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Linguistiche, Filologiche e
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“Ho imparato un po’... un po’ a pensare in inglese”:

**Potentialities of literature in Brazilian and Italian public schools,
in the light of Sociocultural Historical Theory**

Elisa Seerig

Supervisors:

Prof. Dr. Cátia de Azevedo Fronza

Prof. Dr. Alberta Novello

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ELISA SEERIG

**““HO IMPARATO UN PO’... UN PO’ A PENSARE IN INGLESE”:
POTENTIALITIES OF LITERATURE IN BRAZILIAN AND ITALIAN PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, IN THE LIGHT OF SOCIOCULTURAL HISTORICAL THEORY”**

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Scaffolding

Seamus Heaney

Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;

Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.

And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.

So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be
Old bridges breaking between you and me

Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall
Confident that we have built our wall.

In: _____. *Opened Ground: Selected Poems 1966–1996*. 1998.

Your reason and your passion are the rudder and the sails of your seafaring soul. If either your sails or your rudder be broken, you can but toss and drift, or else be held at standstill in mid-seas. For reason, ruling alone, is a force confining; and passion, unattended, is a flame that burns to its own destruction. Therefore let your soul exalt your reason to the height of passion, that it may sing; And let it direct your passion with reason, that your passion may live through its own daily resurrection, and like the phoenix rise above its own ashes.

The Prophet, Khalil Gibran (1974, p. 59, 60)

ABSTRACT

The literary text has humanising potential, it is understood as an "emotional calibrator" and, for this reason, everyone should be permitted its access. In the study of English in basic education, however, various circumstances mean that its approach is neglected or only focussed on structural issues of the language. Among the many reasons for this are the low weekly workload, teachers' excessive number of classes, educational regulations that do not include literary texts, and the diverse proficiency levels of students in the same group. In addition, there is the belief that one must have a certain level of language acquisition to be able to appreciate literature in English. Given the importance of reading and writing literature for not only linguistic but also subjective development, this thesis aims to encourage the development of critical literacy in English in these spheres. To this end, this study sought to identify the potentialities of a brief teaching proposal, consisting of two 50-minute lessons, focused on reading, discussing, and writing a literary text (poem/song) in English, developed and analysed in the light of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Historical Theory. These lessons took place in two contexts, in the first year of Technical Secondary Education: in Brazil, in 2021, remotely due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and in Italy, in person, in 2023. Data generated includes the lessons given, the questionnaires answered by the students about their learning of English and their contact with literature in the language, as well as interviews conducted with volunteer students after the lessons, being two from Brazil and seven from Italy. Based on Sociocultural Historical Theory concepts, and using Content Analysis to organize the data, the results attest: i) the importance of proposing varied activities that provide students with the vocabulary needed to understand the literary text, at the different proficiency levels of the class (thus potentializing the different Zones of Proximal Development) ii) the relevance of discussing the text in groups to stimulate critical literary literacy; and iii) the positive impacts of providing poetry writing as a subjective and meaningful way of acquiring the new language, generating, in this set of activities, motivation to continue learning. It also sheds light on the importance of continuous teacher education, so that they master strategies and feel motivated to apply them in their classrooms, even with little time and few resources available. Academically speaking, this thesis also contributes to the

necessary approximation of the traditionally separate of Linguistics and Literature in the field of Letters.

Keywords: Secondary school English teaching; English language literature; literary literacy; creative writing in English; Sociocultural-Historical Theory; *perezhivanie*.

RESUMO

O texto literário tem potencial humanizador, é compreendido como um “calibrador emocional” e, por esta razão, seu acesso deveria ser um direito de todos. No estudo de língua inglesa na educação básica, no entanto, diversas circunstâncias fazem com que sua abordagem seja ausente ou apenas focada em questões estruturais da língua. Dentre as razões, temos a baixa carga horária semanal, o excesso de turmas dos professores, as normativas educacionais que não incluem o texto literário e os variados níveis de proficiência dos estudantes em uma mesma turma. Além disso, há a crença de que se deve ter um determinado nível de aquisição da língua para poder entender literatura em inglês. Tendo em vista a relevância da leitura e da escrita de literatura para o desenvolvimento não só linguístico, como também subjetivo do indivíduo, esta tese tem o intuito de fomentar o desenvolvimento de letramento literário crítico em inglês nesses espaços. Para isso, este estudo buscou a identificar as potencialidades de uma proposta de ensino breve, consistindo em duas aulas de 50 minutos, com foco na leitura, discussão e escrita do texto literário (poesia/canção), em inglês, desenvolvidas e discutidas à luz da Teoria Socio-histórico-cultural de Vygotsky. Estas aulas aconteceram em dois contextos, no primeiro ano do Ensino Médio Técnico: no Brasil, em 2021, na modalidade remota devido à pandemia de Covid-19, e na Itália, presencialmente, em 2023. Os dados gerados incluem as aulas dadas, os questionários respondidos pelos estudantes a respeito da sua aprendizagem de inglês e o contato com a literatura na língua, bem como entrevistas conduzidas com estudantes voluntários após as aulas, sendo duas do Brasil e sete da Itália. A partir de conceitos da Teoria Sócio-Histórico-Cultural, e da Análise de Conteúdo para organização dos dados, os resultados apontam para: i) a importância de propor atividades variadas que proporcionem o vocabulário necessário para a compreensão do texto literário, nos diversos níveis de proficiência da turma (potencializando, assim, as diversas Zonas de Desenvolvimento Proximal) ii) a relevância da discussão do texto em grupo para estimular o letramento literário crítico; e iii) os impactos positivos de possibilitar a escrita de poesia, como forma subjetiva e significativa de apropriar-se da nova língua, gerando, nesse conjunto de atividades, motivação para continuar a aprender. Aponta-se, ainda, para a importância da formação continuada de professores, para que conheçam estratégias e sintam-se motivados a aplicá-las em

suas salas de aula, mesmo com pouco tempo e recursos disponíveis. No âmbito da pesquisa acadêmica, esta tese também contribui para a necessária reaproximação dos tradicionalmente separados estudos de Linguística e de Literatura, na área de Letras.

Palavras-chave: Ensino de inglês no Ensino Médio; literatura em língua inglesa; letramento literário; escrita criativa em língua inglesa; Teoria Sócio-Histórico-Cultural; *perezhivanie*.

ABSTRACT

Il testo letterario ha un potenziale umanizzante, è inteso come un "calibratore emozionale" e, per questo motivo, a tutti dovrebbe essere consentito il suo accesso. Nell'ambito dello studio dell'inglese nell'istruzione di base, tuttavia, diverse circostanze fanno sì che il suo approccio venga trascurato o si concentri solo su questioni strutturali della lingua. Tra le molte ragioni vi sono il basso carico di lavoro settimanale, l'eccessivo numero di lezioni degli insegnanti, i regolamenti didattici che non includono testi letterari e i diversi livelli di competenza degli studenti nello stesso gruppo. Inoltre, c'è la convinzione che si debba avere un certo livello di acquisizione linguistica per poter apprezzare la letteratura in inglese. Data l'importanza della lettura e della scrittura della letteratura per lo sviluppo non solo linguistico ma anche soggettivo, questa tesi si propone di incoraggiare lo sviluppo di una literacy critica in inglese in questi ambiti. A tal fine, questo studio ha cercato di individuare le potenzialità di una breve proposta didattica, consistente di due lezioni di 50 minuti, incentrate sulla lettura, la discussione e la scrittura di un testo letterario (poesia/canzone) in inglese, sviluppato e discusso alla luce della Teoria Socioculturale Storica di Vygotsky. Queste lezioni si sono svolte in due contesti, nel primo anno dell'istruzione superiore tecnica: in Brasile, nel 2021, a distanza a causa della pandemia di Covid-19, e in Italia, di persona, nel 2023. I dati generati comprendono le lezioni tenute, i questionari compilati dagli studenti sull'apprendimento dell'inglese e sul loro contatto con la letteratura in tale lingua, nonché le interviste condotte con gli studenti volontari dopo le lezioni, due dal Brasile e sette dall'Italia. Sulla base dei concetti della Teoria Socioculturale Storica e utilizzando l'Analisi del Contenuto per organizzare i dati, i risultati attestano: i) l'importanza di proporre attività diversificate che forniscano agli studenti il vocabolario necessario per comprendere il testo letterario, ai diversi livelli di competenza della classe (potenziando così le diverse Zone di Sviluppo Prossimale); ii) l'importanza di discutere il testo in gruppo per stimolare l'alfabetizzazione letteraria critica; e iii) l'impatto positivo di fornire la scrittura di poesie come un modo soggettivo e significativo di acquisire la nuova lingua, generando, in questa serie di attività, la motivazione a continuare l'apprendimento. Inoltre, fa luce sull'importanza della formazione continua degli insegnanti, in modo che conoscano le strategie e si sentano motivati ad applicarle nelle loro classi, anche con poco tempo e poche risorse a disposizione. Dal punto di vista accademico, questa tesi contribuisce anche al

necessario avvicinamento della linguistica e della letteratura, tradizionalmente separate nel campo delle Lettere.

Parole chiave: Insegnamento dell'inglese nella scuola superiore; letteratura inglese; literacy letteraria; scrittura creativa in inglese; Teoria Socioculturale Storica; *perezhivanie*.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AL	Applied Linguistics
SCHT	Sociocultural Historical Theory
BNCC	Base Nacional Comum Curricular
CAL	Comprehensive Approach to Literature
TS	Teacher-researcher
S	Student (when name is unknown)
STS	Students (when they speak in a group)

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1 INTRODUCTION

1. 1. A PERSONAL INTRODUCTORY NOTE ABOUT LITERATURE, LITERACY AND MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

This thesis¹ started in March 2020. Yes, one week before the COVID-19 pandemic formally struck. Despite all the peculiar events brought by the pandemic, this thesis has finally been completed, and I have decided to name it with the words from a dear Ukrainian student living in Italy and whom, thanks to a series of fortunate events in my life, I had the pleasure to teach and interview. Her simple statement on what she had learnt from my lessons was special to me and demonstrates the power of the literary language in language learning and in human development. Hopefully, this work will provide significant proof of that.

A lot has changed in the world, and in all of us since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Therefore, I want to start this introduction with a personal anecdote, to make things lighter. In March 2020 I participated in an ISKCON² meeting for the first time – where we discussed a book that has always interested me: the Baghavat Gita. That, in turn, made me recall a song by the Brazilian songwriter Raul Seixas, called Gita, which my parents had recorded in those old cassette tapes. Listening to that cassette since I was born, during weekends and car rides, the lyrics of the Gita – a word that I pronounced correctly based on intuition, were very strange to me.

Here are a few of its verses (originally in Portuguese): “Sometimes you ask me why I am so quiet, I don’t talk about love nor smile by your side”, “I am in you but you are not in me”, “You have me every day, you eat me, you spit me, you leave me”, “I am the light of the stars”, “I am the hand of the executioner”, “I am shallow, wide, deep”, and so on in a peculiar list of contradictory qualities the lyric subject claims to have. I must have been around 10 or 11 when, in a very spontaneous conversation, while the song played, my dad asked me: “Do you know who he is?” I was puzzled by the question. “No”, I replied. In fact, I had always wondered what kind of romantic song that was – it *must* be a love song. “He is God, my dear!” In fact, I learned years later

¹ This thesis follows the settings established by the Brazilian Association of Technical Standards (ABNT) for structure, citations, and references.

² International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

that many verses in this song are taken from Krishna's words, God in the Vedic Scriptures, in the Bhagavad Gita.

My father's explanation was mind-blowing for me, and it still remains memorable, a "dramatic event", for two reasons. I realized that not all songs that sing about "you" and "I" are on the subject of romantic love; more importantly, it changed my whole understanding of who God is. Born and raised in a Catholic family, I found this concept completely new. God is the future and the past, God can be in evil things. We do not realise their presence... this sort of epiphany is not about believing in God or not, but about being introduced to a more holistic, wider conceptualization of God. To this day I still listen to this song with personal fascination.

I have yet another anecdote to complement this one, from the day I reached for the largest book on my family's bookshelf: Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*. My parents loved it, and I had decided to read it. The main character, Scarlett O'Hara, was more than a little peculiar for my 13-year-old mind: I was not aware of having encountered my first anti-heroine ever. "Scarlett is awful, mom, isn't she?" I said, a little afraid of having completely misunderstood the book. "Yes", she said, "She's indeed awful... terrible... but look at all the things that woman goes through in her life..." she added, almost in pain from recalling the character's hideous fate. Ruminating on my mother's reflection of the book, I could never judge a character in the same shallow way again. This is another "dramatic event" in my personal literary history, and the reader will find out the significance of these events in the following pages.

For the purpose of this thesis, these anecdotes are important for two reasons. First, they demonstrate the process of development in the terms of the Sociocultural Historical Theory, which guides this research. They show how informal, dialogical interactions are the core of human development, and that the development of literacy (one of the main aspects in this research) requires such interactions. In these two stories, a simple comment was able to make me change my whole view of a certain subject (song lyrics interpretation, and God), and a conversation about a novel transformed my perspectives on how to analyse book characters, as well as real people, taking into consideration the social context and the bigger picture. I do believe the Gita conversation was the first literary literacy "turn" I can remember – by means of a song, like this thesis proposes.

In addition, these examples highlight how relevant even a small exchange of words can be: I am not sure my parents ever knew the impact of their speeches in such moments. Are we, teachers, aware of the impact some conversations might have on our students? In a similar way, this research discusses the relevance of a short 2-lesson set focusing on literature, and the outcomes of such a proposal, aiming to demonstrate that even a small opportunity of interaction can make wonders for learners, teachers, and their relationship with the (new) language.

This thesis is, most of all, a register of my own path as a teacher who also attempts to be a researcher, with a humble objective to formalize – in order to improve, facilitate and spread the word – a classroom practice that can be developed by fellow colleagues. Along this path, I became acquainted with many like-minded teachers, who had already developed beautiful research on the matter. I would, most definitely, like to have read and quoted all of them, but time urges, and the thesis must be closed. It must be closed, also with the fragilities of its beginning, which I acknowledge but decide not to remove, as these are also part of the trail I took. This peculiar trail included personal life and health changes, pandemic adaptations, changes in the diet and place of residence... all of which brought me where I am now, on a path that I hope to continue; a road blessed by many fantastic friends, professors, supervisors, who supported me and helped me take the steps to reach this point.

This is a piece of research on Applied Linguistics, on Language Teaching and Learning, and I learnt a new language during the PhD. It was very special for me to be a language learner once again, to observe myself internalizing Italian, always wondering how this would be working with my own students when they are learning English. Additionally, I attempted to write my thesis in my second language, while learning a third. Therefore, I ask the reader for some patience in case my Latin roots interfere in the flow of the English text. I personally observed a strange limitation in my English vocabulary during the process (still in course) of learning Italian. (This means I finished this thesis on language learning not knowing three languages well.) After this disclaimer, let us move towards the proper introduction.

1.2 THE PROPER INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as an Additional Language (EAL) has always been challenging in Brazilian public schools. I have been working as an English teacher for over ten years and, although language and language learning theories have been thoroughly studied during my academic path, only the classroom practice allowed for a better understanding of teaching in this specific context. Amongst the difficulties faced by teachers, we can name the low number of hours dedicated to the subject (usually 50 minutes per week; 1.5 hour maximum), the high number of students per class and the heterogeneity of their previous knowledge of English - while some have access to language courses outside of school, many have never had formal contact with the language before. These challenges make the schoolbooks hard to adapt to the daily routine that has been described above, and we might face demotivation amongst students and teachers, who must work with as much as eight to ten different groups in a full-time weekly working schedule.

My own experience as a language teacher has been transformed after my participation in the CAPES-Fulbright program PDPI³ in 2018. I had started as a public-school language teacher in the Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Sul (IFRS) in 2017 and I was struggling to adapt to students' heterogeneous familiarity with language and demotivation, since the more "advanced" were not engaged in "easier" activities. Prior to IFRS, I worked as a Portuguese Language Teacher in secondary city schools, and taught English as a private tutor or in courses. This means that, although I had been working as a teacher for almost ten years, I had no prior experience with secondary school English classrooms.

From my experience in PDPI, I learnt how to manage classroom time in a more practical manner and became familiar with a series of technological resources that helped me provide engaging activities for students in different levels of language acquisition/learning (I describe these procedures briefly in Seerig (2018), as well as in the Methodology section in this thesis). However, my most cherished learnings were the ones that brought literary texts to the classroom. The activities provided allowed

³ "Programa de Desenvolvimento para Professores de Inglês da Rede Pública". The program sent, in each of its annual editions, over 450 teachers from all regions in Brazil to several universities in the USA.

me to see that, contrary to that belief that we perpetuate, at least in Brazil, which says that literary texts are too difficult and that students “won’t get it anyway”, it was possible to make literature an interesting instrument to promote engagement and thus, language development. Considering that literature has always been a personal interest, which, together with my love for the English language, led me to study Language and Literature, the possibility of (re)uniting English and literature in my professional space was invigorating.

Back to Brazil six weeks after taking the PDPI program, I implemented this wide range of new practices in the classroom in 2018 and 2019, and most of them were very successful, according to the feedback I collected at the time, and still collect today, from students and colleagues, almost three years later (see Seerig and Nicolaidis, 2022). My aim, then, was to make these practices more theoretically founded, to reach other fellow professionals. In a way, this movement might be analysed by the Sociocultural Historical Theory (SCHT) as a way of turning my “everyday concepts” (the ones I have understood through day-to-day experience”) into “scientific concepts” (structured on theoretical ground), as proposed by Vygotsky (1989). These facts led me to the proposition of this PhD research.

In search for a theoretical basis, I was already aware that Applied Linguistics (henceforth AL) could be the field I should adventure myself in, due to its transdisciplinary, versatile nature (Celani, 1998) that focuses on the social purposes of academic investigation (Rajagopalan, 2011). Its realm delves among several other disciplines to develop research – and contributes to them, thus being addressed not as a discipline in itself, but as a field of studies (Moita Lopes, 2011), where this thesis is inserted. In this introductory text, it is important to pose that we are guided by a not only *transdisciplinary* view of AL (Celani, 1998), but also an *undisciplinarity*⁴ one (Moita Lopes, 2011), under a critical perspective (such as it is our understanding of language): it is a major concern to involve as many “subjects” as it can, with the main purpose of building up a more human, just and solidary social reality (Rolando, 2018). By entering in the realm of Linguistics with a project that approaches literature, there is also an attempt to break the vicious circle in the Letters field, which has traditionally made

⁴ A purposeful neologism: *indisciplinar*, in the original Portuguese.

researchers choose between Linguistics or Literature, as if these were not closely related and mutually influential (Jakobson, 2003).

Bearing this in mind, I contacted my advisor-to-be, Professor Christine S. Nicolaidis, at UNISINOS⁵, and initiated my studies in her research group, NUVYLA (Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas da Escola de Vygotsky em Linguística Aplicada⁶), which integrates researchers from my institution, UNISINOS, and UFRJ (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro). While getting acquainted with the SCHT, proposed by Vygotsky⁷ (1896-1934), I recognized it as an ideal foundation for my research, as it identifies interaction and the mediational process as a basis for development, understands the relevance of formal schooling and considers human emotions and subjective experiences as key to the full comprehension of all these social and individual instances. Along the way, I changed supervisor due to professor Nicolaidis's personal matters, and Professor Cátia de Azevedo Fronza became the one who guided me throughout this journey, along with Professor Alberta Novello, from the University of Padua (Unipd).

The concept of language is very relevant for this research: for the SCHT lenses, language is the most sophisticated symbolic artifact, exclusively human, and mediates several interactions along the higher mental functions (voluntary attention, perception, memory, intentional will to act or not) (Lantolf, 2000; Poehner; Lantolf, 2014b). Through this same language, we communicate, and thus interact, transform, and develop our environment, as much as we are shaped by our surroundings – in a dialectical process.

Being from a Latin-American country, and approaching a critical perspective towards teaching and learning, it is common, among its citizens, to question the relevance of the study of the English language, when one considers its stigma of a “colonizing” language, or the “oppressor’s language”. Additionally, there is the low acquaintance many Brazilians still have (me included) as regards to our neighbours' language, Spanish. Our normative educational document, the National Common Core

⁵ In 2022, although the Post Graduation Program in Applied Linguistics at Unisinos increased its grade in the National Standards for Higher Education, the institution, due to changed financial priorities decided to discontinue it. The AL Program was the only one exclusively addressing Applied Linguistics, in Southern Brazil.

⁶ Research group link at CNPq: <http://dgp.cnpq.br/dgp/espelhogrupo/494517>. Access: 2. Apr. 2024.

⁷ There are different spellings for his name in the West; I will adopt “Vygotsky” as it is its most referred graphic register.

(*Base Nacional Comum Curricular*, henceforth BNCC), claims that the contact with English must be under the concept of *lingua franca*, a view that will be briefly developed in chapter 2.

For the purpose of this introduction, I will use the words of the black feminist bell hooks to define the importance of learning such language. Set in the USA context, hooks⁸ discusses why speakers of black vernacular English should also adopt “standard” English, even when this place is a “multicultural society that remains white supremacist, that uses standard English as a weapon to silence and censor” (hooks, 1994). She quotes a poem that says “This is the oppressor’s language, yet I need it to talk to you” (hooks, 1994, p. 172), and argues that we can “take the oppressor’s language and turn it against itself. We make our words a counter-hegemonic speech” (hooks, 1994, p. 175), becoming freer through this language, accessing more than what was once accessible, because only by having access to it, and being able to use it critically, can we change it. Also, as regards to the use of Portuguese language, the official first language in Brazil⁹, we can quote bell hooks, who encourages the use of students’ first language and then translate it: “they don’t feel that seeking higher education will necessarily estrange them from that language and culture they know most intimately” (hooks, 1994, p. 172).

Our Latin American context also reminds us of an emergent topic on sociology and education, namely, the fact that we are a colonized modernity (Mignolo, 2017) and we need decoloniality. Resenting the fact that this concept, which has been discussed by several scholars for over twenty years, has only recently reached many of us teachers (and this is not simply by chance), I must emphasize that there is an effort to promote a dialogue between the aims of my research and those that are proposed by a decolonial perspective of pedagogies (Mota Neto; Streck, 2019), in a critical view of interculturality (Walsh, 2009).

Applied Linguistics, and the SCHAT itself, have remained attentive to more cognitive (and less subjective, affective) aspects of language. This gap has been identified by several scholars, who point to the traditional and problematic tendency to

⁸ The author chooses not to use capital letters for her name and surname.

⁹ Native indigenous peoples’ languages must also be recalled. See the page Povos Indígenas do Brasil, for information in English. Available at: <https://pib.socioambiental.org/en/Languages> . Access: 26. Mar. 2024.

separate reason and emotion: under a SCHAT perspective, they are inseparable (Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Swain, 2013; Swain; Kinnear; Steinman, 2015). Even so, only in the past years SCHAT has attempted to get back to affective aspects in development. This way, while ignoring emotional, affective aspects in our academic investigations on learning, an “emotional deficit” (Dörnyei; Ryan, 2015) was created, which is something that must be addressed, especially in the formal educational environment.

Having now considered that learning English should be transformed into a counter-hegemonic speech, and that Applied Linguistics field is understood as transdisciplinary space to promote social transformation, we now comment on literature – this linguistic element that has been wrongly separated from Linguistics (Aquino; Zaidan, 2016; Fiorin, 2008). Literature consists of an artistic manifestation, seen here as any poetic, fictional, or dramatic form in any societal level and produced by any culture (Candido, 2011). Its power relies on its humanization: it activates the imagination and the intellect, leading to socialization and dialogue. It also exercises reflection, empathy, emotional alignment, the perception of beauty, the sense of humour, as well as develops the capacity to deal with life problems and the complexity of being human (Candido, 2011; Zilberman, 2009) - consider my example with Scarlett O’Hara. In sum, literature is an essential aspect of society, and it is also a *right* to be accessed by every individual (Candido, 2011). Working with literature is also a form of promoting not only critical literacy, which allows to perceive the text from a social point of view (Pineiro, 2019), but also emotional literacy: the capacity to consciously understand oneself and the other, analysing and regulating one’s own emotions. This holistic perspective of teaching and learning, or *developing* from a Sociocultural Historical perspective, in which not only cognitive processes are considered, converges with the understanding of concepts brought by sociologists that value the Epistemologies of the South (Santos, 2021). This social perspective takes “warm reasoning” or “*corazonar*” into consideration. We can also mention Fals Borda’s concept of a “sentipensante” subject (Mota Neto; Streck, 2019), a genuinely Latin American term that unites feeling and thinking, and that can also be in a dialogue with the aims of this thesis, in the aims of uniting cognition and emotion. Working with literature in language teaching and working with learners’ subjectivity is meant to be a (tiny) rupture with the Western paradigms of science and knowledge that are too attached to the cognitive.

Rolando (2018), who investigated literary practices in first language under the SCHAT in his thesis, poses the problem of the growing distance between teenagers and literature, since social networks, videogames and other media are more appealing. Quoting Antônio (2013, *apud* Rolando, 2018), he places the poetic dimension as exiled to give space to market power, entertainment logics and disposable consumerism, insisting on literature as a means to fight against that, as well. Although there are many propositions which defend the use of the literary text in the classroom, only recently has academia turned to empirical experiments that confirm the benefits of this contact in foreign language (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016; Ballester-Roca; Spaliviero, 2020; Tsang; Paran; Lau, 2020). Investigations that focus on basic education are still rare, something that is problematized by Amos Paran (2008) in his extended review on the subject, corroborated more recently by other scholars who attempt to fill this gap (Bloemert; Jansen; Paran, 2019; Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016; Tsang; Paran; Lau, 2020; Viana; Zyngier, 2020). In Brazil, nevertheless, research in the official theses and dissertations catalogue¹⁰ does not locate investigations.

This research proposal aims, therefore, at filling two gaps that have been signalled by researchers. One of them regards the lack of investigations in the SHCT that take into consideration the subjective aspects of the individual (Dewaele *et al.*, 2017; Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Swain, 2013). The other one is related to the still scarce studies that include the presence of literature in the language classroom in secondary education, which is the environment where literature is most commonly used (Paran, 2008).

A third line of investigation presented itself due to the COVID-19 pandemic: how to approach a literary text in a blended (or hybrid, as it has been called in Brazil) learning context? The unexpectedness of the educational changes that the situation imposed on teachers led to much frustration. Not to mention that this happened among the over seven hundred thousand deaths in Brazil, many of them due to lack of governmental policies concerning vaccination¹¹.

¹⁰ Available at: <https://catalogodeteses.capes.gov.br/catalogo-teses/#/> Access: 26. Mar. 2024.

¹¹ Some data on this topic can be found here: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-56663217> Access: 26. Mar. 2024.

Being in the field of Applied Linguistics and guided by the SCHT, which is a theory that takes the context and the individual into consideration in order to understand development, a specific methodology was applied, involving aspects of action research and self-ethnography (in the sense that I was the person in charge to teach the lessons), thus allowing the generation of data regarding reception, interaction and production of literature in the English classroom. In this case, public school secondary school students who participate in English classes, in which Literature is used as a means to develop language. Before presenting the main objective, another concept must be defined, regarding the methodological approach to literature.

In this proposal, I adopt The Comprehensive Approach to Foreign Language Literature as a framework and a guideline. This was proposed by Bloemert et. al (2016, 2019), based on four main teaching approaches identified in a wide review of literature. This Comprehensive Approach is a combination of the four main “focuses” that can be given to literature in EAL (see Chapter 2 and 3). Based on my previous experience, this project aims at promoting experiences that mediate the literary text in this approach, providing space for fruition – and for the subjectivity that emerges.

Initially aiming to observe learners’ emotions, this objective became difficult to reach considering the hybrid context, in Brazil. However, relevant data emerged from the texts made by participants, in English – something that was not part of my practice at that time. The reader will still find mentions to emotions, as they are part of the learners’ subjectivity, and as part of the development of this research.

In 2022, after the qualification process, I was compelled to search for an opportunity to develop part of my research abroad, motivated also by the perspective of a cotutelle. At the University of Padua, my proposal was welcomed by Professor Alberta Novello, who researches English Language Teaching and engages in field research. Thus, from November 2022 to November 2023, I was supervised by her, and we aimed at applying the same project in a secondary school in Italy – where, according to Prof. Novello, the same difficulties regarding proficiency levels and lack of interest occur. It would be a different context in many ways: the pandemic lockdown was over, and the classes were again in person. In addition, I would be communicating in English or Italian – the latter, a language I was not so fluent yet. This experience added much to this research, since I was also able to participate in lectures and

important events in Applied Linguistics and ELT, broadening my view on this matter, and getting familiar with more research involving literature and language teaching.

With all this background in mind, this thesis presents classes that were observed, taught, recorded, and transcribed for further analysis, together with the participants' compositions and interviews, with a main objective in mind:

- To identify the potentialities of a *short* literature inspired lesson plan of EAL for secondary school, built in the light of Sociocultural Historical Theory.

This main objective focuses precisely on the “short” lesson plan, because this is usually what we have in basic education. Considering that the studied context is a school environment, and the steps of this research can collaborate with other common EAL teachers' concerns, the specific objectives of study are:

- To critically describe the planning and development/application of two literature-inspired 50-minute lessons of EAL in Brazil and in Italy;
- To analyse students' previous and current learning paths with English language and literature, in Brazil and in Italy, in the light of SCHT;
- To identify and analyse literacy episodes, in Brazil and in Italy, during the meetings and interviews;
- To identify and discuss SCHT elements that lead to literacy, in Brazil and in Italy;
- To identify potentialities in creative writing as meaningful literacy, in both contexts.

Bearing all these concerns in mind, the structure of this thesis is thus organized. In Chapter Two, I establish the theoretical grounds for the research, starting from an analysis of the English teaching and learning context, and the importance of the presence of literature in these spaces. Then, I present the fundamentals of SHCT as regards to language and human development, to finally reach the more specific scope of arts and literature.

The third chapter presents the methodological procedures as regards to the stages of development of the lesson plan, while discussing the importance of all the data that has been generated through lesson planning, interviews, forms, and class recordings. I also added some detailed descriptions of the lessons.

In the fourth chapter, I discuss the data generated, in a qualitative content analysis (Bardin, 2009; Dörnyei, 2011) perspective, intertwining it with the theoretical grounds that guided this research.

Finally, Chapter 5 presents some future perspectives, with the concluding remarks of the present study, its pedagogical implications, as well as its limitations.

2 THEORETICAL GROUNDS

In this chapter, I present the theoretical grounds that inspire this research and will later guide data discussion. I start by discussing the teaching of English and its relatedness with the literary text; then I present SCHAT grounds for this research within the Applied Linguistics field; and finally, I bring up a discussion on how literature has been studied in these realms.

2.1 TEACHING EAL IN HIGH SCHOOL AND THE PLACE OF LITERATURE

2.1.1 EAL according to the National Common Core in Brazil: erasures

As argued in the introduction, teaching English in Brazilian public schools can be very challenging. The introduction of the literary text in this context requires much care, too, as Schlatter (2008) has argued. Her rich proposal on the need of I was, however, published based on prior governmental documents, that have been recently changed. My focus in this section is to briefly discuss the aims of teaching this language according to the National Common Core (Brasil, 2018) and then direct our sight to the presence of literature in this context.

Brazil's Common Core (Brasil, 2018, henceforth BNCC, for *Base Nacional Comum Curricular*) is a result of a turbulent political context that reflected upon its elaboration. Between 2015 and 2018, there were changes of Ministry of Education – which led to changes in the groups designing the Core – reviews (and no reviews), an *impeachment* and the change of Presidency (Aguiar; T. Tuttmann, 2020; Schlatter, 2020; Traversini; Mello, 2020). The two perspectives that can interfere in the proposition of a common curricular core, indicated by Aguilar and Tuttmann (2020), synthesize the epistemological debate in our country during this time. On the one hand, there is a defence for quality education for all; on the other hand, there is a focus on career, market logics. In addition, it is understood that the curriculum is a document of its time and a result of its sociocultural historical context (Tavano; Almeida, 2018).

The confusing deconstructive situation in Brazilian politics is present in the BNCC, and the dichotomy between quality and market logic is perceptible. The ten general competences seem satisfactory to guide qualified teaching practice; however, the specific competences make their comprehension difficult and open space to this

feared marketed view of education. This is observed in the directions for teaching English Language, which contain contradictions and erasures.

Among the contradictions in the BNCC, there is the presence of the expression English as *lingua franca* (ILF – Inglês como Língua Franca) in primary and secondary school guidelines (5-14 year-old students) and the complete absence of Modern Foreign Languages (*Línguas Estrangeiras Modernas*) other than English. “BNCC prioritizes its focus in the social and political function of English, and thus, treats it in its status of *lingua franca*” (Brasil, 2018, p. 241). ILF, in general, refers to the English used by speakers whose first languages are different – and a concept that is criticized for not considering the political nature of language. Duboc (2019) argues that, by demanding the presence of IFL in schools, but, at the same time, presenting to secondary school teachers pedagogical normative tables, poses two problems. First, the understanding of ILF at schools is unclear, since teachers are not completely aware of the concept and would need training on it. Second, it is possible in this context that, having the pedagogical guidelines readily placed on a table (simple, practical, grammatical), teachers tend to follow them, ignoring the epistemological bases that should guide (be it in a contradictory manner) its use. The same traditional practices with English, thus, perpetrate: “English as we can make it” (Duboc, 2019, p. 19). That is, teachers do not know what the purposes or aims of their teaching are, neither what to expect from students, and are mainly guided by their own preferences and convenience.

The complete absence of other Modern Foreign Languages (including Spanish) promptly disqualifies the whole discourse in the BNCC, as regards to the “false idea of valuing linguistic and cultural diversity²” (Kanashiro; Miranda, 2020). If it is supposed to be plural, why is there only one foreign language in the BNCC? Considering that learning another language interferes in the relationship with one’s own first language, and allows to the construction of an identity that respects difference (Kanashiro; Miranda, 2020), how can we expand horizons by determining that the only language “required” is English?

¹ In the original: “BNCC prioriza o foco da função social e política do inglês e, nesse sentido, passa a tratá-la em seu status de língua franca”.

² In the original: “a falsa ideia de valorização da pluralidade cultural e linguística”.

Criticism towards BNCC examines the focus and the purpose of a common curriculum. This way, a question that arises is whether we are focusing on learning or on teaching. At first glance, it seems the focus is on teaching, but then another question arises: for whose interests? “Whose primal knowledge is being considered as essential? The student’s or the manager’s, the businessperson’s, the teacher’s, the government’s? What is essential for a student is essential for all students?”³ (Kanashiro; Miranda, 2020, p. 220).

The mercantilist content in English is evident in its descriptive guidelines, with a specific erasing: there is no mention on the relevance of the literary text in the foreign language. Specific competences for Secondary School mention only fruition and “the widening of perspectives in the contact with different cultural-artistic manifestations⁴” (Brasil, 2018, p. 246). Within the document directed to secondary school, one reads that learning English is aimed at “allowing students to cooperate and share information and knowledge through English language, as well as act and take critical positions in society, locally and globally⁵”. Besides, students should be capable of

using this language to deepen their understanding of the world they live in, exploring new perspectives for researching and accessing information, exposing ideas and values, arguing, dealing with conflicts in opinions and with criticism, among other actions⁶ (Brasil, 2018, p. 246).

Emotions, identity, or individuality concepts are absent, for instance (which appears only when discussing the literary text in Portuguese language). It is a language to be learned due to its functional, analytical aspect.

The absence of the literary text reports – better: perpetrates – the erasure of a subjective existence, the development of the student as a whole, which is evident in the stated non-obligation of other foreign languages, as well as the teaching of subjects such as Sociology, Philosophy and Arts. In the BNCC for Primary/Secondary School,

³ In the original: “para quem esses conhecimentos são primordiais: para o aluno ou para o administrador, o empresário, o educador, o governo? E o que é essencial para um aluno, será para todos?”

⁴ In the original: “ampliação de perspectivas no contato com diferentes manifestações artístico-culturais”.

⁵ In the original: “possibilitar aos estudantes cooperar e compartilhar informações e conhecimentos por meio da língua inglesa, como também agir e posicionar-se criticamente na sociedade, em âmbito local e global”.

⁶ In the original: “usar essa língua para aprofundar a compreensão sobre o mundo em que vivem, explorar novas perspectivas de pesquisa e obtenção de informações, expor ideias e valores, argumentar, lidar com conflitos de opinião e com a crítica, entre outras ações”.

the only reference to literature in English language occurs in a specific objective for 8th grade; a great inconsistency⁷. The “literary-artistic field”, in the BNCC for secondary school, is present only for Portuguese language, and even there the mention of literary practice, when mentioning countries and peoples, directs “special attention to Portuguese, Indigenous, African and Latin-American literature⁸” (Brasil, 2018, p. 526) – these, it seems, written in Portuguese or translated into it, since their languages are not important to be learnt.

Why is it “convenient” to erase literature in English language as a subject? One way to answer this question would be because, being the literary text a promoter of debate and reflection (Candido, 2011), it becomes counter-productive for the marketed politics we observed in recent curricular revisions. Learning English is defined in the BNCC’s introductory text as a means for developing a plurilingual culture; nevertheless, it seems attached to a utilitarian perspective, since the specific competences argument for language “functions” in a job market context.

There might be a way out of this deadlock, however. By observing several contradictions presented in the text, I ask: Would it be possible to insert literature in English classes, based on the BNCC, considering that there is no explicit manifestation of its relevance in the document? If so, how would that be done?

One of the possibilities would be to take advantage of the “literary-artistic field” in Secondary School BNCC general guidelines, even though it is directed to Portuguese language. After all, BNCC also argues for interdisciplinarity, situating a field for “Languages” (“Languages, Codes and Technologies”). As previously presented, there is support for the access to literatures from other countries (Brasil, 2018, p. 526), which can include Anglophone countries. One must bear in mind that this is not *precisely* the case, however, since this “support” refers to Portuguese, Indigenous, African and Latin-American literature, the three first because they are the

⁷ Apparently, each of the Secondary School Years focuses in a textual genre, and this is the reading model for 8th grade: “practice of reading for fruition: reading literary and artistic texts: Appreciate narrative texts in English Language (short stories, novels, among others, original or adapted), as a way of valuing the cultural heritage in English language”.(In the original: “prática de leitura e fruição: leitura de textos de cunho artístico e literário: Appreciar textos narrativos em língua inglesa (contos, romances, entre outros, em versão original ou simplificada), como forma de valorizar o patrimônio cultural produzido em língua inglesa”) (Brasil, 2018, p. 256-257).

⁸ In the original: atenção “especial às literaturas “portuguesa, a indígena, a africana e a latino-americana”.

greater cultural influence on Brazil, and the latter because of our geographic and cultural proximity. That is, we are still struggling to insert *these* very important literatures in the curricula. Very recently, by pointing out to this niche and in order to insert the absent literary text in the English Language norms, Barcellos and Schlatter (2024) published an interdisciplinary lesson plan (*unidade didática*) that unites English language and the subject of Arts.

Another alternative would be in the active participation of teachers on the curriculum designs of their own institutions. BNCC is supposed to be a wider document to be adapted to each region, state and city in accordance to their contexts; this happens through public meetings that involve school principals and teachers to determine how local documents will be built/adapted, based on BNCC. In my case, that would be in the Federal School Sector, which has not adapted their documents yet. It was supposed to happen in 2020, but COVID-19 pandemic also interfered with these procedures. This leads us to a brief description of this school context, presented in Chapter 3.

If we consider that the Pedagogical Plans for Courses in Federal Institutions will be reviewed soon and bearing in mind that the “literary-artistic field” allows for the insertion of texts from “other countries”, it is possible to have this contact happening in English language, even though (or even better!) in an interdisciplinary approach with Portuguese subject. Successful adaptations/transformations in the curriculum are possible at state level – which happened in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul, whose curriculum presents Spanish in Primary and Secondary school levels, due to its importance for the community context (Kanashiro; Miranda, 2020). These actions are an incentive for us, teachers, not to submit to pre-prepared elaborations in BNCC, as if they were plastered, and for us to we use its several inconsistencies to transform its guidelines in forms to offer what we understand is more relevant to our learners. Either way, a national curricular base should aim at allowing these adaptations to happen – we must make use of this space. This movement is only possible, however, insofar as us, as teachers, see ourselves as capable of making these alterations, through organised action in school communities.

The next section presents some data on the Italian context, pointing to some differences (as well as similar challenges) faced by EAL teachers.

2.1.2 A brief comment on the Italian context

Secondary schools in Italy, called *scuole superiore*, last five years (students stay there from 14 to 19 years old) and are divided in three modalities: the *licei*, the *istituti tecnici* and the *istituti professionali*⁹:

With the reform promulgated by the Presidential Decree of 15 March 2010, it was established that the three main orientations of upper secondary school would be professional school (service sectors, industry and crafts), technical school (economic and technological sectors) and *liceo* (various specializations: art, classical languages, foreign languages, music and dance, applied sciences and human sciences). Foreign literature is taught only in the last three years of the *licei* (English in all of them; German, Spanish and French in the *licei linguistici*) (Balester-Roca; Spaliviero, 2020, p. 233).

There, they follow the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language learning, and learners start learning English in primary school, aiming at A2 level by the end of lower secondary school. Since the reform of the secondary education in Italy, in 2010, there is a common requirement for all courses to achieve level B2 of fluency, and “must proceed along two fundamental axes: the development of communicative language skills and the development of cultural awareness”. (Sirico, 2021, p. 7). Additionally, Italian education is implementing the CLIL¹⁰ methodology, that is, the insertion of a non-linguistic subject taught in English, for the three final years of *Liceo linguistico* and for the 5th year of the other *licei* and *istituti tecnici*, from 2014.

The Italian context is illustrated bellow, as regards to literature in English:

Usually, teachers, following textbooks' didactic sequences, tend to teach linguistic topics during the first two years and literature during the remaining three years. The teaching is often limited to the history of literature with the reading of some anthological passages from the works of authors belonging to the literary canon. Exercises are usually linked to reading comprehension, key themes, and stylistic choices like basic figures of speech (Sirico, 2021, p. 7).

⁹ The *liceo* offers a cultural degree for those aiming at university level; the *istituto tecnico* offers instruction for those aiming to work at sectors of economic and productive development in the country; the *istituto professionale* provides learners with a profession. All of them last for five years, and all students can carry on their studies at the university, afterwards. Usually, this happens to those who take *liceo*. (Sirico, 2021) In the case of this research, I worked in a *istituto tecnico*.

¹⁰ Content and Language Integrated Learning. The information is available at the Governmental website for the Ministry of Education in Italy, Miur: <https://www.miur.gov.it/web/guest/contenuti-in-lingua-straniera-clil>. Access: 4. Mar. 2024.

Bearing this context in mind, Sirico (2021) identified the problematic issue with the approach to literature (which is focused on content, mainly), although Secondary schools offer the *subject* called English Literature in the final three (or two, in the case of my context) years of studies.

His inspiring research on the effects of introducing literature in English from the first year, as a cultural and linguistic element, is presented in the following section. From his experience, nevertheless, it is possible to infer that, in a similar way to Brazil, teachers are able to interpret and insert literature, from the early years, as part of the “cultural awareness” axe related to language. To do so, the teachers’ desire (and the investment on teacher education) is required.

To conclude this section, I advocate for the contact with literature as an essential element for the integral formation of the human being, in its several subjective perspectives. It is imperative that teachers can arm learners with the literary language of the language we teach – in this case, English. In the next section, I present some scholars and their investigations on the presence of Literature in the EAL classroom.

2.1.3 The presence of Literature in the EAL classroom

“Literature forms a body of texts to which individuals and institutions attach ethical, aesthetic, cognitive, affective, social, historical and existential values”, summarizes Luukka (2021), in a phenomenological view. As Balboni (2018, p. 116) explains,

Through literature a person can reflect on life and love, good and evil, power and piety and on the other cores of human awareness. Through literature a person can experience the pleasure of great fiction and escapist fiction, as both are necessary to life every now and then (Chiss 2009). Through literature a person can explore the third pole of the map of human interactions, ‘the world’, in the me/you/world model.

Considering that the focus of this thesis is to approach literature in EAL, this section will present how this specific material has been investigated in the classroom context, in recent years. I start by acknowledging the friction between assessment, content and the meaningful experience teachers want to provide to students in the contact with the literary text, even in their first language (Pieper, 2020), since

Teaching literature [...] has as its aim a cluster of internal goals - the development of the individual in affective and intellectual terms; personal growth; developing private appreciation of literary works (thus leading to growth and development beyond the classroom) (Paran, 2010, p. 144).

Literature, thus, cannot be reduced into testing, or language testing only. There is a developmental purpose in working with this and stimulating this use of language, in fact so present in everyday life, as a form of communication also present in music and media – in a communicative approach, a specific section should be devoted to it, “to enable students to read (listen to, watch) literary texts, to make them aware of the peculiarities of these texts so that they become proficient with them” (Balboni, 2018, p. 120). In an even more holistic perspective, “language users do actually need to ‘read literature’ to read life, or read and use language in ways to which literature reading activities and literary text are recognisably valuable beyond the purely linguistic” (Hall, 2016, p. 1). This widening perspective of literature also depends on the approach chosen by the teachers. Thus, that is where I started my research, by trying to identify what approaches there are and which could be adopted.

Pieper (2020) organises most of the issues regarding the work with literature in the school setting in the curricula, in four main paradigms (cultural, linguistic, social and personal growth); thus, I transcribe the table integrally in Figure 1:

Figure 1 – Curricular aspects of four paradigms to teaching Literature

Paradigms Aspects	Cultural	Linguistic	Social	Personal growth
Aim of literature teaching	Cultural literacy	Aesthetic awareness	Social awareness	Personal development
Content	Literary history, literary movements, (other arts)	Literary theory, style, text structure and meaning (other arts)	Ethical, social, political issues, reader response, student perceptions	Personal experience, student perceptions, reader responses (other arts)
Approach to texts	Literary context (biography, epochs)	Formal aspects of texts	Non-literary context, reader responses	Reader responses
Text selection criteria	National canon	Acknowledged aesthetic values	Topics relevant for age group	Student preferences and interests
Class management	Listening to lecture	Whole-class discussion, writing	Whole-class discussion, peer discussion	Peer discussion
Teacher role	Expert, transmitter	Expert, modelling literary analysis	Discussion leader	Guide, facilitator, stimulator
Evaluation	Reproduction of knowledge	Skills in literary analysis	Knowledge of social context of literature, formulating response	Formulating response, evaluate literary texts and express their judgements, literary competence development
	Content-oriented		Student-oriented	

Source: Witte e Sâmihăian (2013 *apud* Pieper, 2020, p. 119).

The four paradigms to teaching literature in a curricular context¹¹ work as the guideline for the aspects approached in the literature class (indicated in the columns of the table). The first two paradigms (cultural and linguistic) are content-oriented, and 3 and 4 (social and personal growth) are student-oriented. They are:

- Cultural paradigm (19th century): traditional, elitist notion of culture, where canon and classical works are valued.
- Linguistic paradigm (20th century New Criticism and Structuralism): stress on formal aspects and exact procedures; literature as a scientific field.

¹¹ Pieper (2020) uses the context of Finland and establishes her issues in L1; nevertheless, her paradigms are applicable for this discussion.

- Social paradigm (socio-political movements of 1960s on): “The notion of aesthetic value since then may be subject to debate. Further, reception theory starts to influence literature education, and reader response from now on shapes approaches to texts” (Pieper, 2020, p.120). Readers from all backgrounds should be reached and valued.
- Personal growth paradigm (late 20th century): influenced by cognitive psychology and focus on reader, thus being concerned with the processes of learning: “This also means that considerable attention is given to the reading curriculum, and to a broader notion of reading comprehension that encompasses reading literature” (Pieper, 2020, p. 120).

Pieper (2020) explains that the changes in the understanding of literature are responsible for the shift from content-orientation to student-orientation¹². Currently, these different orientations do not exclude, but exist in parallel. By presenting a literary framework¹³ developed by literature teachers in Europe, she explains that the focus on students’ learning is based on cultural literacy and aesthetic awareness, when

the learning process and the notion of progress is anchored in the way that readers, listeners, performers, spectators construct meaning from cultural artefacts. Thus, the view on content is ideally shaped by the perspective of learning. The two central orientations – towards content and toward learning – are intertwined (Pieper, 2020, p. 122).

It is interesting to note that the concepts of cultural literacy and aesthetic awareness pointed out by Pieper (2020) seem to be engulfed by the concept of literary literacy (Cosson, 2015), discussed in the next section. Pieper (2020) investigated, in her context, how teachers relate to social, curricular and contextual demands in order to develop their classes, pointing out that the view of literature as something that should be meaningful to students is at odds with assessment standards. This might get more complicated once these standards relate to its approach in a foreign language, since a gap is still identified (Luukka, 2021; Paran, 2008; Viana; Zyngier, 2020, Sirico, 2021).

¹² This division converses with Bloemert’s (2019) “focus on the text” and “focus on the student” approaches, to be presented further on. However, the latter does not present it in a diachronic manner.

¹³ LIFT-2: Available at: <http://www.literaryframework.eu/Matrix/show/lower.html> Access: 26. Mar. 2024. Italy was not yet part of the framework.

It is important to emphasize that the literary text has been present in language learning practices since, at least, the beginning the 20th century: students worked on the grammar translation of the original text into their own language, or perhaps the opposite (Santos, 2015). This was, however, a mechanical process aimed at decoding words, on account of the rise of the Direct Method (Hall, 2005). Since then, many different approaches to language (and to text) have been developed (Lightbown; Spada, 2013; Rodgers; Richards, 1999), and, due to that, the literary text has also been used, and formally investigated, differently.

As recalled in the introduction of this thesis, there has been a tendency in Linguistics of separating language and literature as if they were different fields. In Brazilian secondary schools, only recently Portuguese language studies included literature as part of their curriculum – and not as a separate subject¹⁴. However, literature is a manifestation of language, and should be looked at as such. Renowned linguist Roman Jakobson (2003) defended the importance of Linguistics looking at the literary studies as a different, but important linguistic event, in the mid-twentieth century. The issue persists, as identified in Brazil by José Luiz Fiorin, who claims:

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

The benefits of Literature in language lessons have been known for a long time (Collie; Slater, 1987); however, the absence of literary texts in English coursebooks¹⁵ in general is still noticeable¹⁶. Nonetheless, narrowing the gap between foreign

¹⁴ The same happens once the student enters the Letters undergraduate program – there is, usually, a preference, for either Literature or Linguistics. This remains along postgraduate level, where professors and researchers chose a preference and remain, either in linguistic or in Literary Studies. My own academic path faced difficulties due to my own shift: I took my Master's degree in literary studies (academic, analytic, bibliographic) and my Ph.D. is in Applied Linguistics, due to my willingness to have a more practical research in my own teaching context.

¹⁵ The Federal Government provides public schools with English textbooks; book sections that contain Literature usually are “extra” sections. As previously presented, BNCC (2018, the National Common Core, the national guidelines that standardize content in Brazil) does not provide any reference to the use of literary texts in Secondary school English classes.

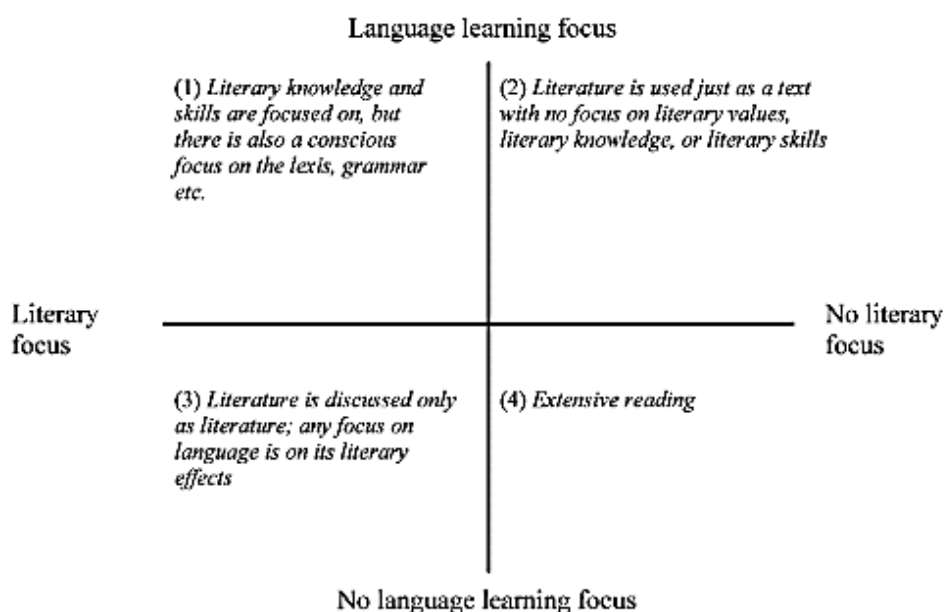
¹⁶ From my observation in the past years working in schools, there is a preference for other types of reading such as newspaper articles or advertisements, possibly due to the belief that this type of material is more suitable to the learner; additionally, because teachers might think that students will not be able to get the more subjective aspects that are present in literature. In Italy, this was confirmed in recent research (Sirico, 2021).

language teaching and literature education is essential, as the personal growth of the individual is valued by both (Luukka, 2021).

There have been more recent investigations on literary practices in the language classroom (Bloemert, 2019; Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016; Bloemert; Paran; Jansen, 2020; Luukka, 2021; Tsang; Paran; Lau, 2020; Viana; Zyngier, 2020), and this section will not be able to address all of them. In order to present a brief overview on the language-literature integration, I recommend Amos Paran's thorough state-of-the-art study (2008), who indicated, at the time, a gap in research in school settings. This gap, although being addressed by some scholars more recently (Bloemert; Jansen; Paran, 2019; Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016; Tsang; Paran; Lau, 2020; Viana; Zyngier, 2020, Sirico, 2021, Ballester-Roca; Spaliviero, 2020), is still noticeable.

Paran's review provides an in-depth analysis of studies on the "shifting relationship between language learning and literature" (Paran, 2008). There is a focus on research carried out mainly after Gilroy and Parkinson's state-of-the-art review (Gilroy; Parkinson, 1996) with the same aim. Paran (2008, p. 466) discusses investigations on "reading, learning, and teaching literature in a variety of foreign languages", providing a focus on emerging research in the area. One important element is the visual representation of the intersection between language and literature in the language classroom. Although claimed as a "simplification" by the author, it is very useful to perceive a general idea of ways of approaching the literary text; thus, I reproduce it below:

Figure 2 – The intersection between language and literature



Source: Paran (2008, p. 467).

Considering any language program, the horizontal axis represents the extent of focus on literature/literary competence; the vertical one indicates the engagement with language learning. This results in four quadrants. The first quadrant represents focus on both areas; quadrant 2 demonstrates a situation where no focus is given to the literary qualities of a text; quadrant 3 represents the focus on literary aspects only, which demands learners with a linguistic level that allows them to discuss literature in the foreign language; quadrant 4, only the reading “practice” is developed. “In between, there is a whole gamut of approaches in which the literature/reading balance is calibrated differently”, and a better representation that would include reading comprehension (such as the proposal by Urbanski, 2023) and cultural elements would “resemble a web” (Paran, 2008).

Only very recent studies have been discussing language-literature integration empirically in an attempt to fill the gap regarding school settings, which remain overlooked: there must be further investigation on “how literature is perceived by teachers and received by students” (Paran, 2008, p. 490). In the Netherlands, quantitative research on students’ perspectives on the presence of literature was carried out (Bloemert *et al.*, 2019), and the findings indicate the linguistic relevance and utility of this type of reading is recognised by language learners. Similar findings

were indicated by Sirico (2021), in Italy. The “non-language” benefits of the use of literature have also been investigated quantitatively in secondary schools in Hong Kong (Tsang, Paran, Lau, 2020a). The students’ answers indicated that aspects such as “knowledge of the world,” “understanding of humans’ thoughts and feelings,” and “aesthetic/ literary appreciation” are among the benefits that are slightly improved by literature. Also in the Netherlands, 365 respondents revealed to value literature lessons for improving their proficiency, in an investigation on students’ motivation and disaffection (Bloemert; Jansen; Paran, 2019), but these aspects were not so much related to higher engagement. Researchers encourage fostering additional research in the area by replicating the study and having classroom practices observed. In Brazil, as presented in the previous section, English literature is not part of the core curriculum for secondary schools, and qualitative data was generated based on students’ perspectives on specific classes designed to work with literary awareness. Findings support the insertion (and production) of “imaginative texts, thus avoiding information-oriented models” (Viana; Zyngier, 2020, p. 11).

In a more recent and hands-on proposal to literature in the classroom, in a learner-centred way, Paran and Robinson (2016) enlist three of the most common approaches to literature:

1) Literature as content: study of the *history* of English literature, the canon, etc. This is what I have observed as a highlight in the English Literature subject, studied from the third grade on, in secondary school, in Italy. It is taken for granted that learners have already achieved a good level of proficiency in English.

2) Literature as language practice material: major focus on linguistic elements (lexis, grammar) and little discussion of the text as literature. This might be the case of Brazil, whenever a literary text is explored.

3) Literature as stimulus for personal development: an approach that “uses activities which relate to students’ personal experiences, thereby developing their imagination and emotions” (Paran; Robinson, 2016, p. 27).

For the purpose of this discussion, the approach in which I usually delved at were quadrants 1 and 3, from Figure 2, in an attempt to provide students with both language development (that is, the “tools” needed to help them fully understand the text) and the experience of fruition, where they could debate how they related to the literature presented. This would mean a focus on the third approach, according to Paran and Robinson’s (2016) list – not excluding the other two as relevant for an overall

experience with the text. A register of my previous experience in this perspective, developed from learners' narratives, is discussed in Seerig and Nicolaidis (2022).

Based on Paran's work, Jasmijn Bloemert has developed recent investigations on the use of literature in language settings (Bloemert; Jansen; Paran, 2019; Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016a; Wolthuis *et al.*, 2020) and suggested the Comprehensive Approach to Literature in the Language Classroom (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016).

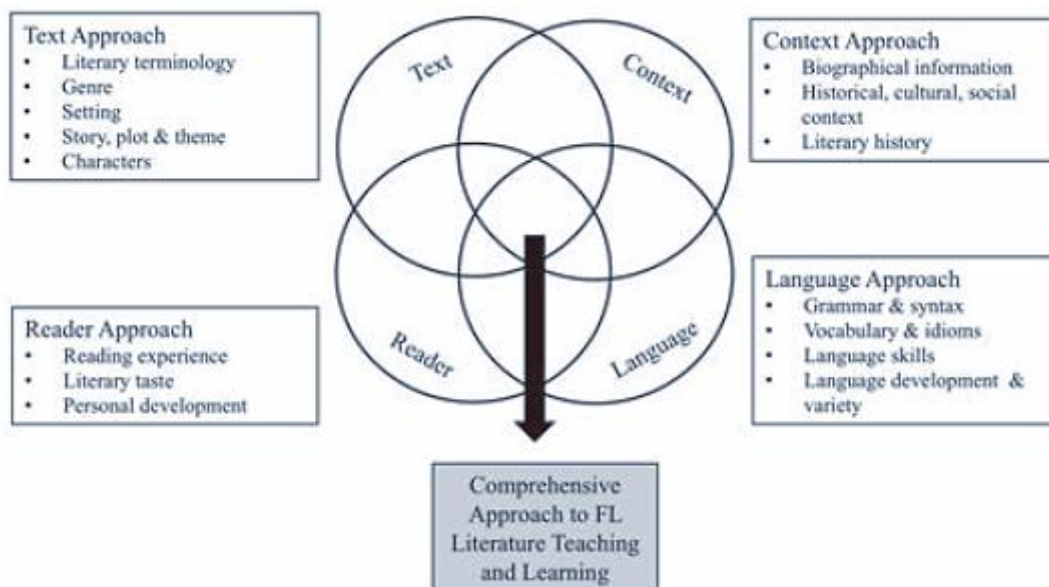
Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift (2016) analysed papers based on teachers' evidence, which, according to them, were inspired by teachers' beliefs and practices, but lacked theoretical conceptualization. They suggested four main approaches to literature – with the aim of contemplating aspects that Paran's diagram did not have room to observe, as the scholar pointed out himself.

- 1) Focus on text (attention is given to literary language, character development);
- 2) Focus on context (cultural elements are observed, as well as the publishing context);
- 3) Focus on reader (personal interpretation and critical thinking are incentivized);
- 4) Focus on language (attention is given to the process of vocabulary acquisition and reading abilities).

The first and second approaches refer to the *study* of the literary text, whereas the third and fourth approaches make *use* of it, focusing on student development.

The Comprehensive Approach to Literature in the Foreign Language Classroom (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016a), henceforth CAL, considers that all these four approaches bring (according to previous research presented) different benefits to the reader and thus, literature lessons should involve all of them. In Bloemert's Ph.D. thesis, she provided a complete illustration of the proposed approach:

Figure 3 – Bloemert’s Comprehensive Approach to FL Literature Teaching and Learning



Source: Bloemert (2019).

Bloemert’s proposal (2019) includes the cultural aspects (Context approach) and the concern with reading comprehension on the part of the reader (Language approach), which were aspects that were unclear in Paran’s (2008) method. In her Ph.D. thesis (Bloemert, 2019), she implemented the designed approach and collected impressions both from teachers (who adopted it) and students (who studied English under the CAL).

By generating data through learner-oriented discourse, listening to students (something that was identified as uncommon in this type of research), she aimed at getting validation for the CAL, and this resulted in several additions in the initial model. As regards to teachers’ impressions on the utility of the CAL, data showed that they felt more aware of their Literature practices. She also indicated that

One important result of our study is that the historically uneasy relationship between language acquisition and literature (sections 1.2 and 1.3) became tangible, not only in terms of how teachers interpreted this approach and experienced implementing this approach as difficult and time-consuming, but also in terms of analysis (Bloemert, 2019, p. 174).

The context in the Netherlands, however, allows for the presence of English Literature in their school core curriculum – which is the case in Italy, where, from the third year of the secondary school course, students have the English Literature subject or at least study English Literature as part of the English subject (Sirico, 2021); but not

in Brazil. Bloemert's data (2019) indicates the importance of consciously reflecting upon our teaching practices, and the need of providing teachers with more systematized and applicable techniques to approach literature (or any other subject, for that matter) in the classroom. Sirico's research (2021) in Italy, pointed the same.

In an attempt to address the lack of studies on Literature in the Additional Language classrooms in basic education, Paran and Duncan (2017) conducted a massive mixed-methods research in three different World Schools, interviewing different teachers, observing different language teaching settings and promoting group discussions with learners. Additionally, there we focus groups and student questionnaires, as well as an online survey. Data revealed acknowledgement of the importance of literature both for learners and teachers, but its use is still rather incidental. Their conclusions indicate the need to provide teachers with more training on the matter, which is a perspective that I also defend, together with the abovementioned researchers in the Netherlands and in Italy.

Throughout the four years of this research, I came across other possibilities of framing the approach to literature, such as Ballester-Roca and Spaliviero's (2020) hermeneutic Model of literary and intercultural communicative competence – a very interesting proposal to experiment in regular class. In terms of SCHT, I highlight Urbanski's recent publication of her Division-of-Labor Pedagogy (2023), developed to teach French in the USA; I also learnt about Yañez-Prieto's literature-through-language (2008), which inserts elements from stylistics. Bloemert's model was not chosen among this set (as I did not know them all, yet), but because it seemed very adequate in its perception and for my need for a framework. The lessons proposed here are, thus, discussed taking CAL as a guideline (see chapter 3).

One traditional step in doctoral research in Brazil consists of verifying which are the works that have been developed, at doctoral level, in the past five years. By searching in the Brazilian Portal of Theses and Dissertations for research that include the keywords “secondary school”, “literature in English language” and “English language”, I came across a number of works and I present some of the most relevant, due to the proximity with my own research¹⁷. Since there are not many doctoral works that involve this topic, I also present research at master's level (Table 2). Below is a

¹⁷ In Italy, similar research could not be carried out because there is not a national bank of theses and dissertations that include all documents in one place.

table with the PhD studies (Table 1), which are briefly discussed afterwards. Its titles are translated into English in italics.

Patriota (2018) goes through interesting bibliographical research on the importance of literature in English classes and on the lack of cultural aspects in the reference documents for the subject in Secondary school, in his Federal school. Although suggesting literature activities for the regular English class with authentic material, he did not generate data to find out how it would work in practice. In 2020, lane Castro (2020) also develops a work with narrative texts in a federal secondary school; however, she addresses comic books in English, which slightly differ because they carry the images intertwined with the written text, providing a more multimodal type of reading. Her intervention does not happen in regular classes, but along a separate course.

Cardoso (2021) gets closer to my scope of investigation by addressing literature in regular classes of English, in a public institution, with a focus on literary literacy and its relation to *multiliteracies* - the researcher conducts reading and writing production inspired in intertexts adapted or inspired by Edgar Allan Poe's *The Raven*. With an aim of developing critical literacy and autonomy, in an ethnographical approach, she investigates the students' impressions on language and literature and implements classes where they read and produced several (multi) literary artifacts. Cardoso's motivation for her research is relevant, too: she works as a professor in the Letters course and identifies the pre-service teachers' lack of engagement with working with literary texts in schools (Cardoso, 2021). She emphasizes three reasons for that, pointing to 1) the absence of Foreign Literature in the formal curriculum, 2) the belief that public school students are unable to read such dense texts in a foreign language such as English, and finally, 3) the approach given to foreign literature in language teaching graduation courses, where the basic education context is not focused and teachers lack strategies to work with it in the classroom. (Cardoso, 2021, p. 83).

Table 1 – Theses on literature in public school English lessons

Author/Area/Institution	Title	Objective	Methodology	Year
1. Luiz Ferdinando da Silva Patriota Doutorado em Estudos da Linguagem. – Doctorate in Language Studies (Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte - UFRN)	O conto policial de Conan Doyle na aula de língua inglesa (<i>Conan Doyle's detective story in the English language classroom</i>)	Development of communicative and intercultural competences by reading 4 original short stories by Doyle in an IFRN (Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Norte) campus.	Questionnaire research with students and didactic sequence based on Cosson (2014) (motivation, introduction, reading, interpretation). Due to timing, there was no application of the sequence. Aims at analysing a course but did not succeed because they did not have enough participants.	2018
2. Iane Isabelle de Oliveira Castro Doutorado em Letras (Linguística) – Doctorate in Letters (Linguistics) (Federal University of Pernambuco – UFPE)	O uso de comic books como textos multimodais em aulas de língua inglesa: estudo de caso com alunos do Ensino Médio técnico do IFRN (campus Apodi) (<i>The use of comic books as multimodal texts in English language classes: case study with technical secondary school students at IFRN</i>)	To verify if comic books are applicable for secondary school English language teaching, in an IFRN (Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Norte) campus.	Questionnaire and analysis of multimodal comic books and movie peanuts, applied to a separate course offered to students - not in regular class.	2020
3. Maria Verônica Cardoso Doutorado em Letras (Estudos Literários) – Doctorate in Letters (Literary Studies) (Maringá State University – UEM)	A literatura em língua inglesa, via adaptações, no Ensino Médio público: leituras plurais e (multi) letramentos literários (<i>Literature in English, via adaptations, in public secondary school: plural readings and (multi) literary literacies</i>)	The author aimed at developing the critical literary literacy by means of multiliteracies, using texts that were adaptations/inspired by Poe's Raven.	Qualitative research with an interpretivist and ethnographical character. Use of content analysis.	2021

Source: Made by the author.

There are other doctoral studies in the field of Linguistics, Letters and Arts which deal with the concepts of literacy, without a specific focus on literature; those that involve literature in English language are focused on pre-service teachers or on teachers' narratives and practices. This thesis, thus, differs because it presents a full study in a real secondary school classroom, considering the full literary experience - and not only the one related to language. In a way, this research implemented ideas such as the ones proposed by Bertonha (2021) and Cardoso (2021) in their masters (see table 2, below), in a very specific context.

A few researchers at master's level took interest in the presence of literature in the English language in basic education. They are presented in Table 2.

Solera (2020) investigated the presence and views on literary texts in official documents on English as an Additional Language. His findings indicate conflicting views. Adding that the English classroom can also promote critical literacy by means of literature, the researcher points to the need to promote courses for teachers to learn how to use these materials in a critical, agentic way. Action research carried out by Garcia (2017) in a 3rd grade secondary school group, aiming at enhancing reading comprehension and making use of the concepts of literacy and literary literacy, indicated students enjoyed classes with literature more than those without them.

Two dissertations propose didactic units involving the literary text in English, without, however, applying them (which is understandable, given the period of only two years for that). Cardoso (2019) analyses and claims for the use of literature in English classes as a means to consolidate the objectives of BNCC in its aims to build more critical citizens, proposing two didactic units that involve reading poems. Bertonha (2021) points to the lack of literature in the official curricular documents, indicating that English is still seen as non-literary, and more relevant for market issues than for the development of critical discursive practices in an additional language. (p. 134, 135). Thus, in order to insert literature in the curriculum, a more subjective type of reading of documents like BNCC is required, according to the author— more or less what I had observed in the previous section.

Table 2 – Dissertations on literature in public school English lessons

Author/Area/Institution	Title	Objective	Methodology	Year
1. Isabela Feitosa Lima Garcia Mestrado Acadêmico em Linguística Aplicada – Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics (State University of Ceará - UEC)	Práticas de leitura literária em língua inglesa para a melhora da compreensão leitora de alunos de ensino médio de uma escola pública de Quixandá. (<i>Literary reading practices in English to improve the reading comprehension of secondary school students at a public school in Quixandá</i>).	To promote literary literacy in English language classes in a 3rd grade secondary school group, 6 participants. Participants demonstrated more interest in the classes developed with literary texts than in those without them.	Action research with the following instruments: beginning and final reading comprehension tests; diary, reading activities and questionnaire on reading practices.	2017
2. Helem Sá Cardoso Mestrado em Letras – Master of Arts in Letters (Southwest Bahia State University – UESB)	Literatura de língua inglesa como viés de consolidação da BNCC para o ensino de inglês no Ensino Médio de escola pública (<i>English literature as a BNCC consolidation bias for teaching English in public secondary school</i>)	This research analyses and claims for the use of literature in English classes as a means to consolidate the aims of BNCC	Lazar's view of literature (1993!). Bibliographical review and a proposal of two didactic units based on poems.	2019
3. Danilo Solera Mestrado em Educação (Educação, Linguagem e Psicologia) – Master of Arts in Education (Education, Language and Psychology) (University of São Paulo - USP)	Letramento crítico-literário no ensino de línguas estrangeiras: possibilidades e desafios (<i>Critical-literary literacy in teaching foreign languages: possibilities and challenges</i>)	To investigate the presence and views on the literary texts in official documents on English as an Additional Language. Findings indicate conflicting views. Adding that the English classroom can also promote critical literacy by means of literature, the researcher indicates the need to promote courses for teachers to learn how to use these materials in a critical, agentive way.	Bibliographical	2020
4. Giovanna Bertonha Mestrado Acadêmico em Linguística Aplicada - Master of Arts in Applied (Campinas State University – UNICAMP)	Letramento Literário Crítico: uma proposta para o ensino transgressivo de literatura na aula de língua inglesa no ensino médio (<i>Critical Literary Literacy: a proposal for the transgressive teaching of literature in English language classes in secondary school</i>)	Bertonha (2021) points to the lack of literature in the official curricular documents, indicating that English is still seen as non-literary, and more relevant for market issues than for the development of critical discursive practices in an additional language. (p. 134, 135).	Didactic plan entitled "languages, literatures, Englishes", inspired on the Pedagogy of Multiliteracies and design learning, in order to promote critical literary literacy in the English language classroom. Transgressive Applied Linguistics approach. Literary text in capital letter, seen as a subject, not an object. Cosson's (2015) view on literature.	2021

Source: Made by the author.

While having opportunity of presenting my research in the AILA World Conference, in 2023, I found out about researchers in Italy who share the interest for Literature in EAL. I highlight the work of Sirico (2021) and Spaliviero (2015, 2020, 2021). Sirico (2021) problematizes the lack of research on the impacts of the use of literature in language learning but also the problem with using only one genre (either prose or poetry). Being in the Italian context in secondary school, he proposes a development that I similarly suggest: using literature with first-year students, who did not take the "English Literature" course yet. He develops this using three different genres (prose, poetry and play), providing a rich body of research in the area and in this specific context. Furthermore, he intertwines this data with the one provided by a group of senior students, giving voice to learners in face of these literary practices. These senior students revealed they feel unable to interpret on their own, as if the teacher was the only one able to do so – yet another reason why we must find ways to change the general approach to literature in school. Finally, he investigates teachers' experiences with teaching literature in English. His experience with first-year learners has had similar findings to this study.

Spaliviero (2020), on the other hand, researches the potentialities of literature in an intercultural perspective especially in the multilingual context of current Italy (Spaliviero, 2021), also tapping into literacies and literature for Italian as an additional language. Her practices include the use of songs and their potential literary aspects (Spaliviero, 2015), which is in line with the perspective of this research.

Ballester-Roca and Spaliviero's findings (2020) researching approaches to literature by teachers convey what has motivated Sirico's investigation (2021), in Italy:

[...] although the majority of teachers claim to propose constant intercultural reflections based on the works [of literature], all of them are limited to the sphere of expanding the canon by referring, for example to the texts of second-generation foreign authors (Ballester-Rocca; Spaliviero, 2020, p. 246).

Learners, since listening to learners is one of the major recommendations for research on literature (Paran, 2008; Viana; Zyngier, 2019, and others), claim to be interested in interpreting present and past meanings of the literary work (in her proposed hermeneutical approach, with a focus on the reader), instead of biographies or textual analysis, as it seems to occur (Ballester-Rocca; Spaliviero, 2020). Sirico's investigation (2021) with teachers demonstrate that, although being controversial in

their opinions about literary texts, teachers' approach to it might change (as their perceptions of working with literature had changed along his research).

Correspondingly, this study aims at collaborating with the ones previously described, so that we can have a wider research corpus in the field. This research goes further than those developed in Brazil so far, as it presents an empirical study, an applied lesson plan critically analysed. To enrich data on the potentialities of a short lesson plan as this one presented, it was conducted in two different countries where English is an Additional Language. This proposal aims at demonstrating how even a short, two-period lesson based on literature, in a real EAL environment (with all limitations of time, schedule, assessment), can positively stimulate students' experience with the language.

To discuss these aspects in the lesson, I briefly present SCHAT and its relationship with language education.

2.2 THE SOCIOCULTURAL HISTORICAL THEORY AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Although Sociocultural Historical Theory¹ is a psychological theory of mind that looks through human development in general (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014b), there has always been a productive dialogue between the SCHAT and language learning investigators, due to several concepts that the theory provides to researchers and teachers (Figueiredo, 2019).

SC[H]T is not a social or sociolinguistic theory. It is instead a theory that explains human psychology, including L2 development, as the dialectical unity of a biologically endowed brain functioning with socially generated forms of mediation that give rise to what Vygotsky called "higher" forms of thinking where humans deploy mediation appropriated through social activity to control (i.e., regulate) their mental functions (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014b, p. 22).

Most of these investigations were, however, focused on the cognitive aspects. Only in the past decades, this tendency is changing, and studies are revisiting Vygotsky's claim that emotions have a critical role in human mental functioning, as systems of meaning unite the affective and the intellectual (Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Swain, 2013). Considering the importance given to language and to the inter-

¹ Also called Cultural Historical or Socio-cultural Theory (Poehner; Infante, 2019), I choose Sociocultural Historical in order to insert all elements that constitute the grounds for the theory: society, culture and history as the influencers of human development.

connection needed between research and practice (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014b), here, I briefly explain certain SCHAT concepts that are relevant for Applied Linguistics studies that focus on language (and) education.

The Sociocultural Historical Theory (SCHAT), which is based primarily on psychologist Lev S. Vygotsky's (1896-1934) studies, understands human development as constant and based on interactive processes between the individual and the world. This interaction is only possible through either material or symbolic artifacts that mediate human development (Lantolf, 2000; Swain; Kinnear; Steinman, 2015). Such mediation also leads to other key concepts in SCHAT, such as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), *scaffolding*² and imitation.

This Sociocultural Historical perspective, as well as the importance given by Vygotsky to education, was inspired by Marx's historical dialectical materialism, in which dialectical principles operate in the three realms of nature: the physical and social world, and the world of human consciousness. Although the first two have been thoroughly explored scientifically, the latter one (human consciousness) is the one identified by Vygotsky as lacking further analysis "to explain human's ability to use symbols to mediate their psyche" (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014a). This perception conducted him to the development of the SCHAT of mind.

The theory highlights this focus given by Vygotsky

on the relationships between the individual's physiological aspects and the social and culturally produced contexts and artifacts that transform the individual's cognitive or mental functions. Language is one such culturally developed artifact (Swain; Kinnear; Steinman, 2015, p. 14).

Language, for this theory, is the most sophisticated symbolic artifact, exclusively human, and mediates several interactions along the higher mental functions: voluntary attention, perception, memory, intentional will to act or not. (Lantolf, 2000; Poehner; Lantolf, 2014). Context is, thus, essential in SCHAT studies, as all these higher mental functions are developed *socially* (Vigotski, 1998).

² The connections between this concept and SCHAT are being questioned (Xi; Lantolf, 2021), however, many studies still correlate them (Swain, Kinnear, Steinman, 2015) so we will maintain it for the purpose of the project, bearing in mind that scaffolding is not the same as ZPD, as some have claimed. It constitutes an attempt to help learners go along their ZPD.

Vygotsky established language as the unit of analysis for his materialist psychology, in his quest to explain the relationship “between brain, body, human practical activity, and consciousness” (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014a):

Language is an appropriate unit because of its bi-directional quality; that is, outwardly directed as social speech at influencing other members of society and it is inwardly directed as private or inner speech (i. e., dialogue with the self) at influencing one’s own psychological activity. On this view, language mediates thinking in the same way that human hands coupled with physical tools mediate human activity in the world of objects (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014a, p. 22, my highlights).

This extract on the importance of language presents, besides the relevance of mediational processes, the concept of inner or private speech, as a regulator of our thoughts. For example, in Piaget’s theory of development, the egocentric speech of a child (when they speak “to themselves”), vanishes as they grow. For Vygotsky, it rather becomes inner/private speech: we still use language to mediate our thoughts, be it silently (inner speech) or, when we need to put more focus to it, we even speak to ourselves (private speech), thinking out loud (Vygotsky, 1989; Figueiredo, 2019) (This means we are not crazy for speaking to ourselves – we are rather trying to self-regulate our thoughts or actions through language.) The main difference between SCHAT and other perspectives that see interaction as relevant to the process of learning a language is that “sociocultural theorists assume that the cognitive processes begin as an external socially mediated activity and eventually become internalized” (Lightbown; Spada, 2013, p. 120) and not the other way around.

Vygotsky explains that

Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first on the social level and later, on the individual level; first between people (*interpsychological*), and then inside the child (*intrapsychological*). This applies equally to all voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher mental functions originate as actual relations between people (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57).

This is why, recently, researchers, aiming at reorganizing educational activity and promote communication through effective learning of the additional language, have turned to Vygotskian theory (Poehner; Infante, 2019).

2.2.1 ZPD and scaffolding: different and complementary

Lightbown and Spada (2013) explain these concepts of the SCHT in brief, in the following extract, where they demonstrate how language and thinking are intertwined, and introduce the concept of ZPD:

Speaking (and writing) mediates thinking, which means that people can gain control over their mental processes as a consequence of internalizing what others say to them and what they say to others. This internalizing is thought to occur when an individual interacts with an interlocutor within his or her zone of proximal development (ZPD) - that is, in a situation in which the learner can perform at a higher level because of the support (scaffolding) offered by an interlocutor (Lightbown; Spada, 2013, p. 118).

Vygotsky (1978) illustrates two “levels” of development: the *actual developmental level*, where one’s mental functions have been established due to *completed* developmental cycles, and the *potential developmental level*, where the learner is able to solve situations with support of others. The metaphorical “path” or “space” between the two is called Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)³. In his own words, the oft-quoted definition is:

What we call the Zone of Proximal Development (...) is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

He further explains with a beautiful metaphor of buds and fruit:

What, then, is defined by the zone of proximal development, as determined through problems that children cannot solve independently but only with assistance? **The zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation, functions that will mature tomorrow but are currently in an embryonic state.** These functions could be termed the "buds" or "flowers" of development rather than the "fruits" of development. The actual developmental level characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86-87, my highlights).

³ Do not mistake it for Krashen’s famous *i+1* construct. See Dunn and Lantolf (1998): “Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development and Krashen’s *i + 1*: Incommensurable constructs; incommensurable theories”. *Language Learning*.

Thus, instead of focusing on the actual developmental level (fruits), teachers should focus on what is in course of maturing (their buds), supporting them along the “fruitful” process of development. This will happen collectively, with peers and mediational means in formal and informal context – in society. For this reason, the concept of *scaffolding* has been constantly quoted as a means to do this:

The ZPD and scaffolding support each other both conceptually and syntactically. How do we 'verb' a ZPD? Scaffolding seems a helpful verb to operationalize the meaning of a ZPD (Wells, 1999). The metaphor of scaffold (noun or verb) or scaffolding (noun or verb) is a vivid one. In co-construction of knowledge, assistance is given when needed in the quantity and quality needed, and is then gradually dismantled when the structure/individual can mediate (regulate) itself (Swain, Kinnear, Steinmann, 2015. p. 25-26).

The abovementioned authors' solution is interesting in presenting *scaffolding* as the *verb* to represent the process *along* the ZPD⁴. SCHAT scholars such as Xi and Lantolf (2021), concerned about the interchangeable use of ZPD and *scaffolding* that some teachers and researchers were applying, explained they cannot be used as such: scaffolding is too much of an “engineering” understanding of development, with no social engagement, whereas Vygotsky had illustrated the ZPD as holistically as to say it is a bud, with all its peculiarities and dependent of environmental (social) factors. Recalling other important sub elements of the ZPD, such as Objective ZPD (leading activities as playing, schooling, work, etc) and Subjective ZPD (the maturing functions of a child), and the Social Situation of Development⁵ (SSD), they explain that “As children interact with others in their SSD (the dialectic between OZPD and SZPD) qualitatively new structural relationships among the psychological functions that form consciousness emerge” (Xi, Lantolf, 2021, p. 34).

Given the complexity of Vygotsky's construct, Xi and Lantolf (2021) suggest that the term scaffolding should be dropped completely, when discussing ZPD. Newman and Holzman (2002) agree with the undesirably mechanic idea of scaffolding and observe the ZPD not as a “place”, but as an activity, a historical unity constantly created and recreated towards new development. Swain, Kinnear and Steinmann (2015) argued that *scaffolding* would suit as a verb for the movement along the ZPD; Newman

⁴ A correlation first explicitly made by Bruner in 1985, based on the metaphor coined by Wood, Bruner and Ross in 1976 (1976).

⁵ “The mutual and unique relationship between person and context Vygotsky called the social situation of development (henceforth, SSD)” (Xi; Lantolf, 2021, p. 33). To be further discussed later in this thesis.

and Holzman (2002) and, still more recently, Holzman (2020), use “creating ZPDs” as the verb for it, as she demonstrates that Vygotsky says

the ZPD *is actively and socially created*, rather than it being an entity existing in psychological-cultural-social space and time. For me, the ZPD is more usefully understood as a process rather than as a spatio-temporal entity, and as an activity rather than a zone, space, or distance. [...] ZPD activity is at once the socio-cultural activity of people together creating the “zone” (the learning-leading-development environment) as well as what is created (learning-leading-development). The method, in this case, is simultaneously tool and result (Holzman, 2020, p. 145, my highlights).

There is no doubt the ZPD concept was the greatest contribution for the conceptualization of human development, as it states the process for this to indicate learning. It guides us, teachers, towards what we should be gazing at as regards to our work. However important their perspective is, research group discussions had led me to understand that the metaphor of scaffolding is still very illustrative in our imagination as teachers – we must only be attentive not to “disqualify” the complexity of Vygotsky’s concept of ZPD by calling it scaffolding, as interchangeable terms.

After stating this disclaimer on my awareness of such differences (between ZPD and scaffolding), my personal choice as a teacher-researcher was to adopt the terminology of scaffolding in this thesis (perhaps because “creating ZPDs” seemed ahead of my competences when I started writing this). Importantly, providing someone with scaffolding does not mean the learner will reach the self-regulation, the autonomous learning we aimed for: it is an attempt to tap into this process of development, an attempt to create ZPDs with her/him.

Considering that this investigation approaches literature mainly as a reading element, it is also important to observe how SCHAT understands this aspect.

2.2.2 Reading and literacy(ies)

There is a relevant differentiation between *reading* and the concept of *literacy* (Street, 2014) in the Vygotskian approach (Urbanski, 2023) and in current research (Paran, Wallace, 2016). Reading, as a skill, is traditionally more related to cognitive approaches to learning (Rosenblatt, 1985, and Urbanski, 2023, mention teaching strategies such as “bottom-up” and “top-down,” and so-called interactive approaches

as problematic, as they do not consider context), whereas literacy is a social practice, and a process:

The difference between teaching literacy [...] and teaching reading as a language skill is that, in teaching reading, we are taking a limited view of the process, often focusing on decoding and comprehension, but no more. In teaching literacy, we are assuming a purpose or reason for reading; we are looking at reading as communication and at what the reader will do with what they read - or what writers do with writing (Paran; Wallace, 2016, p. 16, my highlight).

This means to say that literacy considers context for the use of language, as well as the malleability a language user should develop, together with the critical aspect that the awareness of the sociocultural context provides. In the classroom, an approach to the text as a simple set of words to be mechanically translated does not raise learners' awareness to its social nature (Schlatter, 2009). A perspective based on literacy understands that texts do not have only one meaning, but "meaning potentialities":

The meaning potentialities of a text that develop in the activity of reading are influenced by the different relationships between a writer, reader, text, world, background knowledge, L1, and L2. Therefore, different interpretations are possible from these different relationships. This is not to suggest, however, that any interpretation is possible as meaning potentials are constrained by the language of the text (Urbanski, 2023, p. 12, my highlight).

Due to the malleability of the text (as something socially constructed, like any other cultural element we produce), Urbanski (2023) considers *literacy* development as the appropriate term for teaching reading in a SCHAT approach. Engulfed by the concept of literacy is also the process of writing, practice that this research proposal also addresses. Learners' processes in their L1 should be taken into consideration when we aim to develop literacy in English as an additional language (Paran; Wallace, 2016).

I purposefully underlined the words *comprehension* and *interpretation* in the quotations above: are readers "comprehenders" (who extract meaning from a text, as from a container) or interpreters, invited to bring meaning to the texts? Most textbooks and reading questions are built towards only the first one – comprehension – whereas the ideal would be to also offer the possibility for them to interpret, to make meaning through their own lenses (Paran; Wallace, 2016). These aspects were bore in mind during the construction of the project, which is detailed in the Methodology section (3).

This does not mean to say that cognitive aspects of reading development should be ignored: instead, these must be highly considered – but always as part of a sociocultural process of interaction⁶ between learner, language and text. The role of the teacher is to provide learners with opportunities to develop their cognitive process of reading: literacy. In this case, “To read is to critically (re) act in accordance to the expectatives of the genre” (Schlatter, 2009, p. 13, my translation). According to Kleiman (2004), for this to happen, several aspects must be considered. First, the background knowledge of the learner is activated: this includes their linguistic knowledge, text knowledge and world knowledge, that work together to infer meaning to what is read. The metacognitive processes of determining objectives and formulating hypotheses is also part of reading. In addition, the recognition of formal structures in the text and the capacity to understand the argumentative intentions of a certain author rely on the interactional features of the text (Kleiman, 2004).

Considering that this literacy is aimed at in another language, several additional issues are faced by the students and were taken into consideration during the projection of this thesis. Learners’ L1 reading knowledge and English language knowledge, issues related to grammar, discourse and morphosyntax, and even the manner in which learners determine the meaning of unknown lexicogrammatical elements in a text are aspects that impact literacy development in an additional language (Urbanski, 2023).

Urbanski (2023) also points to the impact of the reading process in the working memory, when it comes to an additional language:

L2 reading/literacy involves a complex set of interactive and interdependent processes (e.g. decoding, understanding vocabulary, morphosyntax, cohesive devices, story structure and genre, incorporating background knowledge, inferring, developing meaning potentials, planning, monitoring, synthesizing, interpreting, making pre-dictions and revising), the working memory of L2 readers, especially beginner or intermediate learners, is quickly taxed (Jeon & Yamashita, 2014; Koda, 2005) (Urbanski, 2023, p. 22).

⁶ Rosenblatt (1985), who is still a reference into teaching literature, coined the term *transactional reading* – pointing that *interaction* is still a very mechanical perception that does not cause transformation, and transaction indicates a more organic blending of components. Although, at the time, she used the term “reading”, her perspective is in line with the concept of literacy presented here, and uses Vygotsky as a reference to her (holistic) understanding of language. For the purpose of this thesis, *interaction* is used here in the least mechanic view it allows, as other SCHAT scholars do.

The researcher problematizes that these challenges might lead to the postponing of reading in the additional language in formal instruction, or to the adoption of overly adapted or short texts in order not to overload the working memory of the learner – so that they will have more “proficiency”. She points out through her own work that this should not be the case: this attitude collaborates for the gap between learners that are beginner and intermediate in terms of proficiency, (that is, who learn how to decode and comprehend the text), and the “advanced” learners - who are able to *interpret and analyse* it (Urbanski, 2023, p. 5). As demonstrated, this “advanced” stage, in other words, literacy, is what we have been aiming for.

In addition, reading/literacy tools and strategies, such as incorporating background knowledge, using dictionaries, identifying certain ideas, making predictions, writing summaries and collaborating in reading tasks, also play a role. Overall, Urbanski (2023) argues that these are all important aspects to be explored by the teacher, with bilingual dictionaries preferred for meaning making (“They must learn how to find the appropriate lexicogrammatical element in question, in the right form and select the appropriate usage for the context using the grammatical and collocational information included in the dictionary”, Urbanski explains on p. 5), and collaborative activities preferred over individual ones, for “cooperation or better yet, working as a collective, may serve a more profound mediating role in the development of learners’ L2 literacy” (Urbanski, 2023, p. 27) in an SCHAT perspective. The activities developed in this research took these aspects into consideration (see the Methodology section).

Traditionally related to the language in written form and in formal instruction, Street (2014) criticizes the “autonomous” idea of literacy, that is exempted from social context and meaning, proposing the critical literacy as an approach that considers this context as paramount to all interaction and in which language happens (be it formally or informally, written or even spoken). In more practical terms, a critical approach to literacy would “enable learners to reach conclusions about the ideological impact of texts in their contexts of use, alerting them to the way texts may marginalize the ‘Other’” (Paran; Wallace, 2016, p. 05). The addition of adjectives to the term *literacy* was implemented later on, together with the plural form (*literacies*).

Thus, teaching a language

is highly involved not only in children learning to read and write (functional literacy) but also their learning to use the Web wisely and skilfully for information (information literacy), learning to read the aesthetic nature of a literary text (literary literacy), learning to read all texts critically and understanding their manipulative power (critical literacy) and also reading pictures for information both deeply and critically (visual literacy) (Bland, 2018, p. 5).

Ideally, we should develop all of those literacies, as interwoven processes in order to read at a deeper level. For this discussion, my interest goes further towards *literary* literacy – which, in my personal view, should not be separated from its wider relative, critical literacy. I will adopt Paulino and Cosson’s explanation (2009) of literary literacy, that considers the social, critical relevance proposed by Street (2014) to their definition: “the process of appropriation of literature as a literary construction of meanings” (Paulino, Cosson, 2009, p. 67)⁷. Literature is not seen as the traditional canonical text, but as a text that uses creativity and imagination (Hall, 2016), “a cultural repertoire constituted by a wide range of texts and activities that provide a unique form of making meaning: the literary form⁸” (Cosson, 2015, p. 182). A necessary addition to the conceptualization that is being built here is that of Rosenblatt (1985), that establishes the differentiation between aesthetic and efferent reading, and is constantly quoted among those who discuss literary literacy in EAL. According to her, all reading delves among these two forms of reading, and it depends on the text but, mostly, on the reader, to activate one or the other with more emphasis:

The predominantly **efferent** reader focuses attention on public meaning, abstracting what is to be retained after the reading - to be recalled, paraphrased, acted on, analysed. In **aesthetic** reading, the reader's selective attention is focused primarily on what is being personally lived through, cognitively and affectively, during the reading event. The range of ideas, feelings, associations activated in the reservoir of symbolizations is drawn upon. (The reader may retain much afterwards, but that is not the differentiating aspect.) Any text (e.g., a sonnet or a story) can be read either way (Rosenblatt, 1985, p. 101-102).

In this sense, to develop literary literacy (because, although Rosenblatt speaks of reading, she is clearly talking of literacy, when she poses the role of the reader’s

⁷ As part of the development of literary literacy, we can include the raising of *literary awareness*: it "results from a process in which the reader awakens to and takes cognizance of the verbal artistry of a literary text" (Zyngier, Fialho, 2010, p. 15). This is a concept from stylistics.

⁸ In the original Brazilian Portuguese: “repertório cultural constituído por uma grande variedade de textos e atividades que proporcionam uma forma muito singular – literária – de construção de sentidos”.

subjectivity as important to the process) is also to encourage the development of Rosenblatt's (1985) aesthetic reading. It is to encourage the moving ahead of simply efferent reading, however important, to a more subjective way of touching the new language.

Another term to add is "critical", as previously noted, because a "critical literary literacy" considers the cultural, literary, ideological, and linguistic aspects in the text (Cosson, 2015). This requires awareness to the current sociocultural context, in the terms of critical pedagogy:

Children of the twenty-first century are faced with complexity, diversity, and challenge. They need the opportunity for a serious engagement with literature that will help them realize their agency and the power of imagination to prepare the world for change (Bland, 2018, p. 05).

Evidently, this opportunity and openness to develop literary literacy in classroom can only be possible once the text is properly presented to students by the teacher, so that, through language, they can mediate meanings in the text.

Additionally, "it is impossible to dissociate a discussion of literature in FL teaching from its educational context, from values and from the communication of values to learners" (Paran, 2010, p. 144), since education aims at transformation. Thus, we cannot dissociate *literary literacy* from *critical literacy*, when we understand the teaching of literature as a means to provide affective and intellectual development, personal growth as well as the appreciation for literary works (Paran, 2010), in a humanizing perspective (Candido, 2011, Hanauer, 2012).

There is no point in working with a literary text in order to (solely) search for words in a dictionary or to learn about grammar structures, as it seems to often happen (Hall, 2016). This is precisely why literature has been seen as difficult to work with or irrelevant for language teaching purposes; it is an object of art and it should be introduced as such, *while* it also functions as a form of contact with the additional language culture, or cultures (Ballester-Roca; Spaliviero, 2021).

By giving space to literature in class, in an approach that allows for the openness previously mentioned, it is possible to relate to Barcelos's concept of emotional literacy.

literacy(ies) recall to a social practice, to a critical engagement and to the inclusion of different modalities. The same happens to emotional literacy, that

runs through everything we do and think, since cognition and emotion are inseparable⁹ (Barcelos, 2015, p. 66).

Barcelos's affirmation that cognition and emotion are inseparable agrees with SCHAT principles: Vygotsky claimed that "intellect and affect are fused in a unified whole" (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 373). Thus, in a dialogue to the methodological approach suggested by Santos (2018a), proposing emotional literacy as a concept (that is stimulated during literary literacy practices, once the appropriate interaction happens) is a form to subvert the traditional scientific method of understanding learning and development, promoting "warm reasoning":

Emotional literacy is not a simple set of individual skills; it is a set of emotional practices that regard how individuals and groups emotionally read and write the world in their social context. I see emotional literacy as a new essential form of literacy for us to survive the crisis in values, the chaos, the violence and the intolerance that so often settles in classrooms, schools and in the whole society¹⁰ (Barcelos, 2015, p. 71).

In a perspective that values the reader as a human being, and development as connected both with cognition and emotion, (critical) literary literacy can be, too, a means to develop emotional literacy.

Literature education, in its complete form, should include the production of literary texts (songs, videos, short stories, drama, poetry, etc.) (Balboni, 2018). As this proposal moved forward from mainly reading literature (my personal experience in my classrooms), to an attempt to writing it, I add to this list of literacies Hanauer's *meaningful* literacy instruction (2012), in which he prospects the humanization of the additional language classroom. In the same terms of this research, then, he claims that the aim of learning a language is to facilitate "personal meaningful expression". His

⁹ In the original Brazilian Portuguese: "letramento(s) remete a uma prática social, ao engajamento crítico e a inclusão de outras modalidades. Da mesma forma, acontece com o letramento emocional, que perpassa tudo o que fazemos e pensamos, já que cognição e emoção são inseparáveis". All translations from Portuguese and Italian were made by me.

¹⁰ In the original Brazilian Portuguese: "O letramento emocional não é pura e simplesmente um conjunto de práticas e habilidades individuais; é o conjunto de práticas emocionais que diz respeito a como os indivíduos e grupos leem e escrevem o mundo emocionalmente em seu contexto social. Vejo o letramento emocional como uma nova forma de letramento essencial para que nós possamos sobreviver à crise de valores, ao caos, à violência, e à intolerância que tantas vezes se instala na sala de aula, na escola, na sociedade com um todo".

conceptualization widely engulfs the principles adopted by SCHAT, for he places the language learner in the centre of the process, as a human being socially and culturally situated, who must interact (with “everything that makes up the experience and understanding of the learner”, as Hanauer (2012, p. 108) explains) to develop, but also as an individual with their own particularities.

The concept of literacy is present in a wide scope in this research, as it is related to reading and writing literature and in the emotional aspect that this type of text can touch. Thus, it will be constantly recalled during diverse moments of data analysis, in its several instances.

Other specific aspects of SCHAT and its relationship to literacy, such as the view on emotions, subjectivity and the use of L1/HL in the English Language classroom will be further addressed in the following sections, and along data analysis.

2.3 LANGUAGE LEARNING, SUBJECTIVITY, AND LITERATURE

In 2013, Merrill Swain claimed that “emotions are the elephant in the room”, because everyone knows they are there, but no one wants to talk about them. She aimed at pointing out that, in most research in language learning, the scientific method historically imposed gave a focus to the cognitive aspects, leaving aside the emotions imbricated in the process (Dörnyei; Ryan, 2015; Santos, 2018; Swain, 2013).

Consistent with this tradition, the roots of the field of SLA [Second Language Acquisition] are resolutely cognitivist, with the initial focus of SLA research being on identifying and describing universal patterns and processes of language development, without any place for irregular and unpredictable emotions within such a research agenda (Dörnyei; Ryan, 2015, p. 19).

This has been changing over the past decades in many areas¹¹; in Applied Linguistics, due to several SCHAT scholars who revisited Vygotsky’s theory to recall that emotion and affect play the same important role as the one of cognition in the process of human development (Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Swain, 2013; Vygotsky, 1978).

Initially, a focus has been given to anxiety as the main emotional factor to influence the process of language learning. Nonetheless, researchers are

¹¹ Methodologically speaking, the decolonial perspective would also lead to this change of research pattern (Mota Neto; Streck, 2019; Santos, 2018).

acknowledging the importance of *positive*¹² emotions such as excitement, enjoyment or hope (Dewaele et al., 2017; Dörnyei; Ryan, 2015), that are part of the process of learning a language: this “is an emotionally loaded experience and any description of what makes a particular learner unique needs to take this into account” (Dörnyei; Ryan, 2015, p. 10).

In the beginning of my doctoral studies, my aim was to investigate emotions involved in the process of interacting with literature in EAL. As the project (and the pandemic, that implicated in remote teaching for half of the process) developed, data generated made me feel unable to state which emotions were being manifested, or how to properly analyse them. Nevertheless, there are aspects of experiencing emotions in the data, and my belief is that they play a central role in development (in accordance with the theoretical framework I follow, SCHAT). Thus, although edited, main concepts that involve learners’ subjectivity, and thus, emotions, are present and permeate data analysis.

2.3.1 Subjectivity in Applied Linguistics and Language Learning: emotions and the concept of *perezhivanie*

Rosiek (2003) observes that the study of emotions is important for teachers in order to anticipate students’ reactions, recognize that they work together with cognitive aspects of learning, and also because “promoting responsiveness to students’ emotional experience of learning is a moral necessity”, as “teaching is a caring profession” (Rosiek, 2003, p. 400). In language classes, emotions interfere with a series of events that interest the teachers’ daily activities, such as “enlighten and keep students’ interest for learning the language, involve students in speaking dynamics; promote responsibility for their own learning; deal with those who resist or fear to express themselves in the classroom” (Aragão, 2008).

I start section 2.3 mentioning the example of renowned AL researcher Merrill Swain, whose work has been an inspiration for this study. She was already a life-long investigator of the processes in language learning, mainly influenced by cognitive approaches, when she shifted her perspective to emotional aspects that interfere in

¹² The concept of emotions and of the classification into positive or negative will be discussed further in this research.

these processes (Swain, 2013). Swain does not claim, however, that a cognitive analysis of learning is problematic, but only that observing learner's subjectivity can enrich research and bring forward yet other aspects that lead to a deeper understanding of human development. Her more recent writings are influenced by the SCHAT. Vygotsky had a *monist* perspective to things (much like philosopher Spinoza, who greatly influenced his work), in which he did not see a split between traditional dichotomies such as mind/soul, material/immaterial, theory/practice, subjective/objective, thought/language or reason/emotion (de La Taille; Dantas; Oliveira, 1992). In the 1930's, he highlighted that one of the main problems in traditional psychology was the tendency to separate affective and intellectual states in the human mind (Vygotsky, 1987), defending a more *holistic* perspective – that is, an opposition to atomism: he searched for a unity of analysis that did not exclude totality (or context) (Oliveira, 1992). As mentioned in the previous section, language can be such a unit as it contemplates material and symbolic elements: the first through acoustic waves and neuronal connections, the second through its conceptual content determined by human culture. (Poehner; Lantolf, 2014a).

Aragão (2007) provides an extensive review on studies on emotions in Second Language Learning, pointing research that refer to individual differences as the first sources of research with this focus, as they considered affective variants to interfere in the process of learning. Other aspects such as learning styles and strategies are also mentioned, because these studies, by investigating the individual, take into consideration affective factors.

Traditionally, in the field of Language Learning, as regards to emotions more specifically, anxiety (derived from feelings of fear, frustration, and apprehension) has been researched, perhaps because it is easier to be “measured” (Swain, 2013). Due to a difficulty in identifying and measuring other emotions, most of them are sidelined, such as enjoyment, relief, jealousy, or anger (Imai, 2010; Swain, 2013). Together with anxiety, motivation has been studied and it relates to emotions as this is considered an individual aspect that has more to do with the individual's subjectivity than with cognitive aspects.

Robert Gardner was a pioneer in researching motivation in language learning, developing the concepts of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and determining that the integrative motivation would be the most effective because it includes a positive attitude towards the culture and a willingness to participate in it (Aragão, 2007). There

are other researchers on motivation, but currently, SCHAT has moved towards the concept of investment (Darwin; Norton, 2015) to refer to these characteristics, giving it a wider view of these attitudes and taking into consideration not only individual preferences, but how they relate (influence and are influenced by) the context, at different levels.

Affective aspects such as the pleasure in interaction, “empathy, cooperation and collaboration, solidarity, mutual respect, self-esteem and joy” are being recognised by several researchers as essential for students’ real engagement in the pedagogical process, and as elements that can spread through – with the teaching as an important promoter of them (Aragão, 2007, p. 53). Aragón’s (2007) review on the studies related to motivation consider it as intertwined to emotion¹³. These refer to the importance of giving more attention to emotion, and scholars are investigating affective aspects other than those related to anxiety and motivation (Swain, 2013).

They are also reformulating these concepts, bringing forward investigations such as the more “positive” emotions like enjoyment in opposition to anxiety (Dewaele *et al.*, 2017), the role of *positive anxiety* (by researcher quoted by Aragón, MacIntyre, and Dewaele), the *affective paradigm* and the *trilogy of mind*, which consists of cognition, motivation and affect (Dörnyei; Ryan, 2015). It is also important to observe how an emotion can lead to different responses by different persons, working as a motivator or a demotivator, depending on the individual’s experiences (Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Swain, 2013). More recently, researchers have been implementing Positive Psychology, although facing some criticism, as with everything that is new, to address language learning, with a promising future at sight (Mercer; MacIntyre, 2014).

As for Vygotsky, he started investigating the relationship between emotions and development by observing emotional reactions to specific circumstances people faced.

He realized that even though two or more individuals may find themselves in what to an observer maybe the same objective context, the individuals may well experience and interpret the situation in completely different ways. This is because the situation is refracted through the person’s unique history and personality in different ways. Moreover, the same individual encountering what is ostensibly the same context at different points in time would likely experience and interpret it in different ways because the person has changed over time and is in fact not the same person (Xi; Lantolf, 2021, p. 33).

¹³ Aragón’s (2007) review brings references to studies by Dörnyei, MacIntyre, Schumman, Scovel and other scholars who study the topic of emotions.

A convenient way of demonstrating the idea explained by Xi and Lantolf (2021) would be in relation to books we read: two readers in the same objective context will experience and interpret the same book differently; if I read the same book I read twenty years ago, I will read it differently, because I have changed, and the context, too. This specific, mutual relationship between the person and the environment is called the Social Situation of Development by Vygotsky. “In other words, while a situation may influence an individual, the nature of the influence is at the same time shaped by the individual” (Xi; Lantolf, 2021, p. 33).

In the lens of SCHAT, Swain and Lantolf (2019) demonstrated this perception of emotions when explaining the recently recalled term used by Vygotsky in some of his works (Kozulin, 2016), *perezhivanie*¹⁴. This is a Russian term used by him to refer to emotion and psychological behaviour, a “unit of analysis of a social situation of development” (Fleer; Rey; Veresov, 2017, p. 11). It is often translated into English as “experience”, “emotional experience” and “lived experience” (Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Liberali; Fuga, 2018) but it seems difficult for scholars to find an adequate equivalent. As it is both an experience and content, it can be understood as “how someone experiences something and what is in fact experienced” (Lantolf; Swain, 2019, p. 82). These experiences are derived from a variety of psychological processes:

[...]perezhivanie is seen neither as a separate single psychological process, nor as function or a state of consciousness. *Perezhivanie* is not only an emotional experience, although it includes emotional components. As Vygotsky puts it, in *perezhivanie* there is an indivisible unity of personality and the social environment (personal characteristics and environmental characteristics) on the one hand, and the complex unity of different psychological processes including emotions, understanding, awareness, insights, thinking, memory, attitudes, addictions, inner conflicts, and even dread and fear, etc., on the other hand (Fleer; Rey; Veresov, 2017, p. 57).

Perezhivanie refers to an experience related to something outside the person, “and is at the same time refracted through the personality of the person”. (Lantolf; Swain, 2019, p. 88). The verb *refraction* is important here: it is not a reflection, like in a mirror - there is a dialectical unit between the individual and the environment. Considering that higher mental functions (such as voluntary memory, attention, perception, planning, etc.) are first intermental experiences (derived from social

¹⁴Kozulin (2016) differs aesthetic *perezhivanie* from the Social Situation of Development, more deeply developed in Vygotsky’s work. Although Aesthetic *Perezhivanie* could be relevant for the work with literature, I chose the other because of the literature developed on it).

relations) and then become intramental (occur inside the individual), it is important to ask if all social relations become higher mental functions. Veresov (2017) explains that only the “dramatic” events, those that are refracted by the individuals “prism” (their *perezhivanie*) can become higher mental functions

As non-purposeful as it was, the project applied in class for this thesis works with a song from Pink Floyd's album *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973), whose cover is a prism, in the terms explained and illustrated by Lantolf and Swain (2019, p. 89): it represents how the social environment is refracted by the individual's personality. This is Vygotsky's description of *perezhivanie* (Liberali; Fuga, 2018). See Figure 4:

Figure 4 – Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* album cover



Source: Dark Side of the Moon (2024).

Figure 4 is, thus, the cover of the Pink Floyd's album, as well as a representation of an individual's *perezhivanie* refracting the social environment (Lantolf, Swain, 2019) or, the dramatic event (Verezov, 2017), these “dramatic” events do not need to be aggressive, but only as deep as to affect the learner (such as my two personal examples in this thesis's introduction), as demonstrated by Lantolf and Swain's (2019) review on studies that involve the concept and L2. There will be examples of this in the data generated for this research.

On the other hand, Aragão (2007) also highlights the importance of taking the other, and the context, into consideration, when investigating the aspects related to affect in learners – which converses with the SCHAT perspective. He problematizes the absence of research that considers motivation and/or anxiety as elements that promote actions (or their absence) *in relation to* or *due to* the context, in a more subjective manner. This manner can be reached through narratives – an element this research tried to encourage by means of interviewing some participants. Both Aragão's (2007) and more recent Dörnyei and Ryan's (2015) review on the role of emotions claim for

further investigations to identify how the affective aspects interfere in the process of learning another language. Research that investigates students' perspectives in AL takes students' emotions into account (more clearly in Bloemert, Jansen, and Paran 2019, on motivation), and has been focused on providing teachers, pre-service teachers, and curriculum designers with resources for more engaging classes.

In the classroom context, yet another concept is relevant. Rosiek (2003) proposes the "emotional scaffolding", which consists of the support given by teachers (or peers) to make emotional connections to specific topics of the subject matter. This is inspired in the general concept of scaffolding, previously addressed, and is taken by Barcelos (2015) to ground the relevance of emotional literacy in the language-teaching context.

Barcelos (2015) presents four essential concepts that constitute emotional literacy, very briefly summarized here: emotional infection (when we raise awareness to being "infected" by other people's moods or vibes), emotional belonging (when you feel invited to participate, and part of a group), emotional scaffolding (previously defined) and love (not to be afraid to express loveliness towards others). (Barcelos, 2015). By raising awareness of the teacher's own emotions and their students', and by promoting activities and actions that lead students to be more aware of their own emotions, emotional literacy is developed. As demonstrated further in this research, literature can be a means to that.

2.3.2 Intertwining learners' subjectivity and literature

This section discusses how SCHAT scholars see literature and how this manifestation of language is closely related to the most subjective aspects of the person. As previously stated, SCHAT considers culture as the result of human interaction with the world, through the mediation of material and symbolic artifacts. "The primary mechanism through which cultural meanings are made available is language, or better expressed in Vygotsky's terminology, speaking (which also includes writing in literate cultures)" (Xi; Lantolf, 2021, p 30). Literature is one such form of manifesting language; a cultural artifact and a fact of language (Jouve, 2012). It is different from other texts because its reception obeys a particular process started by sensation and then reaches aesthetic pleasure, after meaning-making (Zinani; Santos, 2012). This means that

[...] literature works in the nuances of language as a mediator, going further than the cognitive part of the written¹⁵ text (the message in itself) to deal with the subjective aspects of it, bringing inferences and conducting the reader to an aesthetic experience (Seerig; Nicolaides, 2022, p. 186).

Fiorin's previously mentioned description of literature as a way of "seeing, thinking and *feeling*" (Fiorin, 2008) corroborates the idea that, being the literary text more subjective, emotional, it is not in accordance with the traditionally cognitive view of language learning (Dewaele *et al.*, 2017; Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Swain, 2013). This would explain why some researchers criticise the use of literature in EAL classrooms as unsuitable material, as discussed by Paran (2008), who argues that teachers who adopt this line of thought see students as "machines" that are not able to access more subjective nuances in communication, forgetting the interaction process that involves language. "The point is that literary texts are suitable because language is learned by human beings, and the interest and love of literature for its various qualities is a human characteristic (...)" (Paran, 2008, p. 469). In Brazil, (and I would say in Italy, from what I have observed with pre-service teachers and the in-service teacher I had worked with during the project application) the avoidance of this type of material is still perceptible – one main reason would be because teachers are not taught how to use foreign language literature in a way that can be meaningful to the students (Santos, 2015) whose language proficiency is so varied. Sirico (2021) identified the concept of literature as still very much attached to the canon, for teachers in Italy.

Vygotsky was, among everything else, an art critic, and he understood that art regulates feelings at a social level (Vassilieva; Zavershneva, 2020): in other words, it is a social technique of feelings (Kozulin, 2016). Another fundamental function of Art, stated in Vygotsky's *Psychology of Art* is that of

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

¹⁵ I focus on the written text because it is a "registered" form, but I view oral texts with the same literary potential.

As an art, the peculiarity of literature in comparison to other arts is its “raw” material: the language, which is a symbolic system that already works in itself (Jouve, 2012). As previously stated, language is the main symbolic artifact for SCHT, because “language, writing, and different literary forms are those cultural-psychological tools that provide the formal mechanism for human mastery of psychological processes”. (Kozulin, 1998, p. 132).

Perhaps, for this reason, while claiming that development leads to high mental processes (that differentiate us from other species),

There is little doubt that creative activity, especially language based (poetry, prose, drama), constituted for Vygotsky the apex of human development, the highest forms in which higher mental processes can be realized (Kozulin, 2016, p. 1)

Kozulin (1998) analyses literature in the perspective of cultural psychology – that which dialogues with the humanities –, defining it as a psychological tool in two levels. One of them regards composing a literary text as “one of the most advanced forms of psychological activity”.

At this level, based on Bakhtin, Kozulin (1998) presents the idea of “life as authoring”, a conceptualization that fascinated me particularly, where *language* is for *literature* what *human life* is for *text*. In this logic, the human self can emerge and be reconstructed through the literary text. Even in daily interactions,

Language therefore is neither a mere accompaniment of actions nor a simple medium of expression for ideas; it is a tool for turning this reality from a "given" into something that is "developing". Language helps to discern the higher, creative potential in the "lower" forms of psychological life. Language thus offers a paradigm for any action that involves interaction or interpretation (Kozulin, 1998, p. 137).

This concept of life as authoring, then, dialogues not only with the concept of narrative inquiry as a relevant form of research (as narratives might also carry the literary elements and, mainly, authorship), but also with important tasks in the classroom, such as composition, as proposed in this project (see data analysis on chapter 4). “Life as authoring” is stressed by Kozulin (1998) once again, when he addresses what he calls prospective education.

He defines prospective education as the necessity of modern times, and opposed to “retrospective” education, that is the traditional look-backwards approach. In prospective education, *learners should be able to address problems that do not yet*

exist when they are learning. “To achieve this capability, the student should be oriented toward productive, rather than reproductive, knowledge. Knowledge should thus appear not in the form of results and solutions but rather as a process of authoring” (Kozulin, 1998, p. 7). This is one more reason why creative writing (in the composition section proposed in this project) is important, and relevant data was provided from this practice (see chapter 4).

By quoting important writers such as Latin-American Jorge Luis Borges, Indian descendant Salman Rushdie, and Russian Mikhail Bulgakov, Kozulin demonstrates “the dual nature of the literary word, as a ‘sign for a thing’ and as a ‘sign for a sign’” (Kozulin, 1998, p. 148). This leads to the other level of literature as psychological tool: it is a “super tool” that can mediate human experience. The novel, “with its formal structure and historically specific manner succeeded [s] in altering the very method of people’s comprehension of their social existence” (Kozulin, 1998, p. 149).

Although affective science can teach us about literature, only recently literature has been recognised as a means to better understand emotions, which is a difficult matter to research (Hogan, 2015). Hogan’s (2015) review articulates two perspectives on that. The first relates to the basic emotions (something I attempted to observe) and the neurobiological effect of literature on them (innate concepts, affective relations and critical period experiences). The second is more related to the practical emotional benefits of literature, which he relates to Martha Nussbaum’s idea of emotional training and on the refinement of emotional intelligence.

In fact, a 2009 experiment in psychology, mentioned by Hogan (2015) aimed at “measuring” the effects of art and how it moves individuals differently from non-artistic counterparts, taking literature as the artistic medium. With the short story *The Lady with the little Dog* (Chekhov, 1899), and its non-literary (simply narrative) equivalent, two groups of readers were studied, and results identified “change in self-reported experience of personality traits (...), and that emotion change mediated the effect of art on traits” (Djikic *et al.*, 2009, p. 24). The researchers’ greater argument is that if, even in laboratory conditions, this shift in one’s experience of the self when in touch with art can be somewhat measured, it only demonstrates that many other potentialities are worth exploring. The idea, shared by Nussbaum, too, that literature works as the training of sensibility, or as Hogan (2015) states, an emotional calibrator (an idea that correlates to Barcelos’s emotional literacy), must be further explored.

Thus, literature is a genre that can reach the individual's emotions, be it on the level of authorship or on the level of aesthetic fruition, through catharsis. Catharsis, or what Vygotsky considered the "transformative potential of emotion" (Cross, 2012), was a term used by Aristotle, wrongly translated as purification, but in fact meaning clarification: "the cleaning away of obstacles to understanding" (Keltner; Oatley; Jenkins, 2014). Catharsis is a widely used concept in literary studies to define the ultimate contact individuals have when interacting with a fictional narrative (be it drama or novel, for this matter): for Aristotle, "By seeing predicaments of human action [...] we may come to experience emotions of sympathy and fear, and understand consciously for ourselves their relation to the consequences of human action in a world that can be known only imperfectly" (Keltner; Oatley; Jenkins, 2014, p. 11). In a more practical, classroom-oriented view,

Catharsis occurs when the creative juxtaposition of conflicting emotions implodes to produce something novel that has not existed before. In the cathartic moment, individuals and groups overcome the past, transforming perceptions of themselves, others, and the world. In this manner, the creative process touches the future.

A cultural-historical approach to creative education provides ample opportunities for cathartic moments including the sudden "a-ha" one feels when grasping a new concept, the breakthrough insight a team experiences working on a science project, a brilliant solution crafted by novice and mentor to a complex social-historical puzzle (Marjanovic-Shane *et al.*, 2010, p. 228).

In addition to it, Cross (2012) claims for the importance of pedagogy appealing to affect (emotions) in order to *effect* "creative engagement" and thus moves along the concept of imitation as part of this process. Imitation, in turn, is one of the ways to move along (or create) ZPDs (Holzman, 2020), as instruction towards a task can only be effective also through imitation (Vygotsky, 1987). These more specific concepts are more thoroughly discussed and observed along the data analysis (Chapter 4).

To move forward towards the next section, I conclude that literary texts, due to all these powerful psychological effects, are not only relevant, but necessary for the overall growth of our learners. English language teaching can play an important role in this process by implementing the literary text in the classroom, with adequate scaffolding, so that students can make the utmost of this experience – in a constructive way. The additional language can empower them towards *authoring* themselves in yet another way, perhaps accessing deeper parts of their own psyche that remain untouched by their first language.

In this sense, creative writing might have a twofold effect: as well as potentially changing their traditional relationship with language learning (as data has showed), we might be offering students with the possibility of stimulating the access to these hidden parts which they could express only with some psychological/emotional distancing (Swain; Lantolf, 2019).

The relevance of data and the need to dive deeper into the concept of creative writing emerged in the final months of this thesis, when I realized how unusual this practice was for learners, and how important it was for all of us. Aware that I could not embrace all research there is on the relevance of such activities in EAL, I decided to base my research on the perspectives of Spiro (2004, 2010) and Hanauer (2012).

Hanauer's proposal of *meaningful literacy* (briefly mentioned on section 2.2.1), has in his core what has been discussed so far in this thesis, which is the need for humanizing the classroom. His methodological proposal for creative writing consists of stimulating learners to write their own poetry, which would lead them to use the language for deep, personal matters; things of themselves that they *want* to express. They become the context of the language. His approach consists of four principles:

1. AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING: Employ writing that utilizes memory, imagination and personal experience to explore and understand the self.
2. EMOTIONAL WRITING: Promote a student writing process that activates and elicits emotional responses from the writer and the reader and endorses the expression of personal feelings.
3. PERSONAL INSIGHT: Integrate a reflective process that leads to a deepened appreciation and understanding of personal experience (and, ultimately, greater understanding of the human condition).
4. AUTHENTIC PUBLIC ACCESS: Situate writing within a social process of presenting personally held beliefs, understandings and feelings to others in the language learning classroom and beyond the classroom to people and communities who are of significance to the writer (Hanauer, 2012, p. 108).

According to him, by following these principles, teachers are able to provide a whole shift in the experience of language – as demonstrated by his own studies and other researchers that have already applied this methodology in several contexts ((Iida; Chamcharatsri, 2022, who analysed emotions in EFL Japanese learners' poetry; Kasprabowo *et al.*, 2023, who worked with composing photography captions on Facebook; Yang, 2020 who highlighted learners' identity in the process of writing, are some examples).

In the case of this research, the proposal involves writing *poetry* in a meaningful way. As well as being a freer and more personal way of composing, poetry suits the demands of the language classroom, as explained by Spiro (2004, p. 7):

It is inevitable that a focus on form is not what we really do when we give messages in the everyday world. But interestingly, it is, or can be, what we do when we write poetry. In fact, for some a focus on form and language is exactly what makes poetry different from other written texts. Interestingly, controlled language practice has several features typical of poetry: repetition, pattern, and length. The less controlled stages of language practice encourage the learner to be creative and to use strategies for applying the familiar to the unfamiliar - just as poets do.

The lesser controlled stages, the one that makes use of creativity, is what interests here, as learners play with the new language, making it meaningful and emotional (Hanauer, 2012), accessing, as stated by Vygotsky, higher mental functions: looking at themselves, and developing themselves in a new language, through language.

The objective of this thesis is to identify the potentialities of a *short* literature-inspired lesson plan of EAL for secondary school, built in the light of Sociocultural Historical Theory. Thus, the next section describes and discusses the methodological procedures, as well as presents a description of the lessons. It aims at observing stages of lesson planning and data generation, intertwined with theory, where relevant, so that the reader understands the choices made, and the reasons for making the lessons shorter.

3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES: THE PATH AND THE CHOICES MADE

Magalhães (2012) indicates the importance of having the theoretical grounds of a research aligned with its methodological ones. When using Sociocultural Historical Theory, it is necessary that the investigation presents adequate concepts of praxis, based on dialogical interaction and mediation, in accordance with this theory. Bearing that in mind, this is qualitative research that promotes a dialogic relationship with the participants, where I, the researcher, was an observer and a participant (Angrosino, 2009) along what was considered a trimester in the institutional calendar, in the months of August and September 2021, for the case of Brazil. In Italy, in order to develop the project for a similar amount of time, only three lessons had my participation, in their calendar.

For data generation, I use strategies that are typical from the action-research method, such as observation and practical intervention with an investigative objective, without, however, sharing its main principles (that consist of proposing an alternative approach for an *issue* in class, which is not the case). Action-research principles allowed for the investigation of a real classroom context (Paiva, 2019), “gaining better understanding of their educational environment” (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 191), producing practical and theoretical knowledge as to how literary texts might work in the language classroom. Nevertheless, this does not consist of an action-research experiment.

The original plan for this research, which was started in 2020, was to promote regular lessons in the Brazilian classroom context, making use of the literary text, in classes taught by me (the entitled teacher), in the Federal Institution where I work. However, due to COVID-19 pandemic and the distancing measures, the synchronous classes, which were held online since September 2020, had low attendance by the students (not all of them had the digital resources or personal circumstances required for that). Thus, their participation in the synchronous meetings was not mandatory, and their interaction was being verified through homework activities posted on the Moodle platform. Simultaneously, I, the teacher-researcher, was granted a period of work leave to fully dedicate to the doctoral research thesis, having a substitute teacher to work in my place at my school. This teacher, who chose Jane Eyre as her pseudonym, was very collaborative with all the steps of this research, allowing me to observe and record three of her lessons, and to teach two of them, in 2021 – thus, still online. All these steps are better described in the following subsections.

The classes taught have been inspired on my previous experience in a regular classroom context (that is, face-to-face). There are adaptations to the synchronous context (I could not use printed material and pencils, for instance), but the focus is on the interactive processes. I hope to inspire this interaction with several technological resources, such as Kahoot!, Quizlet and Quizizz (Seerig, 2018) that, based on the multiliteracy studies, can make classes much more engaging (Ribeiro; Vecchio, 2020). This analysis, held in an emergency blended/hybrid educational context in Brazil, may contribute, thus, to the necessary studies for the reinvention of the classroom (Junqueira, 2020) as it presents possible approaches to the literary text adapted to on-line teaching and learning contexts or other unexpected situations we may have to face in the future, in which face-to-face classes are not possible, bearing in mind that

The role of the subjects in the online interactive classroom, especially of the teacher, is that of being a mediator, that who provokes and stimulates collective participation, protagonism, cooperation, collaboration and co-creation in building knowledge¹⁶ (Santos, Ribeiro, Fernandes, 2021, p. 30).

Due to my participation in the PDSE (Programa de Doutorado Sanduíche no Exterior) in 2022-2023, which took me to Italy for a semester, both of my supervisors, in Brazil and in Italy, encouraged me to try to develop the same project in an Italian secondary school.

This presented as a challenge since, first, teachers work on a very tight schedule and might not be open to the development of research. In addition, there is the language factor: I am not a completely proficient speaker of Italian, although I have been trying to develop this quickly. However, I decided to see this as an opportunity to experience real classroom interaction in a different country, where English would also be an additional language (and, in such circumstances, the language in common among us should be English) and apply the project in a face-to-face environment this time. Thanks to my supervisor in Italy and to a PhD colleague, I was accepted in a local state school. (see Attachment 1 for the authorization).

As for the ethical aspects, the project, in Brazil, had been submitted and approved by the Institutional Review Board, and it is register under the CAAE

¹⁶ In original Portuguese: "O papel dos sujeitos na sala de aula online interativa, em especial do docente, é de ser mediador, aquele que provoca e estimula a participação coletiva, o protagonismo, a cooperação, a colaboração e a co-criação na construção de conhecimentos".

47380221.5.0000.5344 at Plataforma Brasil. In Italy, the institution where data was generated provided a document of acceptance for the development of research, under the conditions of non-usage of participants' images, nor activities that would include participants and researcher outside the school area.

This section of the thesis presents the methodological procedures in both countries, intertwined with data discussion: this means that the methodological procedures per se are also part of the data that is analysed in the research – the procedures and the lessons are also considered research data. Thus, the reader will be able to understand the grounds for certain choices made and its theoretical perspectives. As it often happens, in the case of qualitative research, data generation and data analysis are “circular and often overlap” (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 124). In this sense, all the procedures are described in detail, based on recordings that have been transcribed: this stage resembles an organized narrative based on my own notes and experiences to elaborate the lessons, which are theoretically founded on relevant points.

3.1 PROCEDURES IN BRAZIL

In this subsection, I present the steps for the data generated, carried out in the regular emergency context of the classes in a Federal Institution, in 2021. In Italy, in 2022, some changes were made and are explained in section 3.7. In brief, my intervention in class consisted of observing three synchronous meetings and teaching other two, thus working along the equivalent to one trimester in the adapted calendar of the institution.

This research consisted of the following steps:

- Contact and planning with the substitute teacher, Mrs. Jane Eyre, to define which group of students would be more suitable for the experience. This happened between May and July 2021. The teacher was very receptive and willing to share strategies.
- Lesson planning in accordance with what the teacher required (lessons focused on reading strategies, discussing about movie reviews by using simple present and simple past structures).
- Observation of three synchronous meetings: thus, I could get familiar with the context, with the group of students and with the lessons planned; a

first questionnaire regarding students' reading habits was requested in the first of these meetings (Appendix A).

- Application of two literature-focused lessons (Appendix B) in accordance with the substitute teacher's plan for the period.
- Final questionnaire to students (Appendix C).
- Interviews with students who volunteered (Alessandra and Beatriz).

The synchronous meetings were recorded, with previous authorization of the institution and participants. Data was generated from the following instruments (Table 3):

Table 3 – Instruments for data generation and dates - Brazil.

	Instrument:	Date of generation:
1)	Initial questionnaire	12th August, 2021
2)	Lessons developed and applied by the teacher-researcher	August-September, 2021
3)	Writing activity in the final class	September, 2021
4)	Final questionnaire	September, 2021
5)	Semi-structured interview with two students	11 th October, 2021

Source: Made by the author.

I explain each of these steps and instruments in more detail in the following subsections, starting by setting the context of the Institution.

3.1.1 Research context in Brazil: institution

The educational institution where research was developed in Brazil consists of a full-time public secondary school, managed by the Federal Government (IF – *Instituto Federal*). This type of institution, which consists of 38 rectories in every state in the country, 644 *campi* and over one million students¹⁷, intends to offer technical courses integrated with the regular secondary school syllabus, thus enabling students to pursue

¹⁷ Available at: <https://portal.conif.org.br/br/component/content/article/84-ultimas-noticias/1794-conif-divulga-selo-comemorativo-dos-10-anos-dos-institutos-federais>. Access: 12. Mar. 2022. Data from 2018.

a technical career, should they choose not to try a college degree¹⁸. In the Brazilian official educational guidelines (Brazil, Federal Law 11.892, 2008), this type of institution must provide Professional and Technological Education not only as a way of producing “manpower”, but as a promoter of a critical thinker who works, a “worker-learner”, a complete citizen that could be a technician, or a philosopher, or both (Pacheco, 2011). This perspective of polytechnic education as a means of balancing theoretical and practical labour was suggested by Vygotsky in 1930, when he argued that this could be a way of promoting professional development to enhance humankind more equally, overcoming social class differences (Vygotsky, 1994). Although the political intention of institutionalizing schools such as IFs is admirable, students there often complain about the excessive focus on the technical/professional/competitive aspects of the syllabus – as identified by studies such as the one by Troian (2023). This is an issue that this investigation also addresses in the way it promotes space for them to manifest more subjectively.

3.1.2 The students and the questionnaires

The group consisted of 24 1st grade students who attend the Oenology technical course integrated with the secondary school curricula. The 1st grade students were recommended by Ms. Eyre (the current lead teacher) due to an important detail regarding their engagement in online classes. According to her, 2nd and 3rd graders were already used to the “remote” learning style, keeping cameras closed and not participating at all. She understands that 1st graders, being new to the institution, would be more engaged than the ones who already were there in the prior year, when pandemics started. Her perceptions corroborate national research on the matter of teaching (English and any other subject) during the pandemics, as regards to the difficulties that involve both technology and interaction with students (Denardi; Marcos; Stankoski, 2021).

There were 17 answers in the first questionnaire sent to the students (Appendix A), but two of the respondents indicated they would not provide the consent form, so

¹⁸ In case they choose to go to college, the institutions also provide a wide range of graduate courses, and some graduate courses, so that students do not have to move in order to continue with their studies. IFs are also traditionally located far from big city centers, to reach citizens who have difficulty accessing other institutions.

answers were not considered. The final questionnaire (Appendix C) had 13 answers, but again, two of them did not provide the consent form.

Table 4 presents students' pseudonyms¹⁹, their age and the level of English proficiency they consider themselves in. Participants are ranged from the ages of 15 (07 of them), 16 (5), to 17 (2) years old. One student was 39 years old. Their gender identification was not requested, so pseudonyms were given according to the traditional gender attributed to their name (except for Alessandra and Beatriz, who chose theirs later, on their interview). They chose their proficiency level based on the four options given: basic, pre-intermediate, intermediate and advanced.

Table 4 – Respondents, age and proficiency level.

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>English proficiency level</i>
<i>Alessandra</i>	16	Basic
<i>Amália</i>	15	Intermediate
<i>Beatriz</i>	15	Intermediate
<i>Brandon</i>	16	Basic
<i>Denise</i>	39	Basic
<i>Grace</i>	16	Basic
<i>Karen</i>	17	Intermediate
<i>Katherine</i>	15	Basic
<i>Kevin</i>	16	Basic
<i>Lana</i>	17	Intermediate
<i>Lucy</i>	15	Pre-intermediate
<i>Margaret</i>	16	Pre-intermediate
<i>Mary</i>	15	Pre-intermediate
<i>Melanie</i>	15	Basic
<i>Samara</i>	16	Basic

Source: Made by the author.

¹⁹ Dorian's composition is discussed in this research; however, he did not answer any of the questionnaires, so I do not have further information about him.

As well as a general overview of the students, for their age and proficiency, the first questionnaire aimed at requesting their experiences and past impressions with the English language and the literary text. This information is important to learn about participants' past experiences with literature – and even what they understand as “literature” in English classes. Table 5 presents the objectives of asking each question, and the questions with their alternatives between brackets. For those with ticking options, I offered extra space for them to comment on their answers, if they wished.

Table 5 – Objectives of the questions in the first questionnaire

<i>Objective of the question</i>	<i>Questions</i>
1) <i>To have a general idea of how they understand their language learning process.</i>	<p>2. To what do you attribute your knowledge of the English language? Select all alternatives that apply to you (one or more alternatives can be checked).</p> <p>(Alternatives given: To regular school / To free English courses outside of school / To my experiences outside formal studies (games, music, movies)</p> <p>3. Comments on question 2 (optional)</p>
2) <i>To engage students into narrating how they felt about classes and what made them feel like that. Perhaps identify certain emotions.</i>	<p>4. Reflect on your learning of English at school. Describe a positive experience that you remember from this context. Justify your answer (why was it positive? How did you feel?)</p> <p>5. Still about your English learning at school, describe a negative experience (if any) that you remember from this context. Justify your answer (why was it negative? How did you feel?).</p>
3) <i>To learn about reading habits students already have. This could identify whether they would feel more at ease with literature after our classes, for instance.</i>	<p>6. Do you usually read literature (poetry, novels, short stories, chronicles, etc.) outside the school context (other than compulsory or at the request of the teacher)?</p> <p>Alternatives given: Yes, in Portuguese and in English. / Yes, in English. / Yes, in Portuguese. / No</p> <p>7. If you read literature (in any language) outside of the school context, how often do you do it?</p> <p>Alternatives given: Always. /Often. /Sometimes. /Rarely.</p> <p>8. Comment on your answer to questions 6 and 7.</p>

<p>4) <i>To identify if students have had a previous experience with the literary text in English, at school.</i></p>	<p>9. Specifically about literary texts in the English language (short stories, novels, poetry, etc.), what experiences/contacts do you remember having had at school? How was your experience (did you enjoy it? If you didn't have this contact, would you like to have it? Why)?</p>
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Source: Made by the author.

The final questionnaire, answered after the classes that integrated research were finished, revised students' experiences with literature, considering the two classes they had had, which involved literature and written production. Since some respondents might not be the same that answered the first questionnaire, some questions were repeated (questions 2, 6, 7 and 8). In the same way as the first questionnaire, Table 6 presents the objective of the questions in the final questionnaire, which was also designed to engage students into writing a narrative in some level. They are consistent with the main objective of the thesis, which is to identify students' experiences with the literary text in EAL.

Table 6 – Objectives of the questions in the final questionnaire.

<i>Objective of the question</i>	<i>Question</i>
<p>1) <i>To identify students' prior experiences with literature and how they could show the similarities or differences.</i></p>	<p>6. Have you worked with literature/music lyrics before in English classes? In what ways were our lessons similar or different from other experiences you have had?</p>
<p>2) <i>To encourage a short narrative in which the participant could explore their impressions on the classes taught.</i></p>	<p>7. What was one important aspect that you would highlight in our two encounters working on the song "Eclipse"? Name at least one positive and one negative. How did you feel about the activities? Did you enjoy working with a literary text in this format? Reflect on these questions and write a short narrative of your impressions.</p>
<p>3) <i>To leave a space open to any further comment students could have.</i></p>	<p>8. If you would like to comment on something else, use the space below. It may be in relation to how you felt answering the questionnaire, or even, if you feel that some important item was not covered, use the space below to say so. This includes negative aspects. Say whatever you want! :)</p>

Source: Made by the author.

The reader will notice these questions (6, 7, 8 above) are very similar to question 9 in the first questionnaire. Yet, participants provided some different answers after our

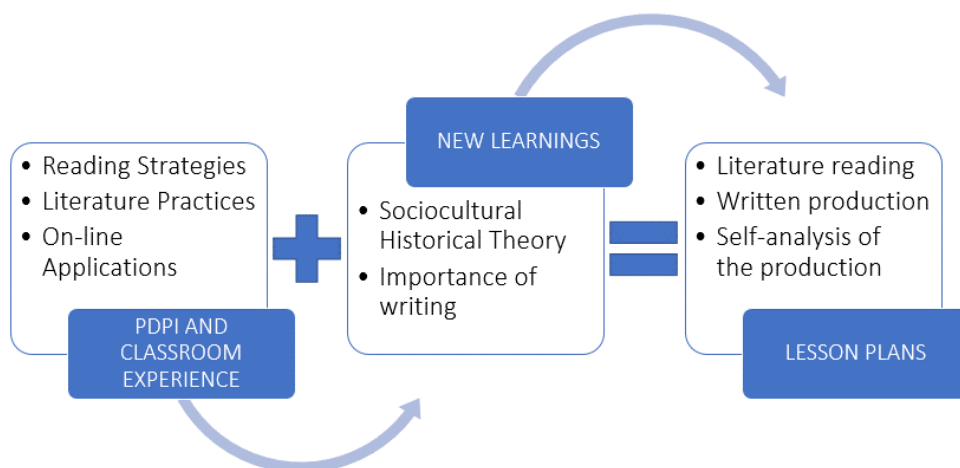
classes. In the final questionnaire, participants were also asked whether they would volunteer for an interview (“Would you accept to collaborate one more time with the research work and give a synchronous interview, if invited? If yes, please leave your name and WhatsApp below, once again. Thank you very much!”), in which they could construct their narratives. Alessandra and Beatriz accepted, and they were interviewed on 11th October 2021, individually. It was a semi-structured interview (Attachment D). Although this is a small sample, together with the interviews conducted in Italy, Alessandra and Beatriz’s answers were taken as part of the data, due to the relevant content.

All answers in the questionnaire, and the interviews, were in Portuguese, which is respondents’ first language. They are presented in English with the originals as footnotes.

3.2 LESSON PLANNING AND TEACHING

The lesson plans developed for this research mingle two elements (see figure 4): my own practice with literary texts in the classroom, which were inspired by my CAPES/Fulbright course at the Michigan State University (Seerig, 2018), and the adaptive process imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which prevented face-to-face classes from happening. Thus, in a way, these plans are a mixture of experience and new practice – both so relevant in research. Figure 5 illustrates this idea.

Figure 5 – Elements that influenced the final lesson plan developed for this research



Source: Made by the author.

The reader sees, in the first box, my experience in PDPI and in the classroom, summarised by the reading strategies, practices with the literary text and the (useful) use of online applications to teach English. This experience goes together with my new learnings during my PhD path, in the second box: the SCHAT and the importance of production in a second language – in this case, writing. These two, summed, resulted in the lesson planning, which consisted of reading literature, writing, and analysing their own texts.

I explain the elements presented in the first two boxes (“PDPI and classroom experience” and “new learnings”) below, in items 3.4.1 (experience) and 3.4.2 (new practice). I present more detailed information of my professional path, too.

3.2.1 Experience: English language teaching and the MSU Methodologies course promoted by CAPES and Fulbright

I have been working as a language teacher for over ten years. I have started in English language courses but entered the public service in 2013, as a Portuguese teacher. I also taught English for adults in basic level, at SESI, and worked as a private tutor. In 2016, after a difficult selection process, I entered IFRS, and returned to my academic studies, starting my Master’s degree in 2017. It was the first time I taught English in regular secondary school (I taught in primary school only, or taught adults), and had difficulties in classroom management and in proposing engaging activities for multi-level groups.

In 2017, I was selected to participate in the PDPI program (Programa de Desenvolvimento para Professores de Língua Inglesa da rede pública²⁰ – “Program for the development of Public School English Language Teachers”), promoted by CAPES and Fulbright. This program sent 479 public school teachers from the whole country to the United States yearly, for courses of language development or teaching methodologies, in accordance with the TOEFL-ITP results. In my case, I had the opportunity to go to the USA, in January and February 2018, with other 18 teachers for a 6-week methodologies course that changed my relationship with teaching,

²⁰ For more information: <https://www.gov.br/capes/pt-br/aceso-a-informacao/acoes-e-programas/educacao-basica/programas-de-cooperacao-internacional-de-formacao-de-professores-da-educacao-basica/programa-de-desenvolvimento-profissional-para-professores-de-lingua-inglesa-nos-estados-unidos-pdpi>. Access: 10. Feb. 2024. The 2020 edition was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

students and my whole career. Thanks to my privileged public school premises (because it counted on wi-fi for students, IT labs with individual computers, data-show in the classrooms), I was able to test many strategies with different applications that facilitated lesson planning and classroom management, which I have been sharing with fellow teachers and language teachers (I describe them in more detail in Seerig, 2018). Since then, I have received (and I continue to receive) very positive feedback from colleagues and, most importantly, from students who openly pointed out the changes in my lessons and became more interested in language learning due to this differentiated approach to teaching English.

As I briefly explained in the introduction, one of the deconstructions, at personal and professional level, that were possible through the PDPI program relates to the use of literature as an interactive learning resource in the classroom. Since it makes use of more complex and subjective structures, such as figures of speech, the language teacher tends to avoid or limit the use of genres such as poetry or short stories for fear of the difficulties that he/she may face, whether in the selection of material, its presentation, or even in the subsequent assessment (Cardoso, 2021; Hall, 2016; Santos, 2015). In the same way (and through experiences that I was able to promote in my own classes), I could understand that, if properly conducted, literature can be a great element for the development of language skills, especially those related to the understanding of written texts - the focus of language teaching in basic education, in Brazil - by the students. More than that, as it does in the mother-tongue, literature can change students' subjectivity and their perception of the world (Candido, 2004). It must be highlighted, thus, that literature is not a *tool*; the final objective is to grasp literature: we, teachers, help students use their tools (language, inference, subjectivity) in order to *read*, or better, to develop, achieve, or activate *literacy* along the text.

Although I had learnt and implemented many forms of working with online applications during PDPI (Seerig, 2018), some of the activities proposed and developed in class were made on paper, especially the ones in which we used literature. This is relevant to mention because many of those were later adapted for the on-line mode, for this research. I present some of these activities that I learnt during PDPI and used in my own classes in 2018 and 2019 on two tables on Appendix E, listing them by numbers that will be later referred to.

The activities listed on Appendix E focus not only on reading and writing competences, but also on speaking, in the Running Dictation (2), and in the Present

(1) when they feel compelled to express their personal impressions on texts (usually poems) in English. Whereas the Present (1) works on interpretation, the Running dictation, the Rapid word recognition and the Exit Tickets (2, 3 and 4) engage students and keep them focused.

Rapid word recognition, more specifically, addresses implications from reading research for becoming skilled readers, such as “the need for rapid and automatic word recognition and the need for fluent recognition processing of the phrase and clause structures to support comprehension” (Grabe; Stoller, 2011, p. 131). **Although** it does seem mechanical (and not critical), and “**although** there may not be very many types of exercise within this general category, this type of exercise should be used as much as possible, and extended throughout the learning process, even to advanced learners” (Paran, 1996, p. 32). Research shows that advanced learners still face a less automatic decoding of words (Paran, 1996). What I have observed in the classroom is that, by reducing the timing to a virtually impossible level in this activity (as I have, myself, experienced), and by repeating it three rounds, learners compete with themselves, participate and enjoy the challenge (and recognize more words each time), no matter their proficiency level.

Some other activities did not require paper, but they did require face-to-face interaction – be it so that I could see the student, or what they were doing. They are also described in more detail on Appendix E, and include the Interactive use of slides (5), Dictation (6), Memory game (7) and Pair work chanting (8).

These activities supported my work with literary texts. In the next section, I discuss my issues with the online format and present my strategies with computer-based technologies, as well as the activities above, adapted to work in the synchronous meetings.

3.2.2 Practice: adapting successful face-to-face methodologies to on-line format, and adding writing to it

Having to accept that research would be developed in this pandemic context was anguishing. I spent the first year of the pandemic (2020-2021) expecting classes to be “back to normal” or expecting the pandemic emergency procedures to be over at some level, visualising a data generation that would happen in a real classroom site – which was my original plan. Finally, I realised that the circumstances could take a long

while to change, and this context does not exist anymore. As with all other teachers put in this situation, I also had to learn how to work in a hybrid educational environment, in a mixture of what Liberali *et al.* (2020) called despair and unpreparedness – which can also lead to the “unprecedented viable way” in our teaching practice. To be consistent with my practice in the classroom, I attempted to develop lessons with the most interactivity possible, which has been thoroughly incentivised by current researchers of our new educational condition (Kersch *et al.*, 2021; Ribeiro; Vecchio, 2020). Thus, I revised technological resources I already knew (such as Quizizz and Quizlet, described in more detail on Appendix F) to develop a lesson plan that could, at some level, emulate this dynamic and interactive environment I used to accomplish in face-to-face classes. In the following subsections, I indicate the stages that led to the lesson planning: interacting with the teacher, choosing the text, thinking of activities, and organizing assessment.

3.2.2.1 Interaction with the teacher and schedule

In July 2021, in my first interactions with Ms. Eyre, the teacher in Brazil, she explained that attendance in synchronous meetings was not mandatory and that these meetings happened mainly for solving any doubts on exercises and assessment posted on the Moodle platform. Thus, how students would respond to the way I wished to conduct the lessons (which included wondering whether they would open the cameras or even show up in the synchronous meetings) were the cause of much apprehension in the days that preceded data generation.

The aim for this first grade, according to my previous interview with Ms. Eyre, was to work with reading strategies and verbs in the present tense, with the theme of movies, songs and literature, using genres such as movie reviews and newspaper articles. As previously explained, there were five synchronous meetings that were equivalent to the school trimester; three of them were regularly conducted by Mrs. Eyre, while I observed and interacted when invited; the latter two were conducted by me in order to promote contact with the literary text. Table 4 presents to readers the dates of the meetings, the teacher in charge on each of them and timing of each meeting.

Table 7 – Class meetings that integrated research.

1 trimester-equivalency in the “emergency” school calendar:

5 meetings – 1st grade

<i>Date of the synchronous meetings (2021):</i>	12 th Aug	19 th Aug	26 th Aug	02 nd Sept	09 th Sept
<i>Teacher in charge:</i>	Ms. Eyre	Ms. Eyre	Ms. Eyre	Researcher	Researcher
<i>Timing:</i>	40'	35'	40'	55'	55'

Source: Made by the author.

Ms. Eyre had told me that there was no stipulated time; it should be around 45 minutes. In my lessons (in September) I took longer than that and this was an issue because my plan was to last 45 minutes maximum. However, all activities were developed.

3.2.2.2 The choice for the text and the stages of the lessons

In order to organize the lessons I would teach, I started by choosing the literary text, which is in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – Song lyrics from “Eclipse”, by Pink Floyd

All that you touch
And all that you see
All that you taste
All you feel
And all that you love
And all that you hate
All you distrust
All you save
And all that you give
And all that you deal
And all that you buy
Beg, borrow or steal
And all you create
And all you destroy
And all that you do
And all that you say
And all that you eat

And everyone you meet (everyone
you meet)
And all that you slight
And everyone you fight
And all that is now
And all that is gone
And all that's to come
And everything under the sun is in tune
But the sun is eclipsed by the moon

Source: Album cover from the album *Dark Side of The Moon*, by Pink Floyd. Personal item.

The reason for this choice of text was context: this was a first-grade group. Usually, they are multi-level, so some basic vocabulary would be recommended – a text that is too advanced can scare students, as it moves to too far from their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD, discussed in section 2.2 and more deeply in chapter 4) (Vigotski, 1998). In addition, reading a text always requires previous knowledge: one of them is of language use - when it is too elaborate, it gets more and more difficult to understand (Kleiman, 2004). As the reader can see, the language is very simple and explores mainly (new) vocabulary through verbs. Thus, it consists of language that is relevant for all proficiency levels. There is no challenging structure in terms of grammar – which could be problematic for lower proficiency learners. At the same time, the final lines are metaphorical, inspiring and allow for higher levels of literary interpretation, such as inference (Cosson; Souza, 2011). In addition, I have already worked with this text in my classes, so I felt more confident. The fact that these are lyrics from a song might surprise participants, for many people do not think of song lyrics as poetry. Nevertheless, I believe that the “song represents a possible resource which could act as a ‘bridge’ between literary education and juvenile culture” (Spaliviero, 2015, p. 35). There is also a cultural element, as students will be presented to a lesser-known song by a British rock group that is still very popular. The cover of the referred album (*Dark Side of the Moon*, 1973) is also explored since some people have already seen it.

The length of the text is very important here – I had little time, so I needed a text that could be relevant without requiring too much time for its deeper interpretation. Poetry usually works in the classroom precisely because of that, and Jane Spiro (2004, p. 8) explains all its relevance:

A shorter text means there are fewer words to convey your message, so every word is important. Because every word is important, poets use many techniques to give their language power. For example, repeating vowel and consonant sounds to create patterns of sound, making words rhyme to create 'music' through words, creating pictures, puns, surprising contrasts and juxtapositions of ideas. Poets make language a surprise, and they make it memorable in the way a song or a jingle can be memorable. A poem can tell us about a single thought or episode, a single image or moment in time. There is no subject too small for a poem (Spiro, 2004, p. 08).

The relevance of working with poetry in reading/reception, is the reason why the composition, in this project, is also aimed for a poetic structure, where learners explore linguistic potentialities of their English, in a small space in paper and time. Another common belief – that poetry is not a typical language students will need to use, but “everyday language uses many devices traditionally thought of as ‘poetic’. In fact, to recognize and use these is part of our skill as language users” (Spiro, 2004, p.10), and this is a major argument for this thesis. Through literary language, “we make people, places and products, feelings and experiences memorable” (Spiro, 2004, p. 11).

Given the chosen text, which contained the above-mentioned poetic aspects, Table 8 presents the stages planned for the lesson and a brief comment. The numbers between brackets refer to Appendix E, which presented the activities I used to conduct in class in previous (non-pandemic) years. Thus, the reader is able to understand the adaptations made, from face-to-face practice to online format, since I could not count on resources such as pen and paper – or even *seeing* the students. These lesson plans were shared with Ms. Eyre; however, I wanted to give her the least work possible – she had already a significant workload.

Table 8 – Stages of the lesson and brief explanation of the activity

STAGE	EXPLANATION/ACTIVITY
a. Pre-reading: Questions on student reading preferences/general comprehension	Slideshow presentation (5) with interactive “true-false” survey on Quizizz.
b. Pre-reading strategy for target vocabulary: Rapid-word recognition in English and in Portuguese - Quizizz	In online format, I adapted the Rapid Word Recognition (3) to the Quizizz platform, where they chose the identical term from a list.
c. Target vocabulary practice: Online flashcards and games - Quizlet	I already used this tool in class, taking students to the IT lab for practice. Students have flashcards to practice vocabulary presented on stage B.

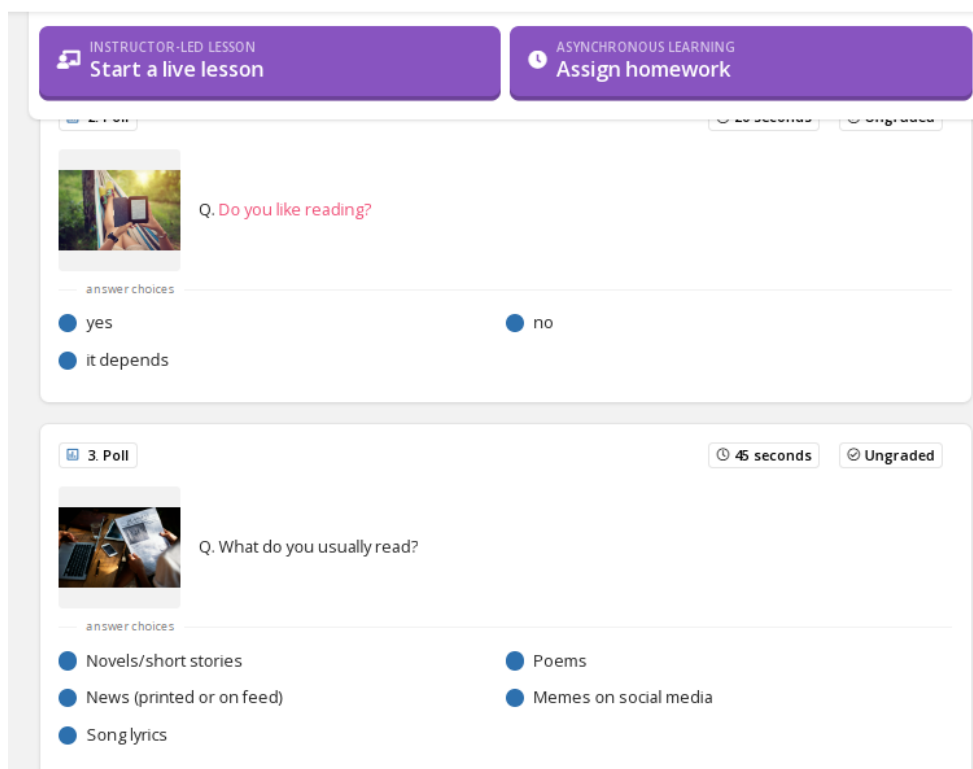
<p>d. Reading and post-reading: Reading, identifying difficult vocabulary, comprehension, choosing a favourite line on a Google Docs shared document</p>	<p>The shared document would allow me to understand which words were difficult, much like I would do in face-to-face interaction. In the same way (1), we would talk about the content. I do not give the name of the song or the author, in case a student may know what song it is. In case they do not know, this should be their homework.</p>
<p>e. Closing activity: Exit ticket</p>	<p>Adapted to be “delivered” online in the Quizizz platform, the exit ticket required students to write down five new words they had learned in class, by the end of first lesson, and what were the activities they enjoyed and did not enjoy by the end of second lesson.</p>
<p>f. Review: Interactive slideshow (5), reading and listening</p>	<p>This is aimed at reviewing the previous class (Class meeting 4), with questions shown on slides where students answer the questions referred to the author, are presented to the song and listen to it.</p>
<p>g. Reading and post-reading: Reading, comprehension, choosing a favourite line on a Google Docs shared document</p>	<p>Students read the lyrics again and chose which would be their favourite line, sharing with colleagues. This aims at promoting further discussion on the content. Students write their favourite line on Quizizz platform, and they can speak about their choice in the language they feel most comfortable with, in the group</p>
<p>h. Post-reading, pre-writing: Choice of five words/expressions that were meaningful and/or new</p>	<p>Students type their selection on Quizizz.</p>
<p>i. Writing: Write a poem/text with the words, that is meaningful</p>	<p>Students write their composition and post it in the space provided on Quizizz.</p>
<p>j. Post-writing: Explaining the text</p>	<p>Students should <i>explain</i> what they meant in their own words. This could be done in Portuguese, Italian (for Italy) or in English and posted in the space provided on Quizizz.</p>

Source: Made by the author.

As the reader will notice on the description of the activities in Table 8, Quizizz was the main resource to promote the interactions with students. Prior to the pandemic, it was only possible to create questions/quizzes that students would answer individually online, providing the teacher with a useful table indicating which questions were more difficult or took longer to be answered. However, due to the pandemic, this (and possibly many other similar platforms) upgraded their features: on Quizizz, I was able to integrate my slides to questionnaires, avoiding a shift of screens to change

platforms and possible confusion. Figure 7 is a screenshot of my view/editing of the file generated on Quizizz:

Figure 7 – Screenshot of the Quizizz developed for the first meeting



Source: Made by the author under my own user account on Quizizz.

Figure 7 illustrates the first two “slides” of the lesson, which consist of a “pool” in which each student can answer from their computer and after, their answers are represented in a chart. These were two pre-reading questions, corresponding to stage a) in table 8.

The reader might wonder why *all* the information and *all* the interaction was implemented through a platform such as Quizizz. The vocabulary exercises developed on Quizlet and Quizizz should also allow students that are absent from the meeting to access the content and develop the activities, providing the needed registration for the institutional control of students’ participation. On Figure 7, this is visible on the top of the screenshot, where one can read two options: “instructor-led lesson / start a live lesson”, and “asynchronous learning – assign homework”. This was very useful for the lead teacher, Ms. Eyre, who could “assign homework” and have absent students complete the activities without extra work for herself. Quizizz also allowed me to share the results/answers from the students with her, after each class. Thus, in these lessons, students would be assessed with regard to the development of the whole set of activities, which could be done remotely thanks to our sharing/organization on Quizizz. This was also a way to encourage their participation in the synchronous meeting: by being there, they would not have to do any extra homework.

In Table 8, previously presented, the reader will find the written practice from stages h) on to j). Inserting writing to the lesson plan was also an “experimentation” (or “attempt”) since this was not part of my regular practice. I used to believe a composition, subjective as it is, could (or should) not be assessed – and thus, not even promoted. And the reason I am not embarrassed to admit this belief is because I understand many other teachers see things this way. Along the PhD course and in contact with SCHAT, however, I found how relevant creative processes are (Cross, 2012; Kozulin, 1998; Lantolf; Swain, 2019; Urbanski, 2023), and even that there are strategies for assessing writing (Paran, 2010). In fact, the simple writing production I suggested provided rich evidence on the importance of creative activities in additional language, as demonstrated in the data analysis section.

The written production consisted of an adaptation of what is known as cento poetry: in this, the writer composes a new text that consists of verses from different poems (Alsyouf, 2020). Poetry engages learners into building new vocabulary, which is a major issue in communication in a new language, due to its memorizing appeal (Alsyouf, 2019), and proposing a composition adds to it as it demands understanding

the meaning of the verses to the full, in order to arrange words for a new message. In the case of this research, due to the short period it engaged, participants did not select preferred verses from different poems, but selected new/relevant words from the poem given (in this case, “Eclipse”, a song lyric by Pink Floyd), and from them, they composed a new one – which they should comment on, or explain, in their own words. Of course, writing cento poetry is not the only way to work with poems in class²¹ (Alsyouf, 2019), nor poetry the only source to engage into creative writing, as research shows with experiments with short stories and novels (Bohm; Magedera-Hofhansl, 2020; Martín de León; García Hermoso, 2020). Although my choice for making students comment on their own writing was very intuitive (and practical in the sense that I could better understand what they would have meant, and to verify whether they got the target message across), I later found that it slightly resembles Spiro's (2010) very relevant suggestion of assessment for creative writing in English as an additional language. Studies agree that, while creative writing engages students into developing communicative competence and using their imagination (Martín de León; García Hermoso, 2020), it also makes classes more enjoyable and motivating (Alsyouf, 2020; Bohm; Magedera-Hofhansl, 2020; Martín de León; García Hermoso, 2020). As highlighted by Hanauer (2012), it engages learners into *meaningful* literacy: the student-authors see purpose in building their message through their new language, because they are writing about themselves.

For a final overview of the data for this research, Table 9 summarizes the activities developed in the five synchronous class meetings that integrate it, in Brazil. It also points out, in the very first column, the two main stages of this research.

Table 9 – Stages of data generation in Brazil

MEETINGS: Synchronous meetings (five weekly recorded meetings that stand for a full traditional trimester). Main topic: reading strategies, vocabulary (verbs)

1 st stage of research	3 class meetings observed:	1. Research questionnaire; teacher introduction and instructions for classes and activities on Moodle (12/08)
		2. Homework check; instructions for further activities (19/08)

²¹ In the Italian school I researched, for instance, I came across beautiful “blackout poetry” works made by students on top of Martin Luther King’s “I have a dream” speech. It consists of covering the text in black drawing, leaving only the words that are the new “poem” visible. I will definitely try that.

		3. Homework check; instructions for further activities and my own. (26/08)
	2 class meetings taught by teacher-researcher:	4. Class taught through Quizizz and Quizlet platforms: vocabulary presentation for song lyric "Eclipse" (02/09)
		5. Vocabulary review and written production based on the text. Final questionnaire. (09/09)
2 nd stage	Post class interview:	Two volunteer students were interviewed about the activities (11/10)

Source: Made by the author.

Table 9 indicates what was done, in brief, in the three class meetings observed – in which the teacher focused mainly on giving students orientations on what should be done on Moodle, and also checked the homework. It also presents what was done in the two meetings I developed.

In sum, in these lessons I aimed at providing a balanced intersection between the literary focus and the language focus (Paran, 2008), or a focus on the student (reading comprehension, interpretation) and focus on the text (aesthetic content, context), which could promote a more whole approach to literature in the EAL classroom. (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016). In the second lesson, I promoted a written practice that was followed by the final questionnaire on the students' experience with the literary text (Appendix B). In this questionnaire, students were also invited to participate in an interview, to which only two of them accepted (Alessandra and Beatriz). These constitute the second stage of the research, as indicated in Table 9.

So far, I have briefly analysed, with some theory, the process of lesson planning and data generation. In an extended manner, the next subsection presents how the two class meetings indicated in Table 9 were organized (as presented in the lesson plans in Appendix B) and how they relate to Bloemert's (2019) Comprehensive Approach to Foreign Language Literature, that consists of one of the guidelines for this research.

3.2.3 Class stages and their Approach to Literature

In the academic realm, Bloemert (2019) developed her Ph.D. thesis investigating the presence of the literary text in Dutch secondary school classrooms, proposing the Comprehensive Approach to Foreign Language²² (FL) Literature teaching (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016). She investigated and organized several teaching experiences and divided them in four main approaches: the text approach, the context approach, the reader approach and the language approach. These approaches are organized and explained in Table 10, based on Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift's (2016) tables and references:

Table 10 – Approaches to FL literature

The <i>study</i> of Literature	Focus on the text	Text approach	Genres and formal elements of literature. Also, “the aesthetic value of literature can be high-lighted by advancing the students’ sensitivity to literary texts through analysing literary language and conventions” (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016, p. 174).
		Context approach	Diversities contextualized and recognized through the literary work: “literature is regarded as a body of texts reflecting the culturally, historically, and socially rich diversities of our world”, “covering issues such as identity, political power, ethnicity, and religion” (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016, p. 174).
The <i>use</i> of literature as a resource	Focus on the student	Reader approach	The reader is “and independent maker of meaning”; also, “students are invited to analyse how people from different parts of the world (...) have beliefs, desires, and perspectives that might be different from their own” (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016, p. 175).
		Language Approach	Reading “literature in language education as a vehicle presenting genuine and undistorted language”, where students can “see how language works in extensive discourse” (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016, p. 175).

Source: Made by the author, based on Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift (2016).

Table 10 indicates the first two approaches focus on the text, by *studying* literature in a more objective manner. The reader and the language approach, on the other hand, focus on students’ perceptions and language development, by *using* the

²² I maintain the official name of the approach, that uses “foreign language”, although “additional language” is always preferred.

literary text as a resource for that²³. In the statistic study presented, authors claim that a literature class where “all four approaches are addressed in an interrelated way could enrich the FL literature lessons and enhance student learning” (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016, p. 176).

To better comprehend the stages in the lessons I delivered, I present two tables (Table 11 and 12) with all the steps that involved the contact and discussion of the literary text, situating them in one of the four approaches according to Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift’s (2016) and Bloemert’s (2019) classifications, based on what is described by them (see Table 10). However, those authors and I agree that every activity may contain more than one of those; this is simply to highlight what is the main approach in each.

Table 11 – Stages in Class meeting 4

Class meeting:	Class stage:	Description:	Approach:
4	1	Opening questions about reading practices/preferences	Reader approach
	2	Vocabulary presentation through word games (on Quizziz and Quizlet platforms)	Language approach
	3	Read the poem, analyse meaning at language level	Language approach
	4	Discuss the poem in pairs: “what is the conclusion in the lyrics”?	Reader approach
	5	Closure: New words learned favourite part of the lesson?	Language approach; Reader approach (in a way they can express their preferences openly)

Source: Made by the author.

²³ The “focus on the text” and the “focus on the student” are similar to Pieper’s (2020) “content-oriented” and “student-oriented” paradigms, mentioned in chapter 2.

Table 12 – Stages in Class meeting 5

Class meeting:	Class stage:	Description:	Approach:
5	1	Finding out where the “poem” was from, recalling previous class	Context Approach
	2	Vocabulary review	Language approach
	3	Read the lyrics with the song, question knowledge about the band, etc.	Context approach
	4	Analyse meaning with the group, select favourite lines and explain the reason for the preference	Text approach, reader approach
	5	Composition: Pick four words/expressions and write their own poem.	Language approach; Reader approach ²⁴
	6	Closure: 1) What did you learn that is new? 2) What did you like or did not like in our class today?	Language approach; Reader approach (in a way they can express their preferences openly)

Source: Made by the author.

Tables 11 and 12 demonstrate that all four approaches have been addressed along the classes, with a higher focus on the student (reader approach) – which is purposeful, given the emphasis aimed to the interaction with the student and the research proposal that intends to investigate students’ experiences with literature.

Stages 1, 2, and 3 from class meeting 4 (Table 11) focused on language. Given that students’ background knowledge is essential to reach reading comprehension (Kleiman, 2004, Urbanski, 2023), the activities aimed at either highlighting them, or at providing them with the needed background knowledge to read the text. Stage 3 in class 4 was an interpretation at “language level”. There were translations and interferences of the teachers in order to help students grasp the meaning, especially of the last lines of the song, which contain metaphors. This type of interference, that attempts to scaffold students towards literacy in English, is necessary to provide learners with full access to textual content and the ability to analyse and interpret this content in the new language (Urbanski, 2023). The results of this process are visible along class meeting 5.

²⁴ Bloemert, Jansen and Van de Grift (2016) do not address composition as a part of the approach. I insert this stage of the class as reader/language approach because the literature read is *used* as a resource to develop students’ language. They can configure their reading and language input into something new, thus using the new language and their reflections.

Stages 4, 5 and 6 in both classes are the most open ones (reader approach), and allowed for the identification of students' experiences with the literary text in the final questionnaire that followed. This will be further discussed in chapter 4.

It is important to highlight that all classes taught mixed the first language (Portuguese for all of them, in Brazil) and English, in order to facilitate for those who identified themselves as less proficient in the language. Their L1 was needed and used as a tool to thinking, or as a mediator between the world and the new language (Urbanski, 2023). These bilingual episodes were purposeful (not random, as recommended by Swain and Lapkin, 2013), and relate to the understanding that more complex tasks require the use of L1 (Swain; Lapkin, 2013). These tasks were mainly instructions on the activities (Quizziz and Quizlet platforms required instruction) and questions that mingled among the execution of these activities in class ("Have you ever thought that music is also poetry?"). Learners were exposed to target language whenever possible and with the vocabulary that was focused on.

Their answers to the activities in the final stages (4, 5 and 6 from class meetings 4 and 5) were also accepted in their first language, because this is the one that allowed them to mediate their thinking "when the content was still too complex to be processed in the L2" (Swain; Lapkin, 2013). Permitting the students to use their L1 to communicate (at times when the complexity of the task makes it necessary to do so) still allows for the target language to play a key role in the activity (Swain; Lapkin, 2013).

Such moments, held in Portuguese in Brazil and in Italian in Italy, consisted mainly of their interpretation regarding the meaning of the lyrics, how they felt about the song and the lyrics itself, and their explanations on the choices of a favourite line in the song (stage 4, class meeting 5). By suggesting this, the aim is to make them feel compelled to attribute meaning to what they are reading.

3.3 INTERVIEW PROCEDURES

Interview questions, to be asked to Alessandra and Beatriz, in Brazil, were elaborated after the first stage (lessons and questionnaires) was finished, as there was the possibility of not having any students available to be interviewed. Questions were designed having certain objectives as guidelines and are presented below (Table 13). The interviews were held and recorded on 11th October 2021, in the morning, on

Google Meet, and developed in Portuguese; I took notes and then re-watched the recordings to make the analysis. Students were also reminded to bear in mind the literature classes they participated in while they spoke.

As the reader will notice, many questions were asked to recall emotions/feelings (mainly section 4). In fact, this instrument was aimed at some initial objectives that, after analysis, could not be addressed, as I initially had a focus on emotions that could emerge from the work with the literary text. Nevertheless, their answers provided data for the objectives that have been adapted, such as their process of literacy in relation to poetry. For this reason, some questions (marked with an *), were not asked to learners interviewed in Italy.

Table 13 – Objectives and questions asked to the interviewees

<i>Objective of the questions:</i>	<i>Questions:</i>
1) <i>To get familiar with student's practice; to break the ice.</i>	1. Tell me about you. What do you do in your leisure time? 2. What is your relationship with the English language? Where do you see it, when you started being in touch with it?
2) <i>To see if there might be a hint on different approaches to English; to identify how the student develops her own self-awareness</i>	3. What are successful things you do that help you learn English?
3) <i>To introduce the topic of emotions and let the answers flow freely; to get a hint on what the student understand as "emotion"; to verify how "remarkable" activities might be related to student's emotions. To observe whether the student names a feeling or an emotion.</i>	4. We will briefly talk about emotions and feelings. What do you remember from our meetings? 5. Did you understand the learning objective of the activities? Did you learn something new? 6. How did you feel during the meetings with me, was it different from other classes? How? 7. How did you feel about the work with vocabulary and with the song?
4) <i>To have a more precise direction about the student's emotions. To observe how they would relate to the list of emotions.</i>	8. *Now let's name these emotions. I will repeat the questions giving you a list of emotions (called "basic" – https://www.calmsage.com/different-types-of-basic-emotions/). Can you take note? Anger, anticipation, joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust. You can feel a mix of two, or suggest another name for it. Try to relate to them to describe them. *How did you feel during the meetings with me, was it different from other classes? How? *How did you feel about the work with vocabulary and with the song?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>5) <i>To identify a possible relationship with “the life as authoring”, by Kozulin (1998).</i></p> <p>6) <i>To identify to what extent composing can be considered a “dramatic” event (Veresov, 2017).</i></p> <p>7) <i>To identify/investigate the possible “cognitive” benefits of the activity; to identify/investigate about colleagues’ negative feedback on the activities. Do they understand how they could have felt?</i></p> <p>8) <i>To identify how students see literature and how they see it as a learning tool – and for what.</i></p> | <p>9. How did you feel about writing the final activity – the poem? I will send it to you (in Italy, <i>show it to you</i>) so that you can take a look:</p> <p>10. Did you understand the learning objective of the activities? Did you learn something new?</p> <p>11. What do you understand as Literature?</p> <p>12. What is your relationship with Literature, in Portuguese or English? Why do you like it or not?</p> <p>13. Do you think it is possible to learn English with literature? In what way, or what part of the language?</p> |
|---|---|

Source: Made by the author.

3.4 PROCEDURES IN ITALY

In this subsection, I present the methodological procedures for data generation in Italy, starting from a brief overview of the context. The aim, in Italy, was to reproduce the same lessons and data developed in Brazil, to analyse their outcomes. Some necessary adaptations have been made, considering these were face-to-face lessons.

3.4.1 Research context in Italy: institution and schedule

The school where I worked is part of an *Istituto di Istruzione Superiore* that offers all modalities (*liceo, tecnico, professionale*), and this was a *scuola tecnica* (technical school) where the technical course developed was called “Tecnico Economico Turismo”. Students study from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. every day – including Saturdays, due to the schedule and the classrooms available. They have three school hours of English every year (that is 150 minutes per week). Additionally, their general school schedule presents another three hours for a second foreign language (in this case, it is Spanish) and a third one from the third year until the fifth. This is possibly related to the focus of the course, which aims to provide a solid cultural base in terms of entrepreneurship,

civil and tax norms, IT and linguistic skills (which ideally include English, French, German and Spanish), in order to be able to project, document and present touristic products and services, according to the course norms provided by the school.

According to the same school documents (available in their website²⁵), these are the objectives for studying English in this technical course, for their first two years:

Finalità

F1 Acquisizione delle competenze comunicative di base attese a conclusione dell'obbligo d'istruzione. Competenze che permettano di servirsi della lingua per i principali scopi comunicativi ed operativi, nonché di produrre testi di vario tipo in relazione ai differenti scopi comunicativi.

F2 Formazione umana, sociale e interculturale.

F3 Educazione al cambiamento.

F4 Potenziamento della flessibilità delle strutture cognitive.

F5 Analisi comparativa con altre lingue e culture²⁶.

The official document states the importance of developing all the abilities (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) and provides assessment tables that describe these abilities and at what level students reach each of them. Learners also work with a specific book by Oxford University Press, called *Identity* (A2-B1). Sirico's research (2021) indicates these books put focus on international proficiency examinations and that teachers, in turn, attach themselves solely to the structure of the books. It is specifically developed for the first two years of Secondary school and should be bought by the students.

Table 14 – Stages for data generation in Italy

	<i>Date:</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Length</i>
<i>First stage of research:</i>	11 th March, 2023	Meeting with lead teacher, Mr. M.	1 hour
	16 th March, 2023	Class observation, initial questionnaire	50 min
	23 rd March, 2023	Lesson 1	50 min
	24 th March, 2023	Lesson 2, composition, final questionnaire	50 min
	27 th March, 2023	Interview with students	90 min

²⁵ To maintain confidentiality, the website is omitted.

²⁶ Purpose: F1 Acquisition of the basic communicative skills expected at the conclusion of compulsory education. Skills that enable the use of language for the main communicative and operational purposes, as well as the production of texts of various types in relation to different communicative purposes; F2 Human, social and intercultural formation; F3 Education for change; F4 Enhancement of flexibility of cognitive structures; F5 Comparative analysis with other languages and cultures.

<i>Second stage of research:</i>	28 th March, 2023	Interview with the lead teacher	30 min
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Source: Made by the author.

Table 14 presents the schedule for the procedures and data generation, organised after my first meeting with the lead teacher, Mr. M.²⁷ – this is more detailed in the upcoming pages.

3.4.2. Students and questionnaires

As presented in Table 14, I had my first meeting with the lead teacher, Mr. M., on 11th March, and he was very receptive. In our first meeting, he gave me a brief perspective of the group I would be working with: there are 22 students, and their English level ranged from A2 to B1 (according to the CEFR). He was happy to learn that I would not speak English all the time – according to him, they would not be able to follow everything. At this point I hinted some approximation with the context in Brazil. However, he suggested that I entered the classroom pretending that I could not speak or understand Italian, so that learners would make an extra effort to communicate with me in English.

Mr. M. spontaneously invited me to watch one lesson before I went in to teach the students, and we kept in touch on WhatsApp. I was going to ask for it, as it is important to observe the classroom dynamics I was concerned to enter the classroom without previous observation, and I was not sure he would allow me to observe. This is one of the main differences from the schedule developed in Brazil: there, I was able to watch three lessons, but in Italy, only one. I suggested that the initial questionnaire could be required to students on this day. He later told me he had mentioned my presence to students, and then we also arranged for them to make an “interview” with me, so they could practice their English.

Table 15 presents all the students who participated in this research in Italy, together with their age and level of proficiency (again, according to their own perceptions). This data was collected via initial questionnaire, which was made available to participants on the school online platform. Those who did not have internet

²⁷ He chose this pseudonym.

access on their phones answered a printed version of the questionnaires. Time was made available by Mr. M. in one of his lessons. Those who were later interviewed are assigned in bold. For many learners, English was their third or fourth language, as some were immigrants. In the classroom, I learnt about some who were immigrants and non-native speakers of Italian either. Their country of origin is indicated in brackets. Data referring to their other known languages is presented in section 3.6.

Table 15 – List of participants in Italy, their age and proficiency level.

<i>Pseudonym²⁸</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>English proficiency level</i>
<i>Albert</i>	14	Pre-intermediate
<i>Aline</i>	14	Pre-intermediate
<i>Alfred</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Claire</i>	15	Basic
<i>Daniel</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Ernest</i>	15	Pre-intermediate
<i>Erica</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Fausto</i>	14	Pre-intermediate
<i>Fran</i>	16	Basic
<i>George</i>	15	Intermediate
<i>Gabriela</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Julian</i> (<i>China</i>)	15	Intermediate
<i>Kosar</i>	14	Pre-intermediate
<i>Michelle</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Mateus</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Marlon</i>	15	Advanced
<i>Mauro</i>	15	Intermediate
<i>Nereu</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Paul</i>	15	Pre-intermediate
<i>Sam</i> (<i>China</i>)	14	Pre-intermediate
<i>Sarah</i>	15	Intermediate

²⁸ These names were chosen by me because I did not have the chance to collect ideas from them for their own names, unfortunately.

Source: Made by the author.

This is a first-year group of the five-year course called *Scuola Superiore*, where they enter at the age of 14 (in this case, their *Scuola Superiore* is *Tecnico*, as previously explained). This means that these students are a little younger than the ones in Brazil, as they are in the beginning of their first year in secondary school. This might explain why most of them are still 14, whereas in Brazil, they were already 15 or 16 years old (students enter the course at the age of 14, in February, but research was carried out in August-September 2021, so they might have had their birthday already during their school year).

3.4.3 Lesson planning and teaching: adaptations

Since, for this opportunity, I was able to teach in person (the remote procedures due to the pandemic were over), some adjustments were made to the original lesson plan – specifically regarding the exercises, that were now printed.

In Italy, the school classrooms were equipped with a projector, so I used it for major instructions and interactions, through a Power Point presentation (Appendix K), adapted from the original materials developed on Quizizz for the online classes. These are other adaptations made:

- Initial questionnaires had an additional question: “What other languages do you speak and how well”. This question was considered because I realized most people in Italy speak Italian and some dialect (Veneto dialect, for instance). In the end, this extra question was essential since there were students born and raised in other countries (such as China and Ukraine). The questions for the interview have also been slightly modified for the Same reason (see section 3.7.4).
- Vocabulary activities such as the Rapid Word Recognition and Rapid Word Definitions were printed (Appendix L), in the format I used to do in regular classes in Brazil. (In the synchronous class, this was turned into an online multiple-choice activity on Quizizz).
- Quizlet exercise was substituted by a different activity called Vocabulary Knowledge, that required peer interaction and provided me with a view of

how much vocabulary they knew, without necessarily using Italian (Appendix M). This type of practice is aligned with Urbanski's (2023) claim in which bilingual dictionaries – as source of input – are preferred, as they make students use the new language to define terms, etc., instead of simply relying on a translation²⁹. It is also supported by research on reading (Grabe; Stoller, 2011).

- The poem/lyrics were printed and handed to them, as well as the exit ticket, by the end of the lesson.
- The final activity (in which they selected the words, wrote a poem, commented on it and finally commented on the whole class), was also printed (Appendix H).
- The final questionnaire was reduced: in Brazil, some repeated questions from the first questionnaire were inserted because I could not be sure of which other students have answered the previous one (and their impressions on the use of literature were very important for this research). These repeated questions were taken off from the final questionnaire, making it more concise.
- All questionnaires were translated into Italian (in Brazil, the questionnaires were in Portuguese) and were kindly reviewed by my supervisor and the lead teacher prior to being presented to the students.

To follow the same structure, I presented for lessons in Brazil, I add that, in relation to the approaches to literature (reader, context, text and language) proposed by Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift (2019), the lessons planned followed the same standards as presented in Tables 11 and 12, where the focus on the reader was the most present approach.

²⁹ A brief description of the Vocabulary Knowledge activity: the activity presents 15 words previously worked with in the rapid word recognition, in which learners should indicate, for each word: 0 – I do not know this word; 1 – I think I have seen this word before, but I do not know what it means; 2 – I recognize this word in listening and reading, but I'm not sure if I can use it correctly; 3 – I know the definition of this word and can use it correctly in speaking and writing. Then students compare their answers. If they noted 3, they should write an example sentence. This activates their background knowledge and exercises their metalinguistic aspects.

3.4.4 Interview procedures in Italy

In the final questionnaire (Appendix J, where they were asked about their impressions of the classes), to follow the same procedures as the study in Brazil, participants were invited to volunteer to be interviewed. Surprisingly to me, 11 students were interested. According to privacy rules of the school, interviews should be developed in the school premises, preferably during class hours, which discarded the possibility for online interviews similar to that which I developed in Brazil. The interviews were voice-recorded for later analysis and were carried out in the language chosen by the students (English or Italian). I had only 90 minutes to interview all of them, so I interviewed as many as I could in the given time, made available by the History teacher of the group on 27th March, 2023. A total of seven students were interviewed in the 90 minutes provided. They are presented in Table 16, with their age and proficiency level (according to their answers in the questionnaires):

Table 16 – Students who volunteered for the interview in Italy

<i>Pseudonym</i> ³⁰	<i>Age</i>	<i>English proficiency level</i>
<i>Ernest</i>	15	Pre-intermediate
<i>Erica</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Fran</i>	16	Basic
<i>Gabriela</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Julian</i>	15	Intermediate
<i>Michelle</i>	14	Intermediate
<i>Veronica</i>	16	Basic

Source: Made by the author.

Given that, at this stage of research, I was aware that emotions were not the focus anymore, the interview questions (Table 11) were also rearranged, and section four of the questions (present in Table 11) was eliminated. A question referring to other languages and dialects was also added in the beginning of the interview, considering that many learners speak more than one language (“Do you speak other languages or dialects? What is your relationship with them?”). This addition turned out to be essential

³⁰ These names were chosen by me because I did not have the chance to collect ideas from them for their own names, unfortunately.

to the research. The questions were translated into Italian in case students decided to carry out the interview in Italian. Only Gabriela preferred to be interviewed in English.

The questions guided the conversation. However, I was concerned about the time with each student (I tried to stick to 10-15 minutes each, as they were in class) and not all of them were asked to everyone. The analysis of their answers, together with those provided by Brazilian students, are presented in Chapter 4.

3.5 PROCEDURES FOR DATA ANALYSIS

This qualitative-interpretivist research (Hammersley, 2013) started with the aim of following the methodology of narrative analysis, taking inspiration in the work of Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2015), who, through narratives in different contexts, present important concepts of SCHAT in form of a textbook.

Thus, although questionnaires and interviews are primarily “non-narrative” data (Barkhuizen; Benson; Chik, 2014), they aimed at providing opportunities to participants to narrate, if they felt compelled to do so. However, my investigation developed a combination of instruments (not only questionnaires and interviews, but class observations, class recordings, multimodal documents and texts, as well as students’ compositions), in which much of the data is non-narrative, but very rich.

Given this context, this research is discussed under a content-based categorical analysis (Paiva, 2019), or thematic analysis³¹. That means that, from data generated, the investigative glaze was to aspects that involve English language and literacy processes, as well as SCHAT concepts manifested, by means of coding, categorizing and reorganizing data under thematic headings (Barkhuizen; Benson; Chik, 2014).

3.6 PARTICIPANTS IN FIGURES AND CHARTS: BRAZIL AND ITALY

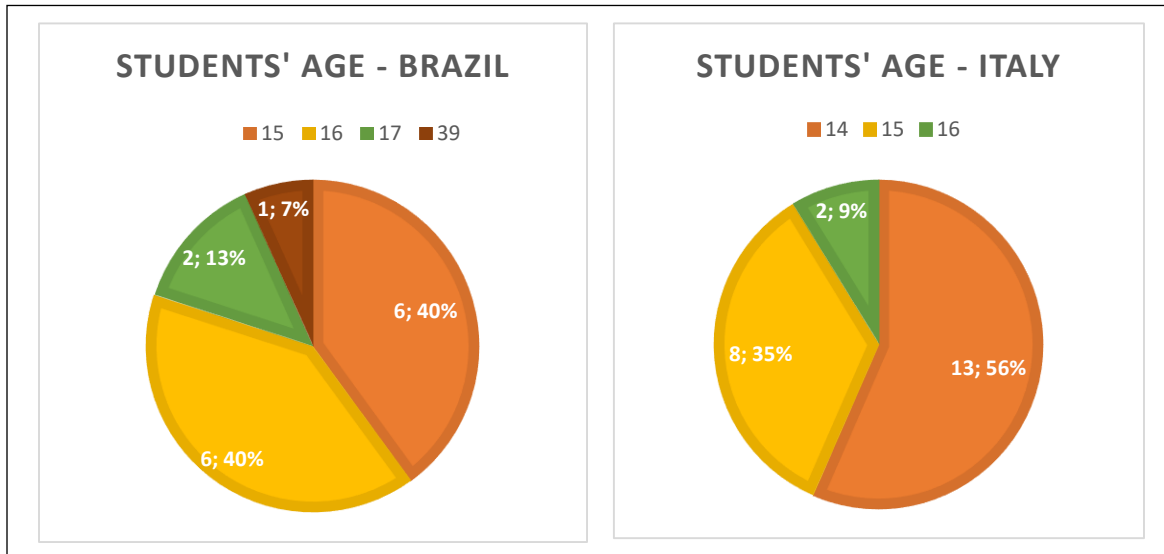
Now that both groups and contexts have been presented, a brief overview of the figures can be depicted through charts. They are conveyed side by side: one for the group in Brazil, and one for the group in Italy.

I begin with their age, in Figure 8.

³¹ Barkhuizen, Benson and Chick (2014) indicate Glaser and Strauss’s Grounded Theory as approximately the same method.

From Charts 1 and 2 we observe that learners are one year younger in Italy: more than half are 14 (that is, they are in the right age for their grade); in Brazil, they are mostly 15 and 16. One participant is 39 years old, but I could not reach further information on why she was in the course.

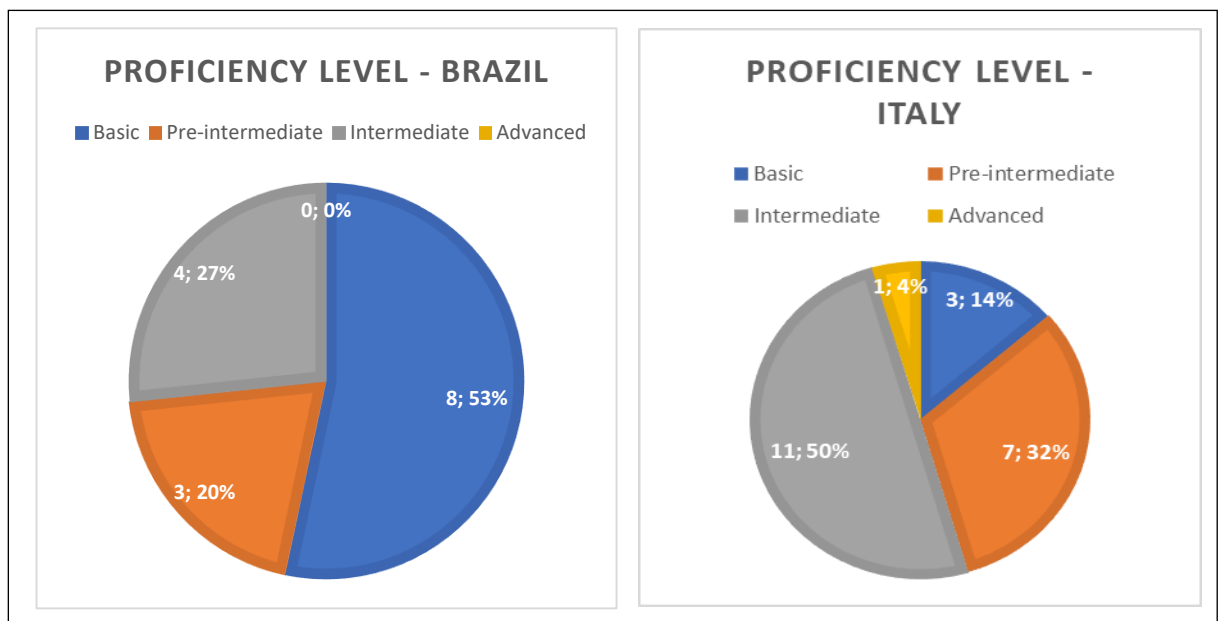
Figure 8 – Students' age in Brazil and in Italy



Source: Made by the author.

Figure 9 presents students' proficiency level, according to their own perceptions – which makes this data subjective, rather than accurate:

Figure 9 – Charts Students' proficiency level in Brazil and in Italy

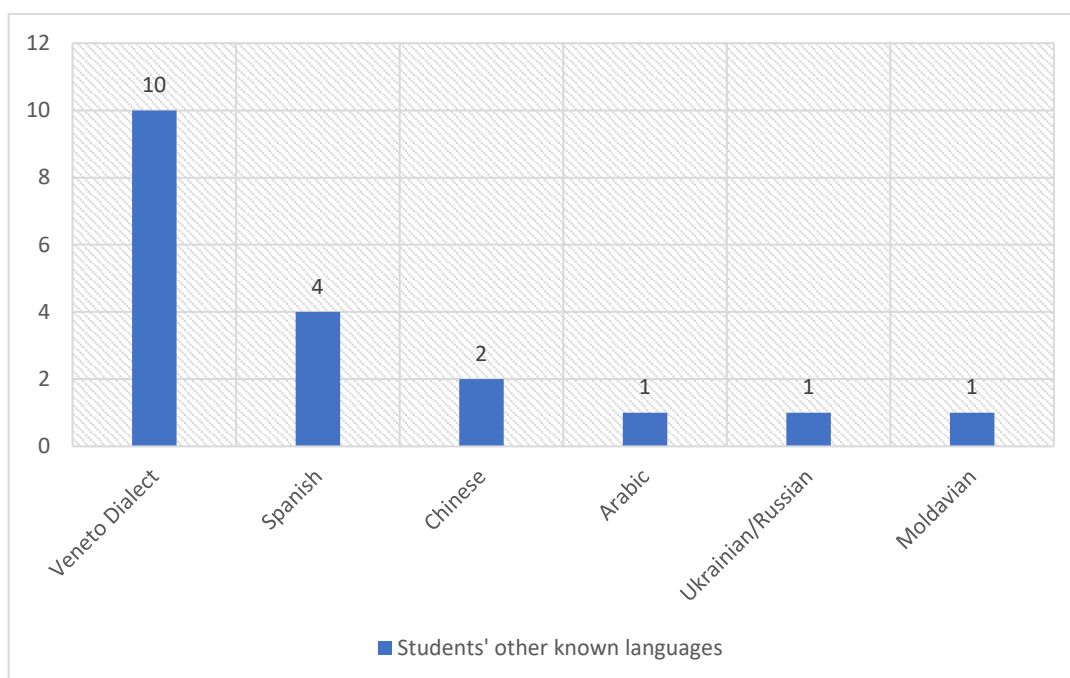


Source: Made by the author.

Their proficiency level might have an impact on their performance and on their *perezhivanie* (their “lived experience”) during the activities developed. It is observable that learners in Italy are between pre-intermediate and intermediate. In Brazil, more than half of them consider themselves as basic. This means that Brazilians being a bit older does not relate to a more advanced proficiency level. It is clear that both groups present the heterogeneity in proficiency that motivates this research in both countries. During the classes, and even in the interviews, this heterogeneity was confirmed.

Although this will not be analysed in depth, the next chart illustrates an important linguistic aspect: learners’ additional (or first) languages.

Figure 10 – Students’ known languages besides Italian



Source: Made by the author.

As it happens in Italy, many inhabitants speak their local dialect at home and in their community (in this case, Veneto – coincidentally, the dialect that many Italian descendants in my region, Serra Gaúcha, still speak, mixed with Brazilian Portuguese, and known as “Talian”). Thus, Veneto dialect is usually their first language, or else it is learnt and spoken together with the standard Italian. This explains why 10 students indicated their dialect. Spanish might have been mentioned because they study this language at school, too. Chinese, Arabic, Ukrainian, and Moldavian are their L1, as some students migrated with their families to Italy. Veronica, who mentioned Russian, had told me she learnt it as a second language when she still lived in Ukraine. From

this data, and knowing that some students were not born in Italy, I highlight that, instead of simply naming the students' common language in Italy as "L1" (as it is the case of Portuguese in Brazil), I should rather name it "Host language" (henceforth HL). In order to address this aspect, during analysis, I will use "L1/HL" (as other students have Italian as their first language).

3.7 DESCRIPTION OF LESSONS – BRAZIL

In an attempt to properly situate the reader, I inserted description of the lessons, in more detail. Lessons in Brazil were held in August-September 2021, during the distancing measures adopted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, I went back to the notes and video recordings of the meetings in Brazil, to provide a reviewed perspective of these lessons, now having the experience of the in-person lessons delivered in the Italian school. This section, very descriptive, thus, aims at presenting a detailed overview of the lessons to the reader, while commenting on some relevant perceptions regarding interaction.

3.7.1 Lessons observed in Brazil: meetings 1, 2 and 3.

As a reminder, in Brazil I observed three lessons, prior to teaching my project.

At the time, I recall that the main aspect that I observed was the interaction issues that happened during the meetings. Some of these notes were built into a section of the thesis, later excluded, but its main points are still noteworthy and briefly presented here.

As previously stated, for SCHAT, human development occurs while interacting with others and with the environment. Thus, interaction is an essential element in this research, especially considering the great changes we have been facing. COVID-19 restrictions demanded adaptation and, after resistance due to accessibility issues, especially for public institutions, regular schools adopted the synchronous meetings, held on-line. These meetings are not mandatory – in the school context where data was generated, students are assessed through Moodle platform, with activities that they can carry out any time they want along the week. This means that, according to Ms. Eyre, the substitute teacher, synchronous meetings became a moment to present activities, correct them and solve any questions students could have. Not many

students attended these meetings, and even when they did, attendance does not necessarily mean presence. If, in the traditional, face-to-face context, teachers sometimes struggle to maintain students' attention, it seems that the on-line context has increased this frustrating sensation.

In the first lesson observed, I presented myself. From the first class (with 13 participants), students were invited to open their cameras, highlighting that I would be there, too. Some of them opened the cameras and, although this was praised by us, teachers (Ms. Eyre exclaimed: "How good it is to see you!" with a joyful smile), the resulting attitude (opening the cameras) did not remain for the following meetings.

The first lesson was also the first of the lead teacher with this group of students, so she asked them to comment on their contact with the English language, making them aware that the purpose of the course was not to make learners fluent. Those who replied mentioned their exposure to TV series and songs and have been attending English courses outside the school. They also commented on the difficulties to speak English, although they are already able to understand it most of the time. Mrs. Eyre also took advantage of this moment to ask about their preferences (which were the TV series, songs, practices they liked). She explained the focus would be in reading comprehension, this being the focus of the trimester, and invited them to answer the initial questionnaire. These conversations were all held in Portuguese. In the last fifteen minutes, she presented some exercises inserted on Moodle, related to the objective in reading comprehension. Her activities involved vocabulary in the pandemic, reading strategies per se and a text on vineyards – which was related to the technical course they were taking (Oenology). They had some questions to respond to, and the teacher made another disclaimer: "you do not have to write the answers in English, because the purpose is to see if you can understand, not write. You can make attempts to use English, but it is not mandatory. Please, do not rely on translators".

In class two, only nine students were present, and of them, three said hello and interacted with the teacher, answering the questions (Ms. Eyre was checking the previous activities and later, presented the ones students should do along the week, on Moodle). After checking the homework, Mrs. Eyre proposed the use of simple present tense to talk about routines, showing the activities inserted on Moodle for them to do by themselves along the week. More than once, there was silence after her requests about students' routines, and Ms. Eyre had to answer the suggested interactive questions in English ("Tell me something about your routine" ... "tell me a

verb related to your routine”) by herself. She got some answers, eventually, and gave general grammar instructions on the present simple, typing on a Word file and sharing her screen. Her suggested activities also included the use of Quizlet: “Elisa made me recall this tool”. In accordance with her plan, there was also a reading activity to develop reading comprehension.

Only in the third class meeting (which started with 10 students and other 4 that arrived later) was it possible to see a little more engagement in conversation from the part of the (same) students. Mrs. Eyre started by checking their homework, asking whether they had any questions. During a discussion about museums, which was a topic planned in the reading material, some students talked about their relationship with this type of cultural space. I also intervened mentioning about the Interactive Museum in a local University. Mrs. Eyre ended by presenting other activities to be done at home. She highlighted that they would have half of their grades related to these activities.

Due to this general lack of participation, when Mrs. Eyre invited me to speak about the following lessons with me, I decided to emphasize the need for the students to be present. I invited them to engage with it as a “mission” and an “opportunity” to show how they feel about the classes since this was doctoral research and they could speak their minds as regards to how these meetings could be improved or changed. At the time, I was very concerned that students would not show up.

The frustrating episodes in which Ms. Eyre had no answer from students might be due to the fact that they are probably not there or are listening while doing something else. Another possibility is that they are simply unaware of the relevance of their answering (in the classroom, you can just nod). These are only assumptions, since we are not able to see what the students are doing, while they keep their cameras closed.

3.7.2 Lessons taught in Brazil: meetings 4 and 5.

This sensation of not knowing whether students were there remained during the two meetings I conducted. It was not possible to know whether the students were taking a long time to answer because they were thinking, or because they were shy, or because they were not there, or not paying attention at all.

In class meeting four, students were invited to ask questions about the homework, but there were none. I then introduced the Quizizz platform: there were students who were late and I had to restart. The first questions, related to their personal preferences, helped me interact a little bit. Then I explained that they would be reading a poem, but before that, they would work on vocabulary through the Rapid Word Recognition. For each word, we had checked the meaning in English. The list of words, followed by a second round with the translated words, seemed too long for students – this is my impression now, as an observer. However, when asked about the level of difficulty of the activity, right after developing them, in a 1-5 Likert scale, the five students who answered, ticked level 2 and 3 (very easy was 1).

The discussion of the poem was productive, but highly conducted by me. I made some suggestions, tried to make them ask comprehension questions and induce some interpretation. This part was highly held in Portuguese for the translation of the lines. I ended up letting them think about it and moved towards the Exit Ticket³² – which consisted of writing five new words they learnt and commenting on the lessons' favourite part or something they might have disliked. Their answers (from only five students – perhaps the others had already left the meeting) are presented in the next chapter.

In class meeting five, I asked whether they could remind other classmates of what we did in the previous class, and nobody answered. All these interactive questions were asked in both languages, so it was not a language comprehension issue, for them.

Quizizz (slides on Appendix G) worked well to organize the presentation and the review of the previous lesson; most students did not research for the author of the poem/ song – which was not yet provided to them. Some questions, based on vocabulary review and etc, were not developed during the lessons in Italy: there was not enough time. We then listened to the song and I explained that this is a progressive rock song, so it would be ok not to “enjoy” the song.

They were then asked whether the song matched the lyrics. According to one student, it did not, because the lyrics seemed joyous, but the music recalls sadness. Other students did not want to make any comments, so I moved to the composition

³² In Italy, the Exit Ticket was handed to students for them to complete as homework, since we had to finish the lesson.

activity, in which they selected their favourite line of the song, then were invited to explain.

At this stage, a few participants made very relevant observations for the discussion, which reflected later, in their compositions. Their comments are described in the analysis section (4.3.1.1). Finally, I added that I liked all their analyses.

Then they were asked to write a comment about the song either in Portuguese or English, and then we moved forward to the selection of words to compose their new text. I did not want them to see each other's perceptions; I was also worried about the time. At one point I turned off the sound (Quizziz has a counting sound that I did not know about) and students commented that this was better, because it was making them anxious.

Denise inserted something extra, something out of the lyrics, in the exercise: "There's no dark side of the moon, really. As a matter of fact, it's all dark³³". She commented to that: "será que a lua é realmente toda escura? Será que o que ilumina ela não é o sol, os raios do sol? Uma questão pra gente parar ali, né, e pensar... eu achei interessante³⁴". Samara inserted a different answer: she pasted some extracts from another Pink Floyd song, Brain Damage, but she did not explain why. She informed she was leaving soon after.

Finally, learners were invited to write their own poem. I tried to reinforce the idea that it had to be relatable to them. One student said he was nervous – I, myself, related to that sensation, because I know I would not like to be invited to do such an exercise. However, I tried to engage them by saying: "A poesia permite que a gente faça do jeito que a gente quiser. Então fiquem muito tranquilos, não vamos olhar pra correção ortográfica ou correção gramatical, não é essa a ideia... inclusive, se vocês já acompanharam letra de música, vocês vão ver que têm muitas... ahn, deslizes gramaticais, no Brasil, na poesia e na letra de música brasileira; porque a gente não vai ter numa escrita assim... que a gente vai chamar de licença poética. Não precisa

³³ This was taken from somewhere in the Internet. I know that Pink Floyd members interviewed people to ask them what was there in the "Dark side of the moon", which was the name of the album where the song Eclipse was released. This was the answer of the doorman of their studio, that can be heard very far away by the end of the song, so it usually never shows in the lyrics. I explain these facts briefly since she gave us this answer.

³⁴ "Is the moon really all dark? Could it be that what illuminates it is not the sun, the sun's rays? A question for us to stop there, right, and think about... I found it interesting".

rimar! Acabamos de ler uma música que não tem rima (...) por exemplo o XXXX disse que tá nervoso, ele pode escrever sobre isso³⁵”.

Students then asked a few questions and started working on their compositions.

In the last few minutes, I invited those who had finished to answer the final questionnaire. There were issues with the platform to collect the answers, because there was a set time for that, but I managed to fix it.

“Profe, ficou um texto bem curtinho³⁶”, said Melanie.

The ending included me showing them the vinyl of the album *Dark Side of the Moon*. I also had no time to get their answers to the final question: what did you learn? The head teacher took her turn to explain this would be the last meeting for a while. “See you in the second trimester”. In my personal notes I pointed to the difficulty of not being able to grasp whether students wanted to speak or not, but I got used to having them with cameras closed.

Learners themselves might also have a difficult time understanding that, by keeping cameras closed, the only interaction we were able to have was through some of the students’ voices, so they actually had to speak when they did not know the answer, or when they needed more time, and so on.

This does not mean that online settings are completely inappropriate and that our previous conditions, face-to-face, were ideal. However, this context allowed us to experiment the on-line context and identify that some aspects of the traditional classroom (such as eye contact, body language, and even pen and paper practice in activities such as running dictation) are relevant to promote engagement, and they are related to the level of interaction we are usually able to promote. We praise how technology enabled the shortening of distances among people, and it must be once again praised for making teaching and learning possible in an emergency context such as the one we faced. However, in the same way we had issues with the introduction of digital tools such as slide presentations (that became another format of expositive teaching, in many cases), in on-line learning, it all depends on how this format is being handled – on both sides of the screen. “The problem [in the pandemic emergency

³⁵ “Poetry allows us to do whatever we want. So don't worry, we're not going to look at spelling correction or grammatical correction, that's not the idea... in fact, if you've ever followed song lyrics, you'll see that there are a lot of... uh, grammatical slips, in Brazil, in poetry and Brazilian music lyrics; Why won't we have it in writing like this... which we will call poetic license. No need to rhyme! We've just read a song that doesn't rhyme (...) For example, XXXX said he's nervous, he can write about this”.

³⁶ “Prof, it is a really short text”.

settings] was the school believing that a simple on-line class, or the conversing of this class, as if it was in person, to on-line format was enough³⁷ (Rojo, 2020, p. 43).

A teacher who is engaged in their work usually makes use of a series of strategies to identify how students are developing. These strategies also depend on the students' looks and manners, their eye contact. Do they look puzzled? Bored? Curious? Tired? This is a sample list of students' most evident emotions, that we can grasp by only looking at them.

Observing them is how we can change the approach, and perhaps suggest different activities, or revise other ones. In other words, constant assessment of our own teaching practices is very important. Thus, we have two forms of interaction with students, both deeply affected by the new technological format: mediation occurring through their emotions per se, and with an instrument to verify their learning achievements. Their emotions are not visible through the screen, due to the closed cameras; teachers' usual assessment strategies are not held in the same way anymore (even in methodologies such as dynamic assessment, a SCHAT concept developed by Lantolf and Poehner, 2005, 2011). It is important to identify new ways to engage (with) the students, to interact in order to promote development.

Nevertheless, this interaction cannot happen from only one side, and this is why I highlighted the need for students to be present and available in front of the computer. The lessons were planned bearing in mind that, to make learners engaged, they should be given activities to be done on the spot, much like in a regular class would happen, if it were face-to-face. On the other hand, there was the insecurity of not having students attending the meeting (as attendance was never mandatory), or, attending and not being effectively engaged in the activities.

In fact, in class meetings 4 and 5, some students left the on-line room once they realized their engagement was necessary and would be shown on the screen³⁸. The presentation was created in a way that, from the beginning, students' interaction was requested, be it by answering pools or by learning new vocabulary in a gamified manner. These were some of my notes in the research diary, for class meeting 4:

³⁷ In the original: "O problema foi a escola acreditar que uma simples aula on-line, ou a conversão dessa aula, como se fosse presencial, para o formato on-line, seria suficiente".

³⁸ This is an assumption, of course. The platform shows a common screen in which participants are indicated, as regards to their responding or not to the activities.

*“Either way, the ones who engaged in the activities were really participating and seemed to be enjoying. They were receptive, collaborative, and enjoyed their funny avatars in the platform, too. I presented them Quizlet, for vocabulary, and they liked it very much – this is what they wrote in the platform, at least. We had to make it a bit of a rush, in the end, and the analysis of the poem/song was not as engaging as I expected. (...) We managed to have some small talk, too; that was good.
(Excerpt 3, notes from class meeting 4, September 2nd, 2021)*

This was observed by those students who remained until the end of the meeting as positive: when asked, in class meeting 4, which was their favourite moment in class, they indicated Quizlet game as a highlight.

3.8 DESCRIPTION OF LESSONS – ITALY

For the lessons given in Italy, I had only the audio recordings from my cell phone. This means I am not able to be as specific as I was for the data generated in Brazil, since I did not learn their names by heart and cannot know their voices, only. Sometimes, there was a lot of noise and interactions were difficult to understand. I also rely on the notes I took after the lessons for certain episodes described here.

3.8.1 Lesson observed in Italy

For the lesson I observed, I arrived earlier with the teacher, then students arrived and placed their phones in the corresponding niche on the wall. I even asked to take a picture of it, because I found that strategy very interesting. Then they sat in pairs, as the desks were structured this way.

Mr. M. started by introducing me and saying that I did not speak any Italian. They asked me a few questions in English, such as: “Where are you from?”, “Why are you here?”, “Why are you in this school?”. They were curious about my city and my research in university. Then they introduced themselves to me, in English. This part was very, very noisy, in the recording, because the others kept talking too, in English or in Italian.

Although I did not think the teacher would make students introduce themselves, this was very important for me: I was able to learn about the diversity of students I would be interacting with. There were students from China, from Ukraine, from Morocco. They had many different backgrounds and spoke, or at least knew, many

languages. At a certain point, one student said he had lived in Portugal and could also speak some Portuguese. This also means that, in Italy, Italian wasn't, for many, their L1, or first language – it was their host language (HL).

Mr. M. then made some corrections on their spoken English while they introduced themselves or asked questions. (As for me, I was too impressed at their ability to communicate to pay attention to that.) This took 20 minutes of the lesson. I then took my place in a seat next to the teacher desk, and Mr. M. started his lesson, by working with the schoolbook. He later told me he does not go through a preparation of the lesson, aiming to focus on some grammar aspects and translation as he goes along the book with the students. They started with a video presenting a conversation between two teenagers who needed to decide where to go. They moved to working with the translation of this conversation, line by line, where each student translated a line. Mr. M. was very engaged, but there was chatter all the time. They moved on with the book until the end of the lesson. Mr. M. ended up forgetting to ask them for the initial questionnaire, but he said that would ask them in the next class. They had two other classes with their own professor before my own lesson, that happened in the following week.

3.8.2 Lessons taught in Italy

“Do you remember my name, and where I am from?”, I started by asking. And they did remember. I started my lesson by stating the “rules” and double-checking the meaning of this work with them: “regole”, they replied, and, by saying “grazie”, they had a hint that I was able to understand some Italian. My “rules” have always been no phones (unless requested), silence when requested (to the count of 3, 2, 1).

Then I presented my country in the map, through Google Maps, so that they would have a geographic idea of it. They asked how many flights I had to take to arrive in Italy. I moved forward with a technique of “true/false” to statements presented on the screen (as a reminder to the reader, in the online version in Brazil, students had to select the appropriate answer on the Quizizz app, but this is the “original” strategy to engage all students and help them with understanding the statements). To each statement (“I like reading”, for example), they had to indicate their answers with their hands, being a cross with fingers “false”, and a circle, “true” (promoting interaction and

avoiding, then, excessive noise)³⁹. Some of them looked uncomfortable after a while and did not answer anymore. It seems that they felt embarrassed to be doing this, but my attentive eye contact made them give me an answer.

We briefly spoke about poetry – I asked them about a famous poet in Italy, and with the “Dante Alighieri” response I added that our central city square, in my city, was named after him. For the next activity, Rapid word recognition (on paper, Appendix L), there was some trouble for them to understand, and I asked a student to repeat the explanation in Italian. We did the example sentences together, and I moved around to observe them do it, or instruct in case this was not clear.

In this activity, some of them looked frustrated and I had to explain that they were not supposed to finish the whole list of words. There was complete silence during the 15 seconds, and a lot of noise after the time was up. I highlighted that this was not a competition, except with themselves. Then we moved to the next activity, Vocabulary knowledge (Appendix M). Again, I asked a student to “translate” the instructions into Italian. I moved around, and Mr. M., who was always very attentive and supportive, too, observing and helping them with any instructions or doubt.

After most of them were finished, we moved to checking the words together. Mr. M. helped me, and, at this stage, it was clear for them that I knew some Italian – as I was able to understand their translations and write them on the board. I did, however, stick to English, providing input for them, even when they communicated in Italian with me or others. In the following activity, *rapid word definition*, they grasped the instructions more easily and this was done faster.

For this lesson, I added a tricky question before introducing the poem:

“Which one is true: 1) The sun is eclipsed by the moon or 2) The moon is eclipsed by the sun”.

They were *really* confused with the answer⁴⁰, and I told them the correct answer would be in the text we were going to read. By this time, it was already the end of the lesson, so I had to rush with reading and instructing them to select a favourite part for it, as well as research on the author. Students were already moving to change teachers, but I remembered to hand them the Exit Ticket slips, which was left as

³⁹ The slides used in the Italian school are on Appendix K).

⁴⁰ Later on, I asked Mr. M. if this could be a language difficulty, but he said it was more of a Geography problem!

homework. Class was dismissed and I spoke a little bit with the lead teacher. He stated that “the students seemed bored”. We commented on the fact that they were teenagers... but I honestly did not find them to be bored, or at least not less engaged as they were in his own lesson.

The second lesson happened at 12 pm, their last hour before leaving school. They were very noisy – a normal thing when they are tired. I tried to relate to that: “I know you’re tired”, when they were having trouble being in silence to start the lesson. We started by reviewing their homework and collecting the exit tickets; most of them had done it, which was pleasant to me – for the same activity, online, I had only five respondents in Brazil. They will be discussed in chapter 4.

They were able to name the song and the band, and guessed Pink Floyd was from the 1990’s. They were surprised that this was 1973 song. I then gave them five minutes to read in pairs and select their favourite line. Mr. M. helped with the instructions, by clarifying what “poesia” and “verso” were. Both of us moved around and solved any questions: some believed they should select one verse together, when the choice was individual.

I called for a volunteer to translate the lyrics in the group. This should be an easy task, given that most vocabulary was worked on in the previous lesson. One student then translated it, with the support of others. “Tutto sotto il sole è in sintonia”.

I tried, then, to ask some interpretation questions, to guide them through the lyrics. Learners felt more at ease to speak once I “allowed” them to speak in Italian (their HL), but they also used their recently learned vocabulary to elicit ideas on the things that “happen” in life. The transcription and a more detailed analysis are developed in chapter 4.

I then moved forward (due to the time) by showing them the cover of the album, eliciting their knowledge of the band, the album, and the music style – saying, again, that it would be ok if they did not like it. There was some chatter about rock styles.

S: *Ma questo è una canzone?*

TR: *Yes. (...) Did you like it?*

S: *No!*

TR: *Ok, maybe it's too progressive. (...)*

I recommended another song from the album (“Time”), my personal favourite, explaining this was a longer one. Then we moved to the final activity; I handed them the first part of the activity for them to write their favourite line on, and then the others.

At this point, I mixed some Italian in the instructions. They asked their questions in Italian, too. I moved around to explain the instructions more clearly. Mr. M. did the same.

For the composition part, Mr. M. helped me by giving the instructions also in Italian. I also tried to use some Italian. He suggested playing a smooth background classical music to help them concentrate and silence, while we moved around and helped them. I liked this idea – another perspective of using songs in the classroom. This, however, made the recording more difficult to transcribe.

It took them some 10 minutes to finish and some of them did not deliver the activity in the end. The final questionnaire was also posted on their online platform so that they could answer to it online.

This was the end of my interactions with the learners in Italy.

As the reader observed, this methodological section addressed many aspects. I stated by presenting the context of research in Brazil, with fewer participants, during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2021, which led to remote teaching. I also detailed my path towards using literature in my EAL lessons, the approaches, and activities I develop and how they have been adapted to this on-line context in Brazil. The instruments for data generation are also explained. Then, I introduced the procedures in Italy, in the regular school context (face-to-face), with new adaptations of the activities, always bearing in mind the main purpose of the lesson (read, comprehend, interpret, write in English). A description of the lessons observed and taught was presented in section 3.7 and 3.8.

At this point, revisiting the research objectives was necessary to refer also to the categories of analysis provided by the data. As a reminder, the main question of this research is:

- What are the potentialities of a short literature-inspired lesson plan of EAL (English as an Additional Language) for public secondary school students, in the light of the Sociocultural Historical Theory?

Considering that the studied context is a school environment, and the steps of this research can collaborate with other common EAL teachers' concerns, the specific objectives of study are presented in Table 17, sided by the indication of their theoretical grounds and the sections where they are analysed and discussed.

The objectives of the study also went through transformations, inspired by the thorough look given to the data. The primary part of the data generated in Brazil had been already analysed and discussed at some level in 2021 and 2022. The qualification board determined that, although consisting of only two lessons, there was a considerable amount of information to discuss (questionnaires, poems, recordings of the lessons etc.), and no new data would be necessary. This recommendation surprised me at the time, but it is in accordance to what *qualitative* research values: small samples and thorough analysis. “Qualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the participants' views of the situation being studied” (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 38). Additionally, the small sample in Brazil respects its “natural” setting (Dörnyei, 2011), at the time, that is, a group that was having their lessons carried out remotely due to an unexpected pandemic. Inattentiveness, unattendance, low participation was an unpredictable result of that, and data was taken as a serious register of those circumstances.

The experience in Italy added to the body of data, increasing the number of participants and interviewees. It also provided a perspective of the same proposal in a different context (face-to-face) and school system. Based on the elements that could be observed in the data, and considering the objectives, five main sections are presented in Chapter 4, in an attempt to separate what most often overlap, for the purpose of this thesis.

Still along the path of data discussion, my supervisors and I had considered excluding the interviews provided by Beatriz and Alessandra, in Brazil, as this was a very small sample, quantitatively speaking. A sample of 6-10 is desirable for a qualitative analysis of interviews (Dörnyei, 2011). However, in terms of content, their interviews provided rich data on their perceptions and previous experiences with the literary text, in both their L1 and AL. Thus, more interviews, shorter, due to the limited time I had been given by the school, were carried out in Italy, reaching a consistent number of interviewees, nine, in total.

Thus, data collected in both countries has been transcribed, when in audio or video recording, then read several times, in an attempt to identify what would belong to the descriptive (chapter 3) or analytic (chapter 4) part of this thesis. After that, data was discussed regarding its representativeness of possible categories. This pre-coding stage (Dörnyei, 2011) included conversations with supervisors and fellow researchers,

and even the presentations in conferences provided relevant insights on how to better analyse specific events. Data was many times reorganized to connect each participant's response and production to their adequate category, in the terms of the (Qualitative) Content Analysis (Bardin, 2009; Dörnyei, 2011) methodological approach. Because I did not feel that lessons were the same (there were different countries, different L1/LH, and contexts, as one was on-line and other was face-to-face), I separated Brazil and Italy when relevant, and indicated the context of the participant by country, so that the reader knows where the participant is speaking from.

Together with the transcriptions of the lessons and the interviews, their perceptions of the activities (collected by means of questionnaires and interviews), their poems and their comments on what they wrote constituted the body of data I analysed. As it often happens in qualitative research, from the analysis of a huge amount of excessive and "messy" data (Dörnyei, 2011), several reorganizations of the discussion were made, until I finally reached these main categories. Section 4.1 discusses students' experiences in learning English in general: it contains the participants' answers to the first questionnaire, but includes some general comments made by them during the interviews.

Section 4.2 addresses their experiences with the literary text and with the lessons in this research. Together with Section 4.1, it responds the second objective (See Table 17). Section 4.3 delves into their development of language and literacy along the lessons and interviews, addressing the third and fourth objective. Section 4.4 presents their compositions (already introduced in section 4.3) with their own perspectives of the activity, responding to the final three objectives; they overlap when observing literacy and their interaction with creative writing.

Table 17 – Specific objectives and the sections addressing them

Objective	Theoretical grounds	Analysis section (s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To critically describe the planning and development/ application of two literature-inspired 50-minute lessons of EAL in Brazil and in Italy; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapters 2 and 3 > <i>Sociocultural Historical Theory</i>: Lantolf; Poehner (2014); Vygotsky (1987, 1998, 2009); Swain and Lantolf (2019); Kozulin (1998) and others. Chapter 2 and 3 > <i>Literacies and EAL Teaching</i>: Paran and Wallace (2016); Urbanski (2023); Ellis (2009) and others. Chapter 2 > <i>Emotions in learning</i>: Aragão (2007); Barcelos (2015); Rosiek (2003). Chapter 2 > <i>Literary Education</i>: Paran (2008, 2016); Paran and Robinson (2016); Cosson (2015); Spiro (2004); Bloemert (2019), and others. 	<p>Chapters 3 and 4; Section 4.5 (Final aspects on the development of the project in Brazil and in Italy: interaction and written practice).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To analyse students' previous and current learning paths with English language and literature, in the light of SCHAT, in Brazil and in Italy; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2 > <i>Sociocultural Historical Theory</i>: Vygotsky (1987, 1998, 2009); Swain and Lantolf (2019); Swain and Lapkin (2013); Kozulin (1998); Holzman (2020), and others. 	<p>Sections 4.1 (Students' learning paths); 4.2 (Experiencing the lessons and experiencing literature).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify and analyse literacy episodes during the meetings and interviews, in Brazil and in Italy; To identify and discuss SCHAT elements that lead to literacy, in Brazil and in Italy; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2 > <i>Literacies and EAL Teaching; SCHAT</i>: Paran and Wallace (2016); Urbanski (2023); Hanauer (2012); Swain and Lapkin (2013); Cosson (2015); Hanauer (2012); and others. Chapter 2 and 3 > <i>Literary Education</i>: Paran (2008, 2016); Paran and Robinson (2016); Spiro (2004, 2010); and others. 	<p>Sections 4.3 (Literature, language development and learner development); 4.4 (A glimpse into creative writing).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify potentialities in creative writing as meaningful literacy, in Brazil and in Italy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 2 > <i>Sociocultural Historical Theory and perezhivanie</i>: Vygotsky (1987, 1998, 2009); Swain and Lantolf (2019); Swain and Lapkin (2013); Kozulin (1998); Verevov (2017), and others. Chapter 2 > <i>Creative writing</i>: Spiro (2004, 2010); Hanauer (2012). 	<p>Section 4.4 (A glimpse into creative writing).</p>

Source: Made by the author.

4. DATA ANALYSIS: POTENTIALITIES OF LITERATURE IN A SMALL SPACE IN PAPER AND TIME

This section presents data generated along the research, intertwined with the theories that guide the study. The title of this section was chosen during my own writing, when I realised there was a small space in time, due to the short lesson plan, and a small space in paper, since participants had little time/space to *write* their poetry. I present my narrative¹ through my impressions on important episodes of the meetings that had been observed, as well as the classes I had taught in Brazil and in Italy, and the analyses of answers in initial and final questionnaires. The interviews with the nine students (two from Brazil and seven from Italy), who volunteered and were able to open more easily in a private conversation, are also presented along the sections. As explained by the end of chapter three, I separated data into categories of analysis, based on the content they presented – nevertheless, these are interweaved throughout the subsections. This apparent overlap is, however, part of the process in qualitative data generation, as it resembles the real-life characteristics of the language classroom (Dörnyei, 2011).

Concepts from the SCHAT, such as that of imitation (Cross, 2012; Urbanski, 2023), the thinking-speaking unity (Holzman, 2020), and ZPD are discussed in episodes of literary literacy (Cosson, 2015, in English or in Portuguese), that is either manifested through students' interactions in class, or their compositions. This is part of their development of meaningful literacy (Hanauer, 2012), in the broad sense and along their writing and interviews. The development of these literacies also relates to the more subjective SCHAT concept of *perezhivanie*, both regarding their past experiences with English language, and the experience with the lessons in this research. These, in turn, also manifested in their questionnaire responses, their Exit Tickets and the interviews.

The first subsections (4.1, 4.2, 4.3) relate more to their experience with learning the language, and with the lessons I taught, in general, highlighting aspects of literacy and moves along learners' ZPDs. Subsection 4.4 discusses the proposal of creative writing and their composition and self-analysis in more depth. Where relevant, the interviews are transcribed and discussed. Finally, subsection 4.5 delineates some final

¹ This narrative is based on my research diary and my access to recorded data.

aspects on the data, considering the different contexts of development. Along the data, some extracts will be presented in bold, highlighting what is being focused on, in each case.

4.1 STUDENTS' LEARNING PATHS

*“Gostei desse formato; com músicas e series parece mais fácil de memorizar expressões e palavras novas.²”
Amália, referring to the classes*

Katherine, in the first class that was observed, when asked by the teacher about her past experiences with English, shared that she “lost interest” because her learning process was getting too difficult – but now she is trying to get back on track. She emphasized this aspect in her answers to the initial questionnaire:

*“A partir do sexto ano, eu troquei de professora, e esta se sucedeu até o nono ano. Nestes 4 anos, eu não conseguia entender as explicações dela, por mais que nas provas eu acabasse indo bem. Por conta disso, eu infelizmente tive um grande desinteresse na matéria por estar tendo bastante dificuldade. 3”. (Katherine)
(Data extracted from answers from the Initial questionnaire – Brazil)*

Lucy makes a similar remark:

*“Lembro que eu tinha muita dificuldade para entender o inglês e **fiquei um pouco triste** com isso, mas com o tempo, fui estudando e consegui compreender melhor. 4”
(Lucy)
(Data extracted from answers from the Initial questionnaire – Brazil)*

These comments deserve attention because they relate to the studies on motivation and with the concept of “flow⁵”, as well as with the Vygotskian concept of

² In English as a footnote, as I preferred to highlight the original text in this thesis: “I liked this format; with songs and series it seems easier to memorize new words or expressions”.

³ In English: “From the 6th grade on, I changed my teacher, and it was the same until 9th grade. In these four years, I was not able to understand her explanations, even though I went well in the tests, after all. Because of that, I unfortunately developed a huge **disinterest** for the subject, for I was having great difficulties”.

⁴ In English: “I remember I had difficulties to understand English and **was a bit sad because of that**, but after some time, I went on studying and managed to understand it better”.

⁵ A concept from motivational psychology that refers to “a particularly intense focus and involvement

ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development). It is an empirical fact that learning should be combined to the level of development of the learner (Vigotski, 1998). The ZPD, then, as explained in chapter 2, consists of the hypothetical “space” between what students already know by themselves (Zone of Real Development) and what students can accomplish with some support (Zone of Potential Development). It is in the ZPD that the teacher should act to support students’ development. Katherine and Lucy probably felt demotivated because they were not being able to apprehend the new elements of language even with external support – Lucy, however, seem to have overcome this difficulty through study. In Italy, Julian provided a similar answer to the questionnaire, detailing that not understanding the sentences, during correction, is a negative experience for him (transcription and further analysis is along this section).

Another aspect to be observed in Katherine’s words – and in other learners’, as I will demonstrate – is related to assessment. Doing well in the tests did not work as a motivator – she recognizes that this is important, and yet, she claims to be sad and uninterested. This demonstrates that teachers’ excessive attachment to traditional testing is not the only way to develop real engagement in students – although we acknowledge that this choice is made also due to the whole institutional system that imposes it.

For students to feel development happening, they should be offered something challenging but not so much that they cannot grasp in their ZPD; that is, with the support of others (be the others the teacher or the classmates). This external support can be previously planned by the teacher, and it is much referred to as *scaffolding*: the “assistance given when needed, and in the quantity and quality needed, and is then gradually dismantled when the structure/individual can mediate (regulate) itself” (Swain; Kinnear; Steinman, 2015, p. 26). Of course, this is an analysis based only on a brief comment by one student, but it also deals with an issue for English teachers: in heterogeneous contexts, offering activities that both engage and promote learning in many different levels of proficiency is certainly a challenge.

in an activity, to the extent that we may even lose self-consciousness and track of time while absorbed in this activity”. Dörnyei and Ryan (2015, p. 99) suggest a substitute for this concept, called Directed Motivational Currents (DMCs), which do not infer the need for enjoyment of the individual in order to focus.

To briefly recall what was presented in the methodology section (see section 3.8), in the sample group that was studied in Brazil⁶, the perception of their own language proficiency is basic (eight of them), pre-intermediate (three) and intermediate (four), which is consistent with the heterogeneity expected – a very common issue in public schools. This was also the case in Italy: out of the 22 respondents to the initial questionnaire, three claimed to be basic, seven, pre-intermediate, and eleven assigned themselves as intermediate. One student, Marlon, claimed to be advanced in terms of English proficiency. It is notable, however, that, whereas in Brazil the majority indicated “basic” (eight out of fifteen), in Italy, only three considered themselves so, and half of them considered themselves intermediate. This might be because they start studying English at regular school from the age of six – in Brazil, public schools offer the foreign language only from eleven (Middle school).

This heterogeneity in proficiency levels leads to students complaining that either classes are too repetitive (verb *to be* all along – usually from pre-intermediate or intermediate students who study languages outside regular school) or too difficult (basic-level students who struggle with more advanced structures, having only one-hour classes a week). This was visible in the initial questionnaire, where they were asked about a negative experience they recalled from their English classes⁷. Questions about positive or negative experiences, asked in the questionnaire, aimed at accessing certain memories students might have in a more subjective sense. Many, as previously demonstrated, replied in a more general manner, not mentioning their own sensations about it, nor giving details on a certain episode. This might indicate a problem in the way I elaborated the question – or else, this could have been better developed through a face-to-face conversation. Nevertheless, their understanding of something “negative” in terms of lesson planning presents its problems. Most of them focused on the teaching methodology:

“As professoras não ensinavam bem.” (Karen)

*“O método que é utilizado não é muito bom por **abordar sempre os mesmos tópicos**” (Margaret)*

⁶ 17 students answered the previous questionnaire, but only 15 allowed the use of their answers.

⁷ The aim of this question was to identify any hints on their feelings, but students did not grasp that they should explain the reason for their comment and only briefly mentioned what they found “negative”.

⁸ “Teachers did not teach well”.

⁹ “The method used is not very good because it always approaches the same topics”.

“Acho que algo negativo é que as aulas ficaram muito apenas no verbo To Be.¹⁰”
(Alessandra)

“Uma experiência que eu considero negativa é a falta da prática de todas as estratégias da língua: reading, speaking, writing e listening, pois muitas vezes na escola os professores apenas trabalhavam com uma delas, sem nenhum aprofundamento.¹¹”
(Beatriz)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil)

The answers above might reveal students' lack of clarity about the purpose of learning English in regular school, which is something that should be explained to them, in the classroom. However, during the interview, Beatriz mentioned that in regular school “O objetivo é você aprender, e não sair fluente,¹²” indicating her awareness about a different purpose of studying English in school, when compared to a language course. I commented on the lack of time for further development of language, to what she observed: “E também, nem todo mundo é interessado em realmente aprender, né¹³”. Going further, I asked how she thought this would affect classes. “É que as pessoas não estão no mesmo nível, né¹⁴ (...)” and she illustrated the whole lesson planning teachers must struggle with, because they have to keep on revising topics due to the different proficiency levels, and this ends up “atrasando a carga horária, eu acho¹⁵”. Recalling again the aspect of disinterest, she complemented:

“E também, por exemplo, tem pessoas que não são interessadas em aprender inglês e acham que isso não é importante pra elas, sabe? E não tem nada errado nisso, mas aí, às vezes isso pode, acho que, atrapalhar o que a professora está tentando ensinar, sabe?¹⁶”

(Excerpt from Beatriz's interview, Brazil – 11th October 2021)

I told her it was good to see students like her who thought about the issue of lesson planning, and how certain points of view may disengage a group or the development of a lesson.

¹⁰ ““I think that something negative is that classes were kept only on Verb To Be too much”.

¹¹ “One experience I consider negative is the lack of practice in all language strategies: reading, speaking, writing and listening, because many times the teachers would work on only one of them, without deepening it”.

¹² “the objective is that you learn, not that you become fluent”.

¹³ “Yeah, not everyone is interested in really learning, you know”.

¹⁴ “People are not in the same proficiency level, you know”.

¹⁵ “delaying the class schedule”.

¹⁶ “Also, for instance, there are people who are not interested in learning English and think this is not important for them, you know? And there's nothing wrong with that, but then, sometimes, this can, I think, disturb what the teacher is trying to teach, you know?”

As will be discussed ahead in this thesis, data confirms Vygotsky's claim that learning leads to motivation (Holzman, 2020). For not knowing that the aim of learning English at school (in Brazil) is not to be fluent, they learners feel they do not correspond to their imaginary expectations to learning. Something around the idea that "I'm not learning, cos I'm not fluent..." and this feeling might be increased before more proficient peers. If one does not feel they're learning, they won't feel engaged to continue, to collaborate.

Among the answers that match somehow what I expected, in terms of their more subjective, personal memories, by asking for a "negative experience", is this comment by Lana, who summarized the issue regarding the heterogeneous context in terms of proficiency:

*"Sempre achei as aulas muito **monótonas**, para aqueles que não tinham muito contato com a língua, sempre via uma grande dificuldade, e, para aqueles que já possuíam um certo domínio do inglês, eram **chatas** e apenas a revisão de conteúdo¹⁷". (Lana)*
(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil)

I bold the expressions "*monótonas*" and "*chatas*" and correlate them with the previous extracts, where Margaret and Alessandra talk about classes "being always the same", or "always verb To Be" – it seems the sensation of boredom can be grasped from these extracts as a negative aspect they recall from lessons in general. Boredom, an "unpleasant psychological state" where people feel dissatisfied, annoyed, demotivated, is directly related to under-challenging or overchallenging activities in the classroom, according to recent research (Dewaele; Sanz Ferrer, 2022)– thus agreeing with the descriptions provided by the learners and emphasizing once more the need to provide activities that promote their engagement, moving them along their ZPD. This, of course, is not that simple in a heterogeneous context such as the ones we face in the English classrooms, both in Brazil and in Italy.

When asked to what they attribute their English learning, however, only four (out of fifteen) respondents indicated that regular school *did not* play a role in the process – two of them were intermediate and two were basic. Three of them took language courses outside school; the others indicated only the experiences outside the

¹⁷ "I always found classes very **boring**, for those who didn't have much contact with the language, that was always great difficulty and, for those who already had a certain knowledge of English, it was **boring** and simple content review".

classroom, with music and tv shows. In Italy, twelve learners, out of 22, indicated they learnt from regular school; ten of them attributed them to experiences outside school¹⁸. This means regular school *did* play a role in their language development, in both contexts.

To support this perspective, Margaret made a relevant comment on her learning at regular school:

*Consegui aprender algumas coisas básicas [na escola] que não aprenderia apenas ouvindo músicas e assistindo séries*¹⁹. (Margaret)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil)

Brandon and Julian also pointed to the relevance of formal instruction of the language to develop his language skills, as a positive experience:

*O aprendizado do verbo to be, foi a partir disso que comecei a conseguir formular melhor as frases*²⁰. (Brandon)

*Capire la grammatica di inglese (perché è importante)*²¹. (Julian)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil and Italy)

This leads this analysis to the importance of formal instruction – another significant concept for Vygotsky. According to him, human development occurs through daily concepts and scientific concepts – which, on the one hand, values every aspect of the life experience, and on the other, states the importance of institutionalized instruction such as schools for learning those scientific concepts, although these are not learnt *only* at school (Figueiredo, 2019, Vygotsky, 1987). Brandon and Margaret demonstrate the role of the school in developing scientific concepts (such as the metalinguistic ones for English) through formal studies of the language.

In face of the same question about a negative experience in their English classes, half of the Italian learners claimed not to be able to recall one. Amongst the examples of those who did reply, Aline, although defining herself as intermediate, comments on her previous English teacher, resembling Karen's comment:

¹⁸ These answers might carry some misunderstanding related to the question: students were allowed to select more than one alternative but might have not understood so and selected only one. This was the case even more in Italy.

¹⁹ "I was able to learn some basic things [at school] that I wouldn't have learnt by only listening to songs or watching TV series".

²⁰ "Learning the verb to be. It was from there that I was able to better formulate sentences".

²¹ "To understand English grammar (because it's important)".

“La mia professoressa delle medie non era molto brava e per questo non ho molte basi dell’inglese e lo capisco poco²²” (Aline)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

Some respondents were more specific, recalling grammatical aspects. Whereas one of them states as a negative experience “not to have ever studied grammar” (Gabriela), two of them, Michelle and Sarah, indicate grammar-led lessons as problematic to them:

“Il momento in cui ho iniziato a studiare il Past simple e il Present simple²³” (Michelle)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

Michelle’s answer is difficult to analyse because she does not explain why, exactly, studying these verb tenses has been a negative experience. One hint could be in her answer to a positive experience, in the previous question. She pointed to grammar as well – although highlighting the presence of the native-speaker and the game-led lessons:

“L’inglese a scuola mi aiuta principalmente sulla grammatica e sulla pronuncia, mi ricordo soprattutto quando alle elementari venivano le madre lingua con cui facevamo un sacco di giochi in inglese²⁴”. (Michelle)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

For Michelle, then, maybe the problem is not in the grammar, as she understands that it has been developed in the lessons, but in the way the lessons are conducted (with games, for instance, she seemed to have enjoyed more).

Sarah’s answer points to an opposing aspect:

“La verifica sui paradigmi, non sono mai stata brava a impararli a memoria perché so usarlo senza saperli [,] a memoria²⁵”. (Sarah)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

²² “My teacher in middle school was not very good, and thus I do not have a great basis for English and poorly understand it”.

²³ “The moment in which I started studying the Past Simple and the Present Simple [was a bad experience]”.

²⁴ “English at school helps me mainly on grammar and pronunciation, I remember when, in Elementary school, we had native speakers with whom we’d play several games in English”.

²⁵ “The test on paradigms, I was never good at memorizing them because I can use it without knowing them [,] by heart”.

According to her, she already reached a level of knowledge in which she can use the language, and yet, assessment seems to validate a more structural, metalinguistic knowledge – that would not be essential to communicate. That might address the form of assessment, that is not directed to the use of language, but to learning rules: in this example, Sarah demonstrated how “rules” are not relevant to language learning, once the structure has already been internalized by use – the main objective of learning the language, after all!

There were four other answers that mention assessment, revealing the importance of these episodes for students:

“In terza media la mia prof d’inglese mi aveva interrogata sulle civiltà e non sapevo nulla e sono presa un brutto voto. È stata una esperienza negativa perchè c’ero rimasta male²⁶.” (Erica)

“Quando ero convinto di prendere 7 e ho preso 5”²⁷. (Alfred)

“Dopo una verifica ho scoperto di aver preso 3 ½ ed è stato bruttissimo²⁸” (Marlon)
(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

Marlon was the only student from the Italian group who claimed to be “advanced”; it is evident that achieving three half marks is not a bad thing for most, but it seems that, for him, this was – if not as terrible as he claimed to be, with some level of irony – at least, *memorable*. How he dealt with these “terrible” marks would be something interesting to investigate²⁹. Alfred also indicates his grades (or else, his unexpected grades) as a negative experience – he was frustrated. As a positive experience, he elicited the same: “quando ho preso un 8 in pagella mi ha fatto sentire bene³⁰”. Although Erica also mentions the bad grade as the issue, she is more concerned with the *experience* itself: “I didn’t know anything”, “I was hurt by it”. This demonstrates the impacts of the assessing processes we propose in class – and how differently it can affect each learner.

Julian’s answer below is more related to a daily classroom practice. It resembles Katherine’s struggle to understand the teacher, in Brazil, in the beginning of this section:

²⁶ “In eighth grade my English teacher had quizzed me on civics and I didn’t know anything and I got a bad grade. It was a negative experience because I was hurt by it”.

²⁷ “When I was certain to have gotten a 7 and I got a 5.”

²⁸ “After an examination I found out that I got 3 1/2 and it was very bad”

²⁹ Research on *perezhivanie* demonstrates that “negative” feedback can be either motivational or demotivational, depending on students’ subjectivity, but this cannot be addressed here due to lack of further information. (Swain, Lantolf, 2019).

³⁰ “When I got an 8 on my report card it made me feel good”.

“ci sono qualche volta che non capisco le frase (esempio quando stavamo facendo verifica)³¹” (Julian)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

His comment relates very much with Katherine’s long-term anguish of not understanding her teacher. Although Julian seems more moderate in his dissatisfaction with this, it is worth noting that students should be in an environment that is constantly double checking their understanding, and where they feel safe to ask questions when things are not clear, considering this heterogeneity in their proficiency levels. In addition, students should be made aware that it is ok not to understand every single word of speech. This rapport can be built by talking to learners and providing opportunities for questions – perhaps also in written form, for those who are shy.

4.1.1 Students’ general feedback to the lessons

By the end of both lessons, students were asked to present some feedback on the classes – a Reader approach, as they can present their personal reactions, exercise their critical thinking, and provide a “critical report on their reading experience” (Bloemert, Jansen and van de Grift, 2016). For the first lesson of the project, students provided their answers through the Exit Ticket (a strategy I already used in my classrooms).

The Exit Ticket activity, carried out online in Brazil, got answers from only four students:

“I liked very much the poem. I have never seen this poem before.” Karen

“I liked to use the Quizlet.” Beatriz

“Minha parte favorita foram as atividades no Quizlet³².” Melanie

“Eu gostei muito de tudo na verdade, é muito bom ter essas aulas interativas, aprendi palavras novas³³.” Alessandra

The other students’ answers were left blank, reinforcing the idea that they were not, perhaps, present anymore. As Brazilian students had to answer the Exit Ticket on the spot, perhaps because of that, two of them preferred to answer in Portuguese.

³¹ “there are times that I don't understand the sentences (example when we are taking tests)”

³² “My favourite part were the Quizlet activities”.

³³ “I liked everything, in fact... it is good to have these interactive lessons, I learnt new words”.

Students in Italy were able to take their Exit Ticket home to respond to the question (“What activities did you like or dislike from the first class”), because there was no time left for them to answer, and this might have helped them write their answers in English, with more time to think. Table 18 presents all the answers from students in Italy – the ones that mention the activity Rapid word recognition are in bold, to be better discussed later.

Table 18 – Answers to the Exit Ticket in Italy

Participant	Answers in the Exit Ticket (on paper):
Albert	-
Aline	I like the exercise
Alfred	I like the game but I dislike the song
Claire	Sono state molto interessanti e iterative
Daniel	-
Ernest	I liked the most the part when we did the rapid word recognition, but I didn't like the lyric from the song.
Erica	I like the exercise
Fausto	Really liked and interesting the lessons, especially the start of the lessons.
Fran	I really liked the fact that we had to save the time clocked to underline as many words as possible.
George	I liked most of the exercises a lot, the ones that we talked
Gabriela	I liked the part where we did the questionnaire or how much we knew the words from 0 to 3. But I didn't liked the rapid words recognition because we had just 15 seconds for finish the recognition.
Julian	Know new words.
Kosar	I like the exercise.
Michelle	My favourite part was the one where we have to play the speed game of finding the same words . That was my favorite part but I enjoyed everything else, too.
Mateus	My favourite part was the translation of the word – I liked every part of the lesson.
Marlon	I liked the Rapid Word recognition . I didn't liked the song, it was a little bit boring
Mauro	Listen the song
Nereu	The speak English and conoscere you
Paul	I liked try to do the word recognition
Sam	My favourite activity of today's lesson is “rapid word definition”. Is funny.
Sarah	I liked the word recognition
Veronica	My favourite activity of today's lesson is to look for similar or some words, that is, the exercises that she had given us.

Source: Made by the author based on students' answers to the Exit Ticket (first lesson).

The second resource to collect feedback from students was the final questionnaire. According to respondents, the activities supported them in “fixating new

words” (Brandon), learning “new words” (Lucy and Alessandra), “vocabulary and expressions” (Katherine). The use of song lyrics was also praised – as it was by Karen (Brazil) and Mauro (Italy) in the Exit Ticket. These are Margaret and Amália’s comments:

“Eu adorei trabalhar dessa forma, pois foi com músicas que eu aprendi a maior parte do que eu sei de inglês hoje. Usar essa música foi uma boa escolha pois ela é simples e fácil de ser interpretada, só me decepcionei um pouco com o ritmo dela.”³⁴ (Margaret)
“Gostei desse formato, com canções ou séries parece mais fácil memorizar palavras ou expressões novas.”³⁵ (Amália)

(Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Brazil)

In the final questionnaire, learners also highlighted interaction: Melanie mentioned that “Um aspecto importante foi a interação³⁶”; Katherine described classes as “envolventes e muito práticas³⁷” and Kevin said it was “fun”. Alessandra also highlighted the “fun”: “Eu amei muito, foram aulas bem divertidas e conseguiram prender minha atenção.”³⁸

Beatriz also commented, in the interview:

“Acho que ali todo mundo tentou colaborar e acho que isso... mudou o jeito que a gente aprendeu”³⁹.

(Excerpt from Beatriz’s interview, Brazil – 11th October 2021)

Beatriz was able to identify the importance of engagement for the activities to develop. After all, “Establishing a good emotional atmosphere in the classroom depends on both learners and teachers and is crucial for learning to happen”. (Dewaele *et al.*, 2017, p. 4). This demonstrates that, although faced with some difficulties and downsides (such as the chronometer for the activities, which was a complaint from some students), the interactive approach was successful for the most part, and managed to engage participants.

Their comments combine to recollections made by Lana, Beatriz and Albert in the initial questionnaire. When asked about good experiences in the language classes at school, literary, artistic texts and media also appeared:

³⁴ “I loved working like this, because most of what I know of English today, I learned from music. Using this song was a good choice because it is simple and easy to interpret; I just got a bit disappointed with its rhythm”.

³⁵ “I liked this format, with songs and series seems easier to memorize new words or expressions”.

³⁶ “A positive aspect was the interaction”.

³⁷ “Engaging and very practical”.

³⁸ “I loved it very much, they were fun classes that really caught my attention”.

³⁹ “I think that everyone tried to collaborate and this... changed the way we learnt”.

*“Gostei muito de uma vez que uma professora fez um seminário de leitura em inglês. Ela disponibilizou pequenas **histórias**, nós escolhíamos uma e **falávamos** sobre ela.⁴⁰” (Lana)*

*“Uma experiência positiva que me recordo é o ensino lúdico com **músicas e filmes**, na escola.⁴¹” (Beatriz)*

*“I **giochi** con cui ci facevano apprendere ai ragazzi le lezioni di inglese perché è **divertente**⁴²” (Albert)*

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil and Italy)

Lana, Beatriz and Albert mention stories, songs, movies and games as positive experiences. Their recalls demonstrate that the work with cultural, artistic elements are memorable, because they consist of a different, enjoyable way of interacting with language, by focusing more on its *meaning*. Culture, for SCHAT, is “the very fabric of human experience” (Kozulin, 1998, p 130) and therefore our contact with it is what is retained by our memory. It only remains because it is meaningful – it provides a *dramatic* event, as Veresov (2017) suggests and I discuss in more detail in section 4.2, where *perezhivanie* is approached.

Also in the final questionnaire, some other positive feedback referred to their language learning impressions:

“Sim, algumas professoras já trabalharam com músicas, mas nossas aulas foram diferentes porque trabalhamos todas as 4 competências do inglês e fizemos isso de maneira divertida⁴³.” (Beatriz)

*“Sim, já trabalhei. Foram diferentes [das que já tive] pois **fizemos isso através de jogos** (quis), e similares pois acompanhamos a letra ouvindo a música.⁴⁴” (Melanie)*

*“Eu consegui **entender** bem as atividades e adorei⁴⁵” (Katherine).*

(Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Brazil)

Given that Katherine made clear she struggles with English, her words indicate that beneficial scaffolding was provided along the lessons developed. In Italy, some other comments (in addition to those already mentioned) have been provided, too:

*“è un **ottimo metodo di insegnamento** questo che ha usato la prof.⁴⁶” (Claire)*

⁴⁰ “I liked it very much when a teacher did a reading seminar in English. She provided short **stories**; we chose one and **talked** about it”.

⁴¹ “One positive experience I recall are the ludic lessons, with **songs** and **movies**”.

⁴² “The **games** they used to teach kids English lessons because it's **fun**”.

⁴³ “Yes, some teachers already worked with songs, but our classes were different because we worked with all four competences”.

⁴⁴ Yes, I have. But these were different because we made it through games (quiz) and similar because we followed the lyrics listening to the song”.

⁴⁵ “I managed to **understand** activities and I loved it”.

⁴⁶ “This is an **excellent teaching method** that the teacher used”.

“Mi è piaciuto perché mi piace molto ascoltare le canzoni.⁴⁷” (Gabriela)
 “Io piaccio **il significato delle parole** ma non ritmo del canzone.⁴⁸” (Julian)
 “Mi è piaciuto lavorare con il testo di canzone, è stato **divertente e interessante** e penso di non aver una espressione negativa⁴⁹” (Veronica)
 “Mi è piaciuto molto l’individuare le parole che più ci piacevano e **fare un testo su di esse**, per adesso non ci sono stati aspetti negativi per me e **mi sono divertita ma ho anche imparato parole e cose nuove** allo stesso tempo. Lo rifarei.⁵⁰” (Michelle)
 “È stato interessante; **io l’inglese non lo capisco molto** ma mi piacerebbe impararlo molto di più. Una cosa che non mi è piaciuta molto è quando dovevamo scrivere la poesia una cosa che mi è piaciuta è **quando abbiamo tradotto le parole perché ne ho conosciute di nuove**⁵¹”. (Aline)
 “Mi è piaciuto lavorare su questa canzone, **soprattutto fare la poesia**⁵²”. (Erica)
 (Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Italy)

In these comments, we observe overall positive feedback from the vocabulary exercises – even when they disliked the main object, which was the song. They demonstrate a sense of accomplishment for feeling they have learnt new things. As something challenging for some, on the other hand, was the written activity, further discussed later. Nevertheless, it is important to mention here, as it will be mentioned in other similar comments, that their motivational speeches confirm that learning leads to motivation, not the other way around (Holzman, 2020). They learnt, so they feel motivated to “do it again”. The playful form of doing this was highlighted in Michelle and Veronica’s words, when she stated she had fun. Playing, in fact, is an excellent form of development, as there is both imagination and rules implied in it (Vygotsky, 1978, Holzman, 2020). Beatriz and Albert had mentioned “games” as something memorable from other lessons, in the same sense, demonstrating the relevance of this type of activity.

Respondents were also invited to point out what were the negative aspects of the class, and they indicated the chronometer in the platform as problematic, in Brazil.

⁴⁷ “I liked it because I really like listening to songs”.

⁴⁸ “I like the **meaning of the words** but not the rhythm of the song”.

⁴⁹ “I enjoyed working with the lyrics, it was **fun and interesting**, and I think I don’t have a negative expression”.

⁵⁰ “I really enjoyed identifying the words we liked most and **writing a text about them**, so far there have been no negative aspects for me, and I **had fun** but I **also learned new words** and things at the same time. I would do it again”.

⁵¹ “it was interesting; I **don’t understand English very well** but I would like to learn it much more. One thing I didn’t like very much was when we had to write the poem, one thing I **liked was when we translated the words because I learned new ones**”.

⁵² “I enjoyed working on this song, **specially writing the poem**”.

“... O tempo acabou me atrapalhando em algumas questões.”⁵³ (Katherine)
“A única coisa negativa foi o tempo de responder às questões hahah (afinal, não consegui terminar uma questão por conta disso.)”⁵⁴ (Beatriz)
(Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Brazil)

In fact, the chronometer was accompanied by a somewhat “tense” sound that I was not aware of when I developed the activity on Quizizz. The purpose of the chronometer was simply to determine a time limit (in my traditional classroom practice, this helps students focus on the task being developed). By using the platform, it was harder to simply add extra time, as I do with a regular watch, in the classroom. This made some students uncomfortable and anxious, especially in the writing activity. In Italy, Mr. M.’s classical music in the background did not cause that. Beatriz explained her nervousness in the composition, because she was used with this practice in the English course:

“Mas eu acho que o tempo talvez influencie nisso, tipo, ‘nossa eu tenho um tempo pra fazer, sabe, eu tenho um tempo pra pensar’. Eu acho que talvez tenha sido isso.”⁵⁵
(Excerpt 5, from Beatriz’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

Melanie and Katherine also showed nervousness due to the time constraints. This could lead to a more specific analysis; had they all been interviewed afterwards. In Italy, on the other hand, the Rapid word recognition was carried out on paper, and their feedback was collected on the Exit Tickets at the first lesson, and also during the interviews. Interestingly, many claimed Rapid word recognition to be their favourite activity (refer to Table 17, and the answers in bold). This confirms my personal impression that the use of realia is important for learners of any age (it also reinforces theorists on reading that state for the use of paper to practice reading, such as Grabe and Stoller, 2011), and it makes a difference for certain activities. Although we had only a few answers to the Exit Ticket in Brazil, two participants pointed to the Quizlet platform as their favourite moment – thus providing us with an alternative activity for the online context, which could be more successful than this adaptation of the Rapid word recognition to the online format.

⁵³ “Timing was a problem for me in some questions”.

⁵⁴ “The only negative thing was the time to answer the questions haha (after all, I couldn’t finish one question because of that”.

⁵⁵ “But I think time might influence on that, like, ‘wow, I have a certain time to do it, you know, I have a certain time-limit to think’. I think it might have been that”.

Still regarding Rapid Word Recognition/Definition (Appendix L), students in Italy with different proficiency levels commented differently. Gabriela, the only one who carried out the interview in English (she stated to be Intermediate, but I would guess she is more proficient than others), was one of the learners who clearly stated her dislike for the activity, both in the Exit Ticket (see Table 17) and later during the interview (the third form to collect their feedback on the lessons):

Gabriela: *When we did this [she points to the Rapid Word Recognition] I felt a bit stressed... because we had just 15 seconds, and I couldn't read it all... so I couldn't finish the first one...*

TR: *Oh, but you were not supposed to finish this in fifteen seconds! If you did it, it means you were really fast! Ok, so you liked it, you felt stressed about this... any other feelings that you remember?*

Gabriela: *A little bit, not really stressed. It was funny, because I didn't really expect this... I was like the elementary one, where they give the words, and they say, yeah complete this, with the thing in Italian, then you have to traduce in English, so it was a different thing and I felt strange [laughs]*

(Excerpt from Gabriela's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023. Gabriela chose to carry out the interview in English.)

Gabriela's dislike of the activity could relate to her self-criticism or her misunderstanding of the activity – it is *purposefully* impossible to respond to *all* words and definitions in the given time. Perhaps with other activities such as these (by repeating the exercise with different vocabulary), this would become more fun than stressful to them, as the structure would not be new. This is what I usually experience in my classrooms.

Erica, intermediate, also pointed to the Rapid Word Definition (not the easier, introductory one, recognition) as something complicated to her:

TR: *E come ti sei sentita nella lezione? Se vuoi guardare il materiale...*

Erica: *Bene, cioè, mi è piaciuto... [cerca tra il materiale, sceglie Rapid Word Recognition, non è quello, era il Rapid Word Definition] ecco, sapevo quale sarebbe però ero in confusione!*

TR: *Era troppo veloce?*

Erica: *Sì!*

TR: *E ti ha annoiato questo?*

Erica: *Sì, non mi è molto piaciuto, poi il resto sì.⁵⁶*

⁵⁶ **TR:** And how did you feel in the lesson? If you want to look at the material...

Erica: Well, I mean, I liked it... (searches through the material, chooses Rapid Word Recognition, it's not that, it was the Rapid Word Definition) well, I knew what it would be but I was confused!

(Excerpt from Erica's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Michelle, on the other hand, pointed to the activity as something very useful *precisely* because of the time constraint:

TR: *E cosa hai pensato della nostra attività?*

Michelle: *Allora, questa attività mi è piaciuta molto! (Rapid Word Recognition) Perché mi ha aiutato anche per la velocità... e mi è piaciuta. Questa qua, anche, certe parole non le sapevo, tipo distrust... e mi è piaciuta... e anche questa (Vocabulary Knowledge). Sì, sapere il significato delle parole... mi sono piaciute tutte, sinceramente.*

TR: *Ah, bello sapere. È diverso di quello che fai? (sì) Di solito, com'è la lezione d'inglese?*

Michelle: *Di solito facciamo sul libro, un po' di grammatica, verbi, degli esercizi. Così. E anche questa (guarda l'attività finale) mi è piaciuta molto. E è un bel testo, secondo me. E, sì, anche l'attività che abbiamo fatto anche dopo.*

TR: *Così, hai trovato interessante... ti sei sentita... come?*

Michelle: *Boh, sì, mi sono sentita bene... mi sono sentita attata da questo...⁵⁷*

(Excerpt from Michelle's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

These differences in perception for one activity highlights each student's individual preferences (Amariz, 2022): some learners do not work so well with time constraints, and factors like the proficiency level are not always at stake. Although this is not the focus of this research, this demonstrates again the importance of bearing this in mind when building any lesson plan: not all students will enjoy everything all the time, although they see the purpose of the activity. It is important to design different proposals to address certain preferences (Gabriela and Michelle, for instance, diverged for Rapid Word Recognition, but both really enjoyed the Vocabulary Knowledge activity). This demonstrates that learners need to be engaged in their

TR: Was it too fast?

Erica: Yes!

TR: And **did this annoy** you?

Erica: Yes, I **didn't like it much**, then the rest yes.

⁵⁷ **TR:** And what did you think of our activity?

Michelle: So, I **really enjoyed this activity!** (Rapid Word Recognition) Because **it also helped me with speed**... and I liked it. This one, too, I didn't know certain words, like distrust... and I liked it... and this one too (Vocabulary Knowledge). Yes, knowing the meaning of the words... I liked them all, honestly.

TR: Ah, good to know. Is it different than what you do? (yes) What is English class usually like?

Michelle: We usually do some grammar, verbs, exercises from the book. Like this. And I really liked this one too (see the final activity). And it's a beautiful text, in my opinion. And, yes, also the activity we did afterwards.

TR: So, you found it interesting., you felt... how?

Michelle: Well, yes, I **felt good... I felt attracted by this...**

ZPDs: for some, that was in learning vocabulary through playing, for others, that was by reflecting on their knowledge, and some highlighted writing as their pleasant challenge.

Which leads to my other question: I asked them to recall what they had learnt. This was to verify what they could have highlighted as “learning”. The excerpt above, from Michelle’s interview, presents her focus on vocabulary, naming “distrust” as something new to her.

Other students remembered their learnings in the interview, focusing on vocabulary:

“Ah, tipo, cos’è che ho imparato... steal, cos’è, rubare.”⁵⁸

(Excerpt from Erica’s interview, Italy, 27th March, 2023)

“Eu aprendi a palavra slight! Essa eu não conhecia”⁵⁹. (Beatriz)

(Excerpt from Beatriz’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

Beatriz was familiar with the rest of the vocabulary (as it seemed to be the case for Michelle, too) – which did not make her necessarily “bored” by the activity:

“Eu levei com uma forma de revisar conteúdo, sabe, e manter fresco na memória... até porque a gente vai esquecendo... se a gente não pratica e usa as palavras.”⁶⁰

(Excerpt from Beatriz’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

Beatriz’s words show her maturity as a learner who is aware of the stages of internalization (of vocabulary, for instance, that is learnt by using). Alessandra’s recollection also provides this understanding of the process of learning:

*“Eu lembro sim, calma aí... tinha as palavras... era... tinha give, ã, acho que é die, se não me engano (...) é que **a gente sabe que a gente sabe, mas a gente não sabe o que aprendeu naquele momento**”⁶¹ (thinking) (...)*

(Excerpt from Alessandra’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

Her comment illustrates language development in this non-linear manner, and might provide hints on how assessment is, sometimes, conducted. When she makes this effort to remember, but cannot recollect the exact moment, she demonstrates that this is not a linear process. In a completely diverse situation, she will, perhaps, be able to use the word learned without realizing she already learnt it. Were she to be given

⁵⁸ “Ah, like, what did I learn... steal, what is it, rubare”.

⁵⁹ “I learned the word slight! I didn’t know that one”.

⁶⁰ “I took it as a form of content review, you know, and keep it fresh in memory... because we get forgetful, if we don’t practice and use the words”.

⁶¹ I do remember, hang on... there were the words... give... I think die, if I’m not mistaken (...) **we just know that we know, but we don’t know what we had learned at that moment**”.

the words, she would be able to recognize and understand them, for instance. Exercises such as Vocabulary Knowledge are ideal to make them aware of this process, too. She goes further on her recall:

Alessandra: *Tinha destroy, acho, [olhando para o que pode ser o caderno], ah, tinha fight, porque eu confundia fire com fight, parece que agora, tipo, eu decorei o que é cada uma, agora foi. (risos). Tinha touch e feel, mas essas aí eu já sabia, por causa das músicas, né, porque tem muito isso... tinha test, eu acho... não sei se é assim que se pronuncia mas é saborear...*

TR: *uhum, taste, very good!*

Alessandra: *Eu sei porque essas eu apliquei em sala de aula, no curso*⁶²

(Excerpt from Alessandra's interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

After listing the words she studied (most of which were highlighted during the vocabulary activities) she declares she made use of the new language somewhere else (in her English course). This was also a contributor for her internalisation of new words, demonstrating the importance of context in making the language meaningful (Hall, 2016).

Similarly, Gabriela, from Italy, provided a comment of her own level of acknowledgement of vocabulary.

TR: *Last thing I wanna ask, did you learn any vocabulary?*

Gabriela: *Actually, can I... (takes the paper for Vocabulary knowledge) Hummm, I know this, the Italian thing, but ahn.. in tune I associated the word in tune with the idea. But I didn't really know the Italian thing. So it was, I think I wrote two [referring to the level of knowledge of the word], maybe because I know the English thing, but in Italian I wouldn't have known... and ahn... slight is like... I really didn't know the, like, in my memories I know. But I can't tell what the word is.*

(Excerpt from Gabriela's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Although Gabriela did not like Rapid Word Recognition, she highlighted the relevance of the Vocabulary Knowledge activity (Appendix M), pointing to metalinguistic perceptions that were important to her. She even recalled the number she designated to words such as “in tune” and “slight” (“2 – I know this word, I can understand it when I see it, but I cannot use it”), acknowledging her understanding in

⁶² “Alessandra: There was destroy, I think (checking her notebook), ah, there was fight, because I confused it with fire, with fight... it seems that now I learned it by heart, which is which, (laughs). There was touch and feel, but these I already knew, because of songs, you know, because there's a lot of that... there was test, I think... I don't know whether the pronunciation is correct, but I know it means to taste.

Researcher: uhummm taste, very good!

Alessandra: I know **because these [words] I used in the classroom, in the course**”.

a context but not yet being able to translate into Italian or using them in a sentence of her own. In fact, she did not use these words in her composition, either. The activity led her to reflect upon her own process of learning.

Fran recalled her learnings in the same way:

“ho imparato il significato di alcune parole che magari ho sentito, però non sapevo il significato. Oppure alcune che non avevo mai sentite, e adesso... cioè, sono un po' più familiare... basta⁶³.”

(Excerpt from Fran's interview – Italy, 27th March, 2023)

When I asked her for examples of words, she moved on and talked about the importance of the text for the reading of the words – which is discussed in the next subsection, where I observe the importance of making use of the language learnt in their composition.

In this section, I aimed at presenting some of the learners' past experiences, as well as some of their more general impressions of the lesson in terms of language learning – without focusing, yet, on the literary “outcomes”. As the reader observed, their “negatives” include boredom and frustration, usually related to assessment issues, but mainly with the feeling that they did not know enough or were not learning. From this sample, we are able to recognise the importance of engaging learners' ZPDs in several ways – thus addressing their differences and preferences. Challenge is important: if you know the vocabulary, you'll be challenged by the excitement of the game, nevertheless.

⁶³ “I learned the meaning of some words that I may have heard, but I didn't know the meaning. Or some that I had never heard of, and now... I mean, I'm a little more familiar... that's it”.

4.2 EXPERIENCING THE LESSONS AND EXPERIENCING LITERATURE

This section aims to present, in more detail, how students described their own experiences in the lessons in a more subjective manner, whereas as I explained in the introduction, the initial aim of this thesis was to delve into learners' emotions. Although this is not the main focus anymore, emotions are always there, in the process of development, which led me dedicate a section to highlight and discuss some episodes identified in the data, regarding their comments on the lessons.

4.2.1 Students' experiences in learning: tapping into their *perezhivaniya* and ZPDs

*“Não tem experiência negativa porque sempre gostei das aulas de inglês.⁶⁴”
Brandon, when recalling negative experiences in English class – Brazil*

Students' lived experiences, or their *perezhivanie*, might be inferred from the way they express their preferences. In this section, the topic of emotions will be brought as an aspect of their personal impressions – as emotions are, after all, the basis of our action (or inaction) (Maturana, 2002), which is what makes us develop. Two answers in the initial questionnaire – the one on stated by Brandon on the epigraph and the following – demonstrate that:

*“Assim eu não gosto de falar inglês, na escola tinham provas orais de inglês e na pronúncia eu não sou nada boa.⁶⁵” (Grace)
(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil)*

Both respondents were answering the same question: “Describe a negative experience you can recall from your English classes in the past”. Whereas Brandon could not name a negative experience because he *likes* the subject (which might make him overlook any disinteresting activity he might have faced), Grace associated her low proficiency in speaking practice to “I don't like speaking English”. Grace's answer, as well as relating to the previously discussed issue of being given a task that is ahead of her ZPD, demonstrates that these are the experiences that might lead students to

⁶⁴ There is no negative experience because I have always enjoyed English classes”.

⁶⁵ “Well, I don't like speaking English; there were oral tests at school and I am not good at all in pronunciation”.

be resistant to *liking* English. After all, to be forced to speak English can cause embarrassment to beginning or shy learners (Dewaele *et al.*, 2017)– which leads to disliking the whole experience with the language.

This indicates, of course, that embarrassment is seen as a “negative” emotion. Embarrassment can be considered a bad experience to be in, but an emotion traditionally seen as “negative” does not always disengage students. Important studies conducted by Barbara Fredrickson (mentioned by Keltner; Oatley; Jenkins, 2014) and her theories on Positive Psychology have been developed, criticising the excessive focus given to “negative emotions” in research, and stating the relevance of “positive emotions” such as joy, amusement, contentment, and relief as essential to broaden and build human resources (Dewaele *et al.*, 2017; Keltner; Oatley; Jenkins, 2014; Kushkiev, 2019). Her 3-to-1 ratio, in which every negative emotion needs three positive ones as counterpart, is reasonable and practical. Although I understand and agree with these claims, the establishment of an emotion as “positive” or “negative” as a pattern seems excessively Cartesian. This is because a so-called “negative” emotion, although producing the same immediate bodily response, might lead to a different *action*. Such an action can be constructive or unconstructive, as Rosiek (2003, p. 407) puts it:

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

To present one example, this means that Gabriela’s frustration with the Rapid Word Recognition exercise does not mean she did not accomplish the task: frustration was constructive, she did her best, nevertheless. Rosiek (2003, p. 399) wisely demonstrates the interrelation of emotions and the process of learning:

Learning is not simply about comprehending the abstract content of ideas; it is about discovering ourselves in relation to new ideas. It involves surprise, revelation, delight, and sometimes outrage. It requires the cultivation of felt appreciations. It sometimes involves risking exposure, humiliation, or changes in beliefs that give us comfort. When education has happened well, we do not simply emerge knowing the world; we also come to love, resent, endure, care, and be thrilled about things in ways we did not before.

Rosiek (2003) shows how emotions shift and process our views of the world, and how experiences are meaningful. Resenting something or exposing oneself to certain situations might be uncomfortable, but the outcome can be constructive. This is, after all, based on how the individual *refracted* the experience, and on how this affects her *perezhivanie* in its particular manner (Fleer; Rey; Veresov, 2017; Lantolf; Swain, 2019).

In this perspective, the same event lived by Grace in her speaking tests can cause embarrassment or anxiety to many learners – however, this emotion can lead to different outcomes. She feels repelled by the language learning process; some might take this embarrassment as a challenge to develop more, as it happened in an example brought by Swain, Kinnear and Steinman (2015). This is due to their specific *perezhivanyia* (the term in plural form). In either way, it is not reasonable to simply state that an emotion is positive or negative. I will then adopt the classification of constructive or unconstructive emotions.

Having clarified this issue of the interpretation of positive and/or negative emotions, I now present some recollections on constructive experiences in EAL classes that learners mentioned in the first questionnaire (prior to the lessons). Respondents did not grasp that they should be specific on their answers. Thus, I highlight Amália's answer:

“Quando eu fui uma das alunas com a nota mais alta na prova, isso foi uma conquista para mim eu me senti muito feliz.”⁶⁶ (Amália)
(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Brazil)

Amália's answer, resembling Alfred's joy with his grade⁶⁷, in Italy, can be opposed to Katherine's disinterest, that was discussed in section 4.1. Katherine mentioned her sadness for not being able to learn the language, “even though I went well in the tests, after all. Because of that, I unfortunately developed a huge **disinterest** for the subject, for I was having great difficulties”.

This is an example of how an individual's *perezhivanie* refracts the same social experience (that is, a good grade in a test) very differently. Amália considers herself of intermediate proficiency and has studied in language courses outside school⁶⁸ – this

⁶⁶ “When I was one of the students with the higher grade in the exam, that was an award for me and I felt very happy”.

⁶⁷ “When I got 8 in the grade it made me feel good”, he recalled.

⁶⁸ According to her answers to the questionnaire.

means she probably had more tools to study and develop her English skills. Her higher grade is an affirmation of her effort and dedication in something she feels she is good at. Katherine, on the other hand, did not study outside of school and the classes seemed to be too pushy for her – her results in the test did not “compensate” for the excessive struggle she seemed to be facing to comprehend her teacher and the language.

[...] the same social environment is not only refracted through, and therefore impacts on, different individuals in different ways, but that the same environment is refracted through the same individual in different ways at different phases of the individual’s development (Lantolf; Swain, 2019, p. 88).

Lantolf and Swain (2019) explain how a same situation may be experienced differently in a different moment in our lives. This means that, in the future, it is possible that Katherine’s response to a good grade in a test changes for better, and she will also be able also experience joy from it. This will not be necessarily due to a great “advance” in English knowledge, but to a range of experiences and constructive emotions that allow her to go along her ZPD and recognize her own development. In the same questionnaire, she also claimed: “Eu também tenho um desejo muito grande, que é voltar a entender a língua inglesa; pensando nisso já estou pensando em estratégias⁶⁹”. This demonstrates her willingness to change her bad feelings about language, perhaps because she has changed her school and sees that there might be different approaches to it. She also states “getting back to understanding the language”, as something she had once been more competent at. Her feedback on the classes taught during this research also seem optimistic:

“Primeiramente, eu tive um conhecimento muito grande de vocabulário com várias novas expressões; é uma música calma e muito reflexiva, a qual me passou um sentimento de tranquilidade e paz, porém achei ela muito repetitiva. Eu consegui entender bem as atividades e adorei, pois eram envolventes e muito práticas (...).⁷⁰”
(Katherine)

(Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Brazil)

⁶⁹ I have this huge desire to get back to understanding English language; thinking of that, I am already considering strategies”.

⁷⁰ “First of all, I had huge acknowledgement regarding vocabulary with many new expressions; it is a calm and thoughtful song, that brought me a feeling of tranquillity and Peace, however, I found it very repetitive. I was able to understand the activities well and I loved it, because they were immersive and very practical”.

It is possible to infer that the proposed activities caused a positive effect in Katherine's perception of English and her learning, as she said she reached "knowledge" of new vocabulary and expressions, together with *feelings*. She seems joyful saying she was able to *understand* the activities – an element she recalled as problematic along her past four years studying English at school. She was honest to say the negative aspects of the proposal as well, which demonstrates that she felt at ease to do so by the end of the term. Her optimism (that was already present in the previous questionnaire) was reassured along the meetings. It is possible to infer a transformation in her *perezhivanie* regarding her experiences in English classes. As teachers, this is our great objective: to have students engaged in the process of learning.

In the writing of poetry, emotions also arise: in a previous research quoted by Hanauer (2012), who proposes the concept of *meaningful* literacy as form of literacy conveyed through literature and poetry writing, identified from his own corpora that, in poetry compositions, emotions (identified in the lexicon) emerged much more: "from the perspective of the emotional lexicon, this poetry is emotive and expresses the emotional lives of these students" (Hanauer, 2012, p. 112). This points to yet another advantage in exploring this specific composition form with learners of a new language.

Fran, in Italy, provided important feedback on her experience with writing her poem:

[...]

Fran: Sì, è stato anche quello molto utile [scrivere la poesia]... mi è venuto un po' difficile, cioè, allora, spiegare il significato di quella poesia che ho scritto, mi è venuto facile. Però **proprio scrivere la poesia, inventare, scrivere un testo, una poesia... non lo so, mi è venuto un po' difficile...** in parte ci ho messo un po' più tempo, però...

TR: Cioè, è stato diverso...

Fran: Sì, sì, è stato diverso. È stato magari un po' più impegnativo ma in modo positivo, perché **proprio tu dovevi pensare in quella lingua.**

TR: Ah! Bellissimo! [sorrindo] Era questo l'obiettivo [Fran mi aiuta con la giusta pronuncia della parola] di questo esercizio. Pensare nella lingua... e anche nei sentimenti.⁷¹

⁷¹ **Fran:** Yes, it was also very useful [writing the poem]... it came a little difficult for me, that is, then, explaining the meaning of that poem I wrote, it came easy to me. But just writing the poem, inventing, writing a text, a poem... I don't know, it was a bit difficult for me... in part it took me a little longer, but...

TR: I mean, it was different...

Fran: Yes, yes, it was different. **It was perhaps a little more challenging but in a positive way, because you actually had to think in that language.**

TR: Oh! Beautiful! [I smile] This was the objective [Fran helps me with the correct pronunciation of the word] of this exercise. Thinking in language... and also in feelings.

[...]

(Excerpt from Fran's interview – Italy, March, 27th, 2023)

Fran explains that it has been difficult, demanding, to write a poem in English – but in a “positive” way, because she had to *think* in English. This comment elucidates the whole purpose of this research, and I will break it down in two parts. The first one relates to her facing “difficulty”. She stated that writing the poem was difficult, but she also enjoyed the activity, which indicates it was developed inside her ZPD – challenging enough to be engaging, but not too challenging as to make her demotivated.

Her additional comment – that the activity was “demanding” because you had to “*think* in that language” was a present for me as a teacher: she is able to state her process of developing the new language to the level of thinking in it, developing her linguistic awareness. Thus, the proposal of this activity engaged her “imitation” process precisely, when they were invited to “imitate” some words from the original text into a new one created by them. Imitation is here related to attributing a personal meaning to words, in the target language. And, for Vygotsky, you are only able to imitate, that is, when you use, or try to use, the new word, when you are already in the process of learning (Newman; Holzman, 2002). This means it is not a mere mechanical process. Fran's thinking in English also hints to her full engagement in the activity, as it required the creation of something new, something hers, with the language. This is development through meaningful literacy (Hanauer, 2012).

Veronica mentioned the same:

TR: *Ok, hai imparato un po' di parole nuove... (...) non hai mai fatto qualcosa così, nelle lezioni d'inglese, o di altre lingue che ha imparato?*

Veronica: *No.*

TR: *Questo per me è interessante... e pensi che sia diverso? Hai imparato qualcosa facendo questo esercizio? Diverso delle altre attività d'inglese?*

Veronica: *Beh, forse ho imparato un po'... un po' a pensare in inglese... cioè, nel senso... cioè quando pensavo, anzi che pensando in italiano, pensavo in inglese, come mettere insieme queste parole e.... [risi] e basta.⁷²*

⁷² **TR:** *Ok, you've learned a few new words... (...) have you never done something like this, in your English lessons, or other languages you've learned?*

Veronica: *No.*

TR: *This is interesting to me... and do you think this is different? Did you learn anything by doing this exercise? Different from other English activities?*

(Excerpt from Veronica's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Veronica is more experienced in writing poetry in another language (she is Ukrainian but writes it in Russian); this means the targeted text format, the subjective language into text, is not so challenging for her ZPD. The challenge was to do it in English, a language that she does not dominate completely, yet. Her description of the process, of stating that she had *learnt* how to do it, is very precise: “Instead of thinking in Italian, I was thinking in English, on how to put the words together”. Her engagement (this time motivated by her personal interest in writing poetry) is seen in the details she gives. Fran and Veronica were able to put English into their inner speech, with the purpose of writing a meaningful message. This demonstrates their linguistic awareness.

Julian, another non-native speaker of Italian, also indicated the writing of poetry in English as the new element, praising it as a way of learning something new:

TR: E ti sei sentito di fare questa attività?

*Julian: Sembra una nuova cose, perché non ho mai usato l'inglese per scrivere una poesia, una parola che in inglese, **con parole mie**. Tipo, scrivere in inglese per me va bene, però se usa la parola che si mette qua, cioè, **costruire le nuove frasi, per me è, comunque interessante per me**. Sempre imparare le nuove cose.*

TR: Ah, questo è una novità per te, non hai mai fatto?

Julian: Sì, mai!

TR: E per la poesia in generale, hai scritto già, in inglese?

Julian: Cioè imparare l'inglese è una cosa normale, però scrivere poesia, scrivere una tema, è diverso, perché non ho mai fatto. Per questo cioè mai provato una cosa...⁷³

(Excerpt from Julian's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

For Julian, it was new to use “words of his own”, and write poetry, which he stated as something interesting for him. Fran, Julian and Veronica seemed interested and motivated by the challenge of writing, in the terms of the SCHAT, where “motivation

Veronica: Well, **maybe I learned a little... a little to think in English...** that is, in the sense... that is, when I thought, or rather that when thinking in Italian, I thought in English, how to put these words together and... (laughter) and that's it.

⁷³ **TR:** And did you feel like doing this activity?

Julian: It seems like a new thing, because I've never used English to write a poem, a word in English, in my own words. Like, writing in English is fine for me, but if you use the word you put here, that is, to construct new sentences, it's still interesting for me. Always learning new things.

TR: Ah, this is new for you, you've never done it?

Julian: Yes, never!

TR: And for poetry in general, have you ever written this, in English?

Julian: I mean learning English is a normal thing, but writing poetry, writing on a topic, is different, because I've never done it. That's why I've never tried anything...

is a consequence of learning” (Newman; Holzman, 2002, p. 77), and not the other way around. They felt they were learning, they felt motivated to accomplish. Through writing, they creatively imitated language in the Vygotskian (Vygotsky, 2009) unity of thinking-speaking (in this case, perhaps thinking-inner speaking, that leads to writing) in the new language.

It is commonly said that one should *think* in the language one wants to learn – although for Vygotsky the correct term would be *think-speak*, as these two form a unity (Holzman, 2020; Vygotsky, 2009). For Fran and Veronica, this perception emerged out of their own analysis of their learning (the process of thinking-speaking about the lesson might have made them realize this). Thinking-speaking in the language was spontaneously motivated by the activity, in their case.

But the concept of *thinking* in another language appeared in a more negative sense in the initial questionnaire, as a negative experience in the English class:

“Quando mi ha detto la mia prof delle medie che avessi dovuto cambiare lingua quando ragiono.”⁷⁴ (Daniel)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

I took a while to understand what Daniel was referring to. But his statement seem to indicate that his teacher had suggested he should change language (to English, I suppose) when he is thinking, as a means to developing the language. He stated this as something negative, possibly because, by consciously *trying* to do so, without the necessary tools (the aimed scaffolds their environment should provide), he did not feel able – which led him to feel frustrated.

Daniel, who is of intermediate proficiency, indicated as a *positive* experience, on the other hand, when the teacher at elementary school made a dialog with him in English, and the other colleagues could not understand them:

“Quando la maestra delle elementari ha fatto un dialogo con me solo in inglese e gli altri non capivano”⁷⁵. (Daniel)

(Data extracted from answers to the initial questionnaire – Italy)

This means two things: he is able to *think-speak* English, at least at some level, for he was able to have a conversation; the teacher’s imposition to *think* in English,

⁷⁴ “When my middle school teacher told me that I had to change my language when I think”.

⁷⁵ “When the primary school teacher had a conversation with me only in English and the others didn't understand”.

years later, caused him some sort of impression – as in Veresov’s (2017) dramatic event. In this case, it seems this was an unconstructive emotion. In fact, Daniel did not show up for the forthcoming lessons, neither responded any of the other activities. Although we cannot claim that his absence is due to demotivation to participate or learn English, we can grasp how teachers’ words might leave an impact, and how the development of “thinking-speaking” in English is a result of a series of stages along the learners’ ZPDs: it cannot be consciously imposed, but suggested through tasks, scaffolded towards self-regulation.

The next subsection discusses specific moments in data where participants’ emotions (one of the initial focuses of this research) are observed and analysed, together with their motivation to learn. I decided to maintain them as they are relevant evidence of the positive impacts of certain interactions.

4.2.2 An analysis on learners’ emotions and motivation

One of the initial objectives of this research was to observe whether there were transformations in participants’ narratives, as regards to their motivation to learn English and the literacy development, due to the contact with the literary text.

In Brazil, Alessandra and Beatriz provided a good opportunity to observe the different ways in which a class can be experienced by a student. Their interviews were longer (around 20 minutes each), which allowed deeper development of the questions. In general, both enjoyed the lessons, but their highlights were very diverse. To identify to what extent they were able to memorize the “lived experiences” in class meetings 4 and 5, the first question was what they could recall from them.

Alessandra (basic level of proficiency) was more towards the feeling of being **engaged** in the process, highlighting that she relaxed from other concerns during class.

“eu lembro das duas últimas aulas, porque elas foram bastante interativas, eu gostei bastante... e eu tava tipo (...) meu Deus do céu! [risos] O mundo ia cair. (...) E daí foi muito legal com as aulas assim porque sei lá, a gente se distrai, a gente esquece naqueles minutos, que tu tem uma montoeira de coisas pra fazer (...) foi umas coisas diferentes que fazem a gente esquecer um pouco.”⁷⁶

⁷⁶ ““I remember the last two classes, because they were very interactive, I really liked it... and I was like (...) my God! [laughs] The world was going to fall. (...) And then it was really cool with classes like that because I don't know, we get distracted, we forget in those minutes, that you have a lot of things to do (...) it was a few different things that make us forget a little”.

(Excerpt from Alessandra's interview – Brazil, 11th October, 2021)

Beatriz pointed to the use of the song:

“E gostei porque, com a música, a gente praticou todos eles [as quatro habilidades], sabe, e não só ‘ah, vamos ouvir a música’. Eu achei isso interessante, sabe, a gente trabalhou tudo isso de uma maneira bem espontânea, sabe. Isso que eu me lembro, assim, que eu gostei”.

“A gente fez um passo a passo.”⁷⁷

(Excerpt from Beatriz's interview – Brazil, 11th October, 2021)

Data provided through the questionnaires did not offer such deep information about students. Interviewees were already engaged as language students, so this was not so evident. They revealed that their public-school context provided classes that were not so engaging, at times, and Beatriz noted that this was due to the lack of engagement of the students, in general. She said one of the emotions provided by our classes was “surprise” because we managed to develop the class exercising the four ‘skills’ (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). This focus on skills seems to be an influence of her language course. Her surprise, according to her, was because she did not have this type of practice in the other school.

Beatriz's naming of “surprise” relates to a specific question in the interview. They were invited to name the emotions they recalled when thinking of our classes according to Plutchik's (1980) eight basic emotions: joy, anger, surprise, anticipation, fear, sadness, trust and disgust⁷⁸. I took advantage of the list and elicited, with them, how these emotions were said both in English and in Portuguese, and they took note. The first emotion they named was “joy⁷⁹” (and this answer, of course, brought me much joy).

Their reasons to feel joy are of relevance:

⁷⁷ “And I liked it because, with music, we practiced all of them [the four skills], you know, and not just ‘ah, let's listen to the song. I found this interesting, you know, we worked on all this in a very spontaneous way, you know. That's what I remember, that's what I liked”. “We did it step by step”.

⁷⁸ As previously explained, one of the objectives of this research was, originally, to tap into learners' emotions. Although this is not the main focus anymore, their answers and the analysis are still relevant for the overall research.

⁷⁹ Prior to giving the eight words, I also asked how they felt in the classes. Beatriz chose “satisfied” and Alessandra chose “happy”, which relates to the expression of joy.

*“[...] é legal você, por exemplo, tu ter, tu ser introduzida num assunto, pra depois praticar ele e viu, **poxa eu aprendi tal palavra!** Tipo, não precisa acertar todas, mas uma, em si, sabe.⁸⁰”*

(Excerpt from Beatriz’s interview – Brazil, October 11th, 2021)

*“Eu fiquei muito **feliz** e veio aquela sensação de tipo ‘cara, **eu aprendi alguma coisa, então vamos continuar que com o tempo a gente... a gente consegue**’, sabe. Porque às vezes eu penso assim... caramba, aquilo eu não sei, aquilo eu também não sei, e aquilo lá eu sei menos ainda (risos). E daí a gente fica naquilo, assim. E eu tava... bom, naquela semana eu recebi a nota ruim de química, então, eu tava muito pistola (risos). E aí foi bom, assim, a gente se sente melhor até, pensa, ‘**pô, eu aprendi, então vamos continuar**’⁸¹”*

(Excerpt from Alessandra’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

As with Fran and Veronica, in Italy, Alessandra described, more precisely, the relationship between motivation and learning: by realising she had learnt something new, she feels compelled (motivated) to continue. Motivation is, indeed, a *result* of learning (Newman, Holzman, 2002). Her optimism helped her change focus from things she doesn’t know (something usually deconstructive) to observe things she’s able to learn, through her ZPD.

Whereas Beatriz named “surprise” as the second emotion, Alessandra chose “anticipation” (I related the word to “anxiety”, for better understanding). She explained:

“E eu ficava... não era ansiedade por causa das coisas, mas eu ficava, ‘aí, eu queria outra aula (risos) pra continuar’. Era isso, eu acho⁸².”

(Excerpt from Alessandra’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

Their reports demonstrate how the sense of accomplishment is important for engagement to endure. Both felt *joy*, and demonstrated motivation, because they felt they were learning something new, and I understand this is due to the way the activities were planned: they could self-assess their learning, because they were gamified (Quizizz and Quizlet). Students were also being accompanied by us, teachers, along

⁸⁰ “[...] it is nice when you, for example, you are introduced to a topic, to practice after and then ‘wow, I learned that word!’ Like, you don’t have to get them all right, but just one, you know”.

⁸¹ “I was very **happy** and that sensation of ‘dude, **I learnt something**, so let’s keep it up and with time we... we can do it’, you know. Because sometimes I think like that... wow, I don’t know that, neither that, and that one I know even less (laughs). And we keep on that. And I was... well, I got a bad grade in chemistry, so I was angry as hell (laughs). And it was good, like, we even feel better, and think ‘**wow, I learnt it, so let’s keep it up**’.”

⁸² “And I was... it wasn’t anxiety because of things, but I was like ‘oh, I’d like another class (laugh) to continue this’. That was it, I think”.

the process of all activities, with constant interaction. These are positive aspects regarding the mediation strategies chosen. The gamified activities also demanded on-the-spot dedication, and it did not give time for Alessandra to think about her grades in Chemistry – she was required to be focused on the tasks. Thus, the activities were successful in promoting engagement and constructive emotions, such as joy and even anticipation for the interviewed participants: for Alessandra, the latter referred to the feeling of wanting more of this type of lesson.

Both for Alessandra and Beatriz, what they feel indicates enjoyment due to the engaging process of learning being developed. They described how they felt and what they liked, even though I did not direct the question this way: I simply asked what they remembered. This also happened in Italy, and, from the extracts presented in this thesis, we can observe that there were, many times, indicatives of “disliking” some things, or even nervousness (out of timed activities, out of the challenge of poetry writing). Nevertheless, this did not seem to impede their engagement in the activities proposed.

In this sense, I quote Lantolf and Swain (2019, p. 103):

The point of paying attention to learner perezhivanie is not to help them avoid negative feelings about learning and to ensure that learning experiences are always pleasurable and non-threatening. Indeed, [...] development emerged precisely from the catharsis arising from confronting and over-coming threatening emotional circumstances.

Thus, acknowledging students’ emotions, by recognising that all of them are important for their development, is relevant when the teaching-learning practice aims for the construction of a “whole” human being. Considering the previous discussion about constructive emotions, Alessandra and Beatriz’s surprise with the engagement provided by the activities also led them to a motivational impulse to keep on with their dedication, because learning was happening.

This section shows that, other than feeling demotivated by the challenge of writing poetry, they felt eager to accomplish a task that was new and that brought them to think in English. This is further developed in the following sections.

4.3 LITERATURE, LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNER DEVELOPMENT

(...)
“All that is now
And all that is gone
All that’s to come
And everything under the sun is in tune
But the sun is eclipsed by the moon”
Eclipse – Pink Floyd

“eu acho que ela não tem, tipo, um conceito, tipo, ‘ah, literatura é isso’. Até porque, tipo, é criatividade, né. Eu acho⁸³.”
Beatriz, defining literature

This section presents a deeper analysis of the interaction between the students and the literary text, along the two classes I delivered. To start this, I refer to the epigraph of this section – an extract from the lyrics that were worked with on these meetings. Towards the end of the final lesson, students were invited to choose their favourite lines from the lyrics, explain what they felt and develop their own composition. These procedures were the same in Brazil and in Italy, with the difference – that perhaps affected the final compositions very much – that in 2021, in Brazil, the whole proposal was made online, and in Italy, they were in a group, in the classroom.

Although literature has been reduced in regular curricula (as most Humanities have, in Brazil), there is no doubt of its relevance in human history. As stated in the introduction and discussed in chapter 2, Literature consists of an artistic manifestation, seen here as any poetic, fictional, or dramatic form in any societal level and produced by any culture (Candido, 2011). It is a cultural artifact and a fact of language (Jouve, 2012), as well as an act of communication (Hall, 2016) with specific features that differentiate it from other types of texts because it requires *sensations* that lead to *fruition* (Zinani; Santos, 2012); to define in a word, its *humanizing* power is thoroughly observed (Candido, 2011; Contreras; Delacroix, 2019; Hanauer, 2012; Troian, 2023; Troian; Seerig, 2020) It explores the *imaginative* function of language (as well as the other arts do, in the aesthetic or humorous sense): more specifically, its functions may

⁸³ “I think there isn’t, like, a concept, like ‘oh, that’s literature. Even because, like, it’s creativity, right? That’s what I think”.

be ludic (it promotes pleasure), cognitive (it builds knowledge of a given objective or psychological reality), cathartic (purifying feelings) and pragmatic (identifying an ideology) (D'onofrio, 1995). It is, of course, already difficult to access all these realms of the literary text in the first language; in second language, many other challenges must be overcome (Paran, 2010; Urbanski, 2023). In an SCHAT perspective,

[...] the first tentative implication of cultural psychology for education is that more attention should be paid to the literary creative process as a paradigm of human understanding. Literature should be used not only as a source of information, images, and ideas but also as a specific method of representation and thinking (Kozulin, 1998, p. 140).

This indicates to what extent the literary text can reach – and represent – the human mind and the relevance of providing students with such contact: not only as a passive reader, but as a producer, a co-constructor of this language (as we will develop further). In the initial questionnaire, respondents were asked whether they have had contact with literary texts before in English classes. Eleven out of fifteen learners from Brazil, indicated they did not have this contact (Karen said teachers did not bring texts to class, “only grammar”), and would like to have the experience. Among the reasons for that, it is “muito importante aprender palavras/expressões novas e a cultura de falantes da língua inglesa⁸⁴”, explained Beatriz.

In Italy, only four out of 22 learners mentioned they recalled reading literature in English at school. Albert and Sarah read books that were “for children” or “very simple”. Kosar recalled reading Shakespeare and enjoying it very much. George also mentioned reading books in English both in primary and initial middle school. Michelle and Sam claimed they'd like to have this contact (“sarebbe bello per acculturarmi e per sapere se ne sarei capace⁸⁵”, explains Michelle); whereas Mateus and Marlon did not have such an interest (“non leggo nemmeno in Italiano⁸⁶”, wrote Marlon).

Amália's answer to the question indicates that to work with literature, you must somehow go beyond “basic”: “Não tive muito contato com textos literários em inglês na escola, só aprendíamos o básico⁸⁷.” This is a belief (or else, as posed by Bland, 2018, a myth), that is perpetrated by many teachers, who understand that students

⁸⁴ In English: “very important to learn new words/expressions and the culture of English language speakers”.

⁸⁵ “It would be nice for me to culturize myself and to see whether I'd be able [to read literature in English]”

⁸⁶ “I do not even read in Italian”.

⁸⁷ “I didn't have much contact with literary texts at school; we only learned the basics”.

must reach a certain proficiency level to grasp literature. However, in my personal experience, I have found that when the language and text are properly scaffolded for the student (as suggested by Spiro, 2010, and many others), they will be able to comprehend and interpret it.

Important to point that Amália's concept of "basic" might also relate to the level of depth that you can go as regards to learning a language in cultural terms – not only to the level of proficiency. This is exemplified by Margaret. She indicated that she had the contact with literature but "Não foi uma experiência muito boa, pois era abordado apenas a interpretação textual sem nenhuma explicação⁸⁸." This is probably due to inadequate scaffolding – only recently research is investigating what tasks work better for literary texts in language learning (Paran, 2008). When she mentions "text interpretation", she must probably be referring to "comprehension" questions, with very objective, language focused activities. As previously discussed, comprehension questions are also relevant, but we should not limit the literary text to this. Such "interpretation questions" can also be seen as "basic", in the sense that the teacher does not offer room to dive deeper into the literary object and develop what we understand as literary literacy, where the reader interprets (adds something to) the text, instead of being only a passive container in relation to the text (Paran, Wallace, 2016). Either way, "providing adequate direction and clear scaffolding is vital. This scaffolding may be provided by a textbook or a reader, but more often than not, it is provided by the teacher (...)" (Paran, 2008). Additionally, such scaffolding must not address vocabulary, only. Bland (2018) reminds us that only language proficiency is not enough to comprehend and interpret a literary text. We must provide students with some background knowledge and allow them to bring their own (Paran; Robinson, 2016).

In the final questionnaire, after the lessons were delivered, one of the questions asked again whether students had had similar activities in school. This time (after experiencing the "poem" that turned out to be a song), other perceptions were recalled, pointing out to tasks that did not seem to work out well, or were "superficial":

⁸⁸ "It was not a good experience because only textual interpretation was approached, without any explanation".

“Sim, ainda no ensino fundamental eu me lembro de uma aula onde estudamos a música ‘Imagine’, dos Beatles, porém foi trabalhada de uma forma mais superficial em comparação a eclipse do Pink Floyd.⁸⁹” (Katherine)

“Já trabalhei na minha antiga escola basicamente era traduzir e responder as perguntas⁹⁰.” (Brandon)

“Já tinha trabalhado alguma coisa, mas pouco. Fiz apenas algumas traduções sem trabalhar muito o vocabulário.⁹¹” (Alessandra)

(Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Brazil)

Once again, these answers indicate a major focus on the “comprehension” questions that are traditionally asked, and the translation method. By “comprehension questions”, I refer to those that remain on the first layer of the text, as exemplified by Katherine. In this proposal, the idea was to go beyond the “superficial”, by asking for their *interpretation*, after the comprehension/translation of the text. Katherine was able to notice the difference. Comprehension questions, as opposed to interpretative ones that lead to literacy, as explained by Paran and Robinson (2016), and translation techniques, are not bad approaches; the problem is to remain there. This points to the importance of the tasks proposed by the teacher when students interact with the text. Teacher’s scaffolding is relevant in two manners: “One is how the task is set up; the second is how the teacher reacts to the way the discussion is going, providing scaffolding as and when it is needed” (Paran, 2008). This, of course, requires opening up for a discussion, the proper interpretation of the text, that did not seem to happen in the cases mentioned above. The moment of discussion will be further analysed in the following sections.

In Italy, Kosar and Aline identified the work with a song as something similar to the other classes they had along the year, but others pointed to the things that differ – Claire and Alfred explained that it was the first time they wrote a text. George and Michelle highlighted that there was a different (non-Italian) teacher who made them speak more in English. Fran analysed it further:

⁸⁹ “Yes, still in elementary school I remember a class where we studied the song ‘Imagine’, by the Beatles (sic), but it was worked on in a more superficial way compared to Pink Floyd’s Eclipse”

⁹⁰ “I worked (with song/literature) at my previous school, basically translating and answering questions”.

⁹¹ “I had already worked on something, but little. I only did a few translations without working much on the vocabulary”.

“Questa è stata la mia prima esperienza in cui una persona adulta proveniente da un altro paese venisse in classe a parlare. Credo che la classe, anche se ci sono state difficoltà nell’apprendimento, sia stata partecipe e un po’ meno annoiata⁹²” (Fran)
(Data extracted the final questionnaire – Italy)

Fran’s comment on the reduction of boredom might lead us to claim that activities promoted did, at some level, provide engagement along learner’s ZPD and thus, some level of development. Another important point Fran makes (that was brought by other students, like Ernest and Gabriela, during the interviews) is the fact that the teacher was a foreigner: this could have interfered very much in their engagement, as this provided a new experience that goes beyond a simple change in methodology. She commented on that during the interview:

Fran (...): Poi ho visto che la classe ha partecipato molto di più! In rispetto alle lezioni normali, sì!

TR: Ah, questo è bello sapere!

Fran: Sì! Anche se c’era un po’ casino ogni tanto, però... eravamo molto più concentrati, con una persona diversa dal professore. In ogni tanto ci sta.

(...)

TR: Ok, pensi, così che, la classe, il gruppo, era un po’ collaborativa perché c’era un’altra persona?

Fran: Sì, un’altra persona che, parlando quella lingua, ha coinvolto tutti.

TR: Ok, sono contenta!⁹³ (...)

(Excerpt from Fran’s interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Fran, 16 years old (the oldest student in the group in Italy) was the only one who commented on the behaviour of the group of students, in Italy. In Brazil, Beatriz made that point, when she said that “I think that everyone tried to collaborate and this... changed the way we learnt”. Fran observed that her colleagues were more *focused*, instead of *bored* – which was something the head professor, Mr. M., said after the first lesson of the project. She also stated the use of the English language as a way of

⁹² “This was my first experience of having an adult from another country come to class and speak. I believe that the class, even if there were difficulties in learning, was involved and a little less bored”.

⁹³ **Fran:** (...) Then I saw that the class participated much more! Compared to normal lessons, yes!

TR: Ah, that’s good to know!

Fran: Yes! Even if there was a bit of a mess every now and then, however... **we were much more concentrated**, with a different person than the professor. Every now and then it’s there.

(...)

TR: Ok, do you think, so, that the class, the group, was a bit collaborative because there was another person?

Fran: Yes, another **person who, speaking that language, involved everyone.**

TR: Ok, I’m happy! (...)

getting students more involved. Indeed, during the lesson, I felt they were really engaged into communicating with me, but this was not only due to the lesson. Together with Beatriz's words, we grasp that the activities have also promoted interaction and (precisely in the SCHAT terms) learning. Through Fran's speech, I was reminded that their interest was also on the novelty of the idea of having a foreign teacher with them. Students are usually more attentive, less "messy" with a new teacher, in general.

The same learner, when asked what she had learnt, brought a more holistic view of the lesson, by highlighting the connection between the vocabulary exercises and the text:

TR: *Hai imparato qualcosa di nuovo (..)? Ti ricordi parole nuove... qualcosa di diverso...*

Fran: *Beh, ho imparato il significato di alcune parole che magari ho sentito, però non sapevo il significato. Oppure alcune che non avevo mai sentite, e adesso... cioè, sono un po' più familiare... basta.*

TR: *Ricordi qualche esempio...? Puoi vedere...(Fran guarda il materiale)*

Fran: *(...) però il fatto che è stata collegata un po' con la canzone, è stata una cosa che mi ha... è stata molto bella... perché la canzone, soprattutto ultima parte, l'ultima frasi, ma anche tutta, parla di, non so, io (...) come un sentimento, poi la luna è sempre vista in un modo un po'... sentimentale, secondo me.. quindi associare la parola con la canzone è stato molto, molto bello.⁹⁴*

(Excerpt from Fran's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

When Fran states that she enjoyed how the "word" relates to the song, she acknowledges the purpose of the pre-reading exercise with the vocabulary. Perhaps more importantly, she interrupts her analysis to state how the lyrics resonate with her: she presents her more subjective perceptions of the song, stating the moon is viewed in a sentimental way. These are episodes of literary literacy (Cosson, 2015), and *meaningful* literacy (Hanauer, 2012), when she was able to grasp deep meanings from the text, creating a personal connection with it, making her analysis possible.

⁹⁴ **TR:** Did you learn anything new (..)? Do you remember new words... something different...

Fran: Well, I learned the meaning of some words that I may have heard, but I didn't know the meaning. Or some that I had never heard of, and now... I mean, I'm a little more familiar... that's it.

TR: Do you remember any examples...? You can see...(Fran looks at the material)

Fran: (...) **but the fact that it was connected a little with the song, was something that made me... it was very beautiful...** because the song, especially the last part, the last sentences, but also the whole thing, speaks of, I don't know, I (...) like a feeling, then the moon is always seen in a somewhat... sentimental way, in my opinion... so associating the word with the song was very, very beautiful".

The next section aims at further discussing such literacy episodes, as made evident by the use of their first/host language (L1/HL) and English by participants, as well as the importance of not only reading, but *talking* literature.

4.3.1 Literacies and the use of host and additional languages in literature-engaged activities

As stated in the methodology section, classes mixed Portuguese and English, in Brazil, and Italian and English, in Italy, and it is understood, in SCHAT, that learners' L1 (or, in the case of Italy, the common language amongst learners and teacher, Italian) is required by less proficient students as their mediator between the world and their new language (Urbanski, 2023). Thus, L1/HL episodes were aimed at helping students understand tasks that are more complex, such as instructions and questions (Swain; Lapkin, 2013). In Brazil, in the final stages of both lessons, their answers were also accepted and Portuguese, as content might be too complex for their processing in English (Swain; Lapkin, 2013) The same succeeded in Italy: at a certain point of the lesson, I told them they could express themselves in Italian, and with this I got some more contributions from the group, as demonstrated further below.

To make a brief recall of the final stages of the lessons (thoroughly explained in chapter 3, Tables 11 and 12): these stages included mainly their interpretation regarding the meaning of the lyrics, how they felt about the song and the lyrics themselves, and their explanations on the choices of a favourite line in the song. By suggesting this, the aim is to make them feel compelled to attribute meaning to what they are reading.

4.3.1.1 Importance of *talking* literature

There were important interactions at stage 4 (Table 11), although they were mostly in Portuguese, in Brazil. After making the choice of a favourite line in the lyrics, beautiful analyses came out to justify their choices, during our conversation:

“O Sol é gigante mas a lua apaga ele (...) uma coisa tão grande às vezes não é tão significativa.”⁹⁵ (Alessandra)

⁹⁵ “The sun is giant, but the moon turns it off, (...) and something so big sometimes doesn't mean so much”. A full transcription of this moment was presented in the Methodology section.

(Data extracted from meeting 5 – Brazil, September, 2021)

In a different perspective, Melanie highlighted that “even the sun” may have its bad days: “Mesmo que tudo o que a gente faça esteja conectado, às vezes vai ter dias escuros, ruins, e a gente... se a gente for parar pra pensar, a gente dentro do mundo é (...) muito pequeno.⁹⁶” These points of view are complementary and reveal the learner’s *perezhivanie* in action. Other students, perhaps motivated by their colleagues, made relevant comments.

Denise highlighted “All that is now”, due to the moment we were going through at the time (Covid-19 pandemic): “Devemos aproveitar o agora, porque não sabemos o que vem depois. Achei isso muito forte⁹⁷”. After starting the deeper discussion, a student interrupted to give an excuse to leave. “And all that’s to come”, according to another student (Beatriz), is “as if it brought a dramatic effect to the lyrics”⁹⁸. She was able to analyse the choice of words by the composer.

“But the sun is eclipsed by the moon”, according to Alessandra, was selected because, “tu vai olhar o sol e é gigantesco, né, tipo... o que é que vai esconder ele, mas aí, em relação à terra, a lua acaba, apagando ele, né... uma coisa tão grande às vezes não é tão significativa, né... não faz sentido essa frase né, mas às vezes uma coisa tão grande, se torna algo tão pequeno, comparado com outras coisas, que parece q não têm importância. Não sei, eu adorei, assim e... porque encerra a música, também.⁹⁹” Alessandra’s flow of words seem to provide us with a glimpse of her thinking-speaking unity, as she corrects her ‘unreasonable’ sentence, reorganizing her speech to clarify it.

⁹⁶ “Even though everything we do is connected, sometimes there will be dark, bad days, and we... if we think about it, inside the world we are (...) too small”.

⁹⁷ All students’ words will be inserted in their original form, with the footnotes in English. All these have been translated by the author. “We must enjoy the now, because we don’t know what comes later. I find that very strong”.

⁹⁸ “Eu escolhi essa parte porque pra mim parece que ela traz um drama... antes do fim da música, sabe? Porque... ‘e tudo o que virá’, e aí depois fala que tudo tá em sintonia, mas que o sol tá coberto, entre aspas, pela lua... não sei explicar!” (I chose this bit because for me it brings some dramatic effect... before the ending of the song... Because ‘and all that’s to come’ and then it says it is all in tune, but the sun is covered, to say, by the moon... I can’t explain!)

⁹⁹ “you look at the sun and it’s gigantic, right, like... what’s it going to hide it, but then, in relation to the earth, the moon ends up, erasing it, right... something so big is sometimes not so significant, right... this phrase doesn’t make sense, right, but sometimes something so big becomes something so small, compared to other things, that it seems like it doesn’t matter. I don’t know, I loved it, like that and... because it ends the song, too”.

Melanie, who selected the same line, said she was thinking about something similar: “(...) que nem fala, o sol é eclipsado pela lua, e ele é tipo o sol, e ele é grande... e mesmo que tudo o que a gente faça às vezes esteja conectado, talvez vá ter dias escuros, ruins, e a gente... se a gente for parar pra pensar, dentro do mundo, a gente é insignificante... não insignificante, mas tipo, muito pequeno¹⁰⁰”. I tried to support her line of thought with the expression “interference”, as if all this tuned space goes through an interference by this inanimate object, very small in relation to the sun, and which we do not think could have any effect. She agreed but did not move further.

I added that they reached the thematic framework of the whole Pink Floyd album. Dorian commented that “Eu achei interessante essa parte ali de que o sol é eclipsado pela lua, né, tipo como é que o sol, que é uma coisa tão grande assim, tipo, comparado com a lua né, ela é meio pequena comparado com o sol, e ela consegue esconder todo o brilho que ele tem¹⁰¹” to which I added, “e a partir da letra, consegue interferir em tudo¹⁰²”. Dorian’s addition seem to resonate with what Alessandra had interpreted before, illustrating the relevance of group discussions for literary texts (Paran; Wallace, 2016, Troian, 2023; Seerig; Troian, 2020).

This moment in class might be seen as “reader approach” because students are invited to express their personal reaction and analyse the text critically (Bloemert; Jansen; van de Grift, 2016) but this is also “language approach” because the only way in which students can do so, is by comprehending the text and its vocabulary further than only literal translation: they must understand the metaphor and infer *meaning* – they must *interpret*, achieve *literacy* (Paran; Wallace, 2016). Their compositions, analysed later, demonstrate this.

In Italy, although I was able to carry out the class mostly in English, at the point of the discussion L1 was required to provide them certain spontaneity, for instance:

[...]

TR: *Okay, but before that, there’s a list of things that you do, right? So, what is the idea?*

¹⁰⁰ “as it says there, the sun is eclipsed by the moon, and it's like the sun, and it's big... and even if everything we do is sometimes connected, maybe there will be dark, bad days, and we ... if we stop to think, within the world, we are insignificant... not insignificant, but like, very small”.

¹⁰¹ “I found this part interesting that the sun is eclipsed by the moon, you know, like how does the sun, which is such a big thing, like, compared to the moon, you know, it's kind of small compared to the sun, and it manages to hide all the shine the sun has”.

¹⁰² “...and, from the lyrics, it's able to interfere on everything”.

S: (...inaudible) **No, perchè c'è gente che non ruba!**¹⁰³ (Referring to the “all that you steal” verse).

TR: *Bello, sì!* (laughter) So are there good and bad things, or only good things that happen?

(Data extracted from class meeting 3 – Italy, March 2023)

The student's impulsive answer (because she did look upset and offended) brings a somewhat limited comprehension of the use of “things that you do”, as if taken personally (and not in a broader sense), when she says, “some people don't steal”. This indicates a) how little details may change the understanding of language and poetry, b) a need to develop this aspect, and c) the possibility of doing so through moments like these, in which we are able to openly interpret the literary artifact, by simply *talking about it*. This is one of the most common ‘real life’ activities we perform with literature (Paran, 2010).

This is literacy, and a way of scaffolding literature (Spiro, 2010). Another hint brought by this episode is that “when language learners are invited to speak more fully, they can be funny, wise, child-like, playful, witty, sentimental, philosophical, experimental. They can be many things there is no room to be in the functional classroom” (Spiro, 2004, p. 5).

This expressiveness is further encouraged in the creative writing activity, later on in the lesson. Further on, I recommend the use of Italian (see below) and get answers from them that are more elaborate than the monotone “yes”:

TR: *Are they? Under the sun... but the sun is eclipsed by the moon...?*

STS: *Yes...[chatter]*

TR: *If you want to use Italian now, it's ok.*

S: *Cioè se il sole viene ripresentato come le cose belle, e la luna come le cose brutte... la luna copre le cose belle*¹⁰⁴.

TR: *Okay... and then, it's not in tune anymore... But under the sun, there's slight, there's steal, there is...*

S...fight...

TR: *Fight, yes!*

S: ... **hate** ...

TR: *Yeah, there are bad things... Do you agree with your classmate?*

STS: *Yes! [many answers]*

TR: *Yes, completely? [laughter] you can have a different opinion, you know?*

S: *I agree.*

¹⁰³ “No because some people don't steal!”

¹⁰⁴ “It means, if the sun comes represented as the beautiful things, and the moon as the ugly things, the moon covers the beautiful things”.

TR: *You agree? Ok. Do you have a different impression?*

Mr. M.: *Do you think things stop being in tune, or they keep being in tune, and they are just not being visible because the sun is eclipsed by the moon? I don't know the answer!*

S: *They keep being in tune...*

S: *Yes because... [thinking] because time on, time on...*

Mr. M. *Time on... which language is that?*

S: *Scorre il tempo...*

Mr. M. *Oh, time goes by... time passes...*

S: *Yes, time goes by and... these are things that... [inaudible]*

TR: *Hum, interesting. Any other impressions? What was your favourite line, then? Anyone wants to share?*

S: *The last one...*

TR: *Why?*

S: *It is a fantastic word [at this point, students were just playing, and the teacher asked them to take it more seriously].*

(Data extracted from class meeting 3 – Italy, March 2023)

In this episode, the “allowance” for the use of Italian let them move forward in their expressions of understanding: because they shared their interpretation of the “sun” and the “moon”, I was able to recall other things in the lyrics that were not so “good” – and this time they used English to help. Their capability to elicit the language in English (“hate”, “fight”, “steal”...) also hints that the pre-reading activities offered them some support. In fact, they did go back to English and try to employ it as much as they could, with the attempt to say “time goes by” with “time on”. Once again, the HL (“*scorre il tempo*”) was the fastest way for the student to clarify the meaning and then use the adequate expression: “time goes by”.

The main aspect is, however, that literary texts promote personal involvement: “Engaging imaginatively with literature enables learners to shift the focus of their attention beyond the more mechanical aspects of the foreign language system” (Collie; Slater, 1987, p. 05). In other words, the student can focus on meaning, as it is a meaningful text, instead of focusing only on form. Once again, then, it is possible to recall how students could remember songs, episodes with music or literature, as memorable to them. As explained by Hall (2016, p. 7),

Noticing a form that is not known or not known well enough, paying conscious attention to it, seems to be a precondition for much successful language learning. Readers of literature often report exact memory for the words of a favourite or meaningful literary text or extract, that those words in that order are particularly effective for them.

This means that literary language (present not only in books, but in songs) may be essential for the internalization of new language and shows that not all genres work the same way. Because some expressions in a song are repeated or structured in a particular way, they become memorable. When certain extracts from a literary piece are discussed in more depth, the effect is the same (Spiro, 2004). This happened with “in tune”, and “the sun is eclipsed by the moon”, in the learners’ compositions, presented further on.

Another important point was observed regarding the use of Italian in the classroom. For the instructions on the final activity, Mr. M., the teacher in Italy, helped me by moving around the class and explaining the activity to them. In this case, I had the impression they felt more comfortable asking for clarification directly from him. He also replied in Italian, and this episode demonstrates that students might feel more comfortable to ask questions to the person they are familiar with (their lead professor) and *in the language they feel more comfortable speaking* (Italian). Later, when I moved around the classroom to see how they developed the activity, I observed that there were still some misunderstandings – how many questions were never asked due to the context we created in class or my incapability to comprehend Italian fully? In Brazil, this might have been even worse due to the online context. This points to the importance of creating a constructive relationship with students in class.

In the interview carried out after the class meetings were over, Alessandra was asked about her impressions on the song. She brought up that, had the analysis of the song not happened in class, she would not have grasped the meaning:

TR: *E sobre a música, alguma emoção¹⁰⁵ em específico?*

Alessandra: *Ah eu acho que dá pra colocar surpresa, porque, tipo, meu Deus, é muito boa! (Risos) Parece aquelas mensagens ocultas que tem.*

TR: *Hummm e tu conseguiu identificar a mensagem oculta sozinha quando tu leu a letra ou foi a partir do que a gente conversou?*

Alessandra: *Não foi... depois que a gente conversou, assim, sei lá, eu não me toquei de primeira.¹⁰⁶*

(Excerpt 3 from Alessandra’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

¹⁰⁵ I remind the reader that, initially, this research project aimed at addressing students’ emotions.

¹⁰⁶ **TR:** And what about the song, any specific emotion?

Alessandra: Ah, I think I can state ‘surprise’, because, my God, it is very good! (Laughs) It seems like those hidden messages.

TR: Hummm, and were you able to identify the hidden message by yourself when you read it, or was it from what we had talked about?

Alessandra: No, it was... after we had talked, I don’t know, I didn’t get it at first”,

Further on in the interview, she commented on the relationship she has with poetry, and I took advantage of that by asking again about her reading comprehension as a group. In this extract, Alessandra was recalling a play she had to participate in, in which she had to learn a Vinicius de Moraes's poem by heart:

"[...] Alessandra: Poesia é mais abstrato, tem uns poemas que, gente, eu não consigo ver sentido. [...] E eu tive que decorar aquilo lá, e eu li umas 500 vezes, pra conseguir ver sentido naquilo, porque na minha cabeça não entrava. Eu acho que é isso, acho que tenho dificuldade para entender o que o autor quer passar, por isso que eu não gosto de ler [poesia].

***Researcher:** Hummm, tem uma questão de linguagem então, né... Que talvez tenha acontecido também na música Eclipse, será que não? Que daí a partir da nossa conversa juntos daí tu conseguiu ver mais sentido...?*

***Alessandra:** É eu acho que é isso né, porque, eles usam uma linguagem bem diferente, né, eu leio muito suspense, casos criminais, essas coisas né, então **pegar um poema é totalmente diferente do que eu costume ler.**¹⁰⁷*

(Excerpt from Beatriz's interview – Brazil, October 11th, 2021)

Alessandra's words incorporate important elements on the need for support along her ZPD, here. She memorized the whole poem, on her own, and even though she read it "five hundred times", she was not able to make sense of it – and this led her to reject it. To absorb the poem's idea, she needed some support from the teacher. Did this not happen, did the teacher simply offer the text without discussing it? I did not ask that (and regret it), but this also reveals the difference between scaffolding and the ZPD – an issue that is constantly discussed by SCHAT scholars. In sum, scaffolding consists of a set of activities that aim at offering learners support along their ZPD; however, this is not always successful also because each student's ZPD is different. Alessandra might have been provided some scaffold in class, yes; but this probably *failed* to guide her along her ZPD in a way that she could reach the interpretation of the words on her own. This difficulty, for some reason, was not identified by the teacher. Alessandra presents a *dramatic* event (Veresov, 2017) – to be further

¹⁰⁷ **Alessandra:** Poetry is more abstract, there are poems that, wow, I can't get the meaning [...]. And I had to memorize that. I read some 500 times, to make sense of that, because it didn't get my head. I think that's it, I think I have trouble understanding what the author wants to transmit, that's why I don't like reading [poetry].

TR: Hummmm, there is a language matter, then, right? What might also have happened with the Eclipse song, don't you think? That from our joint conversation you managed to see more meaning...?

Alessandra: I think this is it, you know, because they use a very different language, right? I read a lot of thrillers, criminal cases, stuff like that, so grabbing a poem is totally different from what I usually read".

discussed – that made her have caveats towards poetry. This demonstrates that ZPD and the success of scaffolding activities are not easily recognizable in the classroom, as each learner’s ZPD is different.

In a sense that is similar to what happened to Alessandra and her poem by Vinicius de Moraes, Alfred and Kosar, from Italy, demonstrated how the lyrics and the same set of activities resonated negatively for them, during the project:

*“Bo la canzone non mi è piaciuta tanto perché **non ho capito bene il senso** però ho trovato molto interessante **come siamo arrivati alla canzone**.¹⁰⁸” (Alfred)*

*“Uno [punto] positivo è che abbiamo studiato dei verbi attraverso una canzone, uno negativo è che è **stato complicato capire il significato della canzone**. Mi è piaciuto lavorare in questo modo alternativo.¹⁰⁹” (Kosar)*

(Data extracted from the final questionnaire – Italy)

Although I attempted to provide scaffolding along the meaning of the song lyrics, Alfred could not “understand the lyrics well”. However, he claimed to have enjoyed the pre-reading activities. Melanie also indicated her difficulty to understand the lyrics as the “negative” side, but indicated the “alternative” approach as something good – she also liked the scaffolding process for the vocabulary.

Paul, on the other hand, claimed a positive, constructive process with the lyrics, like Alessandra:

*“Nella canzone eclipse **ci sono diversi significati che non conoscevo e che ho imparato**. Una cosa negativa è che non mi è piaciuta molto la canzone **ma il suo significato sì**. Mi è piaciuto lavorare con un testo letterario in questo formato e mi ha fatto capire che ci sono ancora tante parole e espressioni di uso comune che devo ancora imparare per arricchire il mio lessico in inglese¹¹⁰”.*

(Data extracted from the final questionnaire – Italy)

Alessandra and Paul’s success in understanding the “hidden message”, or the several meanings, in the lyrics demonstrate an essential notion in terms of literacy development, and previously mentioned in the extract about “stealing”: “Talk frames literacy activity. Talk around the text is an inherent part of the reading experience”

¹⁰⁸ “Bo, I didn’t like the song so much because **I didn’t really understand the meaning**, but I found it very interesting how we arrived at the song”.

¹⁰⁹ “A positive [aspect] is that we studied verbs through a song, a negative one is that **it was complicated to understand the meaning of the song**. I enjoyed working in this alternative way”.

¹¹⁰ “In the song eclipse **there are several meanings that I didn’t know and that I learnt**. One negative thing is that I didn’t really like the song **but its meaning, yes**. I enjoyed working with a literary text in this format and it made me realise that there are still many commonly used words and expressions that I still have to learn to enrich my English vocabulary”.

(Paran, Wallace, 2016, p. 14). Her experience with the song lyrics reveals the importance of what have been called literary circles (Contreras; Delacroix, 2019; Troian; Seerig, 2020) as a successful form of scaffold along her ZPD, so that she could grasp the multiple layers of the literary text. By doing so, literary literacy was developed (Cosson, 2015), since it built literary meanings and allowed this in the realm of a social practice. By reading in a group, not only is reading developed, but also speaking and listening skills, which lead to attentive listening, respectful positioning of ideas, critical thinking, and empathy (Contreras; Delacroix, 2019). Long term, such opportunities of reading literature in a group, with more openness to interpret and present their ideas – and without assessment at any level as the purpose of doing this – increases students' interest in literature and promotes well-being (Troian, Seerig, 2020; Troian, 2023; Troian; Seerig, 2020). Besides, these processes engage the students in manners that develop their emotional literacy (Barcelos, 2015). That is the purpose of a lesson that aims at building learners' development not in a single subject, but as a complete human being. Hopefully, after our classes together, and after the interview, which allowed Alessandra to note how important talking about the text was, she might see her relationship with poetry differently.

Although L1/HL was freely allowed in the classes, it was important to assess learners' understanding of the language at some level, by proposing a composition with four words/expressions taken from the lyrics by them (stage 5 in the final class). The reasons for this activity are summarized by Swain and Lapkin (2013, p. 114):

It is of utmost importance that the students are required to produce an end oral or written product in the target language (Fortune, 2001, p. 340; Swain, 2001, p. 59). Doing so means that the end goal of a target language product will prioritize language learning processes, such as cross-linguistic comparisons in form and meaning and target language vocabulary searches.

Thus, the “product in the target language” was the composition, a poem they should build from the vocabulary of their choice, from the song lyrics. This is analysed in the following subsection, in linguistic terms. Then, in section 4.5, I further analyse it in terms of subjective development.

4.3.1.2 Importance of *writing* literature

With an aim of better analysing this final stage (refer to Chapter 3, Table 12), in which learners composed their own text, I developed two tables: one for the compositions from Brazilian learners (Table 19) and one for the participants in Italy (Table 20). This is not only to be able to better discuss content, but also to illustrate better the differences and convergences in the process for both groups. Each composition is followed by the students' names. The words in bold are the ones they highlighted from the lyrics in the previous activity¹¹¹. The same compositions are presented again on section 4.4, sided by their explanation on the words written, for further discussion. A brief discussion is made after the table:

Table 19 – Compilation of Brazilian students' answers to the final activity

<p>Create all you can now, as the sun shines, before it is eclipsed by the moon.</p> <p>Alessandra</p>	<p>All I create isn't related to the way I think, but if I don't have the chance to try, all my thoughts are a way to destroy the possibility of create.</p> <p>Beatriz</p>
<p>And all that is gone Nothing comes back Time passes without pity for those who stay behind Tramples those who cling to the past And all that is to come Look forward The future is there Every second that passes time becomes past And everything under the sun is in tune It's all in perfect harmony But the sun is eclipsed by the moon That even being such a big and radiant celestial body It's like everyone overshadowed at some point.</p> <p>Dorian</p>	<p>For me, the life is made experiences (taste), everything the things which teach the preciousity of live. That is why, we should lives the now, thinking in the love, and ever see the opportunities as something positive.</p> <p>Katherine</p>
<p>Everything you hate can't be above everything you love. Because not everything under the sun is in tune. So not everyone you meet wants to hurt you, like those you should leave behind.</p> <p>Margaret</p>	<p>I think in my life, and all that is now. I think in everyone I fight and in my choices. Everything under the sun is in tune, is connect, but the sun also can be hidden, because the sun is eclipsed by the moon. We are small in this big world and we need enjoy the life.</p>

¹¹¹ In case the reader needs to see their word selection fully transcribed, sided by the composition, this is available in Appendix O. There, on the top of the table, the reader can see the proposal for the activity (provided in both languages for students).

	Melanie
<p><i>It is hard to deal with all that I distrust. It is even more difficult deal with people that slight me. Because sometimes it seems to be the only thing that I feel. But that is not everything. I feel a lot of other things. All that I love, all that I create, all that I touch and mainly, all that is to come. That is all that I have to pay attention, because one way or another, all is in tune.</i></p> <p>Karen</p>	

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

Melanie, Margaret, Dorian and Karen explored the metaphor of being “under the sun” and “in tune”, giving their own understanding of it. Alessandra worked on another metaphorical concept of being “eclipsed”, and Katherine and Beatriz made use of the verbs in the song to write about their reflections. At some level, then, I observe that students were able to analyse both form and meaning in the literary text – they went beyond simple decoding or literal translation and use new language to create their own use of it. Although sentences were “copied”, this is part of the process of literacy, as explained by Urbanski (2023). In a Sociocultural Historical perspective, imitation is “a creative endeavor and not verbatim copying” (Urbanski, 2023, p. 19). She further explains that

Imitation allows the learners to begin trying out their new conceptual understanding in new contexts (Lantolf, 2000; Vygotsky, 2012). In developmental education, imitation is part of the developmental process initiated through effective *obuchenie*¹¹² (Urbanski, 2023, p. 18).

This understanding of “imitation” as the basal element for learning and development (also Cross, 2012) may apply, at some level, to those students who made use of translating engines as a scaffold so that they would accomplish the task of expressing themselves clearly in English¹¹³.

¹¹² This is the Russian term used by Vygotsky to describe the dialectical unity of teaching-learning: “the *obuchenie* must lead the development of ripening abilities (i.e., in the learners’ ZPD-in-activity), rather than waiting for them to ripen on their own, which was an assumption of theories that rely on Piagetian principles” (Urbanski, 2023, p. 18).

¹¹³ Imitation, for Vygotsky, meant that the speaker or learner was in the process of learning the word – that refers to spontaneous imitation, which might not be the case for the translation engine. Thus, my claim is very speculative.

The use of such resources is perceptible because the texts are flawless and not so “basic” as the students themselves claimed to be, in terms of their own proficiency. However, it is very hard to verify if students were doing so (which is many times seen as cheating) and, after all, this is not the point of assessment. It is time that we abandon punitive exams and adopt a focus on the students’ development (Rodrigues, 2020).

For those who used a translating engine (I would grasp this from Dorian’s text, for the use of words such as “tramples” and “cling”), it is visible that they intended a real *meaning* to the words they chose. This accomplishes the aim of the whole two classes: to provide students with conditions to *use* the language they were exploring – in a freer manner. With time, however, learners should feel more confident as to not use such resources, once they realize that the point is not solely on accuracy.

In Italy, the use of translating engines was not possible, since classes were on-site and students were not allowed to use their mobile phones. This aspect generated a whole different set of compositions – and relevant comments from learners who were later interviewed.

Their compositions, transcribed from the handwritten answers to the activities, in class, are presented in Table 20, in alphabetical order by author. The words in bold indicate those selected from the original poem¹¹⁴. I did not interfere in the transcription, keeping their typos and grammatical peculiarities, for discussion. Albert, Daniel, Fran, Mateus and Nereu did not provide their answers.

In Table 20, the learners’ names with an asterisk indicate those who were later interviewed. I did consider not inserting all compositions, but they all have their merits and deserve to be acknowledged, although I might not discuss them all thoroughly.

As well as in Brazil, many of the learners highlighted the final line “the sun is eclipsed by the moon” from the lyrics as their preferred one – this was an extract that we discussed in class, as well. Some of them selected words and others chose whole expressions. In a general manner, many more or less repeated some structures from the original text, but they were also able to make them more personalised, by converting the language of the lyrics, originally in third person, into first person. Something to bear in mind is that they really were short on time and struggled with this

¹¹⁴ In case the reader needs to see their word selection fully transcribed, sided by the composition, this is available in Appendix P. There, the words/expressions selected are inserted in a list from 1-5 because this was how the exercise was presented on paper (they should fill five gaps with words/expressions).

activity. Some compositions explored word formation – they change verb tenses, and “fight” became “fighter” – and some explored the basal concept of poetry through structure, by using repetition and short verses (Claire, Fausto, George, Gabriela, Paul and Veronica), and even rhyming, like in Ernest’s composition. The content of these compositions will be further discussed in the next section, for they will be accompanied by their own comments on what they wrote.

Table 20 – Compositions by students in Italy

<p>The sun is eclipsed by the moon I love the world We must save it.</p> <p>Aline</p>	<p>I'm eclipsed by the sun I see every day the moon I eat Mauro's kebab so I go to buy a nice kebab.</p> <p>Alfred</p>
<p>Because in this moments I feel many times Because in this moments I thinking a food.</p> <p>Claire</p>	<p>All you feel, I can see And all that you hate, I can exit from the gate And all that you buy, you can't see in the sky And all that you are, I miss you And all that you eat, at the end we do it</p> <p>Ernest*</p>
<p>I like the sun I watch every night the moon I love the stars I feel love sky for the night But the sun is eclipsed by the moon</p> <p>Erica*</p>	<p>I love to feel positive vibes When I play at videogames I'm in fighting with the other players I hate when my mum is hungry When I comeback everything is gone.</p> <p>Fausto</p>
<p>You meet me I eat you I fight you I taste you You create my hate and distrust</p> <p>George</p>	<p>All the love is gone And everything is destroyed And everyone is dead And everything is on fire Because the sun is eclipsed by the moon</p> <p>Gabriela*</p>
<p>You can five all that you love, all that you feel, and all that you buy to your friend but don't distrust your friend</p> <p>Julian*</p>	<p>"But the sun is eclipsed by the moon" because the good thinks fished. "and everything under the sun is in tune" because when you stay with the good people you feel right.</p> <p>Kosar</p>
<p>I meet you and you gave me everything I didn't know what to say and before I decide, we end up fight and eat each other alive</p> <p>Michelle*</p>	<p>all that I create after the sun get eclipsed my the moon get destroyed or steal</p> <p>Marlon</p>
<p>Now I would like eating a cake but I can't because I am muslim and on 23 of march started Ramadan. This afternoon I'm going to buy biscuits and I can eat them when the sun goes down and the moon appear in the sky. If you want I can give you some biscuits tonight.</p> <p>Mauro</p>	<p>I'm a fighter I distrust a lot of people I like destroy the thinks but when I did it I need to buy everything again</p> <p>Paul</p>
<p>The things buds, (bads) (erased) is gone And everything under the sun is in tune But the sun is eclipsed by the moon</p> <p>Sam</p>	<p>"All that I created I have destroy All that I say Whas a lie But I love you And that is truth I want meet you Meet you on sky Say you the word truth And all that I do Is only for you You is my world You is my happiness</p> <p>Veronica*</p>
<p>When you really love someone sometimes you only have eyes for him/her but when they cheat on you You start to distrust everyone, you start to destroy your self confident, you start to slight yourself. Like "I'm the problem it's all my fault" and you start to fight everyone</p> <p>Sarah</p>	<p>Veronica*</p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on the final activity.

Since they had no access to any type of dictionary or corrector (I did ask the teacher if he would recommend that they took their mobile phones, and he clearly

stated he would not), there are many typos and accuracy mistakes. Thus, I'd like to continue the discussion provided by the texts written online in Brazil – which might have used some sort of AI support but did not have to. Overall, I would state that such typos and accuracy mistakes should be praised – it means they are experimenting with the new language, maybe creating structures from their L1 into L2 (or L3, L4 for some!); mainly, they are focusing on the *meaning*, the *message* they want to convey. Some “mistakes” might be, in fact, poetic license (why not?). One example could be in Fausto's verse: “I hate when my mum is hungry” – I wondered whether he misspelled the word and meant “angry” (this exchange is very common amongst English language learners) or if he actually meant “hungry”. This could have been a linguistic joke, since many of us get angry when hungry.

We teachers tend to fear these creative proposals precisely because of the risk of their making mistakes, but proper feedback, on the language that is being focused on, should do the trick. Spiro (2004, p. 9) wisely recommends that “other inaccuracies be overlooked and are recognized as part of the creative process – creative in that the learners are seeking strategies for filling gaps in their knowledge. Some of these strategies may in themselves involve an imaginative leap (...),” as in poetic license. Accuracy, in an activity such as this, in which the objective consisted of them using language to convey some personal experience, should be precisely this. In the terms presented by Hanauer (2012), accuracy can only be verified by the teacher through conversation and questions on that matter to the student-poet: they seem to “honestly want to convey their sense of their own experience. Thus, the scaffolding of this process involves extensive discussion of poems and experiences with the instructor and other students, and revision based on these responses” (Hanauer, 2012, p. 113).

In this sense, accuracy for this activity is purely their addressing what has been requested – talking about something meaningful for them, using the language/vocabulary they selected. Any other “inconsistencies” should be overlooked in detriment of their creative expression and exploration of language. Unfortunately for this research, not all students were interviewed for their compositions – the space provided for a comment in the end of the activity, however, already offered some relevant feedback on their writing process (as presented in the discussion in the next section).

Another point to make is that, for the project, students were assessed only for their participation in the activities. In Italy, perhaps less: the lead teacher did not feel

that keeping their materials was of relevance for school formal assessment. This means the compositions were made only for the purpose of this research. Nevertheless, they consist of a good body of data, in accordance with “real-life” classroom developments (Dörnyei, 2011). Yet another linguistic perspective that is not addressed in this research (but will be in further developments) is that of observing what percentage of words or phrases from the reference text have been used by learners, in their own poems. This could indicate the novelty they inserted and perhaps the range of vocabulary they are able to produce in a new language, taking into account their background and their claimed proficiency level.

As for the other participants from Italy, two of them indicated doing the composition as something they disliked – possibly because it was a big challenge for them. Personally, I would say that, were I in their shoes, I would not be sure of appreciating such an activity either! “Write about me? What competence do I have to do so?”, I would probably think. In the following section, I aimed at systematising these more personal impressions provided by learners, as well as further analysing their poems, together with their own comments about what they wrote.

4.4 A GLIMPSE INTO CREATIVE WRITING AS MEANINGFUL LITERACY: COMPOSITIONS AND SELF-ANALYSES IN BRAZIL AND IN ITALY

TR: Do you need help? Let's try to do it?

*S: I **am** doing it... I'm **thinking** about what to write!*

As previously stated, the proposal to make students write poetry was intuitive and new, as this was not a common practice in my teaching. The results, however, demonstrated what many scholars already know: “when students write about themselves, there is a reason for writing” (Spiro, 2004, p. 10), which leads them into participating beyond the “formalist” perspective of language, to tap into their own subjectivity. Creative writing engages students into developing the new language because it means engaging into personal expression. Thus, “the whole perception of what learning a language is changes when authentic, meaningful, personal expression is at the center of literacy instruction” (Hanauer, 2012, p. 110).

Considering that written productions were developed in different contexts, where these differences seemed to have influenced the data that has been compiled (and even the quantitative results), there is a division between what has been generated in Brazil in 2021 (4.4.1) and in Italy in 2023 (4.4.2).

4.4.1 Poems written in Brazil: imitation and *perezhivanie*

In the compositions that follow, accompanied by the students' explanations, important processes are observed, apart from the linguistic analysis developed in section 4.3.1.2, regarding language development and the importance of imitation. It is possible to discuss the process of catharsis promoted by the literary element and the creative stimuli provided by the activity.

Human imitation, the basis for learning and development, is thus marked by an inherently (albeit everyday and ordinary) creative process of externalisation: the internalisation of what already “is”, to be refashioned into something new— bestowing the old with what it can be (Connery 2010). It is this cathartic process, and the nexus between what is internalised, *perezhivanie*, and the release which creates something new, that we see emotion, affect, and creativity working together within development (Cross, 2012, p. 436).

Considering that emotion and creativity work together within development, the language shifting is perceptible as part of this process. From Cross' words (2012), it is possible to picture the stages of the activity as collaborating with this transition. They explored, understood, internalised "what already 'is'" (i.e., the song lyrics) and then had scaffold provided by the activity in which they were invited to select new and important words/expressions for them. Then, they had the opportunity to externalise their creativity in their composition, in English. Some of them needed more support from L1 by using translation platforms (in Brazil); nevertheless, all managed to get through the activity.

Support of L1 was required again once they had to *explain* their writing. Their explanations are rich resources of what was intended with the task, which was also to provide them with the opportunity of being more subjective in a different language (and complement it with their L1, if necessary). The focus was to use language to "make meaning rather than it being the object of study". (Lantolf; Swain, 2019, p. 92). To facilitate and value learners' compositions, I pasted each of them in the body of the text, followed by a brief comment on the writing and their comments of it.

We start from Katherine's data, in Table 21.

Table 21 – Katherine's composition

<i>Katherine</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>For me, the life is made experiences (taste), everything the things which teach the preciousness of live. That is why, we should live the now, thinking in the love, and ever see the opportunities as something positive.</i></p>	<p><i>Então, eu senti muita dificuldade para escrever esse pequeno texto, mas as palavras que eu usei representam a base da vida para mim; sempre pensar nessa como algo positivo, onde todas as experiências são aprendizados, com base no viver o agora com muito amor.¹¹⁵</i></p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

Katherine aimed at relating the concept of experience with taste, in a sensorial view of "precious" things in life. Inspired by the discussion in class, she states we should "live in the now". Her explanation for her poem brings together two aspects I

¹¹⁵ "So, I had difficulties writing this small text, but the words I used represent the foundations of life for me; always think about it as something positive, where all experiences are learnings, based on living the now with a lot of love".

had grasped from her answers in the questionnaires: she states her difficulties, but she also believes that life is positive and “all experiences are learnings”. This seems to be the way she faces her studies of English.

Table 22 presents Melanie’s data.

Table 22 – Melanie’s composition

<i>Melanie</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>I think in my life, and all that is now. I think in everyone I fight and in my choices. Everything under the sun is in tune, is connect, but the sun also can be hidden, because the sun is eclipsed by the moon. We are small in this big world and we need enjoy the life.</i></p> <p><i>Melanie</i></p>	<p><i>Eu escrevi uma reflexão que fiz sobre minha própria vida e momentos que vivi¹¹⁶.</i></p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

In the same line of thought, Melanie’s poem also made her think about her personal choices and fights, implying perhaps how small they might be. She refers her composition to her life and the moments she lived, paraphrasing in English something she expressed during the meeting, about our “size” in relation to the world and the sun: “We are small in this big world, and we need enjoy the life”. This also demonstrates the language shifting, first expressed in Portuguese (during our lesson), but then possible to happen in L2, through writing.

Let us see what Dorian’s elaboration was, on Table 23.

¹¹⁶ “I wrote a reflection I made on my own life and moments I have lived”.

Table 23 – Dorian’s composition

<i>Dorian</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>And all that is gone Nothing comes back Time passes without pity for those who stay behind Tramples those who cling to the past And all that is to come Look forward The future is there Every second that passes time becomes past And everything under the sun is in tune It’s all in perfect harmony But the sun is eclipsed by the moon That even being such a big and radiant celestial body It’s like everyone overshadowed at some point. Dorian</i></p>	<p><i>Pensei em fazer o poema assim pois sei que o passado não volta e que temos que olhar para o futuro sempre com esperança de algo melhor no dia de hoje, e escrevi sobre o Sol ser ofuscado pela lua pois até o Sol sendo um corpo celeste tão grande é ofuscado pela lua em algum momento¹¹⁷.</i></p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

Dorian’s use of metaphors reveals his interpretation of the lyrics, which he also commented on during the lesson, prior to this activity. His poem discusses the problem with excessive attachment with the past. His words were also very well explained by him in Portuguese, and indicates his real intention of (perhaps) using a translation engine to get the message across clearly, because he did not feel his English could manage that without support. As discussed in the previous section, his text is quite sophisticated in terms of vocabulary, such as “overshadowed”, “celestial body”, “tremple”, “look forward”, and does not present mistakes, which leads me to believe he did use other resources. This helped him amplify meanings in his poem. In this sense, he accomplished the accuracy required not because of precise language, but because he got his message across (Hanauer, 2012).

Table 24 presents Karen’s composition and comment.

¹¹⁷ “I thought of making the poem like that because I know the past never comes back and that we must always look towards the future with hope for something better than today. I wrote about the Sun being obfuscated by the moon because even the sun, being this huge celestial body, is obfuscated by the moon at some point”.

Table 24 – Karen’s composition

<i>Karen</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>It is hard to deal with all that I distrust. It is even more difficult deal with people that slight me. Because sometimes it seems to be the only thing that I feel. But that is not everything. I feel a lot of other things. All that I love, all that I create, all that I touch and mainly, all that is to come. That is all that I have to pay attention, because one way or another, all is in tune.</i></p> <p><i>Karen</i></p>	<p><i>Muitas vezes eu acabo me prendendo as coisas ruins que acontecem na minha vida, na maneira como as pessoas me tratam, no bullying, nos meus traumas de infância... mas na verdade eu deveria focar em outras coisas que sinto, porque eu posso construir um futuro onde a pessoa que eu sou não depende da maneira como as coisas aconteceram no passado. Eu deveria sentir tudo que eu toco, que eu amo, que eu crio e tudo que está por vir... pois assim eu posso influenciar tudo de uma maneira diferente e isso é o que realmente importa, pois tudo isso está em sintonia¹¹⁸.</i></p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

Karen’s composition (Table 24) is very personal, with a sophisticated language that uses comparison, and focuses on difficulties to then remember the good aspects in life and the future (“all that is to come”). Although all explanations given by learners speak of their own individuality in a level, it seems that Karen was able to reach deep thoughts along her narrative about her composition. Amongst the words from the lyrics, she chose some difficult verbs, such as “distrust” and “slight”, and used them in first person, making it very personal (in Italy, interestingly, the use of first person happened more often, as I discuss further on in this thesis). She opposed the things “hard to deal with” with positive ones, seeing perspective in the future (“all that is to come”), and admitting that “all is in tune”. This is a very elaborate reorganisation of the ideas and words presented in the lyrics. Her authorship on this demonstrates the power of language and of the openness allowed by literature and poetry. For Vygotsky, “Language, writing, and different literary forms are those cultural-psychological tools that provide the formal mechanism for human mastery of psychological processes”

¹¹⁸ Many times I end up getting attached to bad things that happened in my life, in the way people treat me, in bullying, in my childhood traumas... but in truth, I should focus on other things I feel, because I can build a future where the person I am does not depend on things that happen in the past. I should feel everything that I touch, that I love, that I create, and everything I create and everything that is on the way... because then I can influence in a different way and this is what really matters, because everything in in tune”.

(Kozulin, 1998, p. 132). This observation matches both her composition in English and her explanation of her own text in Portuguese – where she further presents the personal events in her life that led her to this cathartic production.

In her comments in the second column, Karen mentions her tendency of attaching to “bad things” in her life, such as bullying and other childhood traumas, elaborating that her future does not “depend on how things went in the past”. She places herself as the actor of her story because she can “influence everything”. She elaborates and organises a self-analysis that requires more knowledge of psychology and narratives than I (and us, teachers in general) can provide in order to better discuss this¹¹⁹. What is evident is that, by the tone and the depth of her openness, this was an important space where she felt comfortable to write about her. This could be seen as an autobiographic narrative where she builds her *self*, in a “boundary between psychological and aesthetic self-reflection” (Kozulin, 1998, p. 138). This is, however, too small a sample and would require further interviews (and references) to deepen this “boundary” suggested by Kozulin (1998) and others quoted by him.

By composing in English, Karen might have opened space in herself, thanks to psychological distancing provided by another language. English worked as her cathartic tool to externalize her anguish; Lantolf and Swain (2019, p. 94), similarly, comment about a learner who wrote about the abuse suffered years before, through the acquired English, in a journal practice proposed by one of the authors in the classroom. This learner explained she could only talk about it in English because “the L2 provided her with sufficient psychological distance to enable her to overcome the emotion of talking about it.” According to Swain and Lantolf’s (2019, p. 94) analysis, their student’s first language “was an inseparable component of her identity and her *perezhivanie*,” and did not allow her to verbalize this process before.

In this sense, a different language, once a sufficient level of proficiency is achieved (Karen claimed to be intermediate but also said she can “communicate very well” and that she reads a lot in English), might provide the tools “to intellectualize and therefore to write about” (Lantolf; Swain, 2019, p. 94) her personal struggles, demonstrating how unique the development outcomes might be, for each dialectical social situation of development (Lantolf; Swain, 2019). After this emotional distancing

¹¹⁹ This might bring forward processes of symbolization in a psychoanalytic perspective, for instance.

where she expressed herself in English, she was able to go back to Portuguese to (self-) analyse it more deeply.

Moving forward, Table 25 presents Margaret’s elaboration. Her composition resembles a piece of advice – it was not written in the first person as Karen’s was. She might have been inspired by the language structure of the song lyrics. In addition, she did not provide her self-analysis, which led me to leave it aside in a first glance.

Table 25 – Margaret’s composition

<i>Margaret</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>Everything you hate can't be above everything you love.</i> <i>Because not everything under the sun is in tune.</i> <i>So not everyone you meet wants to hurt you, like those you should leave behind.</i></p> <p><i>Margaret</i></p>	<p><i>(explained during the lesson)</i></p>

Source: made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

However, she makes a very relevant comment *during* the lesson, and about the activity:

“Eu só não vou explicar o meu texto ali, profe, porque como era pra escolher um assunto que a gente se identificava, escolhi um assunto meio delicado, e não me sinto muito bem explicando¹²⁰”.

(Margaret, in the final minutes of the last lesson – Brazil)

In Margaret’s case, perhaps she was not able to get back to her mother tongue to explain her composition better, as it would affect her too deeply. Or, more simply, she did not feel comfortable sharing such personal issues. Either way, it was an important exercise for her, to signify something delicate for her, in her own words – and she felt comfortable enough to at least manifest herself saying why she was not going to do the analysis. Unfortunately, she did not volunteer to be interviewed.

After the cathartic process Karen went through in the final activity, Karen’s answers to the final questionnaire (that she answered straight after) provided the most “negative” feedback on the lessons:

¹²⁰ In English: “I just don't want to explain my text to you, teacher, because as we were supposed to pick a topic that we could identify with, I chose a kind of delicate one, and I won't feel very well explaining it”.

“Eu achei a música ruim, e as atividades poderiam ser um pouquinho mais interessantes, mas eu gostei das aulas em um todo.”¹²¹ (Karen).

(Data extracted from answers to the final questionnaire – Brazil)

Perhaps the self-exposure, although self-induced, bothered her at some level. Perhaps the final activity was not as “interesting” for her as it was for us, who are analysing it. Her disinterest might also be due to the level of difficulty (too low) since she claimed to be of intermediate proficiency in English. However, it seems she recognises that her personal preferences did not interfere in the relevance of the language practice for her development.

This opposes to Beatriz’s comments on the issue, when asked what she had learnt in the classes. She was familiarized with all vocabulary (except for ‘slight’) – which did not make her necessarily “bored” by the activity, because she understood this as a review opportunity.

Again, it is possible to observe that a similar experience may be refracted differently by different individuals. My impression is that all students should have been given my feedback to their composition (not only Alessandra and Beatriz, who were later interviewed). Their deep writing deserved comments on its *content* (and not on the language). This supports the importance of giving students feedback on their composition, welcoming these more subjective manifestations of themselves (Hanauer, 2012) – something I did not predict could be so necessary.

The two interviewees in Brazil, Alessandra and Beatriz, provided interesting comments on the experience of writing in English, thus I left their compositions to the end.

Alessandra was able to recollect what she wrote in her composition, prior to my pasting it for her in the chatbox, during the interview. This was a month after the class:

Alessandra: *Ah eu... eu sei que ficou muito estranho porque... foi de última hora, eu escolhi palavras bem diferentes.. então não dava para... Eu sei que eu fiz uma frase era... calma aí (pensando)... é, não sei o quê, crie tudo o que você pode, tipo, enquanto o sol brilhar (faz gesto de aspas com as mãos), assim... antes do eclipse. Um negócio assim, foi... (risos).*

TR: *Aham, nossa, muito bom! (cola texto no chat)*

Alessandra: *Ficou muito estranho, eu acho, não fez sentido. O eclipse é passageiro, né... o que a gente não fez antes dá pra fazer depois”*

¹²¹ “I found the song bad, and the activities could have been a little bit more interesting, but I liked the classes in general”.

TR: *Tá ótimo, nossa... ficou perfeita essa tua elaboração! Achei legal que tu lembrou do que tu escreveu¹²².*

(Excerpt from Beatriz's interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

She recalled it in Portuguese, but this highlights the importance of meaning making in order to develop long-term learning. Table 26 presents Alessandra's data.

Table 26 – Alessandra's composition

<i>Alessandra</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>Create all you can now, as the sun shines, before it is eclipsed by the moon.</i></p> <p><i>Alessandra</i></p>	<p><i>Eu escrevi esta frase pra tentar explicar para aproveitar quando o sol está te iluminando; ou seja, quando você está bem e tudo bem não estar sempre bem e nesses dias usar para descansar¹²³.</i></p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

She even analyses her composition critically (contesting her explanation given by the time she wrote it), pointing out that content might have been incoherent. She demonstrates the development of critical literary literacy in the way she is able to self-analyse. Her recollections demonstrate, also, that her production of something new, her creative process promoted internalization (Cross, 2012). Considering that the practice touched her, it can be seen as a dramatic event (Veresov, 2017) that led her to remember the process so clearly. This correlates to the fact that learners engage differently with artistic, creative artefacts that are brought to class.

In her turn, also a hint was how Beatriz recalled the word *slight*, as she said she had never seen it before. By working with this language, Beatriz was able to recall it. The same happened to Alessandra's recalls of what she had learnt.

Let us now consider what was elaborated by Beatriz, in Table 27.

¹⁴² In English: Alessandra: Ah, I don't know that it was strange because... it was last minute, I chose very different words, so I couldn't... I know because I made a sentence... hang on... (thinking)... yeah, create whatever you can, like, while the sun is shining (quotation marks sign with fingers), like, before the eclipse. Something like that.. (laughs)

TR: Aham, wow, very good! (paste text on chat box)

Alessandra: It was very strange, I think, it doesn't make sense. Eclipse is temporary, right... what we didn't do before we can do after.

¹²³ "I wrote this sentence to try to explain on enjoying when the sun is shining on you, that is, when you are ok, and it's ok not to be always ok and these days you can take a rest".

Table 27 – Beatriz’s composition

<i>Beatriz</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>All I create isn't related to the way I think, but if I don't have the chance to try, all my thoughts are a way to destroy the possibility of create.</i></p> <p><i>Beatriz</i></p>	<p><i>(left empty – lacked time to answer)</i></p>

Source: Made by the author based on data provided by participants on Quizizz platform.

As regards to the composition, Beatriz did not remember the words – but the sensation:

“Beatriz: Eu lembro que eu fiquei, ‘Meu Deus, o que que eu faço agora?’ (risos)

TR: Ó, que sensação será que é essa?

Beatriz: Medo... e ansiedade, alguma coisa assim?” (risos) Mas eu acho que eu escrevi uma coisa muito fraca... porque eu não sabia como combinar. Mas eu não lembro, tipo, certinho o que eu escrevi...

TR: Tu disse que teve medo... (...) será que foi por causa do tempo? Aquela coisa de contagem do tempo pode ter deixado vocês mais nervosos, assim? Ou porque tu tava insegura do que tu iria fazer? Tu já teve que fazer algo assim?¹²⁴”

(Excerpt from Beatriz’s interview – 11th October 2021)

Beatriz explained that the timing was an issue (they had ten minutes to write) and that she was used to writing exercises in her English course. This means that the process of writing in English, per se, was not that challenging, that was not ahead of her ZPD. But she added:

“Beatriz: Não, eu acho que também, fazer uso da criatividade, né, talvez tenha influenciado nisso.

TR: Isso do nervosismo, pode ter sido de ter que usar a criatividade em outra língua?”

Beatriz: Eu acho que sim...¹²⁵”

(Excerpt from Beatriz’s interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

¹²⁴ Beatriz: I remember being: ‘my God, what do I do now?’ (laughs)

Researcher: Hey, what sensation is that?

Beatriz: Fear... and anxiety, something like that? (laughs) But I think I wrote something very weak... because I didn’t know how to combine. But I can’t quite remember, like, what I wrote.

TR: You said you feared something... (...) was it because of the time-limit? That thing of time-limiting might have made you (all) more nervous? Or because you were insecure on what to do? Have you ever had to do something like that?”

¹²⁵ “Beatriz: No, I also think that making use of creativity, you know, this might have influenced on it.

TR: That of nervousness, could it be because you had to use creativity in another language?

Beatriz: I think so...”.

Her highlight into the *creative* process as an additional demand indicates her acknowledgement of the challenge: the genre *poem* is something new for her (as it is for many learners). In addition, she mentioned that in Portuguese “you have more vocabulary” to do that. She acknowledges the limitation of her expressiveness in English for the purpose of the activity, which led her to struggle a little more (not in a demotivational way). I would argue that, since she has had experience in writing other texts in English, this “difficulty” is more related to a specific language: the literary one – or even, the expression of feelings in that language.

Yet another brief interaction with Beatriz, during the interview, deserves to be mentioned. When asked what emotions would describe her along the classes, she said: “I think ‘joy’” (“*Eu acho que joy*”), using the word just given (joy), in English. This did not happen to Alessandra, perhaps because she is not so familiar with English, yet. This might suggest that students need to be given more opportunities to talk about these emotions and feelings, in order to be able to use the additional language in this way. This issue was signed by Swain and Lapkin (2013, p. 123): “teachers need to teach learners how to express their feelings in the target language”.

Brazilian students used the final activity to express, in their own (English) words, the previous discussion carried out as a group about the literary text. Some used the opportunity to compose in English to manifest their personal restlessness, going through a cathartic episode, and illustrating the power of literature in a foreign language. Karen’s somewhat ambivalent attitude towards the proposed activities, stating that those were not so good, and yet composing strong elucubrations as a response, point to the fact that our adolescents *need* literature.

While these young people may seem adrift in an MTV world—posturing nonchalance and wallowing in materialism—they are rightfully scared to death of a world they have inherited from us, a world where bad things happen to good people, where individuals find it ever more difficult to make a mark, where problems have spiraled out of control, where existence seems both pointless and tenuous, and where God is dead or ordering us to hate one another. It is also a world where fantasy offers a needed escape from information overload and reality television. **Did any generation ever have a more acute need for literature?** (MacLean, 2010, p. 8, my highlights).

Our students *need* literature to deal with the ambivalence of the world and the ambivalence within themselves. The responses originated from the same activity developed in Italy are presented in the next section.

4.4.2 Poems written in Italy: personal views, memories and events

In Italy, there was a different context for the same proposal: learners were physically together. They could see each other, maybe have a look at the partner's paper. They could not access any translation engine and their support for vocabulary were the peers or teachers – who roamed in the classroom, observing and offering help or suggestions when needed. Evidently, the same support was offered in Brazil, but the online circumstances would, for instance, make all other learners know what the student in doubt wanted to know. In the classroom, students from Italy could have the private space of their desks and some possibility to whisper, so that they would not be heard. Their “face” was protected when asking questions.

In this context, I have an anecdote to share: during this final activity, Fausto was with his arms crossed, looking down at his paper. In my eyes, he just seemed disinterested, since he was not holding a pen and writing. I softly invited him to do the activity, because, in my head, he was not doing the activity:

TR: Do you need help? Let's try to do it?

S: I am doing it... I'm thinking about what to write!

I gently apologised after that, and this made me think for many days. We, teachers, are so used to providing activities that are material, that require immediate writing, movement, answering, that we forget the need for thinking when more complex, creative activities are provided. I should praise the fact that Fausto was taking the exercise so seriously. In fact, MacLean (2010) states that *active learning* (in which the teacher provides a series of activities as a coach, not an instructor) is somewhat the problem with teaching Literature in school. Although this methodology is not problematic (I applied this during the pre-reading exercises), “much of active learning is based on an unwillingness to trust the students and let them sit and think, without the comforting cacophony of voices, without even putting them in groups” (MacLean, 2010, p. 11).

Another reminder is that seven students (and not only two, as in Brazil) were interviewed in Italy, providing me with a better overview of their perceptions of the lessons and their own compositions. Most of them had English as a third or fourth language and even the Italian learners had their dialects (like Veneto) as an additional language. I present each student separately, leaving the ones who have been

interviewed for last (thus presenting their comments on their text during the interview, as well).

For the explanation of their compositions, students in Italy provided a wide variety of answers: some were practical and vague (Alfred, Marlon), some misunderstood the question and talked about the original song (Claire, Kosar), and some wrote the translation of their own text (Paul, Sam).

I start by Aline’s composition, in Table 28.

Table 28 – Aline’s composition

<i>Aline</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>The sun is eclipsed by the moon</i> <i>I love the world</i> <i>We must save it</i> <i>Aline</i>	<i>Il mondo in cui viviamo deve essere vissuto con rispetto perché è solo 1¹²⁶.</i>

Source: transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Aline wrote a few words and expanded from the concept of “I” to “We”, in the verses. Her explanation in Italian matches what she had written in English, so accuracy (Hanauer, 2012, Spiro, 2004) was achieved. In Italian, her “essere vissuto con rispetto” is also very poetic – her “pre-intermediate” proficiency (according to her own definition), might not have allowed her to use the same metaphor in English.

Next, there is Alfred’s data, presented in Table 29.

Table 29 – Alfred’s composition

<i>Alfred</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>I’m eclipsed by the sun</i> <i>I see every day the moon</i> <i>I eat Mauro’s kebab so I go to buy a nice kebab.</i> <i>Alfred</i>	<i>I’ho fatto a caso con le parole che avevo scelto prima¹²⁷</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Alfred did not explain why he wrote the lines, but his text is very personal – he even mentioned his Muslim colleague (Mauro) and a dish he likes. His “I’m eclipsed by the sun” is beautiful, but difficult to connect with the follow-up ideas. Fausto also made use of the first person and the opposing verbs love and hate – he depicted two personal

¹²⁶ “The world in which we live in must be lived with respect because it is only one”.

¹²⁷ “I made it by chance with the words I have chosen before”.

scenes: the positive vibes that he gets fighting on videogames (which is somewhat cathartic), and the struggles with the mother. Unfortunately, he did not provide an explanation nor got to be interviewed, to better grasp his final verse or understand whether the use of “hungry” to describe the mother was purposeful (discussed in the previous section). As a reminder, Fausto was the student who was “thinking” to write his poem.

Table 30 shows Claire’s data.

Table 30 – Claire’s composition

<i>Claire</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>Because in this moments I feel many times Because in this moments I thinking a food. Claire</i>	<i>Il testo si relaziona poco con me. Ma il fatto di pensare molto mi piace. Porta a delle cose negative e positive¹²⁸.</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Claire’s text was very short and made use of repetition (“because in this moments...”). She indicated that she is of basic proficiency in English, which might have been a limitation for her (her lack of accuracy for basic structures, such as “a food” confirms that). She might have talked about food because it was lunchtime, too! They are usually starving at this time of day. At the same time, she states in the comment (built on the song, not on her own composition) that she likes how it makes her think – which might demonstrate a positive overall for the activity.

Marlon’s data is presented in Table 31.

Table 31 – Marlon’s composition

<i>Marlon</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>all that I create after the sun get eclipsed my the moon get destroyed or steal Marlon</i>	<i>It comes to my mind.</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

On the other side as regards to proficiency, we have Marlon, who claimed to be advanced: he wrote very little, and although he attempted to comment in English, it

¹²⁸ In English: “The text relates very little with me. But I like the fact of thinking a lot. It takes us to the positive and negative things.

was in a vague manner (“it comes to my mind”). His composition is in first person, and he used the verb create for the idea of creating “after” (not “under”) the sun, getting destroyed or stolen. In the same case as the others, further discussion would have been required to better unfold the meanings he aimed at.

Next, I consider George’s production in Table 32.

Table 32 – George’s composition

<i>George</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>You meet me I eat you I fight you I taste you You create my hate and distrust George</i>	<i>It describes when people make me feel when they make me angry.</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

George was another student who attempted to comment on his own text in English, and provided a less vague reply – though he stated to be “intermediate” in terms of proficiency. His composition depicts a brief and aggressive encounter in the first person – the aggressiveness is permeated by the sense of taste (“I eat you”, “I taste you”) and the “blame” on the other, who “creates” hate and distrust, now working as nouns. He explains this is what he feels when people make him angry. George’s composition is a beautiful description of teenage anger in first person, in very simple sentences, with a lot of metaphoric language. In the questionnaire, he highlighted the final activity as something he liked.

In Table 33, Kosar’s composition and explanation is presented.

Table 33 – Kosar’s composition

<i>Kosar</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>“But the sun is eclipsed by the moon” because the good thinks fished. “and everything under the sun is in tune” because when you stay with the good people you feel right. Kosar</i>	<i>It describes when people make me feel when they make me angry.</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Kosar’s composition consists of her understanding of two passages from the original text (in this case, a strict teacher would not have considered she had

accomplished the task – we did have, however, a shortage of time, and could not ask for adaptations during the development of the activity in this case). Her statement of the moon covering the sun as the good things finishing is somewhat sad – but she also understands that being with good people (perhaps “under the sun”) make you feel right. Her comment is also about the original song – a list of things you can do. Her understanding of the eclipse as finishing things is coherent with the concept of the song, since the verse finishes the lyrics and the song itself finishes the whole album. These were things we discussed as a group prior to the activity, once again revealing the importance of the “literary circles” for the expansion of understanding of the text (Gallian, 2017; Troian, 2023; Bajour, 2012; Paran, 2010). I would, however, further discuss with her the interpretation of her own text, had I had the opportunity of doing so, as suggested by Hanauer (2012).

Table 34 presents Mauro’s composition. He’s a student with special needs.

Table 34 – Mauro’s composition

<i>Mauro</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>Now I would like eating a cake but I can’t because I am muslim and on 23 of march started Ramadan. This afternoon I’m going to buy biscuits and I can eat them when the sun goes down and the moon appear in the sky. If you want I can give you some biscuits tonight.</i></p> <p><i>Mauro</i></p>	<p><i>(left empty)</i></p>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

His composition will be discussed even though he did not have time to provide his comments. He, as well as Karen, in Brazil, managed to compose something very personal with the terms selected. He brought his anguish of not being able to eat during that period of the year when the lesson I because of his religious practice: Ramadan. During Ramadan (a month in the Islamic calendar), devotees should fast from dawn until dusk. Mauro depicted this using the astronomic words from the song: sun and moon. In a very nice closing verse, he offers his biscuits to the reader, but only at night.

Mauro wrote this text with support. He has autism spectrum disorder (as informed by the teacher) and he had, sometimes, the presence of a special needs carer that helped him carry out the activities. I did not have the chance to talk to the carer, but I could observe their interactions from a distance, as she was there during

the composition activity. A more detailed conversation with both would have been interesting, in order to understand the process of composing the text. I could not know how many of the ideas were Mauro's, or perhaps induced by the carer; nevertheless, he managed to talk about personal matters as he brought up Ramadan and his family practice during the period, starting his composition with a personal longing, and finishing it by extending the end of this longing (finally eating) to others. A delicate transaction from the self to the outside world in a few verses.

Moving forward, Table 35 presents Paul's data.

Table 35 – Paul's composition

<i>Paul</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>I'm a fighter I distrust a lot of people I like destroy the thinks but when I did it I need to buy everything again Paul</i>	<i>Sono un combattente. Non mi fido di molte persone. Quando mi arrabbio spacco le cose, Ma quando lo faccio, devo ripegare tutto.</i> ¹²⁹

Source: Transcribed from the student's answer to the classroom activity.

Paul started with a strong statement: he's a fighter, who does not trust people and who likes destroying things – however, he has to reset the things he destroys. In the same way as George, he made use of the language to describe his anger in first person – the comment is a translation of his own text into Italian, indicating, in a different way, that he got the message across in the target language.

Sam's data is presented in Table 36.

Table 36 – Sam's composition

<i>Sam</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>"The things buds, (bads) (erased) is gone And everything under the sun is in tune But the sun is eclipsed by the moon" Sam</i>	<i>Le cose brutte, è andato E ogni cose sotto il sole è sintonizzata Ma il sole è clissa con la luna</i> ¹³⁰

Source: Transcribed from the student's answer to the classroom activity.

¹²⁹ In English: "I am a fighter / I do not trust many people. / When I get angry I destroy things, / but when I do it, I must buy it all back".

¹³⁰ In English: "The bad things / are gone / and everything under the sun is in tune / But the sun eclipses with the moon".

Sam used the same strategy as Paul: she translated her text into Italian in the space for comments – with some typos in both languages, as she’s currently learning Italian, too. She erased and stated that the bad things are gone (not the good ones, as Kosar, for instance), and then repeated the final lines of the original song. Considering her process of learning two languages, I understand she would need more time to develop this final stage of the activity.

Sarah’s composition is presented next, in Table 37.

Table 37 – Sarah’s composition

<i>Sarah</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>“When you really love someone sometimes you only have eyes for him/her but when they cheat on you You start to distrust everyone, you start to destroy your self confident, you start to slight yourself. Like “I’m the problem it’s all my fault” and you start to fight everyone”</i> Sarah</p>	<p><i>Il testo parla di quando sei veramente innamorata di qualcuno/a e quando essi ti tradiscono/ti fanno un torto inizi a non fidarti più di nessuno¹³¹</i></p>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Sarah’s composition seems to be very personal – although she uses third person, perhaps as a strategy or also as a way to resemble the original song. She successfully develops a description of the transition from being in love to disappointment, distrust and the “fighting everyone” as a consequence of it. In the same terms as Karen, in Brazil, she seemed to have used the additional language to express deep feelings within herself about the loved one and the others, including the quotation marks to indicate thoughts of self-blame like “I’m the problem, it’s all my fault”. She was very careful to insert two genders in both languages (him/her and qualcuno/a) – I would speculate this is a way to make it even less personal. This is very much in compliance with what has already been discussed before: writing about yourself is engaging (Spiro, 2004; Hanauer, 2012) but not only. The additional language might provide the space to reflect upon yourself (and your *perezhivanie*) and others in a different manner, less emotional and more analytical (Lantolf; Swain, 2019). Her acknowledgement of distrusting, but also “fighting”, everyone as a reflective

¹³¹ In English: “The text talks about when you are in love with someone, and when this one cheats on you, they are unfair to you, you begin to distrust everyone”.

behaviour that comes with disappointment is very precise. Her explanation for the composition, however, differs from that of Karen, who seemed to have gotten back to Portuguese with a deeper analysis. Sarah kept a simpler explanation in Italian, and her additional languages being English, Veneto and Arabic (in this order, as she stated in the questionnaire), I cannot be sure whether Italian is her mother-tongue or not. Nevertheless, considering that in the first language it might be more difficult to engage into an analysis of the self (as already discussed), her composition in English was very successful in describing deep feelings through a language she has stated to be only intermediate in terms of proficiency.

From now on I discuss the compositions from students that were interviewed in Italy. The discussion of their compositions presents their eventual comments made during the interview, on how they developed the activity.

I start by discussing Ernest's, in Table 38.

Table 38 – Ernest's composition

<i>Ernest</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>All you feel, I can see And all that you hate, I can exit from the gate And all that you buy, you can't see in the sky And all that you are, I miss you And all that you eat, at the end we do it Ernest</i>	<i>Perché sono i fatti quotidiani che la vita mi offre, sono parte della mia quotidianità¹³².</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student's answer to the classroom activity.

Ernest's composition is very intriguing and seem to make use of many metaphors. However, his explanation is somewhat vague: he states these are daily facts in his life. I was hoping to get further development of this during the interview, but it seems his arrangements were solely based on sound, rhyming, as demonstrated in the following dialogue:

TR: *Ed il testo... com'è stata per te questa attività?*

Ernest: *Mi è piaciuta. L'ho fatta con facilità*

TR: *Sì, il tuo testo è bello!*

Ernest: *Perché era in rima, cioè suonava bene...*

TR: *Ok, questa parte "I can exit from the gate"... hai scelto una parola proprio per fare la rima?*

Ernest: *Sì sì*

TR: *[Leggo il testo] So they are supposed to rhyme? Yes, that's great! And did you like doing this, have you done this before?*

¹³² "Because they are the daily facts that life offers me, they are part of my everyday life".

Ernest: *Yes I like do this.*

(...)

TR: *Di che cosa parla il tuo poema? Sai dirmi?*

Ernest: *La traduzione?*

TR: *No, cosa vuoi dire con questa poesia?*

Ernest: *Boh, niente... (ridiamo insieme) cioè, suonava bene e erano cose che, beh, mi toccano... che c'entrano con me.*¹³³

(Excerpt from Ernest's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

As the reader noticed, I attempted to develop a deeper analysis of his own poem during the interview, but Ernest seemed more attached to the “sound” of things. Ernest also told me he'd like to develop his English to go to London because of the Rugby team – he is very much into sports. He stated he doesn't like reading or literature, but he demonstrated a level of acknowledgement of the literary language in the way he arranged his verses in order to rhyme, to sound agreeable to the ear – an important element to develop, when learning a new language (Spiro, 2004; Amer, 2015). Towards the end of the interview, this was his answer to “what is literature, and how do you feel towards literature in general”:

“Boh, Non mi sento molto parte, molto partecipe... non è proprio il mio ambiente¹³⁴”. Thus, he is stating that he does not have a proper relationship with the subject. Nevertheless, his way of putting it is very formal and respectful – perhaps even literary.

Table 39 presents Erica's data. Erica, as many other participants in Italy, chose to use the first person and talked about personal preferences, describing her relationship with the night sky and closing it with the same verse from the reference text. Some sentences seemed arranged confusingly (she states she loves the night

¹³³ **TR:** And the text... how was this activity for you?

Ernest: I liked it. I did it with ease.

TR: Yes, your poem is beautiful!

Ernest: Because it rhymed, that is, it sounded good...

TR: Ok, this part “I can exit from the gate”... did you choose a word specifically to rhyme?

Ernest: Yes

TR: (Reading the lyrics) So they are supposed to rhyme? Yes, that's great! And did you like doing this, have you done this before?

Ernest: Yes, I like doing this.

(...)

TR: What is your poem about? Can you tell me?

Ernest: The translation?

TR: No, what do you mean with this poem?

Ernest: Well, nothing... (we laugh together) I mean, it sounded good and they were things that, well, affect me... that have to do with me”.

¹³⁴ “Well, I don't feel very part of it, very involved... it's not really my environment”.

sky and inserts “but” the sun is eclipsed by the moon, as an opposing thing, although it causes the darkness she likes).

Table 39 – Erica’s composition

<i>Erica</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>I like the sun I watch every night the moon I love the stars I feel love sky for the night But the sun is eclipsed by the moon Erica</i>	<i>Cioè che mi piace l’astronomia, l’universo, ecc.¹³⁵</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

I tried to develop the analysis further but I was unsuccessful; Erica was very short in her answers, as demonstrated in the next excerpt:

TR: *Ma hai già scritto la poesia?*

Erica: *No, mai.*

TR: *E ti è piaciuto, hai trovato difficile?*

Erica: *No, no, l’ho fatto subito.*

TR: *Vediamo... Ti piace l’astronomia, è vero?*

Erica: *Is!¹³⁶*

(Excerpt from Erica’s interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

She did not continue with the topic, so I moved forward with the interview.

Julian’s composition and explanation is presented in Table 40, and further discussed.

¹³⁵ “I mean I like astronomy, the universe, etc.”.

¹³⁶ “**TR:** But have you already written the poem?”

Erica: No, never.

TR: And did you like it, did you find it difficult?

Erica: No, no, I did it right away.

TR: Let’s see... You like astronomy, right?

Erica: Yes!”

Table 40 – Julian’s composition

<i>Julian</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>You can fight all that you love, all that you feel, and all that you buy to your friend but don't distrust your friend</i></p> <p><i>Julian</i></p>	<p><i>My thoughts to “friend” – per me cos'è un amico/a cioè cos'a significa un amico per me¹³⁷.</i></p>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Julian chose to write in the third person, as in giving advice, and he chose friendship as the topic. Although he used the strategy of repetition, by adding the concept of friend (and “never”) he created a whole new composition: “never distrust a friend”. Unfortunately, he was the last student to be interviewed, and I did not have the time to ask him to talk more about his composition. He did comment about his experience of writing in English as the great new element of the lesson (see section 4.2.2).

To address Michelle’s reflections, let us consider Table 41.

Table 41 – Michele’s composition

<i>Michele</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<p><i>I meet you and you gave me everything I didn't know what to say and before I decide, we end up fight and eat each other alive</i></p> <p><i>Michelle</i></p>	<p><i>Mi è successo con una persona e me ne pento.¹³⁸</i></p>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Michelle explains, in Italian, that her composition describes something she regrets. Her use of metaphor (“eat each other alive”) made me very curious. In her interview, she was a bit clearer on the explanation, according to the following transcriptions:

TR.: (...) *Com'è stato fare la scrittura per te? È stato difficile?*

Michelle: *Allora, non è stato difficile, cioè, ho avuto pensare un po'. Però sì, sono venute anche poi molto facilmente delle parole. Soprattutto comunque perché hanno l'immagine, mi sono piaciute. Non è stato difficile. Non c'è nessun altro infatti. Avrei voluto scrivere un po' di più ma... non mi viene in mente nient'altro.*

TR: *E cosa vuoi dire con questo testo?*

¹³⁷ In English: “what is a friend to me / that is, what it means to be a friend to me”

¹³⁸ “It happened with someone and I regret it”.

Michelle: Allora, inizialmente, l'ho fatto così perché mi piaceva... poi mi è venuto in mente che, con queste parole, diciamo, mi è successo con una persona, a cui tenevo molto, ma non è accorta, diciamo, e adesso infatti me ne pento... cioè... voglio tornare indietro...

TR: Avevi litigato?

Michelle: Sì, abbiamo litigato e non ci parliamo più, diciamo... e mi dispiace.

TR: E nel testo, sei riuscita a parlare di questo nella tua poesia...

Michelle: Sì

TR: Mi piace questa espressione "eat each other alive" ... perché hai pensato di (sic) questo? Cosa vuoi dire lì?

Michelle: Avevamo litigato molto...¹³⁹

(Excerpt from Michelle's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Michelle found a way to express herself and her "dramatic event" (Veresov, 2017) through the additional language – although she did not open up so much with me. I asked about her use of "each other alive" to understand in what sense she used it: it was in the sense of quarrelling a lot, to the point of not talking to each other anymore. She did construct an interesting new metaphor with the verb "eat", reconfiguring the simple sense of the word in the song.

Gabriela's data is in Table 42.

¹³⁹ **TR:** (...) What was it like writing for you? Was it difficult?

Michelle: So, it wasn't difficult, I mean, **I had to think a little**. But yes, words also came very easily. Above all, however, **because they have the image**, I liked them. It wasn't difficult. In fact, there is nothing else. I wanted to write a little more but... I can't think of anything else.

TR: And what do you mean with this text?

Michelle: So, initially, I did it like this because I liked it... then it occurred to me that, with these words, let's say, it happened to me with a person, who I cared about a lot, but she didn't notice, let's say, and now in fact I regret it... that is... I want to go back...

TR: Had you argued?

Michelle: Yes, we had an argument and we don't speak to each other anymore, let's say... and I'm sorry.

TR: And in the text, you managed to talk about this in your poem...

Michelle: Yes.

TR: I like this expression "eat each other alive"... why did you think of this? What do you mean there?

Michelle: We had argued a lot...

Table 42 – Gabriela's composition

<i>Gabriela</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>All the love is gone And everything is destroyed And everyone is dead And everything is on fire Because the sun is eclipsed by the moon Gabriela</i>	<i>It just comes to my mind.</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student's answer to the classroom activity.

The interview with Gabriela and her composition was very peculiar. Her text describes some “state of emergency”, and again, by changing one word from the original verse (“but”) she states the eclipse is the cause of this calamity and the vanishing of love, “because the sun is eclipsed by the moon”. In the conversation, she mentions family and her understanding of eclipse:

TR: *What did you mean with your words, can you remember?*

Gabriela: *It was just a funny phrase... phrase? (yes) that me and my cousin Jay one time, my dad always listens to these songs with his friends, so, in Australia, we were doing the Australian Christmas, and he get the disc and we listen to this song and my cousin say this phrase so... it was really funny, I remembered it and I put it.*

TR: *And what was the phrase he said?*

Gabriela: *Laughs – The love is not like this...*

TR: *You mixed that?*

Gabriela: *Yeah, My feelings with the phrase...*

TR: *But do you remember the phrase your cousin said? Or was it a word?*

Gabriela: *Can I see...? Oh my god... (looks at her composition and thinks) Oh yeah... get the “everything is on fire because the sun is eclipsed by the moon” and before that he said “I’m riding a bike... ahn... because... but it’s very difficult because everyone is on fire, and the bike is on fire, and everything in on fire because the sun is eclipsed by the moon” and then he like gets other words from these... tatata, tata (singing)*

TR: *Ok, yeah! And why “everyone is dead”? Because everything is being destroyed? So you have this image of things being destroyed because of the sun being eclipsed by the moon...*

Gabriela: *Yes, because, yeah... **the sun can’t be eclipsed by the moon**... so maybe if one day the sun is eclipsed by the moon, maybe it is like the end of the world, I think... so..*

TR: *But actually the sun is eclipsed by the moon...*

Gabriela: *Yes! I know this... but it seems really interesting and strange... (laughs)*

TR: *Ok, great! And your memory came because you thought of your cousin and also because you listened to this in your home as well?*

Gabriela: *Yes*

TR: *Nice! Nice that you mixed the memories with your music... I liked your text very much (...)*

(Excerpt from Gabriela's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Gabriela was able to use this opportunity of writing to insert her memories with her family: she previously explained that part of her family is from Australia and that they visit each other frequently, and communicate remotely. This might explain her easiness to communicate in the language, nonetheless the minor accuracy aspects. She is able to build a relationship with the language that is more purposeful (she can communicate with her family), but also subjective (since she seemed to have shared many important moments with them, *in English*). This reverberates in her construction of the poem, since she inserted words from a previous conversation with her cousin. Previously, she commented her family had the Pink Floyd record and that she knew the song we worked with, but I could not grasp whether they were listening to this precise song during the conversation. She stated she put her *feelings* in the poem, which is an important statement, but I could not grasp what feelings she meant. Anger, frustration, or the “love” that is gone? Maybe she avoided, as her other colleagues, to go into her more private feelings with me. Another hypothesis is that there was a linguistic limitation in this case since she is still developing her English. Once again, the argument of this thesis resonates in this episode, in which Gabriela was able to compose something through the already discussed process of imitation (Cross, 2012; Urbanski, 2023): this freer, more creative opportunity to write in her “target” language allowed her to imitate and reconfigure not only the words from the song but the expression she learnt from her cousin (mainly “on fire”, from what we can grasp in the interview), making this language, this message, her own, in a process of meaningful literacy (Hanauer, 2012).

In linguistic terms, her understanding of the concept of eclipse, or of the passive voice, perhaps, is unclear, as it seemed to be the case for many students¹⁴⁰. She stated that the sun being eclipsed by the moon was something impossible. Since she was more proficient, I decided to call her attention to the misunderstanding, with the hopes of discussing the concept and perhaps clarifying what was unclear in this, but she responded evasively, maybe out of shyness. Thus, I could not understand whether she meant “the sun is eclipsed by the moon” or “the moon is eclipsed by the sun” (as *this*

¹⁴⁰ In the methodology section, I describe the struggles students had to choose the correct alternative between a) The moon is eclipsed by the sun and b) The sun is eclipsed by the moon. A misunderstanding was also perceptible during Fran’s interview.

virtually impossible). In this case, there could be an issue with accuracy, as she might not have expressed the message she was trying to get across.

Table 43 presents Veronica’s data, the last student to be addressed.

Table 43 – Veronica’s composition

<i>Veronica</i>	
Composition	Explanation
<i>All that I created I have destroy All that I say Whas a lie But I love you And that is truth I want meet you Meet you on sky Say you the word truth And all that I do Is only for you You is my world You is my happiness Veronica</i>	<i>L’ho scritto pensando ad una persona molto importante per me, e quello che faccio è solo per lui.¹⁴¹</i>

Source: Transcribed from the student’s answer to the classroom activity.

Veronica’s poem is a very intense declaration of romantic love; she repeats some of the structures of the original song (“All that...”), creates new ones, and applies the simple, short sentences. She presents some inconsistencies in terms of accuracy: the use of the verbs in the past and some concordance (“You is...”), which did not affect, for the most part, getting the message across. Her text seemed to be free in the sense of worrying about stating what she meant to say, including the use of beautiful metaphors (“I want to meet you / meet you on sky”, “You is my world / You is my happiness”). In her comment in Italian, she seemed very at ease to show her feelings and devotion to this person: “what I do is only for him”.

Veronica is an interesting language learner for many reasons that were unveiled during the interview. She has some experience in writing poetry in Russian and revealed she really enjoyed writing in English for the first time. She is Ukranian and this is her mother-tongue. She was, however, very discreet to talk about her composition during the conversation transcribed:

TR: ... *Mi è veramente piaciuto il tuo testo, sai... perché... “all that I created I have destroyed, all that I say was a lie”... it’s very deep... ahn... molto profondo. Cosa hai pensato quando hai scritto questo? A cosa pensavi?*

¹⁴¹ “I wrote it thinking about a very important person for me, and what I do is only for him”

Veronica: Pensavo.. boh. Pensavo alla vita, all'amore, ai sentimenti, a quello che succede, che può succedere.. cioè, un po' così.

TR: Ok... c'è qualcosa in relazione alla canzone, al testo?

Veronica: Beh... un po', sì, ha relazione alla canzone, ma anche con una persona che... mi sa, che è molto importante per me... e... basta.¹⁴²

(Excerpt from Veronica's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Although I tried to speculate for further inspiration for her text, Veronica did not develop her conversation on the topic – which is understandable, as we did not have a close relationship. She provided, however, a peculiar experience with her text, because she shared it with other people in a picture.

In the interview, Veronica commented that her learning was to write a poem in English for the first time (see the transcription below). This activity probably touched her, as it led her to take a picture of the composition to share with her family. However, their reception to her poem was a bit less focused on the purpose of the activity and brought forward important issues related to accuracy¹⁴³ and how correcting “mistakes” might affect the learner.

The following conversation illustrates this episode:

TR: E in questa lezione hai imparato qualcosa di nuovo?

Veronica: Beh, ho imparato qualche parola che non sapevo... come destroy, tune, slight, e... altre, altre parole simile. Per la prima volta ho fatto una poesia in inglese.

TR: Ecco, questo volevo sapere! Sì, esatto!

Veronica: Che inoltre è venuto un po' così...

TR: Ok, è la prima volta che hai fatto una poesia in inglese. Che cosa hai pensato? Come ti sei sentita di fare la poesia?

Veronica: Beh, quando l'ho scritto, ho detto, **ho pensato beh, madonna, è la prima volta che ho fatto la poesia in inglese, che strano... e poi, niente, ero contenta...** ma poi quando sono arrivata a casa, mio _____ mi hanno detto che ho fatto tanti errori, quindi, ok... cioè... [embarrassed laughter]

TR: Cosa hai detto, in casa, non ho capito...?

Veronica: Ho detto a casa che per la prima volta avevo fatto una poesia in inglese, l'ho fatte vedere, perché ho fatto la foto e **loro mi hanno detto che c'erano tanti errori...**

TR: Oh, vero? Chi ha detto questo?

¹⁴² **TR:** ... I really liked your lyrics, you know... because... “all that I created I have destroyed, all that I say was a lie” ... it's very deep... Ahn... very deep. What were you thinking when you wrote this? What were you thinking about?

Veronica: I thought... well. I was thinking about life, about love, about feelings, about what happens, what can happen... that is, a bit like that.

TR: Ok... is there anything related to the song, to the lyrics?

Veronica: Well... a little, yes, it has to do with the song, but also with a person who... I think, who is very important to me... and... that's it.

¹⁴³ I had briefly discussed accuracy at the analytic level at 4.3.1, but this section is inspired by the conversation and interweaves Veronica's perezhivanie.

Veronica: I miei genitori...e quindi, sono rimasta un po' così...

TR: Perché c'erano errori di grammatica? Oh, no!

Veronica: Tipo, you is... [she looks at her poem], l'uso della h... ed altre...

TR: Ah ma questo mi piace tanto... sono errori piccolini, dopo puoi correggere, sai... Mi è veramente piaciuto il tuo testo, sai... perché... "all that I created I have destroyed, all that I say was a lie" ... it's very deep... ahn... molto profondo.¹⁴⁴

(Excerpt from Veronica's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Veronica describes her surprise and joy about writing a poem in English for the first time (“Oh, my, I have written a poem in English! / I was happy”), only to get home and hear she had made “so many mistakes”. She says that embarrassingly, explaining that she somewhat lost her initial excitement about it. I was surprised at the irony of having her experiencing precisely what I was trying to avoid.

Her family's reaction might as well depict what many teachers would have done: to go through problems with grammar accuracy, spelling etc. In fact, this is one of the demotivators to creative writing practices both for teachers and students: the belief that a certain proficiency, accuracy, level must be achieved in order to develop creative writing. Veronica was brave enough to overlook any struggles with language she might have had, to simply play with the language, the way *poets*, in fact, do! In her case, this is in accordance with research, that indicated that: “Learners with experience of more than one language and culture seemed to be advantaged in having a higher likelihood of this openness [to writing poetry]” (Spiro, 2010, p. 188).

¹⁴⁴ **TR:** And did you learn anything new in this lesson?

Veronica: Well, **I learned some words I didn't know...** like destroy, tune, slight, and... other, other similar words. **For the first time I wrote a poem in English.**

TR: That's what I wanted to know! Yes exactly!

Veronica: Which also came out a bit like this...

TR: Ok, it's the first time you've written a poem in English. What did you think? How did you feel about writing poetry?

Veronica: Well, when I wrote it, I said, **I thought well, holy mother, it's the first time I've written poetry in English, how odd...** and then, nothing, **I was happy...** but then when I got home, my _____ they told me that I made a lot of mistakes, so, ok... that is... (embarrassed laughter)

TR: What did you say, at home, I didn't understand...?

Veronica: I told them at home that for the first time I had written a poem in English, I showed them, because I took the photo and **they told me that there were so many mistakes...**

TR: Oh, right? Who said this?

Veronica: My parents... and so, I remained a bit like that...

TR: Why were there grammatical errors? Oh no!

Veronica: Like, you is... (looks at the poem in front of her), the use of h... and others...

TR: Ah but I really like this... **they are small mistakes, you can correct them later, you know...** I really liked your lyrics, you know... because... “all that I created I have destroyed, all that I say was a lie”... it's very deep... Ahn... very deep.

As regards to her evident concern with accuracy, she feels clearly frustrated with her feedback from the family. I tried to elaborate on this with her, explaining that they were minor mistakes that could be fixed. She had two overlapping dramatic events (Veresov, 2017) refracted through her *perezhivanie*, and I was left without knowing the result. Hopefully, this frustration, which I had tried to soften, does not develop into deconstructive emotions (Rosiek, 2003) towards writing creatively in English.

In this research proposal, there was never an instruction to students about accuracy in grammatical terms, as previously stated, as an “over-concern about errors can be an inhibiting factor to the learner”. The accuracy required was that of getting the message across, which she did, with additional use of figurative language (literary, meaningful literacy, something already developed in her from her through her practice in other languages). Veronica followed the task successfully and the activity made her feel engaged.

We cannot state that “mistakes” (such as the one by Fausto, with the word “hungry”) are not simply fruit of an “imaginative leap” (Spiro, 2004), or poetic license. Veronica tried to express very meaningful things and used verb to be “mistakenly” (she was somewhat annoyed by her mistake, seeming to acknowledge it was a very basic one). That means this frustration, together with the looking at grammar mistakes (rather than content) by the first people she shared her composition with, might have a negative impact in her future productions. This points to the importance of *the teachers’* feedback, as the qualified one to state what is “good” or “bad” about her composition, and the importance to *talk* about what they wrote (Hanauer, 2012). Had I not interviewed Veronica, we might have never talked about this, and about what was good in her composition.

In this section, I discussed and commented learners’ compositions, together with other relevant data, in order to identify the relevance of creative writing activities in the EAL classroom. It is evident that the requirement to explain their compositions added potential to the activity, and even more the interview that was developed with some of the participants.

In Brazil, the expression of one’s subjectivity in an additional language (a great motivator for this research) was demonstrated by Karen’s composition. She expressed very personal issues in English, and explained them back into her first language after the creative, cathartic event. In Italy, where it is difficult to say whether English is their first additional language (and not Italian, or Russian), an interesting piece of data

demonstrates a similar linguistic movement. Below is the beginning of the conversation with Veronica, the Ukrainian participant, when I asked about activities she goes through in her free time:

Veronica: *Disegno, faccio le poesie, ascolto la musica, guardo un film, cane, molto poco esco con gli amici...*

TR: *Tu scrivi poesia, sì?*

Veronica: *Sì, cioè, quando me viene.*

TR: *E in che lingua scrivi, quando vuoi scrivere la poesia?*

Veronica: *In russo.*

TR: *In russo? E qual è la tua madrelingua? Russo?*

Veronica: *Ucraino.*

TR: *Ucraino? Ma preferisci scrivere in russo?*

Veronica: *è, sì, mi viene più naturale, cioè, non lo so.*

TR: *Questo è interessante... il russo è la tua seconda lingua... ok... e dove ha imparato il russo?*

Veronica: *L'ho imparato, cioè, tanto con gli amici con chi gioco al computer... oppure in Ucraina ci sono molte persone che parlano russo... e magari ho sentito da qualche parte...*¹⁴⁵

(Excerpt from Veronica's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

Veronica's example is a whole world of analysis in linguistic terms, that I will not be able to investigate here. But a major hypothesis relates to that presented by Swain and Lantolf (2019), in which they demonstrated that certain dramatic events can be better dealt with through a language that is not your first one (see the discussion about Karen's composition, on section 4.1.1).

Along this line of thought, writing poetry, which is a meaningful, subjective, artistic practice, is a form of accessing these dramatic events. For Veronica, intuitively, Russian seemed easier for her to develop this part of herself, instead of her mother tongue, Ukrainian. There are variables, of course, such as whether she used this

¹⁴⁵ **Veronica:** I draw, I write poems, I listen to music, I watch a film, dog, I go out with friends very little...

TR: You write poetry, yes?

Veronica: Yes, that is, when I feel like it.

TR: And what language do you write in, when you want to write the poem?

Veronica: In Russian.

TR: In Russian? And what is your mother tongue? Russian?

Veronica: Ukrainian.

TR: Ukrainian? But you prefer to write in Russian?

Veronica: It's, yes, it comes more naturally to me, I mean, I don't know.

TR: This is interesting... Russian is your second language... ok... and where did you learn Russian?

Veronica: I learned it, that is, a lot with friends who I play computer games with... or in Ukraine there are many people who speak Russian... and maybe I heard it somewhere...

language for more subjective activities in general (such as friends, relationships etc.). Nevertheless, Russian, her second language, allows her to express herself creatively (more than Ukrainian!). Her spontaneity in learning the language, and in using it as an instrument to express herself through poetry, indicates the powerful instances languages can dive into oneself. Finally, this small conversation provides insights into the, many times, hidden literary lives of our learners. So often, we do not listen to what their real experience with literature is, because we do not create opportunities for that.

4.5 FINAL ASPECTS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT IN BRAZIL AND IN ITALY: INTERACTION AND WRITTEN PRACTICE

The aim of this thesis is never to suggest a comparison between such different contexts as those experienced in Brazil and in Italy. The only four aspects that could have been aimed to be the same were: the lesson plan, the time available, the mixed-proficiency groups, and me, the researcher, who, nevertheless, played different roles. Not even the school settings (that in fact, looked very much alike) could be the same: it was pandemic, remote Brazil in 2021, and post-pandemic, face-to-face Italy, in 2023.

Many variables remind me of what makes the two experiences so diverse. Learners in Italy were a year younger, surrounded by speakers of other languages, in the country, in their community of practice. The researcher arrived in Italy as a foreigner having not yet mastered the host language; whereas in Brazil she was a native speaker of the L1. This L1 was the same for all students, which was not the case in Italy, where we had native-speakers of languages such as Chinese and Ukrainian. Italian, for some of them, was yet another additional language. Brazil was on-line, with fewer participants, and only two interviewees. Italy allowed for the use of pen and paper, for realia; Brazil allowed technological resources.

In this final part, I aim to discuss aspects related to these different contexts (face to face and online) with what would be more or less the same lesson plan set. I also add a small section to final points regarding to *perezhivanie*, inspired by the interview with Veronica and an encounter with an old friend.

My being a temporary new teacher, as well as a foreigner, definitely influenced the engagement of students in Italy, together with the fact that it was a face-to-face lesson. Nevertheless, in terms of general participation, I observed that students felt more at ease to ask questions and for clarification in Italy, even if it was in Italian (and, at times, directly to their lead teacher, Mr. M.), when compared to the study in Brazil. In Italy, I could also see their faces, their body language, their confused, understanding, interested (and disinterested) expressions. This helped me maintain the use of the English language much further than in Brazil. In fact, the little amount of English I spoke in Brazil, when compared to Italy on later analysis, astonished me. This corroborates the general impression that participation is more effective in person, and without phones, digital distractions, etc., as I had already observed in my own personal practice.

However, even though writing is a very private way of communicating, it seemed that students in Brazil, under the protection of their homes and behind a screen, without their colleagues' glances, were more at ease to express their subjectivity in the final activity, where they had to write a meaningful poem. In Italy, they seemed more concerned about their surroundings; they felt shy. Fran briefly illustrates the issue of speaking their minds in front of others, in the following transcription from the interview:

TR: *E la tua opinione della canzone, del testo... perché ti è piaciuto il finale?*

Fran: *Sì, perché cioè, c'è quel collegamento con la luna, [...], cioè, [il sole] è sempre così luminoso, però io ho sempre preferito la luna, perché ha un suo modo diverso di mostrarsi, cioè, a volte si vede, a volte non si vede, il sole invece è sempre lì presente...*

TR: *Esatto.. ah, io volevo tanto che tu dicessi questo nella lezione!*

Fran: *Ma perché dirlo a voce alta avanti a tutti proprio non ci riesco. Proprio adesso con solo una persona riesco a esprimermi meglio... sentimenti, cose così...*

TR: *Hum, importante, questo che mi dici... e per questo ho proposto quello esercizio con la scrittura, sai, perché so che tantissimi studenti non riescono a parlare di queste cose davanti a tutti...*

Fran: *Sì, è stato anche quello **molto utile**... mi è venuto un po' difficile, cioè, allora, spiegare il significato di quella poesia che ho scritto, mi è venuto facile. Però proprio scrivere la poesia, inventare, scrivere un testo, una poesia... non lo so, mi è venuto un po' difficile... in parte ci ho messo un po' più tempo, però...¹⁴⁶*

(Excerpt from Fran's interview – Italy, 27th March 2023)

The extract above, which has been discussed in another section to report the challenge of writing, is here to indicate how some students might feel uncomfortable to open up in a group. This does not mean, however, that this particular student was not attentive. She built this beautiful analysis of her impressions on the song, but could not comment on this in front of the group. In Brazil, I felt we had the opportunity to discuss this as a group more openly (though we need to consider Brazil as a smaller group where only a few students actually spoke during the discussion of the poem). Fran explains that “commenting” on her composition (that is, analysing it) was easy –

¹⁴⁶ **TR:** And your opinion of the song, the lyrics... why did you like the ending?

Fran: Yes, because that is, there is that connection with the moon, [...], that is, [the sun] is always so bright, but I have always preferred the moon, because it has its own different way of showing itself, that is, sometimes you see it, sometimes you don't see it, but the sun is always there...

TR: Exactly... ah, I really wanted you to say this in the lesson!

Fran: But I just can't say it out loud in front of everyone. Right now with just one person I can express myself better... feelings, things like that...

TR: Hum, important, what you're telling me... and that's why I proposed that exercise with writing, you know, because I know that a lot of students can't talk about these things in front of everyone...

Fran: Yes, that was also very useful... it came a little difficult for me, that is, then, explaining the meaning of that poem I wrote came easy to me. But just writing the poem, inventing, writing a text, a poem... I don't know, it was a bit difficult for me... in part it took me a little longer, but...”.

because it was written, thus corroborating my argument for a more private way of expressing themselves. However, during class, I was able to feel some tension between students, who were under their teachers' and their colleagues' gaze all the time, while writing. This might have had an impact in their writing, so a homework alternative, although potentially suffering the "risk" of using AI for linguistic purposes (now with the possibility of the computer composing the poem), could be another way of developing it¹⁴⁷. In addition, the interview offered the opportunity to acknowledge the impression of shyer students like Fran, who were very touched by the literary piece and the activity, even though they remained silent during the discussion part.

Written proposals were, nevertheless, relevant for the purpose of their self-expression and to collect feedback from the lessons. Strategies like the Exit Ticket allow them to comment on the lesson and reflect on their learning in private with the teacher – since, in real life, we are not able to interview each and one of them to ask for their impressions.

¹⁴⁷ Chat GPT was not a thing in 2021 in Brazil, but it was definitely something in 2023, in Italy. Students could easily develop their composition, based on the words taken from the lyric, through it. On the other hand, a follow-up exercise such as this, where they state what they want to be written by the AI tool, could be yet another way of delving into the language. But this is a whole other thesis.

5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: WHERE DO WE ARRIVE?

Beatriz: Literatura eu penso em livro..., mas acho que, não só isso. Envolve criatividade, envolve sentimento, ou, muitas vezes, tipo, uma frase, ela tem diversos significados. E depende, tipo, como você tá num dia, aí tu vai ler, aí tu vai ter uma interpretação. Ou se por exemplo, se tu tá feliz, e tu vai e tu vai ter uma interpretação de um jeito, e se tu ler num outro dia que tu tá mais ou menos, tu vai ter outra interpretação. Então, eu não saberia dizer, tipo, uma, sabe, definir a literatura. Porque eu acho que ela é...

TR: Eu acho que tu definiu lindamente, assim!

(risos)

Beatriz: Porque eu acho que ela não tem, tipo, um conceito, tipo, 'ah, literatura é isso'. Até porque, tipo, é criatividade, né. Eu acho.¹⁴⁸

(Excerpt from Beatriz's interview – Brazil, 11th October 2021)

The epigraph to this final chapter is Beatriz's answer to the question "what is literature". Beatriz mentions elements we have discussed and aimed to interrelate, in this thesis: creativity, sentiment, context, momentum. All of them touch and are touched by the experience with literature, and her words beautifully imbricate the concept of *perezhivanie*. Beatriz's words converse with Lantolf and Swain's description of refraction: "the same environment is refracted through the same individual in different ways at different phases of the individual's development" (Swain; Lantolf, 2019, p. 88). My interviewee, and not myself, has demonstrated the relationship between literature and an individual's "*lived experience*": full of nuances, and full of "meaning potentialities" (Urbanski, 2023) along the creation of new individual ZPDs.

The objective of this thesis was to identify potentialities in a short lesson plan that made use of a literary piece in English, in a secondary school context, in the light of the Sociocultural Historical Theory. To accomplish this, I established specific objectives.

The first of them was to critically analyse the lesson planning and its application, both in Brazil and in Italy. The Comprehensive Approach to Literature in the Foreign Language (Bloemert, 2019) is an approach that organized the focuses given to literature, reminding us of the importance of working both with the text and with the use

¹⁴⁸ **Beatriz:** Literature I think of books... but I think it's not only that. It involves creativity, involves feeling, or, many times, like, one sentence has many meanings. It depends, like, how you are on the day, then you'll read and have one interpretation. Or if, for example, you are happy, you'll have one interpretation in a certain way, and if you read it in another day, when you're not so fine, you'll have another interpretation. So, I wouldn't know, like, you know, how to define literature. Because I think it is...".

Researcher: I think you defined it beautifully like this! (laughs)

Beatriz: Because I don't think it has, like, a concept, like, 'ah, literature is this'. Even because, it's **creativity**, right. That's what I think".

of the text as a resource for development, be it for language development or, as I observed, the development of the learner as a human being, while also considering the importance of content and language use. For this reason, I understand the approach as a guideline for lesson planning, where the teacher can critically observe the space given for all the four approaches (text, content, reader, language). By reaching the end of the research, for instance, I came across other proposals, such as the one by Ballester-Roca and Spaliviero (2021), who investigated how literature has been approached in Italian EAL classrooms, and proposed a hermeneutic model called Model of literary and intercultural communicative competence. It consists of a promising approach that their own paper suggests to be applied in basic education, in order to observe the reception by learners.

My lesson plans, for instance, did not address the four approaches equally, and one of the reasons was that the proficiency level of the group and the language of the text were not very complex. Additionally, this consisted of a very short two-lesson set, and context must always be taken into consideration. The lesson planning must consider the aims, the learner, the teacher, the text and the task (Paran, 2016). In my case, the aim was that students were able to read, comprehend, interpret, and write their own composition based on the song lyric. Since composition requires creativity, it was important to give opportunities for that to emerge through a major focus on the “reader approach”.

The way students accomplished the composition indicates that the previous activities, in which I aimed at scaffolding their vocabulary comprehension prior to reading, were more successful than not. In Brazil, the Quizizz platform worked well, and the main issue was the chronometer, that might have left students apprehensive (mostly, a deconstructive sensation). Thus, in a critical analysis of the activities proposed, these were mostly successful for those who were present in the online class meetings, in Brazil.

In Italy, the experience with pen and paper replicated my previous impressions in the face-to-face context: students usually enjoy it. Timed activities (Rapid Word Recognition and Rapid Word Definition, in Appendix L) were engaging for most students. Some, as presented, did not like it, but this was compensated by non-timed ones like the Vocabulary Knowledge (Appendix M), where they could consciously analyse their knowledge of the language. Whereas some complained about the speed, others struggled more to write the composition. This is very natural, as learners do

have their own preferences. Being aware of that, a certain range of variety will make students engaged at different times along the lesson. Overall, learners in Italy also enjoyed the lessons. However, the discussion in a group – and even their composition – seemed more constrained by the presence and the “judgemental” eye of others. A solution would be to provide it as homework, as previously suggested, and use strategies for collecting class feedback in written form, such as through the Exit Ticket (for a high availability of technology in the classroom, tools like Wordwall or others might be useful to collect feedback while keeping learners’ anonymity).

As regards to their motivation to learn, interviewees seemed engaged, but this was part of their personality as language learners prior to the given classes. In Italy, this motivated attitude had the interference of another factor: having a temporary, foreign teacher in their classroom. Nevertheless, in Brazil, their descriptions of emotions such as joy, surprise and anticipation, all related to the sense of purpose and the identification of their own learning, stand for the importance of engaging lessons. It would be relevant to interview more students who are not so engaged into learning English, or not as interested in literature (this was the case of Ernest¹⁴⁹, only, in Italy): this would allow more relevant data on what difference the literary text can make.

Another specific objective was to observe the learners’ paths in studying English, now and in the past. Most have not had contact with literary pieces in class, or had limited contact with songs, only by translating them. Composing in English was something completely new, and some students’ feedback was very motivational to me as a teacher.

From the data, I perceived that learners value their learning in and outside the school setting. In Brazil and in Italy, their positive experiences with the language refer to being able to use the language in a cultural way, through music or TV series, or through games, or in situations where they were able to speak the language. This shows how culture and interaction are always relevant in the classroom. The study of metalinguistic aspects (such as learning a certain tense structure) was also mentioned as positive, demonstrating that learners value these scientific concepts as relevant to their language development. The same metalinguistic aspect was devalued when out of context, and boredom, due to the excessive repetition of content, was brought as an

¹⁴⁹ He stated: “Well, I don't feel very part of it, very involved... it's not really my environment” (see page 191).

issue (especially in Brazil). In sum, learners' past experiences indicate the relevance of school, but also the impact of assessment for the acknowledgement of their learning. They valued the gamified structure of the vocabulary studies in the lesson proposed, and enjoyed how that was related to the text, as brought up by Michelle¹⁵⁰ and Fran¹⁵¹. Their interviews revealed that such vocabulary activities were successful as they used what they have learnt outside the classroom – as exemplified by Alessandra (p.146).

Although personal preferences might vary, it is important that us, teachers, aim at tapping into their ZPDs, or *creating* opportunities for their development through their ZPDs. Is the vocabulary too simple for some? No problem, let us make it equally engaging by adding a game to it (such as Quizlet), or by practicing quick reading (Rapid Word Recognition), and then working on the different levels of understanding of the same vocabulary (Vocabulary Knowledge), where they may help each other in pair work. Is the vocabulary still too difficult? Let us wrap this up by adding a quick “translation” section, in which those more proficient help building the glossary for those still learning. Thus, everyone, at their different stages of learning, had the necessary background knowledge (Kleinman, 2004) to understand the text we were about to read. In fact, several learners pointed out how they learnt new words thanks to the activity, and Fran¹⁵² highlighted how interesting it was that these words led to understanding a literary text (that is, she found *purpose* in learning the words).

On the other hand, positive and negative experiences were also related to their grades, indicating the importance we must give to assessment in EAL, and not only because a bad grade might frustrate the learner, I observed. The fact that a good grade might not be enough to make them engaged, or acknowledge their learning, reveals the importance of explaining to students the purpose of English in the classroom. This is a fact especially in Brazil, where the mistaken belief that 50-minute weekly lessons should work as an English course and develop high levels of proficiency, leads them to much frustration.

Some learners, who enjoyed the vocabulary activities, still revealed difficulties in comprehending the text, as their final questionnaires revealed. This is proof that

¹⁵⁰ She stated that “So, **I really enjoyed this activity!** (Rapid Word Recognition) Because **it also helped me with speed**... and I liked it” (...) (see page 144, but also 138).

¹⁵¹ “I really liked the fact that we had to race the time clocked to underline as many words as possible” (see page 137).

¹⁵² “(...) but the fact that it was connected a little with the song was something that made me... it was very beautiful” (...). (see page 165).

each learner has a different ZPD and sometimes we are not able to reach this space in their development, although aiming at providing the scaffold. I believe the vocabulary activities did create ZPDs, but the literary discussion might have been ahead of what they were able to grasp, for some of them. This might indicate how little used they were to discuss literary language in English (or even in their L1, for that matter). I also believe that, by doing this more frequently, they will get more used to these aspects in the text, developing the literary literacy we aim for. That was what happened to Alessandra, in Brazil, leading us to the next objective.

I also aimed, in a specific objective, at observing literacy episodes in the meetings and through participants' interviews. Such interviews, at first planned as something secondary, became essential for the understanding of the outcomes, or potentialities, of my small literature-led lesson proposal. It was thanks to this interview that Alessandra's development of literary literacy was highlighted, thus proving that *talking* about literature is what helps us develop it (Paran; Robinson, 2016; Cosson, 2015; Troian; Seerig, 2020).

Although it does not refer to a transformation towards language learning, Alessandra's relationship with poetry might have gone through a shift *due* to the interview, which led her to recognise the importance of group reading (and discussion) to access literary understanding. Through that, she could finally understand the "beauty" in poetry when seeing its "hidden messages" (metaphorical language). It demonstrates that the focus on the reader is a good form of mediation between the learner and the text. It is rewarding to witness how the lesson contributed for the advancement of Alessandra's ZPD in relation to reading – and how the interview helped her re-signify previous, more frustrating experiences, with poetry (she had a bad time with a Vinicius de Moraes's poem in the past, see p. 171). This episode shows how *perezhivanie's emotional* aspect is shaped by the individual's emotional response to their environment or interactions with others, while the *intellectual* aspect involves analysing that response. By combining emotional and intellectual, it results in new behaviour, where the feeling toward an activity or a person could shift, changing from negative to positive (Swain; Lantolf, 2019). Alessandra's example confirms this perspective, in which we might be able to change how learners face their process of learning by the way we invite them to learn.

In this sense, a transformation in the narrative related to language learning was slightly perceptible in Katherine's words (who stated to be feeling again motivated to

learn English – see p. 150-151), but this would be more evident through an interview. This lack of data in Brazil points to the mistake of not inviting certain students to be interviewed, instead of only suggesting them to volunteer; something I tried to remedy in Italy.

As repeatedly claimed in this thesis, learning leads to motivation (Vygotsky, 1976, Holzman, 2020), and I am grateful to have found evidence for this crucial SCHAT statement along this research: in Brazil, Alessandra revealed how the engagement provided by the lesson helped her focus on what she was learning, making her excited about it. Other learners also indicated, in their interviews, the novelty of the approach and how this made them engage in their activities. Fran observed this shift in learners' attitudes, who were more attentive as a group.

Emotional literacy, which consists of how individuals read and write the world emotionally, although not being the focus of the thesis, was promoted in the opportunities given in class to students to explore and express their subjectivity freely. The moments of work with literature with a focus on the reader allowed circumstances of interaction in a humanistic manner, allowing them to open up, as happened in Karen's case, in the final activity (p. 184 on). Such moments, in which learners are given voice and, more than that, are invited to release the voice of their poetic self, are pointed out by Barcelos (2015) as essential for emotional literacy to develop.

The process of literacy was also perceived during the lessons, where the discussions provided them with the possibility of analysing the meaning of the text, while shifting to the L1/HL do develop their literary literacy skills further where they knowledge of English language could not yet reach. These language shifts were important as they were simultaneously applying their understanding to a text in a different language, while acquiring this language, and required their other language to make meaning of it. Finally, this led them to the development of their own personal composition, in English, making use of the Vygotskian concept of imitation as part of the process. The discussions carried out previously also revealed themselves as influential in their compositions, in a beautiful connection. This, in turn, leads to the last secondary objective: to discuss potentialities in the composition as meaningful literacy.

Learners' poems, be it with or without support of translation engines, showed a genuine intention to communicate something about themselves – or, at least, achieve the task of poetic language, even if it is just by making rhymes (like Ernest did). Thus, it is here demonstrated that “Through literature we can explore who we are, who we

are not and who we might want to be” (Hall, 2015, p. 20), not only through reading it, but through writing it, as well.

In this sense, it was possible to identify meaningful literacy in the way they applied their knowledge, their perception of language and their understanding of what poetry is, into what they wrote. By applying the vocabulary selected by them, some mentioned loved ones, some talked about regret; some revealed a typically angry personality – always relating to some sentiment. In Brazil, participants inserted the previous group discussion about the text to their compositions, talking about the pandemic context and the importance of living in the “now”. The intuitive strategy to ask them to comment about what they had written also made their compositions (and even their understanding of the activity) clearer.

This was perceptible especially in Karen’s response to the activity. Although claiming the whole set of lessons could have been “better” (see p. 187), she took advantage of the composition practice to the full (see p. 184), exploring her deep self in English, and analysing it thoroughly in Portuguese. Her process demonstrated how literature-led activities can tap in learners’ *perezhivanie*, leading them to profound perspectives of their personalities in another language. This, I would say, was one of my major personal learnings along this research. Swain and Lantolf’s (2019) discussion on how another language might offer support to elaborate deep emotional events resonate in Karen’s composition, and also in Veronica’s unpredicted revelation that she instinctively preferred to write poetry in her second language (Russian). In this sense, the appropriation of *literary* language in the second language might help re-signify those very conflicting, or even traumatizing personal events. The important analyses developed and the concept of *perezhivanie* dialogue with investigations related to literature and creative writing that were addressed here.

Powerful self-elaborations are possible through additional languages, and through literary (that is, emotional, imaginative, metaphorical) language. It may emerge as a need in a variety of contexts and life stages. This is the case of a great friend of mine who, in 2023, had struggled to diagnose, treat and adapt to bipolar disorder; she had also struggled against prejudice against this diagnosis both in her community and at work. One of her ways of dealing with this was through what she has been calling “therapeutic writing”: she writes narrative poetry as a means to externalise her thoughts, her anguish, her mind and heart, and she publishes it, with the aim of raising awareness to the disorder. Her publications are in Portuguese, but while we talked, I

asked, knowing she's a fluent English speaker: have you ever felt the urge to write in English? Yes, she told me, thinking: "mostly the ugly stuff". She explained that in her deeper states of depressive crises, she would write freely, whatever came to mind, in English. "Also because I could hide these brutal ideas from my mother" (as her mother does not read in English). "Ugly stuff". Deepest dramatic events, hid from the mother, but also unable to be expressed by (or to) her Portuguese-self, so ugly they were? My friend's additional language worked as a means to verbalise her "ugly" self. A self all of us have; a self that we know can be so ugly in our teenage years, as it is the case of my students. In this sense, Karen's texts, Veronica's poetry in Russian, and my close friend's story demonstrate empirically what can be an ambition to all of us, language teachers: to empower learners with another way of looking at themselves and expressing themselves.

From the beginning of this research, I wondered how my relationship with *my* additional language, that is, English, has been. I realized my journaling came out more easily in English, but I have also started it in English to "hide" information from those who lived with me. Is this because the genre was practiced more in this language? This might be the case for Lantolf and Swain's (2019) student, and my own case. But it was not the case for my friend, who wrote in both languages, and eventually published only in Portuguese. If the matter is genre, yet again, let us practice those with students, as I do not think they have been practiced in their first language, either. Our lessons might be the opportunity for them to tap into their selves.

Surprisingly even to me, the interviews brought to light how relevant the composition activity was for them. Veronica¹⁵³ and Fran¹⁵⁴'s claim that, although challenging, this led them to *think* in English, reveal how learners are not afraid of literature: us, teachers, are (MacLean, 2010). This experience also demonstrated the importance of following the whole set of principles suggested by Hanauer (2012), which included discussing the composition with the student and allowing them a place for publishing their work. Veronica, for example, was eager to share her composition (which shows that, yes, they want to say this to someone) and, because we did not have the chance to properly talk about it, she took it straight home and got somewhat

¹⁵³ "...maybe I learned a little... a little to think in English" (see p. 152).

¹⁵⁴ "It was perhaps a little more challenging but in a positive way, because you actually had to think in that language" (see p. 151).

frustrated by her family's objective feedback that focused only on grammar issues (see section 4.4.3).

This points to one of the limitations of this proposal: data generated in the last class meeting demonstrates that a follow-up meeting was required, in which the teacher (or the teachers) could speak further to students about their composition. It seems that the last activity made them open up, but they never got feedback from the teachers, on the content, or the meaning of what they put into words. Had I been in regular classes, I would be able to do that in the following term (in Brazil) or in the following lessons (in Italy) without major problems, but this was not possible.

By discussing all the aspects above, it is now time to reflect on the main objective – to identify the potentialities of a short literature-focused lesson set of EAL, developed for secondary school, in the light of the SCHAT. This study reveals that, even in two lessons developed with a multi-proficient group, it is possible to:

- ✓ Engage learners with different interests and different levels of vocabulary knowledge with “gamified” vocabulary activities, that are fast and effective;
- ✓ Promote literary literacy by providing them with the necessary previous knowledge (in pre-reading activities) for reading a literary text (chosen considering the context and the time available);
- ✓ Promote critical literary (and emotional) literacy through a reader approach, by inviting learners to comprehend, interpret and discuss the literary piece, in an aim to create ZPDs for their literary language;
- ✓ Promote meaningful literacy by inviting them to elaborate what they have learnt through a text in English, about themselves or their perceptions of the world;
- ✓ Engage their thinking-speaking unity in English, by proposing meaningful writing;
- ✓ Develop their English language skills, as they revealed such an activity was new and led them to think in English, and use creativity (the apex of higher mental functions, for Vygotsky);
- ✓ Engage learners to think about themselves by analysing their own compositions, offering them a new form of expression, and promoting transformations in their *perezhivanie* with the support of a new language, in a form of “life as authoring”, in a pedagogy focused on prospective education (Kozulin, 1998).

Bringing forward the beautiful Vygotskian concept of ZPD as a bud to be cultivated, I would say that, in the lessons proposed for this thesis, the capability to talk and write poetry (and thus develop language creatively) is like such buds: they need

our watering to be able to flourish. That is, they need opportunities to develop literary literacy, through group analysis, discussion, observation of the beauty of the text... And it works: we must simply give our learners such an opportunity.

In the case that the lessons presented here should be replicated, however, I reiterate the need for an additional meeting for solving possible linguistic limitations, followed by an additional activity to disclose their compositions in some way, perhaps by hanging them (anonymously, if they prefer) on the walls of the classroom or the school. Another point to make relates to the choice of the text: poetry is a great opportunity to discuss social issues, and we must take advantage of this, in a critical pedagogy approach (Bland, 2018). The next section goes deeper into this.

In the end of the interview (this, an essential step of research that reveals the importance of giving voice to learners), I asked students whether it was possible to learn English through literature: all answers were affirmative, but highlighted *what is done with it*, how it is approached. Their conclusion is that the literary text can be a means to learning English: a means that is mainly enjoyable due to its focus on meaning, from what was observed along this data analysis. The learning, however, depends not so much on the type of reading material, but on how it is presented and developed (Balboni, 2018; Ballester-Roca; Spaliviero, 2021). How it reaches each learner's ZPD (or how it is scaffolded) is more important. Which leads to the final section: where does this research lead us to?

5.1 WHERE TO GO? TOWARDS TEACHER EDUCATION

Teenagers are not afraid of real literature—educators are.
(MacLean, 2010, p. 8)

In a circular movement towards closure, I go back to the beginning: this thesis would not have been possible without public investment in teacher education; I could not have deconstructed my idea that literature in English was impossible in public school without my course at Michigan State University, in 2018 – which is what has inspired me to develop this research. This is not to say we can only learn things abroad, of course: part of the objective of the PDPI program¹⁵⁵ was to have teachers with updates to bring to other fellow teachers.

¹⁵⁵ The CAPES-Fulbright program that sends English teachers to the USA; explained in the introduction section.

During the PhD, I was granted the PDSE scholarship to go exchange knowledge in another country, in another University. As part of this process, I presented some of these ideas to a group of pre-service teachers taking their Master's Degree in Language Teaching – the space was kindly offered by my supervisor, professor Alberta Novello, in one of her courses. I presented two things: my own research, and some ideas on how to work with literature in the classroom. In the belief that much of the feedback we collect is not stated out loud, I asked them to answer a brief form with their impressions on our two meetings. Only seven participants responded, but brought interesting perspectives, also considering their own experiences as English language learners in Italy.

They revealed a shift in their understanding of what literature is (not only big books or available only to proficient learners) and on how to approach it – even at lower proficiency levels, thanks to the “practical tips” and the idea of presenting it in small bits. They also showed an intention to replicate the activities presented, which reveals they, too, see it as “doable” in a regular school context.

Another important point that this simple form makes is that we must ask for learners' feedback – be it in basic or upper education. This is a way of giving them room to speak for themselves, express their concerns, and even internalize their new learnings. (Professor Novello later revealed to me that most of their final papers on her subject addressed literature in EAL, giving me a sense of accomplishment for inspiring other colleagues). During my project, the feedback was essential for me to understand possible successful or unsuccessful activities in the lesson plan – the Exit Ticket also functions with this aim.

The participants' feedback was very optimistic and helped me to see that we do need to spread the word about literature. They even demonstrated interest in participating in a workshop on the matter. What's more, I believe that what made them “register” better was to experience the activities proposed (in the same terms it was made with us during PDPI): I gave them a present, too: “Bluebird”, by Charles Bukowski – which touched them and led us to discuss possibilities of such a poem with EAL learners. This poem was presented to me by a student, and I have been successfully working with it ever since. One of the participants registered and praised the idea of the poem (or the quote, or the painting) as a “present”. This illustrates the potentialities of what has been called pedagogical isomorphism, a methodological strategy in which the pre-service or in-service teacher *experiences* the strategies,

methods and approaches that are to be implemented in their own classroom, in the future (Prieto; Gazoli, 2020).

The deconstruction of literature as this idea of being “big books” only adults (or very proficient speakers) can interpret is also fundamental and, from participants’ responses at Padua University, successful. Another point to make is that literature allows for human development – it must be critically analysed and chosen by us teachers (Bland, 2018). This specific proposal, developed for this thesis, as small as it was, could not be directed in this way. It does not mean that it is not a major concern of mine. In the talk with pre-service teachers, I highlighted this political aspect of literature, by suggesting poems for specific celebrations (Martin Luther King’s Day, Juneteenth, Women’s Day, Pride celebrations) as a means to raise awareness to the self and the other, through literature.

The idea of treating the learner as participant in literature, by recognizing it as a work of art that involves imagination, emotional response and evaluative processes (Pieper, 2020), is highly posed in this proposal. This participation might as well start before reading any of it: empirical findings by Sirico (2021) in Secondary Schools in Italy demonstrate the need of students’ feedback before developing any course with literary texts. This means to engage the curriculum to appeal to how learners *feel* (Cross, 2012). Similarly, Paran’s defence of a democratic approach to literature during the latest IATEFL Conference (2023) proposes a perspective in which learners should be invited to choose their readings. This, of course, under the guidance, the suggestion of the teacher as the more experienced peer, who may suggest a main theme or, again, provide a selection of alternatives around this theme.

This final section stands for the claim that this thesis exists for the purpose of formalising my personal empirical experience as a teacher: that literature does wonders for our learners, as long as us, teachers, are aware of how this can be done. Additionally, these findings on the potentialities of working with literature only make sense, provide growth, enhance, and develop the areas of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching and Learning when they are shared, spread, disseminated, discussed, in practical terms. Thus, I believe my future perspectives move toward teacher education as the means to make this research evolve.

Along my PhD path, my research and the support of many professors and researchers provided me with a wide range of books and manuals that might be useful to do so, but which are difficult to reach on a daily basis. Some of them are *Literature*

and language learning in EFL classroom (Teranishi; Saito; Wales, 2015), *Using Literature in English language Education: challenging reading for 8-18 year olds* (Bland, 2015), and more practical books such as *If you teach it, they will read: Literature's life lessons for today's students*, (MacLean, 2010), *Creative Poetry Writing* (Spiro, 2004), tirelessly quoted in this thesis, and *Literature* (Paran; Robinson, 2016) – a precious, practical book I would have never searched for directly, had it not been recommended by the author himself. Janice Bland's book (2018), for instance, offers to the teacher-researcher (as well as teacher educators, parents, and librarians) a full annotated bibliography compiling story apps, picture books, poetry books, chapter books, graphic novels, short story collections, verse novels, playscripts, screenplays, young adult fiction...

What I mean is that knowledge on the benefits of literature in EAL is there but, for some reason, it is not being spread to those who are in the classroom. We must, thus, invest in teacher education for that matter. I will not go through the discussion of the need to change assessment grids imposed by governmental documents – this is an aim for the future when more and more teachers realise and fight for what is being presented here. My humble proposal is that we find ways to make teachers aware of the potential of even small experiments such as the one presented here. This view is consistent with Duncan and Paran's (2017, p. 4) large scale findings, on the matter, in which

teachers with more training had more positive attitudes towards the use of literature, and they were also more confident in their abilities to teach literature and reported using learner-centred activities more often. Taken together, these findings highlight the importance of including training on the use of literary texts in ITE programmes.

By working with literature, we teachers can promote a realm of activities that engage students' interest and curiosity, allowing them to share their learnings outside the classroom and promoting creative writing contexts where cathartic episodes may occur (Viana; Zyngier, 2020). Being a high mental function activity (Kozulin, 1998) that is connected to students' feelings, experiences, and desires (Troian; Seerig, 2020), the contact with literature, in turn, contributes for the development of the learner as a whole and for the necessary emotional literacy (Barcelos, 2015).

By acknowledging this, as the pre-service group of teachers did, in Padua University, they understand that it is ok to get out of these assessment boxes and provide their learners to a fuller experience with literature and language development, to offer them the opportunity to *corazonar* through language. In the same way, I believe

that future proposals in Brazil will cause the same effect. To close this reflection on how to bring literature to the classroom, I recall again Vygotsky's beautiful metaphor of cropping: teachers know how literature is powerful; we must water this knowledge as if that were a bud, with practical ideas so that it becomes easier for them to give it a try.

In the same sense, this research adds to the fields of Applied Linguistics and Literary Education, in an aim to reapproximate the areas and make them flourish in the same garden, more often. Along my four-year path throughout the PhD, I've been interested in understanding the importance of students' emotions, impressions, experiences with literature, as a more subjective means to learn English, by creating a personal relationship with it. I've also learnt about the limitations of a completely cartesian perspective to scientific research. I learnt that we should move towards a more holistic view of formal studies, not only in basic education (which is one of my claims, here), but also at higher education.

Throughout my struggles into creating "categories", only by the end I realized why it was so difficult to do so: they're interwoven. With every piece of data, every bit of fantastic claims participants provided so spontaneously, I went through the rough time of deciding "where to put it". "Is this a linguistic event? Is this related to their personal experiences? Is this an "emotion"? Is this related to literature, to writing, to speaking, to imitating, to thinking-speaking?". By insisting on separating these, I might have lost some essential aspects of the participants as individuals, and perhaps misplaced or under-analysed important data. It's been an attempt, and definitely a new learning for me as a teacher-researcher. For instance, the *translanguaging* episodes have not been discussed, also due to the lack of time for further development. Additionally, having my glaze directed towards learners' interaction with language and literature, an interesting, corpus linguistics category was missed, as their poems could have been categorized by the number of repetitions each learner used, and which percentage of new language was inserted to build a new message. This will be done in future developments, perhaps with my own students to help analyse it.

The above mentioned experience is *yet* another proof of the claim that we should not – because we cannot – separate interwoven aspects of development, such as language, thinking, speaking, feeling, acting, learning. And it was the field of Applied Linguistics that, due to its transdisciplinary (Celani, 1998) field of studies, allowed me to perceive this. More than that, as a person who is passionate about literature, it was

the Applied Linguistics field that made it possible to formalize my engagement with it as a teacher of English. This leads me to the necessary lament about the discontinuation of such a successful Post Graduation Program at Unisinos: a program that addressed all the necessary standards to grow and increase to provide its candidates with scholarships (such as the ones I had, which supported me for the monthly fees and the studies abroad) and that has developed, along its 25 years, many inspirational results at Masters and PhD level.

Being Applied Linguistics also a *undisciplinary* field (Moita Lopes, 2011), I made my share of this perspective by demonstrating how important it is to move out of the standardized, purely “linguistic” English lesson to offer our students a broader perspective of language, a language they can own in a literary, subjective way, other than simply in an utilitarian manner. In addition, it is Applied Linguistics, as a field, that allowed for the research to embrace Literary Education in EAL.

Hopefully, teachers will adopt, “apply”, this transdisciplinary, undisciplinary attitude, that engages Language Teaching and Literary Education as one (or as two that may be concurrently developed) in an equally practical manner, in their classrooms, engaging the flourishing of their learners as whole beings who own the language at personal level.

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APPENDIX A - FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS IN BRAZIL

Questionário prévio para os estudantes da turma (tanto para o projeto-piloto como para o Projeto de Ensino posterior à qualificação)

Este questionário tem o intuito de investigar suas impressões acerca das atividades que envolvem o texto literário nas aulas de língua inglesa. Ele consiste em algumas perguntas sobre sua relação com a língua inglesa e a literatura. Você deve demorar em torno de 08 minutos para respondê-lo. Por favor, seja o mais honesto possível. Agradeço muitíssimo por sua ajuda nessa investigação!

Nome:

E-mail para contato:

Já forneceu o Termo de Consentimento e Assentimento Livre e Esclarecido?

- Sim
- Não, mas enviarei em breve
- Não pretendo fornecer (respostas serão desconsideradas)

9. Com relação ao seu nível de fluência em Língua Inglesa, você se considera:

- Básico
- Pré-intermediário
- Intermediário
- Avançado

2. A que você atribui seu conhecimento de língua inglesa? Selecione todas as alternativas que se aplicam a você (uma ou mais alternativas podem ser marcadas).

- À escola regular.
- A cursos livres de inglês fora da escola
- A minhas experiências externas aos estudos formais (jogos, músicas, filmes)

3. Comentários sobre a questão 2 (opcional):

4. Reflita sobre sua aprendizagem de inglês na escola. Descreva uma experiência positiva que você recorda desse contexto. Justifique sua resposta (por que ela foi positiva? Como você se sentiu?)

5. Ainda sobre sua aprendizagem de inglês na escola, descreva uma experiência negativa (se houver) que você recorda desse contexto. Justifique sua resposta (por que ela foi negativa? Como você se sentiu?).

6. Você costuma ler literatura (poesia, romances, contos, crônicas, etc.), fora do contexto escolar (que não seja obrigatório ou a pedido do professor)?

- Sim, em português e em inglês.
- Sim, em inglês.
- Sim, em português.

Não.

7. Se você lê literatura (em qualquer língua) fora do contexto escolar, com que frequência isso acontece?

Sempre.

Frequentemente.

Às vezes.

Raramente.

8. Comente sua resposta às questões 6 e 7.

9. Especificamente sobre textos literários em língua inglesa (contos, romances, poesia, etc.), que experiências/contatos você recorda ter tido na escola? Como foi sua experiência (você gostou? Se não teve esse contato, gostaria de ter? Por quê)?

APPENDIX B – LESSON PLANS FOR THE PROJECT IN BRAZIL

Theme: Reading preferences, poetry reading and writing

Linguistic topic: vocabulary – verbs; present tense

Aim:

To develop literary literacy, through the following:

- To get familiar with potentially new vocabulary.
- To read, comprehend and interpret the song lyric of “Eclipse”, by Pink Floyd, in a group.
- To produce a poem based on the vocabulary selected from the song.

New vocabulary:

- Textual genres (Novels / poems / news / short stories / song lyrics)
- Verbs in the song: touch, see, taste, feel, love, hate, distrust, save, give, deal, buy, beg, borrow, steal, slight, fight, create, destroy, do, say, eat, meet
- Other expressions: under the sun, “in tune”.

MEETING 1: (45 min – 1h)

Pre-reading (7’): Lesson developed mainly on Quizizz:

<https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/60ef1d2fce296f001b9423ee>

Teacher starts class with a survey with the following questions:

- Do you like reading?
- What do you usually read?

Novels / poems / news / short stories / song lyrics (NEW VOCAB?)

- What do you read in English? (Novels / poems / news / short stories / song lyrics) (sts write to generate a word map)

T. helps students with new vocabulary using L1 whenever necessary; T. comments and asks further questions to sts based on the word map. It is expected that sts answer they read song lyrics, as it is very common to do this in Brazil. T. can ask about favorite music styles.

Vocabulary introduction (20’): *Rapid Word Recognition* is an exercise presented in PDPI methodologies course.

T. explains the activities: “We will read a very interesting poem today, and I am curious to know if you will recognize it”. This can be said in English and asked for a st to “translate” to other colleagues. This can reduce TTT (Teacher Talking Time).

Game: Instructions are given in L1, to facilitate comprehension.

- 1) Rapid word recognition exercise: Quizizz (Round 1)

Click on the word that is exactly the same as the one written on top:

This game is repeated three times, as they have only a few seconds to answer. We expect students to be able to answer more words correctly as they repeat the game.

- 2) “You need pen and paper for this activity. Check if you understand all the words from the Quizlet game. You can search the internet. Write down the translation for each word. You have 8 min”.

(Quizlet link: https://quizlet.com/_a0efjj?x=1jq&i=1ba723)

This is the opportunity for sts to get more familiar with the vocabulary. Translation is used here again as a facilitator, as we are not able to know how much language sts already know, and levels are usually different.

- 3) Rapid word recognition exercise: Quizizz (Round 2)

Click on the word that is the exact translation for the one written on top:

This exercise usually has word “definitions” as the alternatives for the student to circle/select. However, once again, as we are not aware of sts’ level of familiarity, we will use L1. Again, students can play 2-3 times.

- 4) T. presents slides with the words, in which sts should try to write word/translation quickly (max. 10). In the end, she verifies how many words they got making them indicate with fingers. Will they open the camera?

Reading (10’):

- 5) Students are presented to the text. No author or title is given, so that they should attempt to “recognize” it (some teenage students know Pink Floyd). They won’t know it is a song yet. T. reads the “poem” out loud, indicating they should take note of words they might not understand.
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Gb25ohu7VK3F1jb5I6uFovMfUZbpluN1Xrxuc639wfA/edit?usp=sharing>
- 6) T. helps with any new vocabulary/expression, guiding their understanding. Sts debate the reading content in pairs. In case no one has recognized the author, sts should research online as homework, and listen to the song.
- 7) Exit ticket: sts write five new words they learnt in the meeting.

MEETING 2: Review, interpretation, production: (45' – 1h)

<https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/60ef727964a8df001cda798d>

- 1) T. reviews the previous class with some interactive slides. 5'
 “Eclipse’ is a song written by....”
 “Which of the following sentences was in our text in the previous class?”
- 2) Sts listen and read the song once more. 5’
- 3) Sts chose one favorite line and (hopefully) share their opinion (L1 can be used to explain their choice). 3’
- 4) Sts select five favorite words/lines/new vocabulary from the text. They can comment/share w/ teacher. 3’
- 5) Sts must write a small poem, related to them, using the words. Texts must be posted on Moodle. T. is available to help students. 15’
- 6) Sts finish and are then invited to answer a final questionnaire about the classes. 10’ <https://forms.gle/pQoWEMNtLRSuAF3D7>

APPENDIX C – FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS IN BRAZIL

Práticas literárias na aula de inglês - 1º Eno

Este é o questionário final da nossa proposta de encontros. Você deve demorar em torno de 08 minutos para respondê-lo. Por favor, seja o mais honesto possível. Agradeço muitíssimo por sua ajuda nessa investigação!

Nome:

E-mail para contato:

Já forneceu o Termo de Consentimento e Assentimento Livre e Esclarecido?

- Sim
- Não, mas enviarei em breve
- Não pretendo fornecer (respostas serão desconsideradas)

1. Com relação ao seu nível de fluência em Língua Inglesa, você se considera:

- Básico
- Pré-intermediário
- Intermediário
- Avançado

2. A que você atribui seu conhecimento de língua inglesa? Selecione todas as alternativas que se aplicam a você (uma ou mais alternativas podem ser marcadas).

- À escola regular.
- A cursos livres de inglês fora da escola
- A minhas experiências externas aos estudos formais (jogos, músicas, filmes)

3. Você costuma ler literatura (poesia, romances, contos, crônicas, etc.), fora do contexto escolar (que não seja obrigatório ou a pedido do professor)?

- Sim, em português e em inglês.
- Sim, em inglês.
- Sim, em português.
- Não.

4. Se você lê literatura (em qualquer língua) fora do contexto escolar, com que frequência isso acontece?

- Sempre.
- Frequentemente.
- Às vezes.
- Raramente.

5. Comente sua resposta às questões 3 e 4.

6. Você já trabalhou com literatura/letras de música antes, nas aulas de inglês? De que formas nossas aulas foram similares ou diferentes das outras experiências que você teve?

7. Qual foi um aspecto importante que você destacaria em nossos dois encontros trabalhando a canção "Eclipse"? Cite ao menos uma positiva e uma negativa. Como você se sentiu com as atividades? Gostou de trabalhar com um texto literário nesse formato? Reflita sobre essas questões e escreva uma pequena narrativa de suas impressões.

8. Se quiser comentar algo mais, aproveite o espaço abaixo. Pode ser em relação a como você se sentiu respondendo ao questionário, ou ainda, se achar que algum item importante não foi abordado, aproveite pra falar aqui. Isso inclui aspectos negativos. Diga o que quiser! :)

9. Você aceitaria colaborar mais uma vez com o trabalho de pesquisa e dar uma entrevista síncrona, caso seja convidado? Se sim, deixe seu nome e WhatsApp abaixo, mais uma vez. Agradeço muitíssimo!

APPENDIX D – INTERVIEWS: OBJECTIVES FOR EACH QUESTION

Prior to the questionnaire: please bear in mind the classes we had together and how you felt during the activities.

Questions (the interview was conducted in Portuguese in Brazil, and in Italian in Italy – except for the student Gabriela):

Objective	Questions
To get familiar with student's practice; to break the ice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me about you. What do you do in your leisure time? 2. What is your relationship with the English language? Where do you see it, when you started being in touch with it?
To see if there might be a hint on different approaches to English; to identify how the student develops her own self-awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What are successful things you do that help you learn English?
To introduce the topic of emotions and let the answers flow freely; to get a hint on what the student understand as "emotion"; to verify how "remarkable" activities might be related to student's emotions. To observe whether the student names a <i>feeling</i> or an <i>emotion</i>.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. We will briefly talk about emotions and feelings. What do you remember from our meetings? 5. Did you understand the learning objective of the activities? Did you learn something new? 6. How did you feel during the meetings with me, was it different from other classes? How? 7. How did you feel about the work with vocabulary and with the song?
To have a more precise direction about the student's emotions. To observe how they would relate to the list.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Now let's name these emotions. I will repeat the questions giving you a list of emotions (called "basic" - https://www.calmsage.com/different-types-of-basic-emotions/). Can you take note? Anger, anticipation, joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust. You can feel a mix of two, or suggest another name for it. Try to relate to them to describe them. 9. How did you feel during the meetings with me, was it different from other classes? How? 10. How did you feel about the work with vocabulary and with the song?
To identify a possible relationship with "the life as authoring", by Kozulin.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. How did you feel about writing the final activity - the poem? I will send it to you so that you can take a look:
To identify to what extent composing can be considered a "dramatic" event (Veresov, 2017).	<p>Beatriz's composition: "All I create isn't related to the way I think, but if I don't have the chance to try, all my thoughts are a way to destroy the possibility of create"</p> <p>Alessandra's composition: "Create all you can now, as the sun shines, before it is eclipsed by the moon. Eu escrevi esta frase pra tentar explicar para aproveitar quando o sol está te iluminando ou seja quando vc está bem e tudo bem não estar sempre bem e nesses dias usar para descansar"</p>

To identify/investigate the possible “cognitive” benefits of the activity; to identify/investigate about colleagues’ negative feedback on the activities. Do they understand how they could have felt?

12. Did you understand the learning objective of the activities? Did you learn something new?
13. I was told that there were complaints about the structure of the activities in the group final counselling for the trimester. Some said they did not understand what to do, or what the purpose was. Do you know what could have happened?

To identify how students see literature and how they see it as a learning tool - and for what.

14. What do you understand as Literature?
 15. What is your relationship with Literature, in Portuguese or English? Why do you like it or not?
 16. Do you think it is possible to learn English with literature? In what way, or what part of the language?
-

APPENDIX E – DESCRIPTION ACTIVITIES PREVIOUSLY USED IN MY LESSONS

Table 44 – Activities proposed that required pen and paper.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Description</i>
1) <i>Present</i>	Students would get a “present” in the beginning of the classes. This was usually a short poem, in print, many times related to a topic of the time (Women’s day, Valentine’s day, Juneteenth). I would work with some vocabulary prior to reading, and then we would read together and discuss its content. Students were encouraged to underline their favorite verse or word, explain their choices, and also give it as a present for someone else or post it.
2) <i>Running dictation</i>	The poem would be printed and hung on the wall, and students would work in pairs: one would read the poem on the wall and then dictate to the other who was sitting. Then I would unfold the second part and they would change roles. I would go around checking it. Then we would read it and discuss.
3) <i>Rapid word recognition</i>	Students receive words that are part of the reading vocabulary (this could be a text from the schoolbook, for instance), sided by five words with similar spelling – one of them is exactly the same. They must cross the identical word. This exercise is done three times, and the teacher times fewer seconds to do it each time. It helps develop extensive reading, and students get focused and excited. In a second version, the word given is sided by short definitions – students must cross the correct one.
4) <i>Exit tickets</i>	This, together with the “present” (described in 1) became a “trademark” in my classes. It is called “exit ticket” because in the USA students are supposed to change classrooms, and they should write what is requested by the teacher, in the end of the lesson, in order to “leave”. In Brazil, students do not change classrooms, but they should answer the ticket to “finish” the class and go on break or do something else other than English. They would receive a paper and each class there would be a different task: “Write three new words you learnt today”; “What was your favorite activity today?”; “Write your favorite line from the poem and why”, etc. This was a great opportunity to review the lesson and collect feedback from them. I could check this material to make a quick review in the following class.

Source: Made by the author

Table 45 – Activities that required face-to-face interaction.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Description</i>
5) <i>Interactive slides</i>	This is a way to use slideshows in an interactive way, make them read in English without making them speak – some are embarrassed to do so. You introduce the topic of the lesson with a sentence and students should indicate if they think it is true or false by signing. This sentence can be about the news, the teacher or themselves. For example: “I can play a musical instrument” - if it is true, they indicate a circle with the hand; if it is not, the sign a cross with their fingers. This works with agree/disagree in a Likert scale 1-5. For instance: “This exercise was difficult for me”. Thus, the teacher can find out if this should be further developed.
6) <i>Dictation</i>	The teacher dictates words from the previous class (in Portuguese or English) and students write in English in their notebooks. Then it is checked with the group – the idea is just to review, not compete.
7) <i>Memory game</i>	Students look at a list of words (already worked with) for a minute and try to rewrite them.

8) *Pair work chanting* | After working with a song, students work in pairs, where each one sings a line for the other to continue. This is great to practice pronunciation and rhythm, and the teacher and the colleague can help those with more difficulty individually without exposing them. After a while, the teacher separates in two big groups and the class sings the referred lines together.

Source: Made by the author

APPENDIX F – DESCRIPTION OF ONLINE RESOURCES

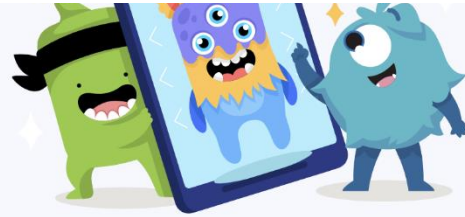
- a) Quizizz – an interactive platform for quizzes integrated with surveys and slide presentations, amongst other useful features for teachers. It offers a free and a “pro” version. Teachers can access other teachers’ materials, too, and adapt/edit – when allowed. On the website, it reads “Ankit and Deepak founded Quizizz in 2015 while teaching remedial math at a school in Bangalore, India. Today, Quizizz supports millions of students in over 100 countries and has offices in Bangalore and Santa Monica, California”¹⁵⁶
- b) Quizlet – the platform provides “cards” and several word games with a pre-established set, that can be created and shared by any learner – not only the teacher. Each study task is harder, so every student gets engaged and challenged at their own level.
- c) Socrative – “Immediate feedback is a vital part of the learning process. Socrative gives you just that for the classroom or office – an efficient way to monitor and evaluate learning that saves time for educators while delivering fun and engaging interactions for learners”. “Since 2010, Socrative has delivered formative assessment tools to teachers around the world. Socrative’s mission has always been to connect teachers with students as learning happens, by providing fun and effective tools to gauge student understanding in real time. This enables teachers to modify their instruction to drive student learning most effectively. Socrative currently has nearly 3 million users worldwide and is available in 14 languages.”¹⁵⁷
- d) Classdojo – now available in Portuguese, too.

¹⁵⁶ Source: <https://quizizz.com/about?fromBrowserLoad=true> . Access: 29. Mar. 2024.

¹⁵⁷ Source: <https://www.socrative.com/> and <https://www.socrative.com/about-us/> Access: 29. Mar. 2024.

Figure 11 – Presentation of the application in Brazilian Portuguese

As crianças sempre aprenderam juntas em espaços físicos. Atualmente, elas também aprendem em espaços virtuais. Agora que o ClassDojo conectou uma comunidade ao redor do mundo de professores, crianças e famílias, estamos desenvolvendo esse espaço virtual para todos, com:



Oportunidades iguais de aprendizado

As melhores experiências de aprendizado estarão disponíveis para todos, independentemente do endereço ou renda

Conexão

O ClassDojo reúne as comunidades escolares, sendo um lugar para professores e famílias se conectarem, se comunicarem e compartilharem experiências de aprendizado

Aprender brincando

O futuro do ensino se parece muito com o brincar – e o ClassDojo é onde as crianças serão livres para aprender brincando juntas e descobrirem o que amam

Segurança e confiança

O ClassDojo é a comunidade online mais segura para as crianças brincarem, descobrirem e crescerem – e sempre será

Source: Screenshot from <https://www.classdojo.com/pt-br/about/> Access: 29. Mar. 2024

5.

Today's reading: poem
Pre-reading exercise: Rapid word recognition
(we will check the vocabulary along the exercise)

 Scelta multipla6. Check the exact word:
TOUCH

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a) SEE | b) TOUCH |
| c) LOVE | d) FEEL |
| e) TASTE | |

 Scelta multipla7. Check the exact word:
FEEL

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| a) FEEL | b) LOVE |
| c) TOUCH | d) TASTE |
| e) SEE | |

 Scelta multipla8. Check the exact word:
TASTE

- | | |
|---------|----------|
| a) LOVE | b) TOUCH |
| c) FEEL | d) TASTE |
| e) SEE | |

 Scelta multipla9. Check the exact word:
SAVE

- | | |
|---------|-------------|
| a) GIVE | b) DISTRUST |
| c) DEAL | d) BORROW |
| e) SAVE | |

 Scelta multipla10. Check the exact word:
DEAL

- | | |
|-------------|---------|
| a) GIVE | b) SAVE |
| c) DISTRUST | d) DEAL |
| e) BORROW | |

 Scelta multipla11. Check the exact word:
STEAL

- | | |
|-------------|-----------|
| a) SAVE | b) BORROW |
| c) DEAL | d) STEAL |
| e) DISTRUST | |

Scelta multipla

12. Check the exact word:
BEG

- a) BORROW
- c) BEG
- e) DISTRUST

- b) SAY
- d) DEAL

Scelta multipla

13. Check the exact word:
FIGHT

- a) DISTRUST
- c) SLIGHT
- e) BORROW

- b) FIGHT
- d) FEEL

Scelta multipla

14. Check the exact word:
DISTRUST

- a) DESTROY
- c) BORROW
- e) DISTRUST

- b) FIGHT
- d) SLIGHT

Scelta multipla

15. Check the exact word:
DESTROY

- a) DESTROY
- c) BORROW
- e) DISTRUST

- b) FIGHT
- d) SLIGHT

Scelta multipla

16. Check the exact word:
BORROW

- a) DISTRUST
- c) SLIGHT
- e) DESTROY

- b) BORROW
- d) FIGHT

Scelta multipla

17. Check the exact word:
SLIGHT

- a) DISTRUST
- c) BORROW
- e) SLIGHT

- b) DESTROY
- d) FIGHT

18.

Can you remember 5 new words you have just learnt?
You have one minute to write them down

19.

Let's practice this vocabulary a bit more

Quizlet (are you familiar?) 8 min. practice for all levels.

https://quizlet.com/_a0efjj?x=1jqt&i=1ba723

20.

Rapid word recognition II:

Tick the correct translation

Scelta multipla

21. Check the exact translation:
SLIGHT

- a) LUTAR
- b) DESCONFIAR
- c) INSULTAR
- d) DESTRUIR
- e) PEGAR EMPRESTADO

Scelta multipla

22. Check the exact translation:
DISTRUST

- a) INSULTAR
- b) LUTAR
- c) DESTRUIR
- d) DESCONFIAR
- e) PEGAR EMPRESTADO

Scelta multipla

23. Check the exact translation:
BORROW

- a) INSULTAR
- b) DESCONFIAR
- c) LUTAR
- d) PEGAR EMPRESTADO
- e) DESTRUIR

Scelta multipla

24. Check the exact translation:
FIGHT

- a) PEGAR EMPRESTADO
- b) INSULTAR
- c) DESCONFIAR
- d) LUTAR
- e) DESTRUIR

 Scelta multipla

25. Check the exact translation:
DESTROY

- a) INSULTAR
- b) DESTRUIR
- c) PEGAR EMPRESTADO
- d) LUTAR
- e) DESCONFIAR

 Scelta multipla

26. Check the exact translation:
TOUCH

- a) AMAR
- b) VER
- c) SABOREAR
- d) SENTIR
- e) TOCAR

 Scelta multipla

27. Check the exact translation:
SEE

- a) SENTIR
- b) TOCAR
- c) AMAR
- d) SABOREAR
- e) VER

 Scelta multipla

28. Check the exact translation:
TASTE

- a) SENTIR
- b) AMAR
- c) TOCAR
- d) SABOREAR
- e) VER

 Scelta multipla

29. Check the exact translation:
LOVE

- a) TOCAR
- b) AMAR
- c) SENTIR
- d) SABOREAR
- e) VER

 Scelta multipla

30. Check the exact translation:
FEEL

- a) TOCAR
- b) SABOREAR
- c) SENTIR
- d) CREATE
- e) VER

 Scelta multipla

31. From 1 (very easy) to 5 (very difficult), how difficult were the exercises?

- a) 2
- b) 5
- c) 4
- d) 3
- e) 1

32.

Let's read the poem

Click on the document link on Moodle: "poem". We will read together and you can comment any expressions or vocabulary you don't know.

33.

Homepage Reading poem - Home - Google Docs Apert in una nuova scheda Copia link

Name: _____
Autore: _____

All that you touch
And all that you see
All that you taste
All you feel
And all that you love
And all that you hate
All you distrust
All you save
And all that you give
And all that you deal
And all that you buy
Sigh, sorrow or pain
And all you create
And all you destroy
And all that you do
And all that you say
And all that you eat
And everyone you meet (everyone you need)
And all that you slight
And everyone you fight
And all that is now
And all that is gone
And all that is to come
And everything under the sun is in time
But the sun is eclipsed by the moon

34.

Discuss the poem in pairs. (?) What is the conclusion in the lyrics?

Homework: who is the author? (Or, in case the author has been recognized, listen to the song at home. Try to follow the lyrics and practice pronunciation)

Aperto

35. EXIT TICKET (1):

Write down 5 new words you learned today (preferably, with definition/translation):

Aperto

36. EXIT TICKET (2):

What was your favorite part of today's lesson? Anything you particularly liked or disliked?

QUIZIZZ Fogli di lavoro

Reading practice II - production

Domande totali: 13

Tempo del foglio di lavoro: 25min

Nome dell'istruttore: Elisa Seerig

Nome

Classe

Data

1.

Reading practice II -
production



2.

Did you find out where the text is from?

8. Select one favorite line from the song. Explain your choice (you can do it orally, and in Portuguese, if you prefer).

9. What do you think of the song? You can comment in Portuguese if you prefer, or mix Portuguese and English!

10. Select four other favorite words, lines or simply new words from the lyrics. They should be meaningful to you. Write them here and in a piece of paper.

11. Write a poem/short text of your own, using the words/expressions you have selected. The text must be related to you somehow. After that, explain your text briefly. (Escreva um poema/texto curto usando as palavras/expressões que você selecionou. O texto deve relacionar-se a você de alguma forma. Depois, explique seu texto brevemente).

- 12. 1) What did you learn that is new?
- 2) What did you like or did not like in our class today?

13.

Please answer a final questionnaire about these past two
classes
You will take around 5 minutes.

APPENDIX H - INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS IN ITALY

Pratiche letterarie nelle lezioni di inglese- 1° Turistico

Lo scopo di questo questionario è di conoscerti e di indagare le tue impressioni sulle attività che coinvolgono il testo letterario nelle lezioni di lingua inglese. Si tratta di alcune domande sul tuo rapporto con la lingua e la letteratura inglese. Dovrebbe impiegare circa 7 minuti per rispondere. Si prega di essere il più onesto possibile. Grazie mille per il suo aiuto in questa indagine!

Primo nome ed iniziale cognome: (Esempio: Elisa S.)

Età:

Parli o capisci bene qualche altra lingua? Ciò include i dialetti locali. Per favore scrivi quale/i.

1. Per quanto riguarda il tuo livello di fluidità nella lingua inglese, ti consideri:

2. A cosa attribuisce la tua conoscenza della lingua inglese? Selezionate tutte le alternative che ti interessano (è possibile contrassegnare una o più alternative).

- Alla scuola regolare.
- Ai corsi di inglese fuori dalla scuola.
- Alle mie esperienze al di fuori dello studio regolare: videogiochi, social network, film, musica, ecc.
- Altri...

3. Commenti sulla domanda 2 (facoltativo):

4. Rifletti sul tuo apprendimento dell'inglese a scuola. Descrivi un'esperienza positiva che ricordi di questo contesto. Giustifica la tua risposta (perché è stata positiva? Come ti sei sentito?).

5. Sempre sull'apprendimento dell'inglese a scuola, descrivi un'esperienza negativa (se presente) che ricordi in questo contesto. Giustifica la tua risposta (perché è stata negativa?).

6. Leggi abitualmente letteratura (poesie, romanzi, racconti, cronache, ecc.), al di fuori del contesto scolastico (che non è obbligatorio o richiesto dall'insegnante)?

- Sì, in italiano e in inglese.
- Sì, solo in inglese.
- Sì, solo in italiano.
- No.

7. Se leggi letteratura (in qualsiasi lingua) al di fuori della scuola, quanto spesso accade?

- Sempre.
- Di solito.
- A volte.
- Raramente.

8. Commenti sulla domanda 2 (facoltativo):

9. In particolare sui testi letterari in lingua inglese (racconti, romanzi, poesie, ecc.), quali esperienze/contatti ricordi di aver avuto a scuola? Com'è stata la tua esperienza (ti è piaciuta? Se non hai avuto questo contatto, ti piacerebbe averlo? Perché)?

Fine!

Grazie mille per il tempo messo a disposizione; I tuoi rapporti e le tue riflessioni sono molto importanti per me!

Se vuoi commentare qualcos'altro, usa lo spazio sottostante. Potrebbe essere in relazione a come ti sei sentito a rispondere al questionario, o anche, se pensi che qualche punto importante non sia stato affrontato, cogli l'occasione per parlarne qui. Ciò include aspetti negativi. Dì ciò che vuoi! :)

APPENDIX I – LESSON PLAN PRESENTED TO THE INSTITUTION IN ITALY



PROGETTO DI INGLESE (2 ORE + osservazione) – LITERATURE AND CREATIVE WRITING

Dottoranda: ELISA SEERIG

Supervisione: Prof.ssa Dott.ssa Alberta Novello (Unipd)

This is a malleable project as regards to the level of proficiency: it is developed to involve a heterogeneous group, but once I realise, from observation, that the proficiency of the group is higher, there can be a deeper focus on interactions in English and a reduction in the vocabulary practices.

A secondary school group (14 or above) is required because of the level of discussion (use of metaphorical language) and written production. It must also resemble the group I had in Brazil in terms of age gap.

Group addressed: 14–17-year-old students.

Part one: observation of 2 lessons (4h observation).

Part two: application of the lesson plan - 2 hours required.

Objectives: to teach a literature-based lesson and analyse how students will make use of **creative writing**. Students will respond to a Google Forms questionnaire prior to the lesson and another one after, on their impression of the style. This can be sent to them on e-mail to be answered at home, in both cases, but the last one would be better to be answered right after the class. They could do it during the final minutes, on their phones, if this is allowed in the school.

For students, the main objectives include being able to comprehend and discuss metaphors, and to produce a literary text in English of their own, based on a choice of words they will make from the text read. Students must also explain (either in English or in their first language) what they mean with this text they composed.

Text: the song lyrics from "Eclipse", by Pink Floyd.

Grammar focus: a review/learning of verbs in English. The choice was made because the song is in the present tense, it enlists recurrent verbs and ends with a metaphor that can be nicely discussed with them, prior to their own writing.

Assessment: throughout the lesson, based on students' participation. The teacher can also consider their composition and their analysis as part of their assessment for the quadrimester.

Part 1: (1h)

Objective	Abilities	Competences	Activities	Type of assessment
<p>To get familiar with new vocabulary</p> <p>To be able to read, interpret and discuss a literary text and its metaphor.</p> <p>(To practise some reading strategies)</p>	<p>Reading</p> <p>Speaking</p> <p>Listening</p>	<p>Linguistic: verbs in the present tense; metaphoric language</p> <p>Sociolinguistic: perceptions of language in literature and music – register.</p> <p>Pragmatic: cohesion and coherence.</p>	<p>Brainstorming</p> <p>Rapid word recognition</p> <p>Vocabulary practice</p> <p>Open questions</p> <p>Listening to the song</p>	<p>Class observation</p> <p>Eventual oral production</p>

Part 2: (45min – 1h)

Objective	Abilities	Competences	Activities	Type of assessment
<p>To be able to express themselves in English through creative language, in written form.</p>	<p>Reading</p> <p>Writing</p>	<p>Linguistic: verbs in the present tense; metaphoric use of language</p>	<p>Vocabulary review</p> <p>Open questions</p>	<p>Class observation</p> <p>Eventual oral production</p>

To be able to explain their composition.		Sociolinguistic: register in poetic, written language. Pragmatic: cohesion and coherence. Possible use of metaphors in creative writing.	Writing	Written production and analysis
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Instruments required:

Pen and paper, projector, internet connection, mobile phones (for the Google Forms questionnaire, Quizlet and/or Kahoot!)

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PROCEDURES - Lessons will be audio recorded

Part 1

6' – 10': answering the initial questionnaire in their phone, by reading a QR Code (alternative - I take it printed)

5': initial brainstorming about sts' reading practices, with the support of the projector. ("Do you like reading?" "What do you usually read?" T shows pictures of reading objects, elicit their names in English and check each st's answer)

5' T explains there will be a reading, but some vocabulary must be checked, first. T delivers the photocopies of the "rapid word recognition" game and explains it.

5' Sts go through the activity. T checks if students are familiar with that vocabulary and work on it.

5' T delivers a new rapid word *definition*, this time with a synonym (or translation, depends on the group level). Sts go through the activity. **If needed, a Quizlet can be offered, too, but I don't think it is necessary.**

5' T gives sts one minute to write down in their notebook 5 new words, or words they remember, from the activities so far.

5' T goes back to the projection and verifies some specific language from the song: "During an Eclipse... a) the moon is eclipsed by the sun or b) the sun is eclipsed by the moon?" Thus verifying the comprehension of passive voice.

5' Sts are given a copy of the song lyrics, without yet knowing that this is a song. The name of the group is purposefully left blank for them to complete later. A volunteer is invited to read out loud and sts can indicate words they do not yet understand. The teacher can ask whether they know it already.

5' Sts are invited to discuss their understanding of the song. What do you understand from it? What does this list mean? What does "in tune" mean? And what about the ending?

5' If there's a gap in time, T can choose to present the song and the album information now or on the next part (the album cover is presented and sts indicate if they saw it before, etc.). Sts can research for the name of the band. Sts discuss the language. Exit ticket: "What was your favorite part of today's lesson? Anything you particularly liked or disliked?"

Part 2:

5' If the second part on a different day, T can provide a brief review. ("Take a look at your notes for 30 seconds. Close it and write down new vocabulary", etc / on the slides: "which of these sentences were NOT in the song lyrics")

5' T asks sts to select their favourite line of the song. Sts are invited to give a brief explanation of their choice. This can be either in Italian or English. Sts give their opinion of the song.

5' Sts select four other favourite words, lines or simply new words from the lyrics. They should be meaningful to them. Sts are given a paper sheet to write them.

15' Sts are invited to write a poem/short text of their own, using the words/expressions they have selected. The text must be related to them somehow. After that, they must explain their text briefly in written form, either in English or in Italian. The teacher goes around the class to offer support.

2' Exit ticket (in the same paper sheet - opposite): 1) What did you learn that is new?
2) What did you like or did not like in our class today?

10' Sts are invited to answer the final questionnaire. (QR code in the paper sheet).

Students will be invited to participate in an online interview.

APPENDIX J – FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS IN ITALY

Pratiche letterarie in inglese - 1 Turistico

Questo è il questionario finale della nostra proposta di appuntamento. Dovresti impiegare circa 6 minuti per rispondere. Per favore sii il più onesto possibile. Grazie mille per il tuo aiuto in questa indagine!

Primo nome ed iniziale del cognome: (Esempio: Elisa S.)

1. Hai risposto il questionario iniziale della settimana scorsa?

- Sì
- No

Sulla lezione:

2. Hai già lavorato con letteratura/testi, nelle lezioni di inglese? In che modo la nostra classe è stata simile o diversa dalle altre esperienze che hai avuto?

3. Qual è stato un aspetto importante che vorresti evidenziare nel nostro incontro lavorando alla canzone "Eclipse"? Cita almeno un positivo e uno negativo. Come ti sei sentito riguardo alle attività? Ti è piaciuto lavorare con un testo letterario in questo formato? Rifletti su queste domande e scrivi una breve narrazione delle tue impressioni.

Almost done!

Grazie mille per il tempo messo a disposizione; le tue risposte e le tue riflessioni sono molto importanti per me!

Se vuoi commentare qualcos'altro, usa lo spazio sottostante. Potrebbe essere in relazione a come ti sei sentito a rispondere al questionario, o anche, se pensi che qualche punto importante non sia stato affrontato, cogli l'occasione per parlarne qui. Ciò include aspetti negativi. Dì ciò che vuoi! :)

APPENDIX K – SLIDES USED IN ITALY

March 23rd, 2023

Elisa Seerig, M.A., PhD candidate - Unipd / Unisinos
eseerig@gmail.com

3 rules:

- 1) Attention
- 2) No phones unless requested
- 3) Silence when requested - code:

Brief presentation:



TRUE OR FALSE (for you):

I like reading.



TRUE OR FALSE (for you):

I like reading...

- 1) Song lyrics
- 2) News (printed or feed)
- 3) Novels and short stories
- 4) Memes on social media
- 5) Poems



Pre-reading

Rapid word recognition

Rapid Word Recognition

Directions: You will see a target word followed by a / . Following the / you will see four or five other words that are similar to the target word. Your job is to ~~draw a line through~~ the word that matches the target word. Work as quickly as possible.

Example:

A. healthy / wealthy healthier heady handy **healthy**

B. harmful / brimful handful ~~harmful~~ hurtful harmed

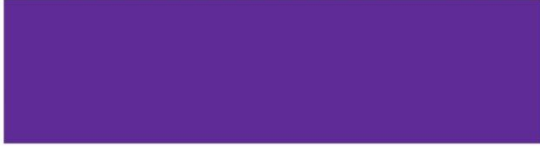
Vocabulary knowledge:

Look at the vocabulary words #1-15. How well do you know these words? To the left of the number, write one of the four numbers below to show how well you know each word.

- 0 – I do not know this word
1 – I think I have seen this word before, but I do not know what it means
2 – I recognize this word in listening and reading, but I'm not sure if I can use it correctly
3 – I know the definition of this word and can use it correctly in speaking and writing
1. touch _____
 2. feel _____
 3. taste _____
 4. save _____
 5. deal (v.) _____

Compare with a partner and help each other.

Notebook and pencil:
can you remember 5 new words you learned now?



Rapid Word Definition:

Example:

A. healthy / ~~not sick~~ active visual

B. harmful / active ~~dangerous~~ sick

Which affirmation is correct:
1) The sun is eclipsed by the moon
2) The moon is eclipsed by the sun.



UNDERLINE YOUR FAVOURITE PART.

3 min pair work discussion:

Do you recognize these words from somewhere?

What is the conclusion of this poem?



HOMEWORK:

Song lyrics:

Name: _____

Artist: _____

Exit ticket:

What was your favourite part of today's lesson?

Anything you liked or disliked? (be honest)

March 24th, 2023

Elisa Seerig, M.A., PhD candidate
eseerig@gmail.com



Complete in your notebook:

"_____"

IS A SONG RELEASED BY _____
in _____.



Complete in your notebook:

"Eclipse"

IS A SONG RELEASED BY Pink Floyd
in 1973.

Which of these sentences were NOT in the song lyrics? (pay attention!)

- 1) All that you feel
- 2) The moon is eclipsed by the sun
- 3) All you distrust
- 4) Everything under the sun is in tune
- 5) All that you touch



Which of these sentences were NOT in the song lyrics? (pay attention!)

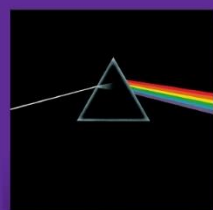
- 1) All you distrust
- 2) All you create
- 3) Twist and shout
- 4) Everyone you kill
- 5) The sun is eclipsed by the moon



Let's listen to the song.



Select one favorite line from the song.



Select one favorite line from the song.

- 1) Explain your choice to your partner (you can do it orally, and in Italian, if you prefer).
- 2) What do you think of the song? You can comment in Italian if you prefer, or mix Italian and English!

5 min!



Share with us!

Final activity:

1) Select four other favorite words, lines or simply new words from the lyrics. They should be meaningful to you. Write all five words/expressions selected here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

1) Write a poem/short text of your own, using the words/expressions you have selected, in English. The text must be related to you somehow.

(Scrivi una tua poesia/breve testo, usando le parole/espressioni che hai selezionato. Il testo deve essere correlato a te in qualche modo.)

Final steps!

Elisa Seerig
eseerig@gmail.com

Explain your text
Give your feedback on today's class
Answer the final questionnaire

APPENDIX L – RAPID WORD RECOGNITION/DEFINITION (PRINTED MATERIAL IN ITALY)

Rapid Word Recognition

Directions: This activity provides practice in rapid word recognition. The words that you see below are from the passage we will read in class today. You will see a target word followed by a / . Following the dash you will see four or five other words that are similar to the target word. Work as quickly as possible. You have 15 seconds to complete this activity.

Example

A. healthy / wealthy healthier heady handy ~~healthy~~

B. harmful / brimful handful ~~harmful~~ hurtful harmed

--

1. touch / taste see touch feel love

2. feel / touch taste love see feel

3. taste / see taste feel love

4. save / distrust save give deal borrow

5. deal / save borrow give distrust deal

6. steal / distrust borrow steal deal save

7. beg / borrow deal distrust beg say

8. fight / feel slight distrust fight borrow

9. distrust / slight destroy fight distrust borrow

10. destroy / borrow slight destroy fight distrust

11. borrow / slight borrow distrust fight destroy

12. slight / borrow distrust fight destroy slight

13. tune / dune shine tuna tune zone

14. meet / feet treat meet peep eat

15. moon / soon zoom broom moon room

Rapid word definition

Directions: This activity provides practice in matching the word to a short definition. You will see a target word followed by a / . Following the / you will see three other words or phrases. Your job is to draw a line through the word that matches the meaning of the target word. Work as quickly as possible. You will have 15 seconds to complete this activity.

1. touch / cut the hair ~~put your hand~~ fall on the floor
2. feel / have a sensation punch someone laugh nervously
3. taste / put on lotion sit down experience the flavor
4. save / spend money keep safe jump on the street
5. deal / negotiate disagree run away
6. steal / give a present wake up take someone's property
7. beg / argue with someone ask desperately shout at someone
8. fight / sleep soundly confront violently laugh
9. distrust / run away give a present not trust someone
10. destroy / ruin something build something decorate something
11. borrow / throw something away plant something take something for a while
12. slight / compliment someone insult someone kiss someone
13. in tune / properly disconnected properly ugly properly connected
14. meet / encounter someone run away punch someone
15. moon / a star in the sky the natural satellite of the Earth a type of cheese

APPENDIX M – VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE (PRINTED MATERIAL IN ITALY)

Look at the vocabulary words #1-15. How well do you know these words? To the left of the number, write one of the four numbers below to show how well you know each word.

0 – I do not know this word

1 – I think I have seen this word before, but I do not know what it means

2 – I recognize this word in listening and reading, but I'm not sure if I can use it correctly

3 – I know the definition of this word and can use it correctly in speaking and writing

1. touch _____
2. feel _____
3. taste _____
4. save _____
5. deal (v.) _____
6. steal _____
7. beg _____
8. fight _____
9. distrust _____
10. destroy _____
11. borrow _____
12. slight _____
13. (to be) in tune _____
14. meet _____
15. moon (n.) _____

APPENDIX O – STUDENTS’ SELECTION OF WORDS AND COMPOSITIONS - BRAZIL

Write a poem/short text of your own, using the words/expressions you have selected. The text must be related to you somehow. After that, explain your text briefly. (Escreva um poema/texto curto usando as palavras/expressões que você selecionou. O texto deve relacionar-se a você de alguma forma. Depois, explique seu texto brevemente)		
Name	Selected Words	Composition
Alessandra	Sun, eclipsed, and all that is now and create	“ Create all you can now , as the sun shines, before it is eclipsed by the moon.”
Katherine	All that you taste, and all that is now, love, see	“For me, the life is made experiences (taste), everything the things which teach the preciousness of life. That is why, we should live the now , thinking in the love , and ever see the opportunities as something positive.”
Beatriz	And all that you give And all that you deal And all you create And all you destroy	All I create isn't related to the way I think, but if I don't have the chance to try, all my thoughts are a way to destroy the possibility of create.
Melanie	And everyone you fight; and all that is now; and everything under the sun is in tune; but the sun is eclipsed by the moon.	“I think in my life, and all that is now . I think in everyone I fight and in my choices. Everything under the sun is in tune , is correct, but the sun also can be hidden, because the sun is eclipsed by the moon . We are small in this big world and we need enjoy the life.”
Margaret	And all that you love And all that you hate And everything under the sun is in tune And everyone you meet	“ Everything you hate can't be above everything you love. Because not everything under the sun is in tune . So not everyone you meet wants to hurt you, like those you should leave behind.”
Dorian	But the sun is eclipsed by the moon. And all that is gone. buy Beg, borrow or steal	“ And all that is gone Nothing comes back Time passes without pity for those who stay behind Tramples those who cling to the past And all that is to come Look forward The future is there Every second that passes time becomes past And everything under the sun is in tune It's all in perfect harmony But the sun is eclipsed by the moon That even being such a big and radiant celestial body It's like everyone overshadowed at some point.”
Karen	NEW WORDS: SLIGHT DEAL DISTRUST BEG and the ones that are meaningful for me: all that you touch, all that you love, all you create, all that is to come	“It is hard to deal with all that I distrust . It is even more difficult deal with people that slight me. Because sometimes it seems to be the only thing that I feel. But that is not everything . I feel a lot of other things. all that I love , all that I create , all that I touch and mainly, all that is to come . That is all that I have to pay attention, because one way or another, all is in tune .”

APPENDIX P – STUDENTS’ SELECTION OF WORDS AND COMPOSITIONS - ITALY

Write a poem/short text of your own, using the words/expressions you have selected. The text must be related to you somehow. After that, explain your text briefly.		
Name	Words	Composition
Aline	1) But the sun is eclipsed by the moon; 2) love; 3) save; 4) distrust; 5) see	The sun is eclipsed by the moon I love the world We must save it
Alfred	1) eat 2) moon 3) buy 4) see 5) eclipsed	I'm eclipsed by the sun I see every day the moon I eat Mauro's kebab so I go to buy a nice kebab.
Claire	1) all you feel 2) and all that you hate 3) and all that you buy 4) and all that you do 5) and all that you eat	Because in this moments I feel many times Because in this moments I thinking a food.
Ernest	1) all you feel 2) and all that you hate 3) and all that you buy 4) and all that you do 5) and all that you eat	All you feel , I can see And all that you hate , I can exit from the gate And all that you buy , you can't see in the sky And all that you are, I miss you And all that you eat , at the end we do it
Erica	1) But the sun is eclipsed by the moon 2) moon 3) love 4) sun 5) fell	I like the sun I watch every night the moon I love the stars I feel love sky for the night But the sun is eclipsed by the moon
Fausto	1) feel 2) fight 3) hate 4) come 5) gone	I love to feel positive vibes When I play at videogames I'm in fighting with the other players I hate when my mum is hungry When I come back everything is gone .
George	1) all that you eat 2) fight 3) meet 4) taste 5) create	You meet me I eat you I fight you I taste you You create my hate and distrust
Gabriela	1) But the sun is eclipsed by the moon 2) and everyone you meet 3) and all that you love 4) all that is gone 5) all you destroy	All the love is gone And everything is destroyed And everyone is dead And everything is on fire Because the sun is eclipsed by the moon
Julian	1) and all you love 2) and all distrust 3) and all feel 4) (empty) 5) (empty)	You can give all that you love , all that you feel , and all that you buy to your friend but don't distrust your friend
Kosar	1) But the sun is eclipsed by the moon 2) And everything under the sun is in tune 3) And all that you give 4) And all that you destroy 5) And all that you say	"But the sun is eclipsed by the moon" because the good thinks fished. "and everything under the sun is in tune" because when you stay with the good people you feel right.

Michelle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) all that you eat 2) everyone you meet 3) everyone you fight 4) all that you give 5) all that you say 	<p>I meet you and you gave me everything I didn't know what to say and before I decide, we end up fight and eat each other alive -</p>
Marlon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) but the sun is eclipsed by the moon 2) everything under the sun is in tune 3) and all you create 4) and all you destroy 5) beg borrow or steal 	<p>all that I create after the sun get eclipsed my the moon get destroyed or steal</p>
Mauro	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) give 2) buy 3) eat 4) moon 5) now 	<p>Now I would like eating a cake but I can't because I am muslim and on 23 of march started Ramadan. This afternoon I'm going to buy biscuits and I can eat them when the sun goes down and the moon appear in the sky. If you want I can give you some biscuits tonight.</p>
Paul	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) all you distrust 2) all that you buy 3) all you destroy 4) everyone you fight 5) all that you do 	<p>I'm a fighter I distrust a lot of people I like destroy the things but when I did it I need to buy everything again</p>
Sam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) but the sun is eclipsed by the moon 2) and all that you deal 3) and everything under the sun is in tune 4) and all that is now 5) and all that is gone 	<p>The things buds, (bads) (eraser) is gone And everything under the sun is in tune But the sun is eclipsed by the moon</p>
Sarah	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) All that you love 2) All you distrust 3) All you destroy 4) All that you slight 5) Everyone you fight 	<p>When you really love someone sometimes you only have eyes for him/her but when they cheat on you You start to distrust everyone, you start to destroy your self confident, you start to slight yourself. Like "I'm the problem it's all my fault" and you start to fight everyone</p>
Veronica	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) And all you create 2) And all you destroy 3) And all that you do 4) And all that you say 5) And everyone you meet 	<p>"All that I created I have destroy All that I say Whas a lie But I love you And that is truth I want meet you Meet you on sky Say you the word truth And all that I do Is only for you You is my world You is my happiness</p>