READING AS A MEANS OF PROMOTING SOCIAL INTERACTION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF LITERATURE CIRCLES IN EFL TEACHING

Sara Medina Calzada
Universidad de Valladolid

Abstract

This paper explores how literature circles were introduced in the EFL lessons of a group of 3rd year ESO students. Literature circles are school book clubs in which the students form small groups in order to discuss a text. They were first used in American Elementary Schools to promote literacy in the 1980s, but soon they began to be introduced in ESL and EFL teaching. In order to analyze the students' responses to the activity, data was collected from classroom observation, the students' written tasks, and a questionnaire designed for that purpose. According to the results, on the whole, the students responded positively to the activity. Nevertheless, aspects like the process of selection of reading materials and the students' overuse of their mother tongue require further revision.

Key words: literature circles, EFL, Secondary Education, reading, learning autonomy.

Resumen

Este artículo analiza cómo los llamados *literature circles* se introdujeron en la asignatura de Lengua Extranjera Inglés con un grupo de estudiantes de 3º de la ESO. Estos *literature circles* son pequeños clubes de lectura en el aula en los que los estudiantes comentan un texto por grupos. Aunque surgieron en las Escuelas Elementales estadounidenses para promover la lectura, pronto comenzaron a utilizarse en la enseñanza del inglés como segunda lengua o como lengua extranjera. Con el fin de analizar las reacciones del alumnado ante esta práctica, se llevó a cabo una recogida de datos a partir de la observación en el aula, las tareas que los alumnos entregaron por escrito y la elaboración de un cuestionario diseñado para tal propósito. Los resultados muestran que, en términos generales, los participantes respondieron a la actividad de forma positiva. No obstante, habría que reflexionar sobre determinados aspectos como la selección de textos y la utilización excesiva de la lengua materna por parte del alumnado.

Palabras clave: *literature circles*, enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, Educación Secundaria, lectura, aprendizaje autónomo.

1. Introduction

In 1982, Karen Smith, who was teaching fifth grade at Lowell School in Phoenix, Arizona, left a box with old books at the back of her classroom. Her students discovered those books and asked her if they could read them. Of course, she allowed them to do it. Some days later, she noticed that her students had formed groups around their book choices and were meeting to discuss the books they were reading. Smith was surprised by the quality and depth of their talk. Her students had just invented literature circles.

Literature circles are the school version of adult book clubs. Although they emerged in the context of American Elementary Education and were used to teach literacy, they spread to other education levels and began to be used for different purposes. American teachers soon noticed that book discussions could be particularly beneficial for immigrants and students who were learning English as a second language (Watts-Taffe and Truscott, 2000; DaLie, 2001; Carrison and Ernst-Slavit, 2005; Li, 2005; Gilmore and Day, 2006;

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Day and Ainley, 2008). Given the benefits of literature circles for ESL students and their high degree of versatility, they were also implemented in EFL classrooms. Even though the research carried out on the use of literature circles in EFL teaching is less abundant, several studies have been conducted on the practice of this activity in countries such as Bulgaria (Bedel, 2011), Japan (Furr, 2004; Praver *et al*., 2011), Taiwan (Chiang and Huang, 2005), Ecuador (Calderón, 2010) or South Korea (Kim, 2003). There is no account of the introduction of literature circles in Spain.

The purpose of this paper is thus to explore the use of literature circles in EFL teaching by analyzing how this practice was introduced in a Secondary classroom and by examining the students' responses and reactions to the activity. In order to do so, data was collected from classroom observation, the students' tasks and the questionnaires designed for that purpose.

2. Literature circles and EFL teaching

2.1. Literature circles: Definition and characterization

Daniels (2002: 2) defines literature circles as "small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article or book". According to him, the eleven key features of this activity are:

1. Students *choose* their own reading materials.
2. *Small temporary groups* are formed, based on book choice.
3. Different groups read *different books*.
4. Groups meet on a *regular, predictable schedule* to discuss their reading.
5. Kids use written or drawn *notes* to guide both their reading and discussion.
6. Discussion *topics come from the students*.
7. Group meetings aim to be *open, natural conversations about books*, so personal connections, digressions, and open-ended questions are welcome.
8. The teacher serves as a *facilitator*, not a group member or instructor.
9. Evaluation is by *teacher observation and student self-evaluation*.
10. A spirit of *playfulness and fun* pervades the room.
11. When books are finished, *readers share with their classmates*, and then *new groups form* around new reading choices (Daniels 2002: 18; emphasis in the original).

Since it is essential that the students themselves propose the topics for discussion (point 6), they are encouraged to use notes or response logs in which they can write the ideas and questions that would nurture their group discussion. While the students get used to the dynamics of literature circles, instead of notes and response logs, role sheets can be used in order to guide both the reading and the discussion of the text (Daniels, 2002: 102). Role sheets provide the students with a definite purpose when reading the story and enhance their self-confidence because they can prepare their contribution to the discussion in advance (Furr, 2004: 6). A different role should be assigned to each member of the group so that they would read the text from different perspectives, which would certainly enrich the subsequent group meeting. Daniels (2002: 103) suggests four basic roles (Questioner, Connector, Literary Luminary, and Illustrator) and four optional roles (Summarizer, Researcher, Vocabulary Enricher, and Travel Tracer), but the possibilities should not be reduced to that.

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According to Daniels (2002: 91), when books are finished, students can undertake book projects such as theatre performances, sequels of the story, panel debates, book reviews, collages representing some of the characters, posters advertising the work, or adaptations of the story written as a book for younger kids.

2.2. Benefits of literature circles for EFL students

Teachers and researchers have emphasized the positive effects that literature circles may have on the development of reading comprehension, both in students whose mother tongue is English (Burns:1998: 124; Daniels, 2002: 8; Carrison & Ernst-Slavit, 2005: 105; Berne and Clark, 2008: 74) and in students who are learning it as a second or foreign language (Carrison & Ernst-Slavit, 2005: 105; Chiang & Huang, 2005: 81, 84; Li, 2005: 129). Furthermore, this activity may improve not only the students' reading comprehension, but also their reading motivation. Furr (2004: 9) remarks that implementing literature circles in his EFL classes motivated his students to read in their spare time. In fact, Gambrell (1996: 21-22) points out that reading motivation is fostered by providing opportunities for choice and social interaction, two features that appear in literature circles. She argues that talking about books with their classmates contributes to the development of engaged and motivated readers, and that this type of interactions may have a positive effect on their reading achievement.

In EFL classes, literature circles allow students to practise their speaking skills by discussing books in the foreign language. Furr (2004: 1, 9) and Chiang and Huang (2005: 81, 84) noticed that their students gained confidence and proficiency in speaking due to the implementation of book discussions in their classes. Literature circles imitate adult book clubs and become an opportunity to use English in real and authentic communicative situations in which the students can carry out meaningful interactions (Carrison & Ernst Slavit, 2005: 98; Li, 2005: 124; Bedel, 2011).

Literature circles can also develop the students' autonomy. It is a student-centred activity in which the learners themselves control the process of language acquisition. In fact, Noll (1994: 92) points out that this activity is powerful precisely because students direct their own learning. Although the activity may be guided by the teacher at the beginning, one of the principles of literature circles is to give the students the opportunity to select their reading materials and to lead group discussion (Daniels, 2002: 18). Students are thus encouraged to make decisions, take responsibilities, and become active participants (DaLie, 2001: 98; Carrison & Ernst-Slavit, 2005: 96-7).

Group work can also create links and trust between students (Li, 2005: 128), thus establishing a positive and safe classroom climate. Burns (1998: 124) argues that aspects like student choice, interactive groups of mixed ability, and peer-led discussion "can change the classroom climate to be more cooperative, responsible, and pleasurable". Furthermore, Carrison and Ernst-Slavit (2005: 96) note that literature circles offer students the possibility to interact and share their ideas in a "non-threatening, community-like setting". Similarly, Day and Ainley (2008: 163-164) remark that students feel more comfortable when they work in small groups and that they have more opportunities to talk in group tasks than in whole-class activities.

2.3. Challenges of introducing literature circles in a Secondary EFL classroom

In spite of the numerous benefits of literature circles for EFL students, introducing this activity may be a challenge for the teachers. Literature circles are intended to be spontaneous, dynamic, and enthusiastic peer-led book discussions, but in certain cases they may become a monotonous and repetitive activity. For

instance, Lloyd (2004: 115) and Calderón (2010: 27) complain that their students filled in their role sheets mechanically and some of them did not even participate in the discussions.

Group discussions should be lively and spontaneous, but above all, they should be in English. However, the students may use their mother tongue to talk to each other, especially if the teacher is not present. For Hill (1992: 42), the students' overuse of their mother tongue is one of the main problems of book discussions in EFL classes. Consequently, the teacher has to insist on the importance of discussing the texts in English. Otherwise, the activity cannot be useful to develop the learners' communicative competence in the foreign language.

In addition, teachers have to face those behaviour problems or conflicts that may emerge from group work. As we have already seen, literature circles can improve the class climate, but creating and maintaining a positive and respectful atmosphere is not easy. Clarke and Holwadel (2007: 20-23) discuss the problems that arose in their sixth grade class with children between 11 and 12 years of age. They observed there was a pervasive feeling of hostility in the classroom and disagreeing, interruptions and role-switching dominated group discussions. This type of behaviour can certainly spoil the activity.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The study was conducted on a group of fourteen 3rd year ESO students from the IES Jorge Manrique (Palencia) in the spring of 2013. The group was formed by nine girls and five boys between ages 14 and 15. All the students were enrolled in the bilingual programme; most of them entered it in 2010 (when they were studying 1st of ESO), but one student joined it in 2011 and two in 2012. Besides their five weekly hours of English instruction, they studied Biology and Social Sciences in English. In the subjects of English and Biology, they were sometimes taught by one of the two British assistant teachers who worked in the high school.

Nine out of the fourteen students had been to an English-speaking country. In most cases, they had been to the United Kingdom and they had stayed there only for a week. One student had lived in England for a whole year and another one had been to the United States. In addition, three students studied English in a language school and one in private lessons.

3.2. Planning of the activity

I planned to devote two sessions to the introduction of literature circles. The first session would allow the students to become acquainted with the roles and procedures of literature circles. In the second one, they would discuss a short story in groups. The students would play the roles assigned to them in the previous session. After group discussion, they would carry out their book projects, which would consist in the composition of a book review of the story they had read and discussed.

The students were not familiar with literature circles or book discussions in general, so, in order to provide them more guidance, some modifications were introduced in Daniels' (2002) model of literature circles. The most important ones are that all the students read the same texts, those texts were selected by the teacher, and groups were not formed around book choice.

The success of literature circles depends on a good selection of texts. Daniels (2002: 18) claims that one of the most important aspects of literature circles is that students are the ones who choose their own reading materials. According to him, students need to learn to assume responsibility for selecting their own readings, instead of expecting that teachers or other adults would do it for them (20). In addition, as we have already seen, the studies connected with the students' self-selection of reading materials conclude that student choice fosters reading motivation (Gambrell, 1996: 21). By contrast, other authors argue that books should be selected by the teacher, especially in EFL teaching (Furr, 2004: 4; Li ,2005: 126).

Since the participants had not taken part in literature circles before, I selected the texts myself and used the same reading for all the groups, a procedure suggested by Daniels (2002: 57) for those cases in which the activity is introduced for the first time. Bearing in mind the age, the linguistic competence and interests of the students, and the difficulty, length and theme of the texts, the reading materials I chose were a very short fragment of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* for the first session (see Appendix 1) and Isaac Asimov's short story "True Love" for the second one. I decided on this particular fragment of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* because, although brief, it contains a good deal of information which assures that all the groups could perform their functions. In addition, "True Love" was selected because I considered that a short story could be more appropriate than graded readings or the fragment of a novel. Short stories are particularly suitable for Secondary EFL students not only because of their length, but also because they allow them to read real literature. In fact, Day and Ainley (2008: 170) indicate that the introduction of authentic reading materials enhances the students' enthusiasm and motivation. Moreover, Asimov's story introduces slightly complex themes such as the nature of true love, the dehumanization of human beings and the humanization of machines, which would certainly favour group discussion.

As for group arrangement, according to Daniels (2002: 18), small temporary groups should be formed based on book choice and they should be dissolved when the book is finished. As all the participants were going to read the same story, groups could not be formed around book choice. I did not want to establish groups according to the students' abilities or confidence either. Therefore, I decided that the best option was to form groups randomly in the first session. The students would be divided in five groups of three people and each group would be assigned a different role at random. Then, in the second session, groups would be formed according to the roles assigned in the previous one. The class would be divided in three groups of five people so that there would be a representative of the five different roles in every single group. A letter would be assigned to each group (A, B, or C).

Five roles were selected for the practice of literature circles: Discussion Facilitator, Connector, Summarizer, Vocabulary Enricher, and Character Analyzer. Each role had a definite and clear function. The job of the Discussion Facilitator was to propose questions and topics for group discussion. The Connector had to establish links between the story and real life, thus connecting the text with personal experiences, books, films, etc. The Summarizer had to elaborate a summary of the story so that everyone could understand the text. The Vocabulary Enricher had to pay attention to difficult or strange words and then explain their meaning. Finally, the Character Analyzer had to examine the appearance, personality and behaviour of the characters in the story.

Different role sheets were designed for each text and role. They were based on the model provided by Daniels (2002: 107-132), but they were adapted to the texts and the level and characteristics of the students (see Appendix 2). In the role sheets designed for the discussion of "True Love", I decided to include a couple

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of questions in which the students were asked to write the opinions of the other members of the group on their role or topic. As we have already seen, one of the problems that teachers have to face is that students are sometimes reluctant to get involved in the discussions (Lloyd, 2004: 115; Calderón, 2010: 27). Literature circles may become a mechanic activity in which the students just read their role sheets one after another, so these questions were included in order to promote group discussion.

In addition, following Daniels' eleven-point definition of literature circles (2002: 18), assessment should be based on teacher's observation and students' peer and self-evaluation. Consequently, an assessment grid that would enable students to evaluate themselves was designed (see Appendix 3). The criteria included in this assessment grid show that the evaluation should not focus on the correctness or proficiency of the learners, but on their performance of the tasks and their attitude towards the activity.

3.3. Data Collection

Data was collected in order to analyze the students' reactions to literature circles and the development of the activity in general. Observational field notes were taken in class and data was obtained from the students' role sheets, their book projects, and their assessment grids. In addition, a questionnaire was designed to gather information about the students' opinion and comments on literature circles (see Appendix 4). The questionnaire is divided in two parts. The first part contains five scaled questions about language learning. The second one deals with the students' opinion on literature circles. There are four scaled questions about the activity, an open-ended question on whether they would like to do this activity in the future, and a blank space for comments and suggestions.

Although it is a qualitative study, statistical information has been also included in the analysis and discussion of the data.

4. Analysis and discussion

4.1. Class Activities

In spite of the careful planning of the activity, certain modifications had to be introduced in the schedule. In the end, three sessions were devoted to literature circles, instead of the two that had been planned. An additional session was required in order to adapt the timing of each task to the difficulties that arose in session 2. The students had been told to read Isaac Asimov's "True Love" and complete the role sheets individually at home, but not all of them had done it. I decided to modify the schedule and tell the students to read the story in class. I thought it was the best option; those students who had not done their homework would at least read it once before the discussion, and those who had done it would read it again and pay attention to certain details that perhaps they had not noticed before. As a result, the students had no time to start with their book projects, so that task was postponed until the following session.

There were noticeable differences in the dynamics of the conversation between the different groups. In session 2, groups A and C were considerably autonomous and the discussion arose spontaneously. Group B was more problematic. From the very beginning they seemed reluctant to talk about the text. Their attitude was indifferent and they showed no signs of interest in the activity either. Two of these students finally admitted that they had not finished reading the text, even though they had had time to do it in class.

In sessions 1 and 2, the Connectors had difficulties in establishing connections between the stories and real life. According to Daniels (2002: 103), the Connector is one of the four basic roles of literature circles and it embodies "what skilful readers often do" when reading a book. Bond (2001: 580) also concluded that the role of the Connector was the most frequently used role. On the other hand, Furr (2004: 7) indicates that during the first sessions devoted to literature circles, his students considered that the role of the Connector was difficult to perform but, by the end of the year, they thought that it was the most interesting one. Therefore, the difficulties that the Connectors found may be caused by their lack of habit in establishing links between books and real life, and they may have performed their role better if they had had more opportunities to practise literature circles.

On the contrary, the Discussion Facilitators encountered no difficulties in proposing topics for discussion. Since the students were used to be asked questions about the content of a particular text, it might have been difficult for them to pose open-ended questions that would facilitate group discussion. That is the reason why their role sheets included some possible questions for discussion that could help them to carry out their task. However, the three Discussion Facilitators proposed their own original and considerably deep topics for discussion. These are some of the questions that they posed for the discussion of "True Love":

Participant 2: "Do you think that it's possible to make a computer as perfect as the human brain?"[1]
Participant 6: "Do you think that new Technologies can solve sentimental problems? What do you think about Milton and his worry of looking for the true love?"

The good work performed by the Discussion Facilitators shows that Secondary students can also carry out quality conversations about a text with a considerable degree of autonomy.

Nevertheless, group discussion could have been more enriching if the participants had talked to each other only in English. The students' overuse of their mother tongue was the main challenge we faced when literature circles were put into practice. The majority of the participants discussed the texts mainly in Spanish, even though they were constantly reminded that group discussion should be carried out in English. What is more, in session 2, one of the Discussion Facilitators even translated the questions that she had prepared for the discussion into Spanish, instead of simply reading them in English.

The class climate was positive and safe, and the participants' behaviour was appropriate. Conflicts between students did not emerge from group discussion and everyone respected the others' views. In fact, they respected them too much. Apparently, some students preferred to agree with the others' opinion than to do the effort to express their own ideas. On the role sheets, a good number of the students recorded that their mates neither proposed any changes, nor had any other ideas on the topic. Furthermore, the Vocabulary Enricher of Group C did not note down the words that the other members of the group did not know, but wrote: "they are very clever and they know all the words". That type of conduct considerably impoverished the students' discussion.

4.2. Analysis of Questionnaires

Before discussing the students' views and responses to literature circles, it is necessary to analyze the results of the scaled questions related to language learning. The whole-class average value of each item was calculated and the results are shown in Figure 1.

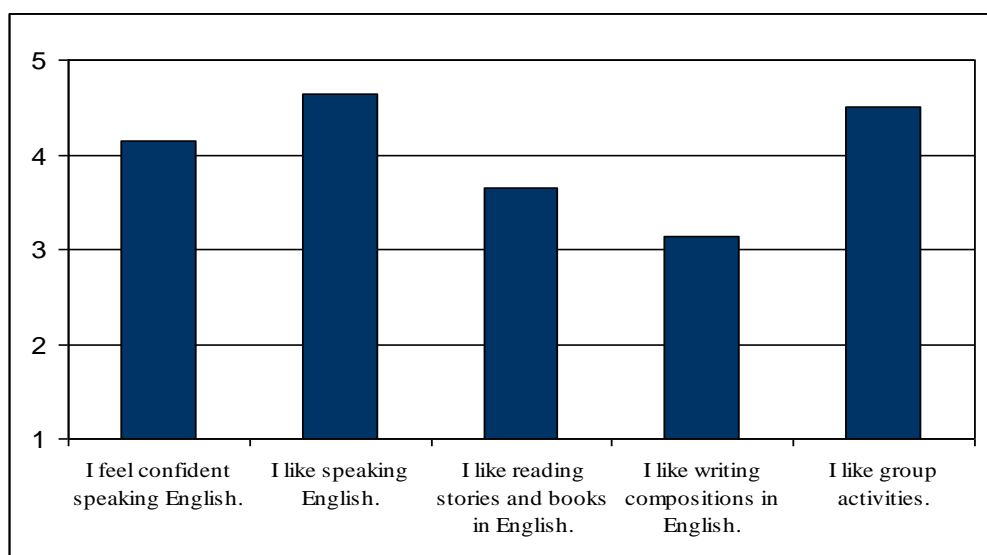[1] The students' comments and responses have been reproduced exactly as they were written.

Figure 1. Questions about language learning: average results.

It is significant that the students assigned very high values to the two items connected with speaking. Since the average value is slightly over 4 (4.14), the students seem to feel rather confident speaking English. Furthermore, they enjoy doing so because the average result of item 2 is 4.64. Ten students "strongly agreed" with the statement "I like speaking English", thus assigning the highest value to this item. Three students "agreed" with it and only one marked the option "I neither agree nor disagree".

On the contrary, reading and writing may not appeal to them so much because the average values of the questions connected with those skills are lower (3.64 and 3.14, respectively). Whereas two students "strongly agreed" and six "agreed" with the statement "I like reading stories and books in English", five selected the option "I neither agree nor disagree" and one "disagreed" with it. As for the question on writing, once again, six students selected the option "I agree" and five chose that of "I neither agree nor disagree". However, in this case, two students "disagreed" with this statement and even one "strongly disagreed" with it.

In addition, according to the high values that they attributed to the item "I like group work" (4.50), they seem to enjoy group activities. Seven participants indicated that they "strongly agreed" with that statement and the other seven said that they "agreed" with it.

Since the results of the questionnaires show that the participants enjoy group work, like speaking English and feel confident doing it, a priori they would like an activity like literature circles, which involves group discussion. On the other hand, the values that they attributed to the questions connected with reading and writing are lower, which may have an effect on their judgement of the activity as well. In fact, on the whole, the students evaluated literature circles positively, but they did not assign very high values to the items related to the enjoyment and utility of the activity, as Figure 2 shows.
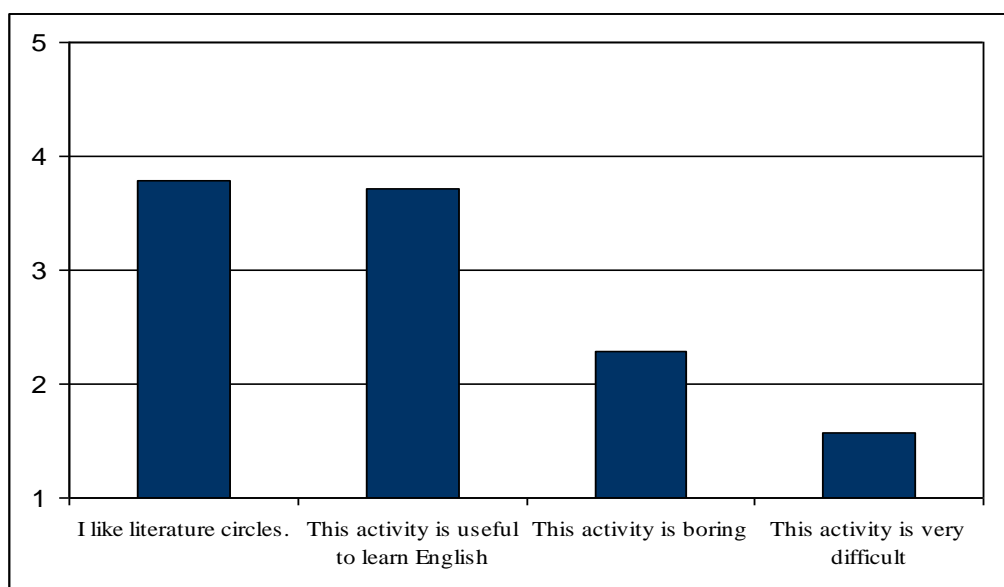
Figure 2. Questions about literature circles: average results.

The average value assigned to item 1, "I like literature circles", is 3.79. Two students "strongly agreed" with that statement and eight indicated that they "agreed" with it. Moreover, three participants "neither agreed nor disagreed" with it and one selected the option "I disagree". In addition, a similar average result (3.71) is obtained when the students were asked about the utility of literature circles in the process of language acquisition. However, in this case, seven students selected the option "I neither agree nor disagree", three participants indicated that they "strongly agreed" and four that they "agreed" with it. On the contrary, the values they assigned to items 3 and 4 are considerably lower (2.29 and 1.57, respectively). Only one student indicated that the activity was boring and none of them considered that it was difficult.

The students were also asked if they would like to practise literature circles again. Eight participants responded that they would like to do this activity in the future, five commented that they would not like it, and one did not answer the question. They offered different reasons for and against repeating this activity in their English lessons. Those who would like to participate in literature circles again argued that it was a good activity to learn how to work in groups and to improve their communicative and linguistic competence:

Participant 3: "I think it was a good activity to work in groups, discuss our opinions and
improve our English".
Participant 5: "Yes, because doing this activity we learn English in a different way".

On the other hand, the students who would not like to perform this activity in the future proposed diverse reasons for not doing so. For example, some students complained about the text selected for session 2 or about the book project carried out in session 3. One participant argued that he would prefer to choose the stories and read them alone, and another student commented that she did not like the activity because it was not adequate for their age.

Only four students completed the section devoted to comments and suggestions. One of them indicated that he would like to "do this activity more times". The other students complained about the text once again and suggested that interesting or funny stories should be selected. Similarly, most of the participants also remarked that they did not like "True Love" in their book reviews. They considered that the story was

strange and implausible. I consider that literature circles would have worked better if the students had really enjoyed the story. Therefore, it is important to carry out a careful and appropriate selection of texts.

5. Conclusion

The introduction of literature circles in an EFL classroom does not simply imply the creation of student book clubs or the practice of a series of communicative competences; it should have an effect on the approach to EFL teaching. Reading becomes a way of stimulating social interaction (Bedel 2011) and language is used for communication. It is a student-centred activity in which the learners progressively take responsibility in their own learning, thus developing their learning autonomy and motivation. As a result, teachers are no longer instructors; they become the facilitators of the students' process of language acquisition. They do not provide answers, but guidance.

Data analysis shows that literature circles can be effectively used with teenagers that are learning English as a foreign language, although there are a series of aspects that require further revision. The majority of the participants responded to literature circles positively, but not enthusiastically. This lack of enthusiasm might have been caused by the short story selected for book discussion in session 2. Therefore, it is essential to adjust the selection of texts to the purposes of the activity and the interests of the students. Even though teachers may choose the reading materials while the learners become acquainted with the dynamics of literature circles, student choice should be gradually introduced in the development of the activity.

Furthermore, in literature circles, the students form small groups in which they are encouraged to share their views on a text in a positive and relaxed class climate, which enhances their confidence in their communicative competence. Consequently, literature circles become an excellent opportunity for the development of the learners' speaking skills. However, that opportunity may be ruined if the students discuss the texts in their mother tongue. Teachers should emphasize the importance of using the foreign language for classroom communication so that the learners can get used to speak in English during the lessons.

EFL learners will only benefit from literature circles if this activity is carried out regularly throughout the whole academic year. In fact, it is necessary to carry out long-term studies on literature circles in order to investigate their benefits for EFL students. Research on literature circles has explored the potential of this activity, but the real effects it may have on language acquisition have not been examined. Further practice and research on the use of literature circles are thus required. Nevertheless, despite the limitations of this study, namely the small number of both participants and sessions, this paper aims to provide some considerations for the practice of literature circles in Secondary EFL teaching.

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Sara Medina Calzada is a PhD student at the English Department of the University of Valladolid. In 2013, she was granted with a doctoral research scholarship by the Spanish Ministry of Education (*Programa de Formación de Profesorado Universitario*). Although her thesis focuses on the reception of English literature in José Joaquín de Mora's intellectual production, her academic and professional interests include EFL teaching and the use of literature in foreign language learning.

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Reading as a means of promoting social interaction. An analysis of the use of literature circles in EFL teaching
Sara Medina Calzada   *Encuentro* 22, 2013, ISSN 1989-0796, pp. 84-97

APPENDIX 1

Session 1: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

Text:

The Dursleys had everything they wanted, but they also had a secret, and their greatest fear was that somebody would discover it. They didn't think they could bear it if anyone found out about the Potters. Mrs. Potter was Mrs. Dursley's sister, but they hadn't met for several years; in fact, Mrs. Dursley pretended she didn't

5   have a sister, because her sister and her good-for-nothing husband were as unDursleyish as it was possible to be. The Dursleys shuddered to think what the neighbours would say if the Potters arrived in the street. The Dursleys knew that the Potters had a small son, too, but they had never even seen him. This boy was another good reason for keeping the Potters away; they didn't want Dudley mixing

10   with a child like that.

(J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*: 1-2)

APPENDIX 2

Role sheets: a sample.

Role: CONNECTOR

Story: "True Love"

Name:_____ Date: _____

Your task is to find connections between the story and real life. Does the story remind you of anything that happened to you, your friends or your family? Does Joe remind you of any social network or web application you use?

_____

Does the story remind you of any book you read or any film you watched?

_____

Do you think that this story can happen in real life?

_____

ଔ

** What do your mates think? Does the story remind them of experiences that they lived, books that they read or films that they watched? *(in class)*

_____

** Do your partners think that this story can happen in real life? *(in class)*

_____

APPENDIX 3
Assessment grid

GROUP ASSESSMENT

Literature circles group: ☐ A   ☐ B   ☐ C

You have to evaluate the work done by the members of your group (only your group, not the whole class).

Do you agree with the following statements?

| 1 = I strongly disagree 2 = I disagree.   3 = I'm not sure. I neither agree nor disagree. |
| 4 = I agree.   5 = I strongly agree. |

	1	2	3	4	5
All the members of the group read the story.					
Everyone completed the role sheets.					
Everyone participated in the conversation.					
Everyone listened carefully to each other.					
Everyone respected the others' opinion.					
Group discussion was in English.					
Group discussion was friendly and active.					

Comments: _____
_____
_____

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Now, it's time to evaluate your own work. Do you agree with the following statements?

	1	2	3	4	5
I read and understood the story.					
I completed the role sheet.					
My contribution to the discussion was relevant and significant.					
I listened carefully to my mates.					
I respected the others' opinion.					
I tried to use English as much as possible.					

Comments: _____
_____
_____

APPENDIX 4

Questionnaire

Class: 3º ESO B (Bilingual programme)

Age:_____   Sex: Male / Female

When did you enter the bilingual programme?

☐ Primaria ☐1º ESO   ☐2º ESO   ☐3º ESO

Have you ever been to any English speaking country? How long did you stay there?

_____

Do you study English outside high school? Where (academy, private lessons, etc.)?

_____

Do you agree with the following statements?

1 = I strongly disagree 2 = I disagree.   3 = I'm not sure. I neither agree nor disagree.
4 = I agree.   5 = I strongly agree.

	1	2	3	4	5
I feel confident speaking English.					
I like speaking English.					
I like reading stories and books in English.					
I like writing compositions in English.					
I like group activities.					

	1	2	3	4	5
I like literature circles.					
I think that this activity is useful to learn English					
I think that this activity is boring					
I think that this activity is difficult					

Would you like to do this activity in the future? Why?

_____

_____

Comments and suggestions:

_____

_____

_____

_____