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**Teaching Literature Activities in EFL Classroom**

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**ABSTRACT**

Creativity, imagination, and ingenuity are connected with instructing students in literary tasks. The purpose of the study is to determine what teaching activities are most Productive in helping students to comprehend literature. The research design used in the study is descriptive one. The researcher created a survey questionnaire that teachers could complete. It includes twelve learning activities related to teaching literature, such as: conceptual mapping of a poem, short story, or novel; observing and analyzing videos; collaborative discussions about the chosen text; and topical discussions with a partner ,composition of a poem ,analytic writings; playing a role; narrating stories with visual assistance, teacher-student exchanges; attending lectures; private orally presenting; poems arrangement; and, evaluated spoken word in literary studies. The responders include six language literature professors at the College of Education Ibn Rushd for Human Sciences and 175 second-stage English department students. The most engaging and productive learning activities were identified by interpreting the data using an average mean and a modified Likert scale. Students were found to find playing a role, reflective writing, and discussion groups to be very engaging and productive. The teacher-student conversation was being equally very engaging and productive. Upon conducting a study among language teachers, the researcher discovered that graded spoken recitation is the least engaging yet most successful method. Based on the study's findings, recommendations and ideas for more research are made.


**Keywords**: literature, learning activities, EFL Classroom.

### 1. Introduction

Inspiration, creative thinking, and persistence are necessary while teaching literature to students. They develop their critical thinking abilities through literature when they read literary works. With the suitable educational techniques, students may learn how to relate to the literary texts they read on an emotional level. It's not always obvious what each student wants to learn and the way professors should help them draw valid understanding from a given material. (Senechal, 2011).

According to Rao (2019) Teaching students about the more complex and varied creative uses of language is one of the main reasons teachers choose language models when teaching literature. One of the main objectives of language-centered literature education is to provide students the freedom to approach a book methodically and independently. Since "literature is comprised of language," it follows that students who become more proficient readers will be able to recognize a literary work as literature. When used as a teaching tool, literature may help EFL students improve their writing skills in particular by expanding their vocabulary.

One of these difficulties with EFL students also noted that they may learn the correct sentence structure and paragraph structure through novels or short tales, which refers to how to write without making grammatical mistakes. Ilahiyah et al. (2019) said that reading and writing make particularly rich subjects for motivation research since there are several benefits to participating in these activities in addition to the primarily social nature of literacy. Reading may be a way to pass the time, learn new

things, instruct students, or engage in social contact. It can be seen as an enjoyable hobby in and of itself, or as a means of gaining reputation or knowledge.

Literature instruction should represent and meet the needs of the learners, which could be moral, social, or physical. As a result, while teaching, educators must constantly consider the characteristics of their students as well as the performance or skill level of each one. Teachers of literature should be knowledgeable about their subject, create relevant teaching resources, and pay attention to how their students learn. Furthermore, they should be enthusiastic about reading and teaching, able to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils, and able to pique their interest in class regardless of the environment. Teachers have a critical role to play in helping students enhance their capacity to acquire literature throughout the instructional process (Ahmad 2009). As instructors, they have a significant influence on pupils' development of a passion and interest in reading. Their enthusiasm for the topic, which comes through in their methods and approaches, naturally articulates and expresses itself, and it can impact students' interests and outlook on life. It goes without saying that for the students to feel comfortable studying literature and not be alarmed or frightened by the difficult texts selected, the instructor must foster a good learning atmosphere. (Kheirelseed et al., 2018).

Knowledge of literary works is essential for many university instructors of English as a foreign language (EFL) because it provides students with relevant scenarios full of intriguing characters and descriptions (Van, 2009). For all, the instantly adapted activities for literary courses adhere to the student-centered and participatory principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Sadly, a lot of graduate EFL education for teachers' programs concentrate primarily on language classroom techniques and provide less instruction on the analytical skills necessary for analyzing literature and creating engaging lesson plans.
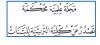
Rao (2019) asserts that teaching the four core skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing requires a strong foundation in literature. However, techniques need to be provided in a combined manner instead of separately in isolation when using literary in language classes. As a crucial component of written and spoken communication, teachers should try to provide students with the basics of language

Expanding the range of procedures and utilizing those that would stimulate students' interests is what motivated the researchers to carry out this investigation. Whether the reading material is challenging or not, students will value a work of literature more if the academic activity is tailored to their interests. For various learner types, the course becomes engaging and enjoyable based on the utilization of these learning activities. (Sukandi & Syafar, 2018).

The idea that students must read great novels and engage in continuous discussion decreases when suitable learning activities are incorporated into the teaching of literature. Furthermore, learners take ownership of their education, explore domains above the wildest dreams, and develop deeper life philosophies when these activities are carried out well. Phuong (2020).

**The aims of the study**
The purpose of this study is to determine which literary instruction activities best

meet student requirements for comprehension and appreciation of literature. It primarily aims to determine

1. which learning activities, in the opinion of the students, are more engaging and productive when it comes to studying literature?; and
2. which learning activities, in the opinion of language teachers, are the most engaging and productive when it comes to studying literature?.

## 3.METHODS
### 3.1Research Design

The research design used in this study is descriptive one. To "have access an exact and comprehensive awareness of current issues or phenomena aspects, to achieve a more complete and precise comprehension or create future rules and procedures," is the definition of descriptive research. (McCombes, 2019,p12).

The researcher creates a survey questionnaire to the teachers and students that it includes the twelve learning activities found in the teaching literature.

### 3.2 Participant

Population refers Anything that consists of members of a certain group who share one or more traits  (Best & Khan, 2006). The procedure of looking at a portion of a state cluster of possible respondents and using the results to make generalizations about the population is known as sampling (Salkind, 2010). The study sample was selected by randomly choosing 175 second-year students from the English departments and Colleges of Education for Human Sciences in Baghdad universities, as well as 6 language literature professors from the College of Education Ibn Rushd for Human Sciences who were enrolled in the Literature course in English Language Teaching (ELT).

### 3.3Instrument

The researcher created a survey questionnaire that teachers may use to teach literature. It includes twelve instructional activities including 1) conceptual mappings of a piece of poetry, short story, or novel; 2) observing and analyzing films; 3) collaborative debate on the chosen material; 4) pair conversation on a subject; 5) composing poems; 6) analytic writings 7)playing roles; 8) narrative telling with visual assistance; and 9) teacher-student dialogue;10) attending a lecture; 11) individual oral reporting; and 12) grading speaking passages while reading literature. The most engaging and successful learning activities were identified by interpreting the data using the average mean and a modified Likert scale, with variable responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### 3.4Validity

The degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure and functions as intended is known as its validity. Since it is extremely unique, if not inconceivable, for a tool to be 100% valid, validity is typically expressed in degrees (Gay et al, 2012).

The extent to which an instrument seems to assess the information it purports to assess is known as face validity (Mills, 2019).

A jury of six ELT experts in literature is given the instruments and the derivation of the educational objectives of the present research to get accurate views on the suitability and adequacy of the items.concept validity is "the extent to which an

instrument measures the trait, theoretical ability, or construct that it intended,"
(Collins et al. 2010, p.208)

## 3.5 Pilot Administration

To verify that the instructions and the components included are clear, a pilot administration of the research instrument was carried out. Additionally, the time required to administer each instrument was estimated. On January 2, 2024, fifty students who were not part of the first sample were randomly selected from the second year of Baghdad University's College of Education for Women to participate in this administration. The time allocated to complete the questionnaire spans from fifteen to twenty minutes, according to the results of the pilot administration, which revealed that there is no significant uncertainty about the provided items and the instructions.

## 3.6 Reliability of the Study Instruments

Reliability is "the extent to which an instrument regularly determines whatever it is intended to evaluate," as defined by Gay et al. (2012, p. 144). The Alpha-Cronbach approach is used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The resultant rating of (0.88) indicates that every questionnaire item is dependable and consistent.
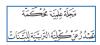
## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As stated at the beginning of the paper, this research aims to elaborate on two research questions:

To accomplish the first aim " which learning activities, in the opinion of the students, are the most engaging and productive when studying literature?"

To generate a list of learning activities that promote substantial interaction between teachers and students, a researcher conducted a survey. According to the data collected, students rate the learning activities as engaging, giving them a rating of 4.10 or highly engaging. This outcome might be explained by their regular participation in eight engaging learning activities. These include idea visualization, observing and assessing films, having partner discussions, writing poems, narrating stories with visual aids, attending lectures, doing individual verbal evaluations, and grading recitations of texts. Students found the following learning activities to be particularly engaging: playing a role, reflecting on writings, collaborative discussions about the studied literary works, and teacher-student interactions. A reflective piece of writing takes the most of events to improve occupational growth and self-awareness. Writing that Reflects is more than just narrative; it allows the writer and reader to analyze difficult, morally dubious, thought-provoking, or inspirational events to improve their analytical abilities and interpersonal skills . Additionally, the subject matter of the instructional material affects how the students learn.

**Table 1. Students` Learning activities used in studying literature**

| N | Learning Activities | Mean | Engaging | Mean | Productive |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | conceptual mappings of a piece of poetry, short story, or nove | 3.43 | Engaging | 3.28 | Productive |

| 2 | observing and analyzing films | 4.0 | Very Engaging | 3.0 | Productive |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | collaborative debate on the chosen material | 3.14 | Engaging | 3.43 | Productive |
| 4 | pair conversation on a subject | 3.0 | Engaging | 3.28 | Productive |
| 5 | composing poems | 4.0 | Very Engaging | 2.14 | Least Productive |
| 6 | analytic writings | 4.14 | Very Engaging | 3.28 | Productive |
| 7 | playing roles | 3.43 | Engaging | 3.14 | Productive |
| 8 | narrative telling with visual assistance | 4.14 | Very Engaging | 3.71 | Productive |
| 9 | teacher-student dialogue | 3.86 | Engaging | 4.0 | Very Productive |
| 10 | attending a lecture | 3.0 | Engaging | 3.86 | Productive |
| 11 | individual oral reporting | 3.14 | Engaging | 3.86 | Productive |
| 12 | grading speaking passages while reading literature | 3.43 | Engaging | 3.71 | Productive |

In order to achieve the  second aim (which learning activities, in the opinion of language teachers, are the most engaging and productive when studying literature?). Teachers of literature have identified a number of highly engaging and productive learning activities, which are included in Table 2.

It is simpler to ascertain the order of activities, as the following results: 1) Group discussions, reflective essays, role-playing, and teacher-student conversations are thought to be very engaging by the students. It seems that teacher-student conversation is the only successful method. 2)idea mapping helps students understand the story's flow. Concept mapping helps students learn by helping teachers spot unnecessary or missing ideas, insignificant or inaccurate connecting words, etc. 3)teacher-student conversations are well-liked by both educators and students as a means of ideation or opinion gathering. There must be an idea exchange between the instructor and learners for it to happen. This type of engagement suggests that professors are trying to discover methods to make the

debate engaging and that students are keen to find solutions. 4)Discussions by group . Group participation is encouraged by teachers for their students. Because each group member brings unique knowledge and abilities, the group usually solves issues more Productively than anyone could work alone. Students will pick up information, abilities, and tactics from one another during the process, particularly if you make them talk about the procedures they followed.
 5) teachers think that viewing films is a delightful form of leisure. More than 95% of teachers, experienced and inexperienced alike, said they would rather watch movies and read short stories that were based on books they had read.

**Table 2: Teachers' perception on learning activities used in studying literature**

| N | Learning Activities | Mean | Engaging | Mean | Productive |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | conceptual mappings of a piece of poetry, short story, or nove | 4.17 | Very Engaging | 4.0 | Very Productive |
| 2 | observing and analyzing films | 4.27 | Very Engaging | 4.0 | Very Productive |
| 3 | collaborative debate on the chosen material | 4.17 | Very Engaging | 4.0 | Very Productive |
| 4 | pair conversation on a subject | 3.5 | Engaging | 3.5 | Productive |
| 5 | composing poems | 3.5 | Engaging | 3.5 | Productive |
| 6 | analytic writings | 4.0 | Very Engaging | 4.0 | Very Productive |
| 7 | playing roles | 4.67 | Very Engaging | 4.33 | Very Productive |
| 8 | narrative telling with visual assistance | 3.83 | Engaging | 4.17 | Very Productive |
| 9 | teacher-student dialogue | 4.17 | Very Engaging | 4.17 | Very Productive |
| 10 | attending a lecture | 3.67 | Engaging | 3.67 | Productive |
| 11 | individual oral reporting | 3.16 | Engaging | 3.0 | Productive |
| 12 | grading speaking passages while reading literature | 2.16 | Least Engaging | 3.5 | Productive |

## 4.1 Discussion of the Results

The findings of the students' learning activities that are useful when learning literature are displayed in Table 1. For students, almost all of the learning activities are beneficial. They find that composing poems is the least productive learning activity. Deep thinking and imagination are needed for this task. Because they lack ideas for the topic, students studying literary find this idea to be unappealing. Limited vocabulary, according to the study, is a further explanation why pupils aren't motivated to write poems. Due to linguistic considerations (i.e., structure and meaning), students find it challenging to express their thoughts from their native

language to a second language. According to Padak (2001), some students—and teachers—have unfavorable recollections of their past experiences with poetry because too much focus was placed on "the poet's intention," on analyzing poems to identify patterns of rhyme, or on learning the meanings of poetical phrases like representation and alliterations by their core. Students believe that all other learning activities are beneficial.

Concept mapping, watching and evaluating films, having a group discussion about the chosen material, talking with a partner about a subject, creating poems, reflective essays, role-playing, and utilizing visuals to express stories assistance, teacher-student discussions, lecture listening, and individual oral reporting are among the engaging and successful learning methods that language instructors and students agree upon as in table 2. The idea map serves as a starting point for conversations between students and their teachers, helping to make sense of linkages like the one shown and, in general, improving comprehension of the material (Caňas, 2003).

Students find that teacher-student interactions are a highly powerful learning tool. The students thought that having a student-teacher interaction was suitable because the subject is a content course. In the classroom, a student starts to actively learn. When studying literature, other educational activities are seen to be more successful.

As can be seen, students respond well to these learning exercises and they provide a solid foundation for comprehension of the literary works. learners can express their feelings through role-playing. They encounter unfamiliar things as a result of this. Ultimately, written reflections encourage students to share their individual stories. Other subjects that Students write character descriptions while examining the subject, events, and lessons learned. In the subsequent set of tasks, learners start putting the knowledge they've gained into practice in an autonomous writing scenario. (Johannesen, 1992).

According to the study, having a subject conversation with a partner, creating a poem, attending a lecture, and doing solo oral reporting are all engaging and productive ways to learn when studying literature. Although these exercises become second nature to the pupils, they are thought to be useful in analyzing literary works.

Teachers of languages find visual aids to be both fascinating and very productive when teaching stories. Teachers are naturally enlightened by the ingenuity of their students. One the one hand, instructors and students enjoy hearing anecdotes, personal experiences, and captivating narratives. This reinforces Sialongo's (2010) assertion that literature is a product of a particular civilization that concretizes man's Except graded oral recitation, learning is enjoyable. Although it is a useful learning exercise, this is the least fascinating. professors of languages are aware that pupils struggle to express themselves in the language and frequently show hesitation while answering questions from professors during graded oral recitation. Nonetheless, grading spoken expression is Productive means for gauging students' comprehension of the literature.

## 4.2 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the survey confirm that literature is a difficult and fascinating subject to teach and learn for both teachers and students. Instructors are dedicated to piquing students' interest in the material. Teachers have a duty to provide engaging reading for all students, which requires them to have a wealth of tactics, approaches, and activities at their disposal. It is important for educators to bear in mind that proper and effective activities and tactics are necessary to augment meaningful and productive learning. Some learning activities, like concept mapping, watching and analyzing films, having group discussions about the chosen text, writing reflective essays, role-playing, and storytelling with visual aids, are seen as highly Productive by teachers but as less Productive by the students.

There isn't a single most engaging and productive learning exercise that teachers and students can do. When it comes to some engaging and productive learning activities, teachers and students have different opinions. Language instructors can use the results of this study to design more engaging and productive literature-based learning exercises.

## 4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The study's findings will serve as the foundation for creating the literature course syllabus.
2. To guarantee that students learn in a meaningful way, language instructors should employ the successful learning exercises while instructing literature.

3. When teaching literature, language and literature instructors should incorporate additional learning activities such learning journals, literary discussions in groups, field trips, blogging, and portfolio creation.

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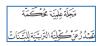　　　*of Literacy Research.*
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