5 Motivation, engagement and achievement in the EFL literature class: 21st century perspectives

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Introduction

TEACHER: Well, students, now you have some five-six minutes to read this short extract from Mark Twain's great novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. It is the opening scene, one of many funny episodes, where old aunt Polly is talking to herself about how mischievous Tom is. Can you read it and debate whether you find this extract Realistic, Romantic or represents some other literary styles? We can also talk about the symbolic value of the characters and motifs, or anything that you find interesting. Perhaps Twain wanted to criticize something by this scene – can you think what it was?

(AFTER TEN MINUTES): TEACHER: Ok, anybody?

SILENCE.

TEACHER: Did you like the extract? Did you find it funny?

(RELUCTANT CONSENT FROM STUDENTS). Hmm.

TEACHER: Well, Anna? What could you say about the text?

ANNA: I think it is Realistic.

TEACHER: Right, can you tell us more about why you find it Realistic?

ANNA: It is realistically written.

TEACHER: Would anybody like to add any comment to Anna?

SILENCE.

*(*Sample case study based on the author's twenty-year experience of teaching literature in EFL classroom.

Referring to my experience with teaching literature to future teachers and translators at university level and also talking to many other teachers of literature, the above-quoted case study illustrates a wide spectrum of problems related to teaching literature in present-day EFL classroom, at high and post-high-school level. My observations relate to university graduates in humanities, future teachers and translators, who study literature in EFL classes to learn facts and data about authors, movements and styles of writing; however, by reading and discussing literary texts they also improve their reading comprehension and communicative competences in foreign language, the ability to summarize, analyze and synthetize from various literary texts, draw evaluations and personal statements about a text as well as cultivate their ability to discuss literature in an academic manner. Personal observations are correlated to the results of two quantitative surveys done in 2015 and 2016.

1.   Problem: Motivation

The sample situation in the opening section of this study shows what many educationalists call "a dramatic lack of students' motivation" to participate in the classroom task and learn by the experience and many teachers of literature know far too well (Low class participation has already been explored by many educationalists (Knight, Swope, Weimer, Lathrop, 2010). Let us first explore the concept of motivation in general and reading motivation specifically, and its significance for the student and teacher.

Motivation is a multidisciplinary term, integrating findings from many disciplines such as psychology, education, personal management and many others (Hitka & Balážová, 2015). Generally, motivation is understood as "the desire to do things" (Psychology Today, 2017). Educational psychologists Paul R. and Anne M. Kleninngina give a more detailed definition of motivation as "an internal state or condition (sometimes described as a need, desire, or want) that serves to activate or energize behavior and give it direction (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981). Expert on human motivation, R. E. Franken (2006) provides an additional component in his definition; he above all the mentioned attributes he understands motivation as "the arousal, direction, and persistence of behavior". A. Bandura (1986) further expands the definition and suggests that motivation (or a lack thereof) is the result of an individual's self-efficacy related to a task. Bandura defines self-efficacy as the

beliefs we have about ourselves that cause us to make choices, put forth effort, and persist in the face of difficulty. Jeanne E. Omrod explores the attributes of motivation which she summarized into six maxims in her article *How Motivation Affects Learning and Behavior* (2014):

1. Motivation directs behavior toward particular goals.
2. Motivation leads to increased effort and energy.
3. Motivation increases initiation of and persistence in activities.
4. Motivation affects cognitive processes.
5. Motivation determines which consequences are reinforcing and punishing.
6. Motivation often enhances performance.

Many other experts (Wigfield, Gladstone & Turci, 2016) distinguish between **intrinsic** and **extrinsic** motivation for various tasks; intrinsic motivation arises from the individual's own self-expressed interests and extrinsic motivation based on outside influences such as rewards and grades. All the findings related to general motivation may be applied to reading motivation specifically.

Worldwide, reading abilities and reading motivation is being periodically monitored by international surveys such as PISA and OECD research. The reason is pragmatic; lack of literacy skills may lead to serious economic drawbacks, loss and even injuries and deaths. In spite the global use of English as one of the leading languages of labor, little attention is paid to reading skills and motivation of **bilinguals** (Bilinguals are generally defined as users of mother tongue (L1 language) and acquired language, (denoted as L2 language) on approximately the same level and in an analogical variety of communicational situations (Ramírez, pp. 4-5). Therefore, in 2015 and 2016, we have conducted two surveys (**2015 Reading Literacy Survey** and **2016 Reading Efficiency Survey**) to state the *status quo* of Slovak bilinguals' general and specific reading skills as well as inner and outer factors that might influence one's reading achievement in both reading fiction and non-fiction (Complete research results were published in Javorčíková, Vajdičková, 2016 and 2017). The research will be done on regular basis every year; 2017 survey results are currently being prosessed.

The sample unit of both surveys comprised of university students of humanities (future teachers and translators). All students studied double majors

(e. g. English – Philosophy, English – French, etc.); which is the prevailing type of study at teacher training universities in Slovakia. All respondents passed high-school-leaving exams and university entrance exams with usual passmark 75, 00% (Rounded to two decimal points). High-school-leaving exams also served as an equalizer of students' general academic skills and competencies to study at the university. Average number of years of English studies in both surveys was 9, 71 with minimum 3 and maximum 16 years of study. Average age of the both sample units was 19.90 years. Women outnumbered men more than three times; this is a prevailing trend in Slovak humanities-related universities. Slovak was the mother tongue (first language; L1) of all the students. In the following section, we will provide a comparative commentary of both surveys and draw conclusions for students' motivation, engagement and achievement in their reading performance.

1.1 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey – Achievement v. Motivation

In October 2016, a survey of university students' testing their reading efficiency (speed and accuracy) was conducted via questionnaire method. The sampling unit consisted of eighty-four (84) valid questionnaires. Respondents included students of humanities – first-year teacher-training students (38) and translation and interpreting programme students (46). The procedure of the survey was based on speed-reading of a selected short text (total 182 words) and responding to three questions (questions 1 and 3 required reading for direct information; question 2 required interpretation and evaluation). Research outcomes proved four interesting points:

1.1.1 Low-to-average reading efficiency of respondents: 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey displayed average reading skills of university students.

The average speed of reading was 161.71 wpm. Comparing this result to general standards, in one's **mother tongue**, the parameters of reading speed are usually as following:

0-150 wpm = slow reading
150-250 wpm = average reading;
250-400 wpm = above average reading;
more than 400 wpm = superfast reading
(Words per minute. 2017. In: http://www.ako-sa-naucit-skor.com/rychlocitanie-test/) .

In **foreign tongue L2**, this ratio is lowered by 30% (Segalowitz, Poulsen, & Comoda, 1991). Thus, for the purposes of this research, the ratio for L2 text (mother tongue text deduced by 30%) is stated as follows: ˈ

0-105 wpm = slow reading;
106-175 wpm = average reading;
176-280 wpm = above average reading;
more than 281 wpm = superfast reading.

In **2016 Reading Efficiency Survey**, the speed of reading was as follows:

0-105 wpm = slow reading = 2 respondents (2, 39%);
106-175 wpm = average reading = 48 respondents (57.14%);
176-280 wpm = above average reading = 34 respondents (40.48%);
more than 281 = superfast reading = not applicable.

Majority of respondents (57, 14%) qualified as "slow readers"; however, 40, 48% respondents fell into the category of "above average readers). Nevertheless, the global survey outcome – average speed of reading of the whole sample unit (161.71 wpm) qualifies as average reading speed.

Average accuracy of the sample unit was as low as 44, 74%. In case of reading in a foreign language, experts (Segalowitz, Poulsen, & Comoda, 1991) recommend to raise the data by 30%; even then however, average accuracy is as low as 58,08% which can be considered insufficient.

There is no comparable research of reading efficiency of bilinguals conducted in Slovakia, however, our outcomes correlate to 2015 PISA results conducted among 15-year old students. Slovak teenagers gained average results both in reading speed and comprehension and thus placed Slovakia on 42nd position among 70 countries. Interestingly, the Czech Republic with a similar educational history as Slovakia scored on substantially better position, on the 29th place. In reading literacy, Slovak students achieved 453 points, compared to the OECD average 493 (PISA. 2017).

The only similar research, we could support our finding with is a larger survey (133 respondents) done in Slovakia by Maťúšová and Gavora in 2006 and published in the article *Investigation into Reading Literacy of University Students* (2010, pp. 183-196). Maťúšová and Gavora tested university students' reading efficiency in their mother tongue by using released PISA reading literacy test items

(2000) as a data gathering instrument. They expected university students will score at least at the 90 % level (or 90 points) on the test. However, this level was reached only by 25 % of students. About 25 % students from the sample scored less than 75 points out of 100. In other fields, university students acquired:

86, 2 points (%) in obtaining direct information from texts;
81, 8 points (%) in interpretation of information from texts and
78, 9 points (%) in thinking and evaluation, reflecting.

Maťúšová and Gavora consider the findings "disappointing" and indicating that the low level of text processing with university students in the sample is dominant. (2010, p. 192). Their results, however, show similar trend than our survey – respondents were most successful in gathering direct information from texts, however, they gained lower results when interpreting and evaluating the information in the text.

1.1.2 Significant inability of respondents to assess one's reading performance: 2016 Reading Efficiency Research also showed another interesting phenomenon: dramatic lack of students' awareness of their own reading abilities. Only as little as 11.10% respondents were able to assess their reading skills correctly. As many as 32.63% respondents seriously misjudged their reading skills and felt to be "fast readers", however, in speed test they only achieved average results. Respondents thus were not only unable to judge their own reading performance but were also not aware of their inability and consequently, they could not further train and cultivate their reading efficiency.

1.1.3 Overestimation of intrinsic motivation to reading as an enhancer of reading efficiency: 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey showed several interesting phenomena related to respondents' attitude to reading and their reading achievement. We have already discussed the importance of intrinsic motivation for readers' performance. Expert educationalists (Wigfield, Gladstone, & Turci, 2014) agree, one's positive attitude enhances one's performance and, vice versa, one's negative attitude negatively affects one's output. In contrary with the

popular opinion, the 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey proved the opposite: one's (positive) attitude to reading does not necessarily lead to a better reading performance.

Respondents' reading motivation and general attitude to reading both fiction and non-fiction was identified by a set of questions (Do you enjoy reading?; Do you read for pleasure?; Do you read at least three times a week (minimum 30 minutes)?; Do you feel uncomfortable in you have nothing to read, e.g. when waiting at the doctor's?). As many as 82.14% of respondents confirmed they enjoy reading and 85.71% stated they read for pleasure (both fiction and non-fiction) and (34 respondents, 40.48%) stated they enjoy reading and read at least 3 times a week per 30 minutes. It may come as a positive sign for the future that generally, only 16, 64% respondents stated they did not enjoy reading (further referred to as "dislike readers"); as many as 83, 36% claimed positive attitude to reading (further referred to as "hobby readers"). Interestingly, "hobby readers" actually read slower and were slightly less accurate than "dislike readers". Among "hobby readers", average reading speed was 161, 17 wpm (compared to higher speed of "dislike readers" = 167.00 wpm). Average accuracy of these "hobby readers" was 50.00% (compared to "dislike readers" = 52.38%). Nevertheless, the overall accuracy, oscillating around 50% can be considered insufficient.

1.1.4 Overestimation of stimulating background (extrinsic motivation) as an enhancer of reader's performance: Extrinsic, i.e. "outside" motivation also plays an important role affecting reader's performance. In 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey, attention was also paid to the extrinsic motivating factors such as supportive background (respondents were asked whether reading was a rewarded activity in their family, whether their parents used to read them and buy books and whether books were considered a desired object such as present in their household). These questions were to find out whether supportive background in the past actually affected respondents' reading achievements at present in a statistically significant way. Quite surprisingly, 2016 survey proved that stimulating background (e.g. parents and family stimulating reading since one's childhood by reading, buying books and library cards, giving books as presents, etc.) did not significantly affect real reading performance of respondents.

Respondents coming from a stimulating environment scored higher in reading speed, however, they were significantly outscored by the respondents from non-stimulating environment in reading accuracy. Their average reading speed was 167.13 wpm (compared to those from "non-stimulating environment" = 145.86 wpm). Average accuracy of "respondents from a stimulating environment" was 50.00% (compared to those from "non-stimulating environment" = 61.91%) (Javorčíková & Vajdičková, 2017). Thus, stimulating environment correlated to a higher speed of reading, however, the accuracy of those from "non-stimulating environment" was significantly higher. Other stimulating phenomena, such as reading parents, did not have any significant statistical value in students' performance.

Thus, one's attitude and motivation to reading did not significantly enhance respondents' skills, when compared with the best sample unit results. On the other hand, the latest research in the field of modern pedagogy and didactics heads towards the focus on the "process of learning, rather than product" (Šipošová, 2016, pp. 134-135). One's attitude thus might play a significant role in achieving long-term goals. Nevertheless, the legacy of 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey is positive: readers can score high in spite of their social, material and family background and can overcome negative hurdles to their path to achievement. Also, if intrinsic and extrinsic (family bound) motivation does not play a significant role, it is perhaps another form of extrinsic in-class (teacher-initiated) motivation that could change students' motivation to read. In-class motivation will be discussed in the final chapter of this study.

2. Problem: Engagement

Unmotivated students are often students who are difficult to engage in classroom activities. Many teachers are well-aware of the sample situation we stated at the beginning of this article when the classroom debate is obviously slow-paced and "lazy" – students were shy and generally reluctant to answer even most banal questions. Moreover, students tended to verbalize their answers in utterances seldom longer than few words. Many professional educationalists point out the necessity to engage students. However, the roots of low students' engagement are multilayered – they may include cultural barriers, general

ignorance of the subject-in-debate, lack of learner's independence, lack of verbum and many phenomena.

Students' engagement in literature classes or in lessons in general is extensively affected by the **cultural norms** valid in the society. In terms of cultural norms that affect one's participation in class activities, Ota (2013, pp. 4-5) recognizes "individualistic cultures" which "value tendencies...emphasizing the importance of individual identity over group identity, individual rights over group rights, and individual needs over group needs". According to Ota, such individualism promotes qualities such as "self-efficiency, individual responsibility, and personal autonomy". Ota further notes that most international and international ESL students (and this includes Slovak students too) come from "collectivistic cultures" whose values tend to emphasize "the importance of "we" identity over the "I" identity, group rights over individual rights, and in-group needs over individual wants and desires." Therefore, members with collectivistic cultural values focus on promoting "relational interdependence, in-group harmony, and in-group collaborative sprit". Thus cultural norms may answer some questions related to students' reluctance to participate in class activities and overall classroom management.

In traditional "collaborative" culture, the interaction from teacher to student is viewed as the most "polite" and "manageable" variant. Other students do not interfere if a teacher speaks or interacts with another student, neither they react to their peers' remarks and responses – such interaction would be taken as "disturbing". That may negatively affect the classroom management which eventually leads to what many teachers informally call "one man's show" (only one student participates in debate, the others are irresponsive). Many students feel they only respond to a question if they are asked personally by name. Needless to say, it is the teacher's task to overcome the hurdles of cultural norms and make students to fully participate and interact during class activities and reading discussion (we will revisit the methods increasing students' participation and engagement in the final section of this study).

Another reason for low engagement in literature classroom activities many also stem from **general ignorance** of the subject-matter. For laymen, it may come as a surprise how few university students recognize even well-known world famous texts (professional teachers would certainly agree they regularly meet

students who claim they have never heard of writers such as Mark Twain, Edgar Allan Poe, sisters Brontës and many other key authors). Such students cannot relate to their previous experience and broaden it.

Lack of learner's independence represents another barrier to students' engagement in EFL literature classes. Students are often unable to cross disciplines and use the information they already gathered in other courses (e.g. history classes, civics, their mother tongue classes, other languages and humanities), related to literary movements, trends and tendencies and cannot actively and independently trace the features of these movements in given texts. In their conclusions, they always relate on the teacher to provide the "correct" answer and sum of information. Moreover, many students are withdrawn because of **lack of verbum.** In spite passing propaedeutic courses, such as Introduction to literature, many cannot verbalize their opinions in an academic manner. To explain a point, they often just re-word their previous answer or use a synonymic one (See the sample situation; the student, to add to her previous commentary simply re-worded her previous statement: *Realistic – realistically written*).

3. Problem: Achievement

Lack of motivation and engagement in EFL literature classroom activities inevitably leads to low achievement and performance. As seen in the sample situation, unmotivated and unengaged students get very little from their classes – they fail to notice most obvious features of a literary movement in a given text which will eventually be detrimental to their grades and generally to their ability to "work" with a text, either literary or non-literary. However, underachievement in literature classes may also be caused by general inability to handle written medium (text), be it literary or non-literary. We again stress out what may come as a general warning that 2015 PISA results (examining mother tongue-written texts) placed Slovak 15-year old students on the bellow-average 42nd position out of 70 countries (much lower than the Czech Republic, for example, which scored 29th), which indicates a systemic disparity – an alarming lack of reading skills and competencies of Slovak students in their mother tongue.

We have already noted in spite reading skills in one's mother tongue are regularly checked and monitored by international tests, no similar research has ever been done in reading skills in acquired language (L2, English). To find out the

status quo of reading efficiency and literary literacy of university graduates in acquired language (English), we rely on results of two independent surveys conducted in 2015 and 2016; the already mentioned 2016 Reading Efficiency Survey which tested university-educated bilinguals' reading efficiency and the 2015 Reading Literacy Survey, focused on university-educated bilinguals' ability to manage a literary text (accuracy and ability to acquire direct, indirect and implicit meaning as well as symbolic and interpretative aspects of the text).

3.1 2015 Reading Literacy Survey – Achievement by Tasks

2015 survey was focused on tracing students' ability to work with a **literary text (c**omplete survey results were published in Javorčíková & Vajdičková, 2017) and their reading literacy was checked via questionnaire method. The sample unit was smaller than in the research of functional literacy (34 valid questionnaires were obtained), however, other data, including the gender, age and study combinations were comparable. Respondents were provided with a sample original English unabridged literary text (60-line unabridged opening of a popular humoristic English novel (D. Lodge's *Small World*; 1984, the text was selected because of the university-life related subject matter which corresponds with respondents' present life of university students. In this mid-1980s comic campus novel, Lodge starts with a prologue, where he in a light banter compares medieval pilgrimages and present-day conferences and draws frequent allusions to famous writers such as G. Chaucer and T. S. Eliot. Lodge in this text uses advanced language as well as advanced figurative language. Nevertheless, the overall meaning of the text is generally comprehensible and clear to a university student of English). The language level was B2; it used advanced but comprehensible choice of words for the target group. Sample text was followed by a set of 10 tasks. The structure and the nature of tasks purposefully differed to obtain the widest possible spectrum of students' abilities. According to the structure of test tasks, suggested by Gavora and Maťúšová (2010, p. 189), the structure of questionnaire tasks used was divided as follows (Table 3).

Timing was unrestricted in order to obtain the most accurate answers; respondents were instructed to complete the tasks as well as possible which provided them with the authority to decide when the test is complete and answered correctly. Students were instructed to note if they do not completely

agree with the wording of a statement and amend or change it as necessary. Here we tested students' ability to think critically, go out of task and think "out of box".

Table 3. Questionnaire Description - Task Structure

	Task types	Task number(s)
Task types	Acquiring **direct** information	2,4,6
	Acquiring indirect information	1,7,10
	Interpretation	5,8
	Thinking and evaluation	3,9

Respondents achieved the best score (31 correct answers, 91,18%) in task 8 testing their ability to **interpret** in order to grasp the overall gist of the text and understand its tone, overall atmosphere and implications beyond the lexical meaning. This task was completed most successfully, with maximum, 31 correct answers (91, 20%). In tasks requiring obtaining **information directly mentioned** in the text respondents also reached very high average 80, 4% correctness. Answers for tasks 2, 4, 6, were directly mentioned in the text in almost unchanged wording and thus required mostly reading skills to complete them. In these tasks, students were very successful and acquired 29 (85, 3%), 26 (76, 5%) and 27 (79, 4%) correct answers out of 34 respectively.

Respondents however seriously struggled with the tasks requiring analysis, synthesis and independent critical thinking. In the tasks requiring reading for **indirect information** (tasks 1, 7, 10), average correctness was as low as 50, 97%. Here respondents acquired the lowest scoring of correct answers, only 15 (44, 1%), 20 (58, 8%), and 17 (50, 0%) correct answers out of 34 respectively. Respondents also could not answer correctly those tasks which required **thinking and evaluation** and comparing the required answer with their personal experience and background information.

Answer to task 3 was speculative in its nature, the proper answer lied in the difference between the words *usually* (universities usually pay) and *always* (universities *always* pay)*.* Students encountered serious problems with this task, with only 19 correct answers (55, 90%). Interestingly, only two students (women) were sensitive to the semantic difference between *always* and *usually* and commented on it. Similarly, Task 9 (The narrator is a man) tested respondents' general ability to distinguish between fact and opinion and also to identify or deny the "supposed" male narrator, revealing himself in self-assured tone and

stereotypically masculine idiomatic language. 25 students (73, 50%) answered this task correctly.

Answers to Task 5 required **interpretation** as the answer was encoded in a longer text and was not mentioned directly. 27 students (79, 41%) answered it correctly, which came as a surprise, given, they failed to answer a connected Task 10 (17 correct and 17 incorrect answers). More detailed research outcomes are presented in the following table (Table 4):

Table 4. Comprehension of Literary Text – 2015 Reading Literacy Survey outcomes ordered by tasks 1-10:

	Total correct answers out of 34	Total correct answers out of 34 (%)	Type of task
Task 1	15*	44.1%	Acquiring indirect information
Task 2	29	85.3%	Acquiring **direct** information
Task 3	19	55.9%	Thinking and evaluation
Task 4	26	76.5%	Acquiring **direct** information
Task 5	27	79.4%	Interpretation
Task 6	27	79.4%	Acquiring **direct** information
Task 7	20	58.8%	Acquiring indirect information
Task 8	31	91.2%	Overall interpretation
Task 9	25	73.5%	Thinking and evaluation
Task 10	17	50.0%	Acquiring indirect information

* - If the respondent failed to provide any answer, the answer was classified as "incorrect".

3.1 Respondents succeeded in gathering the overall gist of reading: Respondents generally scored very high in the tasks requiring getting the overall gist of reading (the comic tone, atmosphere of the text) and obtaining information directly mentioned. Moreover, they were able to identify the narrator properly, perhaps a result of the Introduction to Literature course which made them aware of basic literary terms.

3.2 Respondents succeeded in gathering directly stated data; however, they scored averagely in getting indirect and implied information: Students they seriously struggled in the tasks, which involved advanced logical operations such as analysis, interpretation, synthesis and speculative thinking or drawing from their own experience. Also they could not effectively get the indirect and implicit information and information wrapped in artistic and figurative language.

Table 5 shows the order of tasks, ordered by correct responses:

Table 5. Comprehension of Literary text – 2015 Reading Literacy Research outcomes listed by correct responses:

	Total correct answers out of 34	Total correct answers out of 34 (%)	Type of task
Task 8	31	91.2%	Overall interpretation
Task 2	29	85.3%	Acquiring **direct** information
Task 5	27	79.4%	Interpretation
Task 6	27	79.4%	Acquiring **direct** information
Task 4	26	76.5%	Acquiring **direct** information
Task 9	25	73.5%	Thinking and evaluation
Task 7	20	58.8%	Acquiring indirect information
Task 3	19	55.9%	Thinking and evaluation
Task 10	17	50.0%	Acquiring indirect information
Task 1	15	44.1%	Acquiring indirect information

2015 Reading Literacy Survey revealed three interesting facts about respondents' abilities to read and comprehend fiction:

3.3 Respondents failed in critical thinking, analysing and synthetizing information for the text: only two students were, on the basis of the text, able to rely on their expertise and correct incorrect information.

2015 and 2016 surveys draw attention to an interesting phenomenon – both analyses demonstrate lower performance in more synthetic and independent type of tasks – thinking and evaluation. The 2016 Reading Literacy Survey pointed out Slovak university students need more training in active work with text leading to

independent and critical reading and thinking (in this we agree with Šimoniová (2008, p. 2). University students, more than ever, need to learn ways and methods how to get beyond text, evaluate it critically and relate to their own experience. Schools and various educational institutions should intensify their focus on reading literacy and those skills and training that enhance reading competences, critical reading and general understanding of written texts. Universities should, therefore, offer more focused and extensive courses based on active work with texts in order to provide students with tools to grasp the gist of written information.

4. Motivation, Engagement and Achievement Revisited: Teaching Literature in the 21st Century

The empirical research discussed in the previous sections opened several interesting issues to debate. It has proved serious backlashes in reading competences. As far as reading efficiency was concerned, respondents could not assess their own reading abilities and scored averagely. As for reading literacy, respondents only mastered easier tasks, focused on reading for the overall information or information directly stated in the text; however, they seriously failed in tasks requiring advanced logical operations, search for implicit and indirect information and in formulating their own hypotheses about the text. Their performance was not gravely affected by intrinsic motivation; neither were they significantly affected by extrinsic, supportive background. That puts in-class, teacher-initiated motivation to the spot. The key question this is, how to improve respondents' reading skills, reading performance in general, enhance their passion for pleasure reading and also increase their awareness of their own reading abilities and potential?

Some answers to all these questions might lie in applying the methods of **affective learning** to teaching literature in order to enhance readers' motivation, engagement and achievement. Affective learning is, as the general definition has it, "…the acquisition of behaviors involved in expressing feelings in attitudes, appreciations, and values" (Affective Learning, p. 1). In order to understand the principles of affective learning, we need to borrow from Bloom's taxonomy: Educationalists recognize **three main domains of learning**: cognitive (thinking), affective (emotion and feeling), and psychomotor (physical and kinesthetic):

1) **Cognitive domain**, (explored by B.Bloom in 1956) involves knowledge and the development of intellectual skills (Bloom, 1956). Cognitive education has been greatly revised by Krathwohl who suggested the following stages or

operational activities: remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating and the uppermost phase which is creating (Wilson, p. 1).

2) **Affective domain**, (explored by Krathwohl , Bloom, & Masia, 1973) includes the manner in which we deal with things emotionally, such as feelings, values, appreciation, enthusiasms, motivations, and attitudes (Wilson, p. 1). Unlike cognitive domain, which concentrates on logical operations, affective domain includes the following five sub-activities:

- **Receiving:** This refers to the learner's sensitivity to the existence of stimuli – awareness, willingness to receive (for example, to meet new people and get acquainted with them), or selected attention. In an EFL literature classroom, receiving may refer to the introductory classes where students get acquainted with each other, with the help of such activities as "Find somebody who", which provide them with basic and also more detailed information about their peers´ preferences, opinions, etc.
- **Responding:** This refers to the learners' active attention to stimuli (such as participation in class discussion, responding, giving presentation) and his or her motivation to learn – acquiescence, willing responses, or feelings of satisfaction. In an EFL literature classroom, responding may refer to personalized discussions and presentations which maximally enhance students' intellectual as well as emotional involvement.
- **Valuing:** This refers to the learner's beliefs and attitudes of worth – acceptance, preference, or commitment: An acceptance, preference, or commitment to a value. For example, they accept a cultural diversity; participate in the system of control. In an EFL literature classroom, "valuing" translates into taking a point without drawing judgmental, overgeneralizing statements.
- **Organization:** This refers to the learner's internalization of values and beliefs involving (1) the conceptualization of values; and (2) the organization of a value system for example, when planning the future, solving problems, etc.). As values or beliefs become internalized, the leaner organizes them according to priority. In an EFL literature classroom, organization means applying gathered behavioral patterns in order to improve one´s performance.
- **Characterization: This refers to** learner's internalization of values and relates to behavior that reflects (1) a generalized set of values; and (2) a characterization or a philosophy about life. At this level the learner is capable of practicing and acting on their values or beliefs, for example, when working in a group or independently. In an EFL literature classroom, characterization may mean internalization of gathered values and behaving accordingly.

3) Kinesthetic domain: Psychomotor objectives are those specific to discreet physical functions, reflex actions and interpretive movements. In an EFL literature classroom, kinesthetic aspect of may be integrated into the process of teaching. These may relate to teaching cultural norms of body language and gestures.

Many authors (Martin, 1994; Lenčová, 2008; 2010) stress the weak points of the Western educational ideals emphasizing singled items of Bloom's learning domains rather than their complexity; "reason over emotion, thought over action, mind over body, head over hand, self over other, education over life". Carolyn Panofsky agrees; saying "the authors argue for the importance of the affective domain in an era" when "reason, head, thought, and mind" are valued more than "emotion, heart, action, and body" (Panofsky, pp. 2-3). Perhaps because the affective domain cannot be measured by standardized tests, the "system" does not support the caring part of the teaching job. Nevertheless, it is crucial that preservice and in-service teachers become more respectful toward children.

In EFL literature classroom such single-sided attitude often results in preoccupation with content-based material, "facts" and data instead of incorporating more personalized approach based on affective experience. Therefore, in the field of education, the relationship between cognitive and affective domain is crucial and its nature should be sensitively reconsidered. Inevitably, the interdisciplinary nature of the issue requires wide variety of fields, from psychology to education to consider it. Various experts from all these fields agree nowadays it is essential to integrate both approaches. For example, Robert Kegan, a psychologist, also suggests a developmental model that incorporates emotion and cognition. (Kegan, p. 11). Kegan integrates the content of learning and the personality of the learner: "...it is not that a person makes meaning, as much as that the activity of being a person is the activity of meaning-making.... The most fundamental thing we do with what happens to us is organize it. We literally make sense" (Kegan, p. 11).

Neuropsychologist Antonio R. Damasio (1994) also supports the hypotheses that feelings have a powerful influence on reason, that the brain systems required for feeling are enmeshed with those needed for reason, and that both together are closely interwoven with the systems that regulate the body. While cautioning that this information about emotion should not in any way suggests that reason is less important than feelings, he does state that the research suggests that: "the strengthening of rationality probably requires that great consideration be given to the vulnerability of the world within" (Damasio, p. 247).

Educationalists more than the others support the idea of a more holistic approach to education, integrating the whole complex of approaches rather than a singled one. Recent researchers reconsidered the previously overly stressed cognitive approach and tended more towards affective approach which has been neglected for decades (Panofsky p. 1; Lenčová, 2008, 2010). C. Panofsky further notes there is a long and honorable tradition in Western education of separating emotion and cognition and of valuing the rational and the cognitive as the core and essence of the educational process (Panofsky, p. 21). More holistic approaches to education are now taking over. Panofsky for example suggested to focus on and to integrate both cognitive and social dimensions of literacy (Panofsky, p. 1). William Ayers agrees with Panofsky and further points out that "…it is not useful to separate physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. We are all whole people – cognition is entwined with affect, and my mind (and yours) is embedded in spiritual, cultural, and psychological being" (Ayers, p. 62.). How then to apply the principles of integrated and more holistic education into a literature classroom? In other words, how to teach literature in the 21st century? Here are some maxims upgrading traditional teaching of literature according to 21st century media and student interest zones:

1) No anonymous student policy: student-centred education

Let me once more return back to the initial sample in-class conversation. Discussing literature often means to discuss one's viewpoints, cultural and social patterns even political opinions. All these issues are very personal and intimate and one would certainly not open up to a stranger or a random passer-by, just like in the opening sample in-class situation. Students were not even willing to share their opinions and their personal evaluation of the text.

In a literature class, there has to be developed an intimate atmosphere of tolerance and comradeship. Safe environment helps to enhance the feeling one will not be scrutinized or ridiculed for their opinions and experience. It is a long-term task, requiring team and community building activities (these could be summarized as "no anonymous student policy") which should be paid more attention by pedagogical scholarship. The proportion of power in classes should also shift closer toward the student. Teacher, instead of being the authority and source of all "truth" should become a facilitator or a partner in debate. Students, in spite still in their formative years, should feel they also can bring up new incentives and ideas.

2) Meta-learning: tell them what happens when they learn and develop awareness of the learning processes

Students often question the very reason to read literature. Quite fairly, in the 21st century, they are overloaded with a variety of written material the scope and size their teachers are often not even aware of (for example blogs, FB entries, internet sources, text messages etc.) which is funny and educational enough, so many quite justly cast the question why should they read pieces of literature which are often decades if not centuries old, dated and written in a language that is no longer used. At this point, it is very important to let the students know what actually happens if one reads, physically, intellectually, emotionally. In other words, in literature classes, meta-learning (i.e. learning about the process of learning) is as important as the learning itself. Students should be aware that reading fiction (including poetry, drama) in one's mother tongue contributes to:

1. Improvement of General Linguistic Skills, Abilities and Competencies:
- Physiologically, reading improves memory.
- Reading extends one's lexicon.
- Reading increases the analytical thinking, i. e. the ability to find schemes, patterns and repeating schemes.
- Reading also improves and accelerates writing skills (Bergland, pp. 1-4).

2. Self-improvement and Improvement of one's Lifestyle:
- Reading stimulates active lifestyle, exercising and similar activities (Freitland, p. 1).
- Reading stimulates empathy (Vezzali, p. 1).
- Reading reduces xenophobia, negative attitudes to stigmatized groups (immigrants, homosexuals, refugees) (Vezzali, p. 1).

3. Physical, Emotional and Therapeutic Improvement:
- Reading reduces stress and brings relief. A 2009 study proved that 10-minute reading reduces stress by incredible 68%. Research done by University of Sussex. (Lewis, p. 1).
- Reading trains human brain and increases the ability to retain information (Freitland, p. 1).
- Reading reduces the risk of Alzheimer disease. Regular intellectual practice leads to reduced risk of AD (Freitland, p. 1). Research done by National US Academy of Sciences.

- Reading brings a transferable experience. C. Russel proved that reading enables to connect previous experience with a new one and thus enlarge it (Russel, p. 1).

Many of these findings relate to reading in foreign language. For bilinguals, reading fiction in English, apart from all the previously mentioned benefits of reading fiction in one's mother tongue, greatly contributes to one's ability to **function** in the foreign language. The contribution of reading in English could be organized into several categories:

1. Practical Linguistic Contribution:

Linguistic contribution lies in most obvious benefit of reading literary texts, i. e. acquisition of new words, phrases, grammar structures, various variants of colloquial and standard language, formal and informal language, lexicon of various social and educational groups and many other linguistic phenomena.

2. Practical Social and Historical Contribution: Gathering Historical, Political and other "Data":

Even though postmodern literary critics (Derrida, Foucault, and Kristeva) advise against traditional Marxist approaches to literary texts, drawing "facts" from fiction, there are many pieces of literature which comment on specific historical events and criticize or praise specific phenomena, including, but not limited to issues such as human and civil rights of minorities; for example rights of Native Americans (e.g. Sherman Alexie: *Reservation Blues*; rights of immigrants (e.g. Amy Tan: *The Joy Lucky Club*); rights of African-Americans (e.g. Toni Morrison: *The Bluest Eye*) and rights of lesbians and homosexuals (e.g. Michael Cunningham: *The Hours*). Give or take their poetic license, these novels illustrate the point for readers from very different cultural background and thus serve as a source of information about the issue in debate.

3. Cultural identity: Gathering Transferable Experience of Behavioral Codes

In spite of some cultural sceptics (the most famous is Viëtor) we believe it is impossible to learn a foreign language without acquiring the culture it embraces, i. e. the **"cultural identity"**. By cultural identity we understand the sum of cultural patterns and codes (for example, new concepts of time/tense system; new concepts of expressing oneself politely) one acquires when he or she learns a foreign language. Needless to say, such social competencies expand regular day-to-day informal situations. A competent language speaker has to

be both "languagewise" and "culturewise" in order to understand the multiple forms of use of a foreign language in various unrehearsed situations and to be able to react spontaneously yet appropriately. Therefore some scholars speak about "**the art"** of crossing cultures.

Indeed, mastering a foreign language means more than mastering its linguistic rules. As Zelenka (p. 31) notes, it is equally important to master the "culturewise" level of the language. That incorporates many verbal and non-verbal elements (including proximity, gestures and movements, facial expressions and many others), social skills, codes and taboos, for example:

- proximity: how close people stand to each other;
- how loudly or softly someone speaks;
- when to and when not to make eye contact;
- socially acceptable and inacceptable topics for formal/informal situations;
- formulations of excuses, how to respond to feedback;
- how directly or indirectly one may ask for help or clarification of instructions, how to treat people of a different gender, sexual orientation, race, culture or age;
- how to say no;
- in what manner (tone, pitch, style) to criticize or praise other people's performance and many others;
- when to be casual and when to be formal;
- how to interpret the meaning of others' behavior

(adopted from: Gardenswartz – Rowe, 1990).

1) Maximizing students' engagement: use a variety of media

Teaching literature in the 21st century puts even more load on teachers' shoulders. A lot of literature is now presented on the internet, and internet has actually become a new genre (let us remind of a recent, 2012 tweet-novel by Jennifer Egan, *Black Box*, appraised both by critics and readers). Teaching the "pre-internet way", I dare say, is no longer possible. Teachers thus have to incorporate media into their classes. Some of popular modern forms of integrating media into teaching literature are:

1. **Presenting various media** – classic and digital (e.g. *The Last of the Mohicans* as a text-movie, commix, film, etc.). Ask students to analyze diverse media forms and talk about their strengths and weaknesses.
2. **Ask students to choose and create various media:** Instead of classic essays, they might as well turn in video presentations and podcast presentations.
3. **Publish students' works:** "All students work leaves the classroom": Some educationalists suggest starting a web-page, supporting students' wikipaedias (Read more at Javorčíková, 2008), or, turning old-fashioned journals to online journals. That will enhance the feeling students' work has more than one reader.
4. **Implement tools for digital text annotation** on pdfs, note-sharing, and more to help students mark text, document questions and insights, and revisit thinking or collaborate with others during the reading of classic texts (inspired by Teachthoughts, 2017).
5. **Create social media-based reading clubs.** Establish a tag that anchors year-long discussion of certain themes, authors, text, literary categories and issues to debate related to the curriculum(inspired by Teachthoughts, 2017).

> **2) Draw from students' experience: respect affective needs of students**

Literature classes often tend to provide a historical survey of movements, trends and literary tendencies rather than rely on the subjective perception of these by the readers. However, topic-based content gives an opportunity to involve students and to draw from their experience. A statement, popularly attributed to C. S. Lewis, a recognized author of literature for children and juvenile poignantly illustrates the point: "We read to know that we are not alone". Experience shared via literature enriches the reader's own intellectual and emotional experience in an unprecedented way. Therefore, students' readers' diaries could include an entry related to their own experience with the subject matter discussed in the work-of-choice. They should be given the chance to say how they can "connect" with the theme (For example, when reading the novel *The Lord of the Rings*, they could borrow from their own experience of friendship and how it helped them to achieve their goals). Personalisation will eventually help readers to find the "bridge" between their own life and the text read.

Overloaded by lesson plan goals, teachers sometimes tend to forget that "one of the hallmark characteristics of classic literature is that it endures. This is, in part, due to timelessness of the human condition. Love lost, coming of age, overcoming

obstacles, civil rights, identity, and more are all at the core of the greatest of literary works" (inspired by Teachthoughts, 2017). Let students express their reflection of timeless topics and relate literary solutions to their personal lives.

Conclusion

21ˢᵗ century with its technological advancements brings new requirements on teachers of literature as well as the perpetuators of general literacy. In spite there is a greater availability of a variety of texts than ever before; two surveys (conducted in 2015 and 2016) indicated that there is actually a regress in students' reading skill and competencies, especially those requiring tracing indirect information, complex logical operations and understanding figurative language. Intrinsic and extrinsic-family based motivation may be less significant than teacher-initiated in-class motivation and thus, traditional types of literary education need to be redefined. One of the professional educationalists, Jane Martin poignantly sums this situation by saying, in literature classes "care, concern, connectedness, nurturance are as important for carrying on society's economic, political, and social processes as its reproductive ones. If education is to help us acquire them, it must be redefined" (Martin, p. 206).

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