Universidad de **Valladolid**

LITERATURE CIRCLES AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SPAIN: A PROPOSAL FOR INTERVENTION

TRABAJO FIN DE MÁSTER

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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of literature as a teaching resource in EFL classes is not very popular – at least when we talk about English lessons in Secondary Education in Spain (Medina Calzada, 2013). However, teaching English through literature is a topic that has been widely studied and that has been proved to be effective (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Little and Wood, 2005; Alam 2002 in Ali & Ahmed, 2015). In this paper we want to support this idea and demonstrate that literature not only can be a perfectly adequate resource for teaching a foreign language, but that in fact it can be more beneficial than teaching from a merely linguistic approach. How can we demonstrate this? By revising a strong theoretical framework and using it to design a proposal for intervention that includes literature in a specific context – a context provided by the Spanish secondary education system.

Literature is a very large area, so we are going to focus on a particular kind of text and a particular methodology in our proposal. Regarding the texts, short stories seem to be the most adequate kind of text for secondary education due to the age of the students (from 12 to 18 years old) and their level of English (which can vary depending on the person but which usually corresponds to an A2 to B1 – or B2 in the highest levels – according to CEFR (Pathan, 2013; Erkaya, 2005). They are short, easy to read, usually dealing with moral issues that can lead students to think and discuss. As we will see, these features appear in the secondary education curriculum as part of the competences and skills fostered and required to acquire during this stage (RD 1105-2014). Moreover, there is a huge variety of topics that we can choose according to their preferences. For these reasons, and as we will explain later, many authors support the use of short stories in secondary education (Pathan & Al-Dersi, 2013; Jalilifar & Assi, 2008; Khatib, 2011; Erkaya, 2005).

The short story chosen for this proposal is *Harrison Bergeron*, by Kurt Vonnegut. This text has been selected according to a criteria based on the age, interests, type of course, linguistic proficiency and literary cultural background of the students, together with the exploitability of the text, as we will explain later. As for the author, Kurt Vonnegut, he is a highly regarded writer, and although this story is not as well-known as other works he might have, by choosing him we ensure the quality of both linguistic and literary forms.

Although the original text is accessible enough for mostly every kind of student, it is going to be adapted in this proposal in order to better fit the characteristics of our target class. There will be three different kinds of adaptation: linguistic, content and cultural adaptations[1].

Regarding the methodology of this proposal, we have focused on literary circles. Literary circles are small groups – usually of five people – in which a text is read and discussed (Daniels, 2002). In this paper we will explain and analyze all the benefits that literary circles provide, and also we will discuss some problems that could arouse when moving into practice, according to different authors (Clarke and Holwadel, 2007; Medina, 2013; Lloyd, 2004). Then, after reviewing both positive and negative aspects of literature circles, we will discuss how to adapt this model into a Spanish secondary education class – more specifically, a course belonging to the 4th year of E.S.O.[2] in Castilla y León.

So what we want to do in this paper is to make a proposal for intervention designed specifically for the 4th course of E.S.O in Castilla y León. In this proposal, literature – short stories in particular – is used in order to teach English as a foreign language by using literature circles. Besides, we will adapt and modify the original idea suggested by Daniels in order to fit the Spanish curriculum and also to try to avoid the problems presented by other researchers. These modifications include mainly the addition of a final project, the adjustment of students' roles according to the characteristics of the target class and a more active presence of the teacher.

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[1] See pages 29-32.
[2] Educación Secundaria Obligatoria

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section we will discuss the theoretical framework. First, we will review the use of literature in the EFL class along the past decades. Then, we will discuss some authors that are both against and in favour of the use of literature as a teaching resource. Thirdly, we will how does literature fit in the Spanish curriculum, and after this we will explain how texts can be selected and approached in the class. Finally, we will move to literary circles: we will define, explain and review the original model proposed by Daniels together with its use in the EFL class. To finish with, we will expose some problems reported by other authors when using literature circles in class.

2.1 THE USE OF LITERATURE IN THE EFL CLASS: A BRIEF REVIEW.

The use of literature as a tool for teaching a foreign language has been a widely studied, and somehow controversial, topic along the twentieth century. In the last decades there has been a renewed interest in literature as a teaching resource, but it has not been considered like this – a useful resource – for many years.

In the first part of the twentieth century, the Grammar Translation method[3] was the one and only method to use in terms of teaching foreign languages. Literature was one of the main components of this approach, as it provided an exemplary model of the language, especially in terms of grammar and vocabulary. The texts selected belonged just to canonical literature and the approach was merely linguistic; they did not focus on content (Duff and Maley, 1990; Carter, 2007; Llach, 2007).

With the arrival of Structural methods[3] literature was put aside. The interest fell on functional, communicative and authentic aspects of language, and literature was not considered to have any of these characteristics (Carter, 2007). Moreover, the Grammar Translation method was not valued any more, and literature represented largely this approach, so its status as a teaching resource decreased.

Later on, in the 1980s, the Communicative approach[3] was introduced and with it the interest on literature was recovered. The recognition of literature as a valuable teaching

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[3] For more information about this method, see: Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014*). Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

resource, especially when talking about reading and writing skills, and as an authentic material, led researchers and teachers to rethink the possible benefits of literature for the foreign language students. Besides, literature was no longer approached from a merely linguistic point of view; it was also recognized "the fact that more imaginative and representational uses of language could be embedded alongside more referentially utilitarian output" (Carter, 2007, p. 6).

However, despite the revival of the interest on literature in the EFL classroom, we are far from coming to a general agreement on the main point: Should literature be used as a teaching resource in the EFL context?

2.2 LITERATURE AS A TEACHING RESOURCE: WHY OR WHY NOT?

As in every research field, there is a wide variety of opinions regarding the use of literature in the EFL class. And some of these opinions – albeit less in this case – are against it.

The most common arguments that detractors maintain are related to structure and use of language, together with the possible cultural barriers and the ultimate goal of foreign language students, which usually has little to do with literary aspirations – a similar argument to those that were contended when the structural approach was on its peak (McKay, 1982).

So, the first problem deals with syntax and lexis (Khatib et al, 2011a). According to Savvidou (2004), the complexity of syntactical structures in literary texts can be an obstacle in the learning process of students, as those structures are often quite different from ordinary English. Robson (1989) adds that the kind of vocabulary used in literature is complex, convoluted, sometimes old fashioned or even obsolete, and again, far from the vocabulary used in Standard English. Other authors argue that literature can arouse problems regarding semantics and even phonetics and phonology (Khatib et al, 2011a), but these normally apply to texts that have not been adapted, or that in fact they have been adapted but they do not fit the characteristics of the class – of course, using

the original version of *Beowulf* in an EFL class with a low level of English is an arguable decision.

Regarding cultural barriers, McKay argues that "literature often reflects a particular cultural perspective; thus, on a conceptual level, it may be quite difficult for students" (1982: p. 529). A text with a lot of specific cultural references might create problems for the students when trying to understand the content.

Finally, the ultimate goal of students when they decide to learn a new language is usually related to an academic or professional field (McKay, 1982) – or, in some cases, they are simply required to study it, as in secondary education. And literature, as it has been said before, has usually little or nothing to do with these aims, which lead teachers and researches to wonder whether literature adjusts to the student's needs or not.

Other kinds of questions are also regarded as potential problems, as the importance of selecting an appropriate text or the possible lack of adequate literature formation of EFL teachers. A good selection of texts, made taking into account all the relevant characteristics of the class – age, level of English, interests, number of people, etc. – can overcome many – if not all – of the problems explained before (Carter and Long, 1991; McKay, 1982). And if the original texts are not appropriate enough, they can always be adapted to fit the characteristics and needs of the group.

Khatib et al. suggest more specific solutions to the most common arguments against literature, as the syntactic and lexical complexity found in literary texts, which "can become a source for practice especially for the learners at the intermediate and the above levels" (2011a: p. 203). The amount of new vocabulary and syntactic patterns or structures that students acquire while being exposed to literature is huge, and more important, varied; and with literary texts we ensure that the language to which they are exposed is employed at its finest. So we could argue that this complexity of form is nothing more than a tool for students to enrich their language.

Language and culture and inseparable: they mutually support and sustain each other. And literature is one of the best ways of bringing culture into the class (Sage, 1987; Khatib, 2011a; Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Sage argues that, in fact, "the primary lure of literature, and the major value of literature to ESL students, is its cultural content" (1987: p. 13). Nevertheless, the differences between the students' own culture and the

foreign one can be many and complex, and it is for this reason that they should have the chance of being aware and understand these differences as soon as possible. Therefore, it is necessary that students get exposed to those cultural barriers so they can jump over them in a controlled context – as it is a classroom – where they can ask for help: explanations, opinions, examples…

Regarding the contribution of literature to specialized or academic fields, it is true that it could be difficult to find a literary text including English for specific purposes, but as we are focusing on ESL instruction it could be said that the very first step is to learn the language itself, and as Khatib indicates, "it can be a positive catalyst for quickening language learning process" (2011a: p. 204).

But, does literature actually help students to learn the language itself, its basis? Absolutely yes. Many authors concur on the richness of literature in terms of developing the basic four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking (Carter, 2007; Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Khatib, 2011a; Llach, 2007; McKay, 1982; Rai, 2012; Sage, 1987).

As for reading, literature provides the perfect tools for practicing both intensive and extensive reading. The material is practically endless, and as we have mentioned before, it is a way of exposing students to the best forms of language. And, of course, they can enjoy the content – especially if the texts have been selected according to their interests.

Also, literary texts offer the opportunity to practice writing in a creative and encouraging way, as well as speaking and listening. From literary discussions to recreations of theatre plays, dramatic readings or lecture clubs, all of these activities provide good and original chances to practice oral skills.

But literature goes besides linguistic skills. As Sage points out, "By modeling language, literature teaches sustained, significant communication. ESL is more than just a matter of gaining mastery of many isolated communicative situations […]. Literature, in short, models and teaches coherence of language and thought." (1987: p. 17).

Many other benefits of the use of literature have been asserted, as the authenticity of literary texts (Khatib, 2011a; Llach, 2007), its universality and its importance in the era of globalization (Sage, 1987), the motivational component of literature (Simla, 2009) and the development of critical thinking (McKay, 1982). So we can conclude that, although the use of literature has been questioned, and despite some authors are still

against it (Savvidou, 2004; Robson, 1989; McKay, 1982), it has been proved to be an effective, helpful, creative and productive resource for the EFL instruction.

2.3 LITERATURE, CEFRL AND THE SPANISH CURRICULUM.

As we have seen, there are a number of authors who support the benefits of using literature in an EFL context. But in the Spanish curriculum, English literature is not included as a subject or as part of the Second Language syllabus. Does it mean that literature cannot be used as a resource for teaching English language? Not at all.

In fact, both the Spanish Royal Decree and the *Official Gazette/Boletín Oficial* of, in this case, Castilla y León, give particular attention to the sociocultural and artistical side of foreign languages, apart from linguistic skills themselves:

Regarding the general objectives of Secondary Education:

> *Artículo 11. Objetivos de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria*
>
> *i) Comprender y expresarse en **una o más lenguas extranjeras**[4] de manera apropiada.*
>
> *j) Conocer, valorar y respetar los aspectos básicos de la **cultura y la historia propias y de los demás, así como el patrimonio artístico y cultural.***
>
> *l) **Apreciar la creación artística y comprender el lenguaje de las distintas manifestaciones artísticas, utilizando diversos medios de expresión y representación.*** (RD 1105/2014: p. 176)

> *Artículo 15. Proceso de aprendizaje y atención individualizada.*
>
> *3. En esta etapa se prestará una atención especial a la adquisición y el desarrollo de las competencias y se fomentará la correcta expresión oral y escrita y el uso de las matemáticas. **A fin de promover el hábito de la lectura, se dedicará un tiempo a la misma en la práctica docente de todas las materias.*** (RD 1105/2014: p. 180)

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[4] We have highlighted these sentences in order to emphasize.

General objectives in *Bachillerato*:

> *Artículo 25. Objetivos.*
>
> *f) Expresarse con fluidez y corrección en **una o más lenguas extranjeras.***
>
> *l) **Desarrollar la sensibilidad artística y literaria, así como el criterio estético, como fuentes de formación y enriquecimiento cultural.** (RD 1105/2014: p. 188)*

As for the general description of the foreign language subject (English in this case):

> *El uso efectivo de lenguas extranjeras supone necesariamente una visión abierta y positiva [...]**Las competencias sociales y cívicas, y la conciencia y la expresión culturales, tanto las circunscritas a los entornos más inmediatos como las propias de ámbitos cada vez más amplios de actuación, forman así parte de las habilidades que comprende una competencia intercultural integrada en el aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras.** (RD 1105/2014: pps. 422-423)*

In the *Boletín Oficial de Castilla y León*, we find similar references, as in the description of the contents of foreign languages subjects:

> *[…]Por su parte, los contenidos del bloque 4, Aspectos socioculturales y consciencia intercultural, contribuyen a que el alumnado conozca **costumbres, formas de relación social, rasgos y particularidades de los países en los que se habla la lengua extranjera, en definitiva, formas de vida diferentes a las suyas. Este conocimiento promoverá la tolerancia y el respeto, acrecentará el interés por el conocimiento de las diferentes realidades sociales y culturales y facilitará la comunicación intercultural, porque por medio de las lenguas se accede a los modelos y los valores de las culturas que representan.** (DECRETO 52/2007: p. 50)*

Regarding the specific objectives of this subject, we should highlight:

> *3. Leer y comprender de forma autónoma textos diversos de un nivel adecuado a las capacidades e intereses del alumnado con el fin de extraer información general y específica, y **utilizar la lectura como fuente de placer y de enriquecimiento personal.** (DECRETO 52/2007: p. 51)*

And we also find the following in the contents of the subject (in every course):

> *Comprensión general e identificación de informaciones específicas en diferentes textos sencillos auténticos y adaptados, en soporte papel y digital, sobre diversos temas adecuados a su edad o relacionados con contenidos de otras materias del currículo.*
>
> *Iniciativa para leer con cierta autonomía textos adecuados a la edad, intereses y nivel de competencia.*
>
> *Uso de estrategias básicas de comprensión lectora: identificación del tema de un texto con ayuda de elementos textuales y no textuales, uso de los conocimientos previos, inferencia de significados por el contexto, por elementos visuales, por comparación de palabras o frases similares en las lenguas que conocen.* (DECRETO 52/2007: p. 52)

We have argued before that one of literature's most powerful elements is the representation of culture – and the huge profit that it provides to students. Bearing in mind all the specific references to culture and artistic values – apart from the direct references to reading and literature – and that literature is a great resource for teaching these aspects, we could say that it is perfectly feasible to use literature as a didactic resource in a foreign language class in order to achieve all the objectives marked by the law.

Besides, everything concerning language education is included in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (MCERL in Spanish), which is the document on which the Royal Decree is based regarding foreign languages (RD 1105/2014: 516). And is in this document where we find direct allusions to the use of literature:

> *Los usos imaginativos y artísticos de la lengua son importantes tanto en el campo educativo como en sí mismos.[…] Comprenden actividades como las siguientes: […] volver a contar y escribir historias, etc.; escuchar, leer, contar y escribir textos imaginativos (cuentos, canciones, etc.) incluyendo textos audiovisuales, historietas, cuentos con imágenes, etc.; representar obras de teatro con guion o sin él, etc.; presenciar y escenificar textos literarios como, por ejemplo, leer y escribir textos (relatos cortos, novelas, poesía, etc.), representar y presenciar como espectador recitales, obras de teatro y de ópera, etc. […] Las literaturas nacionales y regionales contribuyen de forma importante a la herencia cultural europea, que el Consejo de Europa considera «un patrimonio común valioso que hay que proteger y desarrollar».*

> *Los estudios literarios cumplen muchos más fines educativos, intelectuales, morales, emocionales, lingüísticos y culturales que los puramente estéticos. Se espera que muchas secciones del Marco de referencia resulten adecuadas para las preocupaciones de los profesores de literatura de todos los niveles y que sean útiles a la hora de lograr que los objetivos y métodos sean más transparentes.* (MCERL, 2002: 59-60)

This document also states the type of texts that can be used in the EFL context:

> *Textos escritos: libros, ficción y no ficción, incluyendo publicaciones literarias; revistas; periódicos; manuales de instrucciones (bricolaje, libros de recetas de cocina, etc.); libros de texto; tiras cómicas;[…])* (MCERL, 2002: 93)

Finally, regarding general competences that the students should have, we find the follwoing:

> 5.1.1.2. *El conocimiento sociocultural*
>
> *Estrictamente hablando, el conocimiento de la sociedad y de la cultura de la comunidad o comunidades en las que se habla el idioma es un aspecto del conocimiento del mundo. **Sin embargo, tiene la importancia suficiente como para merecer la atención del alumno, sobre todo porque, al contrario que muchos otros aspectos del conocimiento, es probable que no se encuentre en su experiencia previa, y puede que esté distorsionado por los estereotipos.***
>
> 5.1.1.3. *La consciencia intercultural*
>
> *[…]la conciencia de la diversidad regional y social en ambos mundos[…] **se enriquece con la conciencia de una serie de culturas más amplia de la que conlleva la lengua materna y la segunda lengua, lo cual contribuye a ubicar ambas en su contexto.** Además del conocimiento objetivo, la consciencia intercultural supone una toma de conciencia del modo en que aparece la comunidad desde la perspectiva de los demás, a menudo, en forma de estereotipos nacionales.* (MCERL, 2002: 100-101)

2.4 USING LITERATURE IN CLASS.

 Now that the reasons for using literature in an EFL context have been exposed, together with its place within the European and Spanish legal context, it is time to discuss how literature is introduced in the classroom.

2.4.1. Selecting texts

The very first thing to take into account is the selection of texts. As we have mentioned before, choosing a suitable or unsuitable text can determine the success or the failure of a program. By making a good selection of texts we can avoid almost every possible problem, as linguistic complexity or cultural barriers (Carter and Long, 1991; McKay, 1982). But, how do we select the appropriate text?

We have to take into account several factors, all of them dealing with the type of course and the students' profile – age, maturity, linguistic proficiency, interests and cultural background – or the kind of text – structure, plot, stylistics, themes and its exploitability (McKay, 1982; Sage, 1987; Lazar, 1993).

Regarding the type of course, it is important to consider all the characteristics of the course and the class: the length of the course – is it possible to work all over the year or do we have just a semester?; the number of students in the class; the kind of English required; or the reasons why they want to learn this language – it is a secondary English class? Or it is an English for Specific Purposes course? Do they need English for their professional future? Or do they just want to travel? (Lazar, 1993)

It is also important to revise the syllabus and determine if it is flexible enough to include literature – if it is not included yet. In certain courses, especially the last year of secondary education, the syllabus is focused on a final test (an official exam to enter the university) and for this reason it can be difficult to fit tasks dealing with literature, as it is not part of that final test.

As for the students' profile, the age is a determinant factor to take into account. Age is probably going to condition many other factors, as intellectual maturity or interests. And we also have to consider that the class might not have same aged students – as in Official Language Schools or language academies.

Intellectual maturity is sometimes linked to age, but not always. The complexity of themes, topics and structure of the text selected has to be equated with their capability for understanding and processing the content (Lazar, 1993).

In relation to form, another important element to consider is the student's linguistic proficiency. Using an original, classical text with students with a poor linguistic proficiency is only going to create frustration and an overwhelming feeling. McKay

(1982) suggests choosing simpler texts – as young adult novels – or adapting complex ones for the students with a lower level.

In relation to personal interests, the ideal option would be that students could select the texts themselves, according to their preferences. This might be possible in some cases, but not always, as we have to ensure that the text they are going to work on is appropriate in every sense, and that it contains the elements from the syllabus that we want to focus on. And sometimes students would not take these aspects into account in order to select a text. An intermediate option is giving them a list of possible choices – previously selected by the teacher – so they can choose in a controlled manner (Furr, 2004).

The students' cultural background is relevant as well, but as it has been argued before, what some authors consider as *cultural barriers* can be in fact a positive aspect for students to learn about this crucial aspect of language – culture. They might find some difficulties understanding certain cultural references, but this is something that the teacher should have taken into account when choosing the text, so these cultural references can be explained and even provide a chance to develop topics that would remain untouched otherwise.

Now, taking into account all the information about the course and students, we can proceed to apply it to the characteristics of the texts. We need to find a text that satisfies the needs and features of our students as far as possible. If we are not able to find an appropriate text, we can adapt or modify some aspects of the text that is closer to what we need. Some important factors on the text to consider are the genre and the main theme – regarding the students' interests, the stylistics – according to the students' linguistic proficiency and their literary background, the structure, plot and topics appearing in the text – in regard to intellectual maturity and, again, to interests, or the exploitability of the text together with the fit with the course's syllabus.

Once the text is properly selected, it is time to discuss the different approaches we can use to work on it.

2.4.2 Approaches to the text

Different approaches to the literary texts in the EFL context have been discussed and proposed (Khatib, 2011a): the Critical Literary Approach, the Stylistic Approach (Maley, 1989); the Story Grammar Approach, the Reading Response Approach (Amer, 2003); the Integrated Approach (Timucin, 2001; Savvidou, 2004) and the Van's Approaches (2009), subdivided in New Criticism, Structuralism, Stylistics, Reader-Response, Language-based and Critical Literacy, among others. But in this paper we are going to focus on the three approaches suggested by Carter and Long (1991): the Language-Based Approach, Literature as Content and, especially, Literature as Personal Enrichment.

The first approach, the Language-Based Approach or the Language Model, is one of the most common approaches, and it focuses mainly in the linguistic features of the text, normally in order to exemplify a particular aspect – as, for example, reported speech (Carter and Long, 1991). It is similar to the Stylistic Approach suggested by Maley.

Literature as Content, also called the Cultural Model, is a traditional approach to literature, in which the attention falls on the content of the text – plot, themes, characterization, discussion… The cultural side of the novel is also included – historical background, politics, social criticism, traditions, etc. (Khatib, 2011a). The acquisition of language is achieved by reading and discussing literature, and not by directly working on the set linguistic features in the text.

The last approach proposed by Carter and Long is Literature as Personal Enrichment, or the Personal Growth Model. In this approach, the main aim is to engage the student with literature. It focuses on the relation between the text and personal experiences, thoughts, feelings and opinions. The predominant kind of activities in this approach is related with discussions, a relaxed environment, small groups in which students are encouraged to express their opinions (Savvidou, 2004). It could be said that a very representative example of this approach are literary circles – small groups, texts selected according to the students' interests, discussions and exposition of opinions, thoughts and feelings – as we will discuss later.

And, how about a task-based approach? The task-based approach is the most popular approach in terms of EFL teaching nowadays. Why not applying it to the use of literature?

First of all, we should discuss the definition of task. Shekan suggests that a task is "an activity in which meaning is primary; there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task completion has some priority; and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome" (qtd. In Khatib 2011b).

According to this definition of communicative tasks, we could say that the previous methodological approaches discussed – especially Literature for Personal Enrichment – fit completely in the definition of task. They provide a link with the real world, a focus on the content and, above all, a chance for real interaction in a real communicative environment.

Bearing all these in mind, Khatib proposes an approach to literature from a communicative task-based model. He divides his approach in three parts: pre-task, during-task and post-task activities (also known as pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading activities).

In the pre-task stage, students get familiarized with the main topic and make the *schema building* (2011b: p. 217). These are introductory activities in general in order to get in touch with the text, as for example, trying to predict the topic of the text just by the title, little discussions about the background and context of the text and author and so on. Then, in the during-task step, Khatib suggests many activities so as to exploit the text and ensure that students comprehend properly all the text. These activities are, for example, skimming, scanning, predicting what would happen in the story, role-plays or summarizing.Finally, the main component of the post-task stage is the reflection on the task. Here the students and the teacher can discuss about what they have read, write about it or make a final project related with the text – as a play, wall paintings, a critical review or any other final task in which students could be interested in.These are examples of the kind of activities that can be done in these three stages, but the possibilities are actually endless.

Carter and Long's three approaches together with Khatib's adaptation of the communicative task-based approach to literature give us a lot of ideas and tools to use in our class, but, what if we propose an approach that joins these two models in a different way?

2.5 LITERATURE CIRCLES

Literature circles are defined by Daniels as "small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article or book" (2002: p. 2). This idea came from the concept of adult book clubs, which were so popular few decades ago – and in fact, it is something that had been put in practice for centuries. Reading a book and commenting it with a bunch of friends seemed to be a fun, relaxed and original way to achieve the same goals that literature lessons had (Furr, 2004).

Daniels, together with other researchers, has develop this idea in order to make literature courses more attractive and productive. They delimit the concept of literature circles so it fits in an academic context. Daniels presents a list of essential elements that these circles should have:

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.

(2002: p. 18).

Apart from these elements, another key component of literary circles is students' roles. Students are divided in small groups, and every member of the group has a role assigned. Daniels suggests four main roles and four optional ones (1994). Regarding the four main students roles, first we have a *discussion director*, who is the one in charge of launching a discussion topic and making questions to the other members of the group - linked with the analytical part of the task; a *literary luminary*, who selects the best, most important passages of the text and share them with his group mates – thus highlighting the oral part of the text; a *connector*, who creates a link between the text and the world

represented in it and reality, their own world – connected with the associative aspect; and an *illustrator*, who is in charge of representing graphically the most important point of the text – by drawing, making map minds or flow charts, sketching, etc. They are all connected with the symbolic aspect of the text.

The other four roles are *summarizer*, *vocabulary enricher*, *travel tracer* – in charge of creating a time line or diagram representing the story – and *investigator* – who will find information about the historical context, background or the author. (Hsu, 2004; Medina Calzada, 2013).

Each student will be provided with a *role sheet* in which it is explained what they have to do according to their role, and where they have to write down their notes and commentaries both to guide and record the discussion.

2.5.1 Literature circles and EFL

Literature circles were originally developed for native speakers of English in a literature class – from elementary school to university. But, how about learners of English as a Second Language? Would literature circles work in this context?

A number of researchers have discussed about this activity in EFL (Bedel, 2012; Medina Calzada, 2013; Furr, 2004; Hsu, 2004), and all of them agree on the benefits of using this circles in an EFL context.

It seems logical to think that literature circles foster an improvement in reading comprehension, but they also make students more engaged and motivated to read, not only in class, but also in their free time (Furr, 2004; Medina Calzada, 2013). Clarke and Holwadel (2007) argue that the fact that the activity is not limited to reading but leads to an extensive interaction is what engages students to read. And as interaction is crucial in literary circles, speaking skills also progress (Medina Calzada, 2013). As they get used to speaking during relatively long periods of time, in a comfortable and relaxed environment where everyone is allowed to speak, their confidence improves quickly (Furr, 2004). And more important, the environment is different from the usual atmosphere in class; it is an authentic, real communicative setting where they can practice real interactions focusing on the meaning of the conversation and not on a

specific linguistic feature to be practiced (Bedel, 2012). Besides, it is a student-centered approach, in which the teacher is merely a guide, a facilitator (Daniels, 2002). This gives autonomy to the students, making them responsible of their own learning, and again, fostering motivation – as they are the ones who decide what to read and what, how and why to discuss.

Furr agrees with the fact that literature circles can be used effectively in EFL instruction, as he states that: "in many respects, an EFL Literature Circle does closely resemble a literature circle in an L1 classroom […]." (2004: 6). However,he also suggests some changes in the key elements that Daniels exposed in order to achieve a more effective and successful practice.

The first variation Furr makes concerns the selection of the material. While in the L1 context it is the students who choose their reading, in the EFL class the texts should be selected by the teacher – always taking into account all the relevant factors when selecting texts. Also, the groups can be formed by students, but always under the instructor's discretion (2004: 4). Furr considers that EFL students need more guidance than native students, as they need to work with a text that is appropriate for their linguistic proficiency and that provides a basis for discussion in English.

Finally, another change suggested by Furr is that all the groups read the same text: "With each group reading the same stories, I can allow the students to first get hooked by the story and then sneak in a mini-lecture to the entire class after the groups have finished their discussions." (2004: 5).By including these little variations in the development of literature circles in the EFL class – and following the classic methodology for the rest of the aspects – Furr ensures that literature circles are *magic*:

> EFL Literature Circles are magic because at their heart lie something that I did not even really touch on in my paper […] let us not forget that at the heart of a literature circle is a great story. In all cultures, over thousands of years, people have been fascinated by a good story, and I can say from experience, that my students have been no exception. (2004: 9).

2.5.2 Just benefits?

As we have seen, literature circles provide an excellent way of working with literature in the English class; either they for native speakers or for secondary language learners. But there are also some difficulties that have emerged on practice.

Medina Calzada (2013) mentions three main problems when putting literature circles into practice. The first one – and the most common – is the overuse of the mother tongue. This is a common problem in regular EFL classes. When we talk about a lesson based on small discussion groups where the teacher is an observer and a guide, the probability of finding students speaking in their native language is much higher. A reason for this behavior could be that the text or the topic of discussion is too difficult for their actual level of English, and they are unable to express themselves in English. This happens even in native speakers classes, where students struggle to say what they want to say (Clarke and Holwadel, 2007: 23).

Also, given the degree of autonomy provided, students getting out of control could be another problem. Literature circles are made to, among others, create a supportive and relaxed atmosphere around calmed discussions, but this is not always the case. Clarke and Holwadel (2007) explain the case of a class in which there was a high degree of hostility between the students. These behaviour problems can spoil the lesson, and should be avoided as much as possible.

A minor problem that can emerge from using literature circles, but that can contribute to a subsequent behaviour problem, is the chance that these lessons become repetitive and monotonous (Medina Calzada, 2013). Discussing things in the same group, with the same people, about the same text every day can lead students to boredom in some cases.

3. PROPOSAL FOR INTERVENTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The entire theoretical framework has been revised, and it has been made clear that the use of literature is a perfect resource for the EFL class. Also, and more specifically, we have discussed the potential that literature circles have regarding EFL classes – although they also present some challenges to the teacher when put into practice. But, how can we transform these theoretical assumptions into reality? The first step is to design a practical approach.

In this section we will discuss a proposal for intervention in which, following Daniels' idea of literature circles, we will develop a program that fits within the Spanish curricula of Secondary Education. In order to do so, we will modify some components of the original literature circles proposed by Daniels – for example, the students' roles[5].

What we understand by proposal is a lesson plan designed for a number of hours, normally corresponding with a standard unit (five or six hours) of a course syllabus, dealing with a specific topic and that can be evaluated while it is developed (Estaire, 2004). Literature circles were originally designed as a resource to teach literature to native speakers of English, and duration was not specified in any case – although it could be inferred that literature circles were used all along the course. They were approached as a methodology to follow in the literature class, not as a specific unit included in a syllabus. So, why do we suggest this? Why not suggesting general exercises that could fit into the context described before? Or, why not a proposal on a full course syllabus?

Medina Calzada (2013) points out that a possible problem when using literature circles in the EFL class is that these lessons could be at some point monotonous and repetitive. If we design a lesson plan with a duration of five to six hours, the chances for this to happen decrease automatically. It can be approached as something occasional at first, to see if this methodology really fits and functions having into account the characteristics of the course and its students, and as a way of introducing a fresh and original way of learning English as seen by students. Of course, this proposal can also serve as a model

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[5] See section 3.3 "Methodology".

for designing more lesson plans, or even a full course syllabus, which is an option that cannot be discarded. However, and for the time being - using literature circles in the EFL Spanish context is such a new way of teaching English, that has barely been put into practice in Spanish Secondary Education, and designing a full course syllabus can be too risky.

Also, a duration of six hours (six lessons) fits perfectly with the elements that Daniels claims to be essential in literature circles: groups are temporary, students meet regularly and evaluation is made during the class (2002). The major objection that we could find is that six lessons could be too short for students to read a full novel, or any other type of text with a considerable length. Consequently, we have decided to use adapted short stories in this proposal. They are short enough for students to read during one or two weeks and they are short enough for students to analyze and discuss about them in six hours. Further reasons for using short stories will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

Our proposal for intervention has three main objectives. The first one is to suggest a methodology for teaching the same contents that have been traditionally taught in a more effective, original and innovative way besides promoting a development of students' literary skills: using literature in the EFL class. This is the most important objective, not only belonging to the proposal but to this entire work, as it represents what every author working on the use of literature as a teaching resource defends.

Following this idea, we have our second objective, which is to give the opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the use of literature in the EFL class by designing and offering a model for intervention. It is not just a matter of proving the efficacy of literature as a teaching resource – which has been proved in numerous occasions - but also to prove it regarding literature circles in the specific context of the Secondary Education in Spain. As we have mentioned before, there are not many examples of scientific literature recording on the use of literature circles in the Spanish Secondary Education so, although the theoretical framework supports this proposal, it would be interesting to put it into practice and prove the effectiveness of this method in this specific context.

Medina Calzada (2013) is one of the authors that support and put in practice the idea of using literature circles in the Spanish Secondary Education context, and the final experience was positive (2013: 93), which is another reason that boosts the idea of practicing this methodology. But she also points out that some aspects need further revision – the overuse of students' mother tongue, the possibility of the activity to become monotonous and some behaviour problems (2013: 87). Taking these aspects into account we get to our third objective: trying to suggest solutions to the most common problems that can emerge from this practice and filling the gaps indicated by other authors, regarding both the Spanish Secondary Education context and other contexts as well (Medina Calzada, 2013; Clarke and Holwadel, 2007). This objective will be tried to achieve by modifying some of the elements provided by Daniels and adjusting them to our specific context.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

The first thing we have to point out regarding the methodology used in the design of this proposal is that it is a student-centered proposal. This is a key point when discussing literature circles in an academic context: the student is the protagonist of the practice. In a way, they create the lesson: students are the ones who suggest and develop a discussion about any topic related to the reading. They give their opinions, impressions and explain their thoughts and feelings is what sustain literature circles. The teacher can guide, give tips or guidelines to make their task easier – mainly when it is the first time that students work in a literature circle – but students are the ones in charge of making decisions, directing their progress, taking responsibilities and be autonomous in their work (Medina Calzada, 2013). In fact, Daniels (2002) suggests that students should choose their own readings, form their own groups, give discussion topics and that they should also take part in the evaluation process with self-evaluation. Taking into account the specific context in which this proposal will be put in practice, a context in which students probably have never heard about literature circles and, even less, in an English environment, we consider that the teacher should intercede in these aspects, direct or indirectly. First of all, regarding the selection of texts, it seems to be more appropriate that the teacher prepares this selection instead of the students, always bearing in mind relevant aspects as the students' personal interests, age, length of the

text and many more[6]. The reason for varying the original guideline proposed by Daniels is that students might not take into account their own level of English, the length of the text or if it provides a proper basis for discussion, whereas the teacher should be capable of noticing every of these aspects and find the appropriate text. Also, the text might need to be adapted, and this has to be done by the teacher. In the next section we will discuss the selection of texts made for this proposal.

Another variation in Daniels' suggestions is related to group formation. In literature circles group work is essential. That is why it is so important to form adequate groups of students so to avoid behaviour problems or any possible conflicts between classmates, as well as to create balanced groups in terms of linguistic proficiency, personality or active participation. So, as Furr suggests (2004:4) that groups can be formed by students, but always under the instructor's discretion. So in this proposal, the teacher will choose one of the members of each group and then it will be the students' task to choose the rest of the members of their group, as we will explain later. By this we can control the formation of the groups as well as maintaining students' autonomy.

Regarding discussion topics, students choosing the topic to discuss is an interesting proposal, but being this proposal the first time in which this way of working is put in practice, it seems necessary to guide them a little bit more and present possible topics – which can be chosen and discussed later the way students prefer. Therefore, some general topics will be showed in different lessons, taking into account what they have read for that specific lesson and what the text was about, if they have finished the text or they have not started, and so on. Then, students will choose how to discuss and what aspect of the general topic proposed are they going to focus – always under the teacher guidance, so they do not deviate excessively.

As for evaluation, self-evaluation will be contemplated in the general evaluation, although the main responsibility will be taken by the teacher. Observation, as Daniels indicates (2002: 18), will be essential; but the teacher will also evaluate written work so he or she can assess every linguistic skill, as well as evaluate any possible student that has not participated as much as the rest of students.

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[6] See pages 10 to 12 ~~of this paper~~.

Another important variation regarding Daniels' key elements in literary circles is the fact that students are going to read the same text in this proposal. He suggests (2002) that different groups should read different texts – in fact, groups are formed around text choice. Why are our students going to read the same text? As we have mentioned before, if we talk about the specific context of this proposal, and that the teacher will have a more active part in the class than in the original suggestions by Daniels, making all the students read the same text enables the teacher to implement the same guidance activities or explanations for the whole class, while if every group would read a different text, this *extra-guidance* would not be possible to achieve. In addition, although every group is going to work by themselves, any contribution from one group or one student to the rest of the class would be welcome.

Regarding the remaining key elements proposed by Daniels, all of them will be followed: Groups will meet regularly, as this proposal is thought to be made during a whole unit (6 lessons), so it is probable that students will meet three days per week. Also, expression of personal feelings, ideas, opinions and digressions are welcome, so discussions will require an open-minded attitude; and the discussions are meant to be natural, relaxed, playful and, if possible, funny. Finally, students will use written notes and sheets to self-guide their discussions, and they will be assigned different roles.

As we explained in the previous section, different roles (four main roles and four optional ones) were suggested by Daniels. In this proposal we are going to maintain some of them, however, some others will be modified, and one new role will be introduced.

Finally, in this proposal, and in addition to the methodology proposed by Daniels in order to carry out literary circles, we have decided to include a final project. This final project consists in a brief representation of an alternative ending (that they will have to create) to the short story, performed by every group. The reason why a final project is included is, following the task-based approach, giving the students a target in which they can focus, and showing them that everything that they do in class has a reason and a goal; in other words, give the students a justification for what they do. Also, the final project is another way to evaluate the students, both their oral skills – as they have to represent a play – and their writing skills – with the written script that they will have to

hand to the teacher. Also, it is a way of verifying that they have worked all along the lessons, showing a product in which there is included every aspect seen before.

3.4 CLASS PROFILE

The target audience of this proposal is a class of 25 to 30 people belonging to the fourth course of Secondary Education in Castilla y León. They will not belong to a bilingual program, and they will study in a state secondary school in which there are not many resources; this means, computers and access to the Internet inside the class, electronic blackboards, tablets or any other kind of *expensive,* electronic resource. Why this profile? Because this proposal is intended to be as realistic as possible, and to cover as many situations as possible, at least regarding Secondary Education in Spain. And the reality is that many secondary schools have many more problems than it is thought: overcrowded groups, lack of electronic and digital resources, old facilities and other kind of inconveniences. The only resources needed to carry out this proposal are photocopies given by the teacher. Students do not even need to buy a book: as the text selected is an adapted short story (this will be discussed in the next section), it can be easily photocopied and distributed by the teacher.

The reason why we refer to a non-bilingual course is that this proposal can be implemented in any context, and a higher command of English is not necessarily required. Literature circles can be easily adapted to different students' profiles (age, interests, linguistic proficiency…) by choosing a proper text, adapting it according to the students' needs and designing discussion topics and a final project suitable for the course. The same happens with the course: Fourth course of Secondary Education (4º E.S.O.). This course has been selected because it corresponds to the midpoint of Secondary Education (students have a considerable level of English and they are neither the youngest nor the oldest students), but again, the selection of the text and its adaptation can be adjusted to any other course belonging to Secondary Education. In fact, original literary circles were developed in elementary schools, and later they were also implemented in University courses (Daniels, 2002; Furr, 2004).

3.5 SELECTION OF THE TEXT

3.5.1 Why a short story?

We have selected one single text for this proposal because, as it has been mentioned before, every group is going to read the same text during the six sessions suggested in this proposal. That is precisely the main reason why this text is a short story, instead of a play, a novel or a poem. A short story is usually short enough to be read and discussed in one or two weeks (taking into account that we have an average of three sessions per week), but long enough to have a definite plot and varied topics to be discussed. Moreover, different authors recommend the use of short stories in the EFL context above any other genre, especially if it is the first time that English literature is presented to the students (Brumfit and Carter, 1986; Collie and Slater, 1991; Khatib, 2011; Medina Calzada, 2013; Pathan and Al-Dersi, 2013).

These authors also allude to the importance of reading real literature, and all the linguistic benefits that it entails. Pathan and Al-Dersi indicate that "the controlled length, with the concise writing and with carefully selected vocabulary and lexis, is another linguistic benefit of the use of short-stories for EFL teachers and learners […]" (2013: 5). Also, the topics covered by short-stories are usually more accessible for students of these characteristics (Secondary students, 15 to 16 years old) than topics included in, for example, poetry. Short stories are faster, more practical and more approachable than any other genre (Khatib, 2011: 153).

3.5.2 Selection of the text.

The short story that has been selected for this proposal is "Harrison Bergeron"[7], by Kurt Vonnegut. It is a dystopian science-fiction story about social equality. It is five pages long, and it has – as it was pointed out previously – a definite and precise plot structure. The main topics of this story are the social equality taken to an extreme point, as well as oppression, a dystopian future and rebellion. It is written in an agile style, with short sentences and a fast development – which makes it suitable for teenagers.

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[7] See Appendix XXI.

So, what factors have been taken into account to select this text? First of all, the type of course. As we have mentioned before, we are talking about a Secondary Education course belonging to the fourth year, which means that students should have a B1 level of English according to CEFRL. Bearing in mind the linguistic characteristics of the story (short sentences, predominance of past tenses, everyday language among others – to be discussed in the following section the level of English of these students should not be a major problem.

Regarding the type of students, the first thing to consider is their age. Students of this course are 15 to 16 years old, an age in which they should have enough intellectual and emotional maturity to understand and discuss this text. It is true that this story covers some moral, social and political aspects, aspects that sometimes can become complex, but the point of view presented in the text is so exaggerated, evident and clear that its topics should be perfectly understandable in terms of maturity.

In relation to students' interests, dystopian futuristic settings are trendy right now. The number of young adult novels and films placed in these kinds of worlds are high – *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, *The Moon Dwellers*, *Delirium*, *The Maze Runner*, *Matched* and *The Host* are some examples, and all of them have been published in the past three or four years. In addition, there are many TV series and videogames on this issue nowadays. And its target audience is, in its majority, teenagers. So it seems to be clear that these topics are currently in vogue, and can attract the students' attention. But, why choosing "Harrison Bergeron", a short story published in 1961, instead of one of these young adult novels? Apart from the length of the text, by choosing a story written by Kurt Vonnegut – an important and recognized author – we ensure to a large extent that the quality of our text is high. Also, by showing our students that these topics that are now so interesting for them have been addressed before in contemporary classical literature – in Vonnegut's, Orwell's or Huxley's works - we open their minds and change their opinions about classical authors. Of course, each student has different interests, and it is possible that this text does not please all of them.

Finally, regarding the students' cultural and literary background, it is not necessary for them to have a wide background knowledge. As for the cultural aspects showed in the text – if there is any of them – they will be explained in class. And no literary

background is required, as this proposal is not going to focus on stylistic features or deep literary analysis.

3.5.3 Adaptation of the text

Although the original text is short, accessible and simple enough for our students to understand, we have preferred to adapt it to this specific course. We have selected two extracts of the original text and their equivalents in the adapted version to better show the kind of modifications that we have made.

First of all, we will talk about linguistic adaptations, as it is shown in the following table.

Line	ORIGINAL TEXT	ADAPTED TEXT
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	It was tragic, all right, but George and Hazel couldn't think about it very hard. Hazel had a perfectly average intelligence, which meant she couldn't think about anything except in short bursts. And George, while his intelligence was way above normal, had a little mental handicap radio in his ear. He was required by law to wear it at all times. It was tuned to a government transmitter. Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains.	It was tragic, all right, but George and Hazel couldn't think about it very hard. Hazel had an average intelligence, so she could think just for little periods of time. And George had a little mental handicap[1] radio in his ear because he was more intelligent than the average people. He had to wear it all the time by law. The radio was connected to a government radio. Every twenty seconds or so, the radio sent out some sharp noise to prevent people like George from thinking too much.
16 17 18	George and Hazel were watching television. There were tears on Hazel's cheeks, but she'd forgotten for the	George and Hazel were watching television. Hazel was crying, but she had forgotten why.

19	moment what they were about.	
20	On the television screen were ballerinas.	On the television screen were ballerinas.
21		
22	A buzzer sounded in George's head. His thoughts fled in panic, like bandits	A noise sounded in George's head. He automatically forgot what he was
23	from a burglar alarm.	thinking about.
24		
25	"That was a real pretty dance, that	"That was a real pretty dance, that dance
26	dance they just did," said Hazel.	they just did," said Hazel.
27	"Huh" said George.	"Huh" said George.
28	"That dance-it was nice," said Hazel.	"That dance-it was nice," said Hazel.
29	"Yup," said George. He tried to think a	"Yes," said George. He tried to think a
30	little about the ballerinas. They weren't	little about the ballerinas. They weren't
31	really very good-no better than	really very good-as everyone was equal,
32	anybody else would have been,	everyone danced the same. They were
33	anyway. They were burdened with	wearing weights in their hips. They were
34	sashweights and bags of birdshot, and	also wearing masks, and no one could
35	their faces were masked, so that no one,	see if they were pretty or not. George
36	seeing a free and graceful gesture or a	started to think that maybe dancers
37	pretty face, would feel like something	should not be handicapped. But he didn't
38	the cat drug in. George was toying with	get very far with it. Another noise in his
39	the vague notion that maybe dancers	ear radio interrupted his thoughts.
40	shouldn't be handicapped. But he didn't get very far with it before another noise in his ear radio scattered his thoughts.	
		[1]Handicap: An impediment, an obstacle or a disadvantage.

Table 1. Linguistic adaptations.

The main modifications introduced in the adaptation are the following: subordinate sentences have been turned into simple or coordinate sentences, as we can see in the following example: *They were burdened with sashweights and bags of birdshot, and their faces were masked, so that no one, seeing a free and graceful gesture or a pretty face, would feel like something the cat drug in* (lines from 30 to 35 in the original text). This sentence is transformed into two simple sentences: *They were wearing weights in their hips. They were also wearing masks, and no one could see if they were pretty or not.* (lines 30 to 33 in the adapted text). Other examples can be found in lines 4-5, 29-30 or 35-47.

Another important modification is the replacement of difficult vocabulary by more accessible words or expressions. This is the case, for example, of *periods of time* instead of *bursts* (lines 4-5); *sound* instead of *buzzer* (line 20) or *weights* instead of *sashweights and bags of birdshot* in lines 31-32. Other examples are in lines 3, 10 or 39.

There are some words along the text that have not been replaced due to its importance regarding the story. Here we have an example with the word *handicap* (line 5). Instead of replacing it, a footnote has been added with some other synonyms to help the student to understand the term.

Finally, some convoluted expressions have been eliminated. One example is *would feel like something the cat drug in*, which has been eliminated as it was a complex expression and added little to nothing to the main meaning of the text. Other examples of convoluted expressions that have been eliminated are in lines 9-10 and 21-22.

As verbal tenses presented in the text are simple – most of them are past simple, past continuous or, the most complex, past perfect – there has not been a necessity to change them. The same happens with punctuation – the only changes made have been the ones made when transforming complex sentences into simple ones.

Regarding content adaptation, no big modifications have been required. The plot is simple and its sequence is lineal – there are no flashbacks or flash-forwards. Also, very few characters appear so it is not necessary to eliminate or replace any of them. As a result, the only changes that have been made in terms of content are the elimination of some descriptions that were full of metaphors and difficult vocabulary and that could be

summarized easily without losing any important detail for the development of the story. Here we have an extract in which the eliminated text has been crossed out:

Line	ORIGINAL TEXT © Kurt Vonnegut	ADAPTED TEXT
1 2 3 4 5	The musicians scrambled back into their chairs, and Harrison stripped them of their handicaps, too. "Play your best," he told them, "and I'll make you barons and dukes and earls."	The musicians went back to their chairs, and Harrison took off their handicaps, too. "Play your best," he told them, "and I'll make you barons and dukes and earls."
6 7 8 9 10 11	The music began. It was normal at first- cheap, silly, false. But Harrison snatched two musicians from their chairs, waved them like batons as he sang the music as he wanted it played. He slammed them back into their chairs.	The music began. It was normal at the beginning, silly, false. But Harrison picked up two musicians from their chairs, waved them while he sang the music he wanted to hear like batons as he sang the music as he wanted it played and pushed them back to their chairs.
12 13	The music began again and was much improved.	The music began again and was much improved.
14 15 16 17	Harrison and his Empress merely listened to the music for a while-listened gravely, as though synchronizing their heartbeats with it.	Harrison and his Empress merely listened to the music for a while, while listened gravely, as though synchronizing their heartbeats with it
18	They shifted their weights to their toes.	They shifted their weights to their toes.
19 20 21 22	Harrison placed his big hands on the girls tiny waist, letting her sense the weightlessness that would soon be hers.	Harrison placed his big hands on the girls tiny waist, letting her sense the weightlessness that would soon be hers.
23 24	And then, in an explosion of joy and grace, into the air they sprang!	And then, in an explosion of joy and grace, into the air they sprang!
25	Not only were the laws of the land	

26 27	abandoned, but the law of gravity and the laws of motion as well.	~~Not only were the laws of the land abandoned, but the law of gravity and the laws of motion as well.~~
28 29	They reeled, whirled, swiveled, flounced, capered, gamboled, and spun.	
30	They leaped like deer on the moon.	~~They reeled, whirled, swiveled, flounced, capered, gamboled, and spun.~~
31 32	The studio ceiling was thirty feet high, but each leap brought the dancers nearer to it.	~~They leaped like deer on the moon.~~
33 34	It became their obvious intention to kiss the ceiling. They kissed it.	~~The studio ceiling was thirty feet high, but each leap brought the dancers nearer to it.~~
35 36 37 38 39 40 41	And then, neutraling gravity with love and pure will, they remained suspended in air inches below the ceiling, and they kissed each other for a long, long time.	~~It became their obvious intention to kiss the ceiling. They kissed it.~~ ~~And then, neutraling gravity with love and pure will, they remained suspended in air inches below the ceiling, and they kissed each other for a long, long time.~~ and began to dance. They happily danced for a long time, and then they kissed each other.

Table 2. Content adaptations.

We should underline that this is the most significant elimination that has been made in the full story.

Finally, regarding cultural adaptations, only two little explanations regarding cultural references have been added with footnotes, as we see in the following table:

Line	ORIGINAL TEXT	ADAPTED TEXT
1 2 3	THE YEAR WAS 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God and	THE YEAR WAS 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God and the

4	the law. They were equal every	law[1]. They were equal every which
5	which way. Nobody was smarter	way. Nobody was smarter than
6	than anybody else. Nobody was	anybody else. Nobody was better
7	better looking than anybody else.	looking than anybody else. Nobody
8	Nobody was stronger or quicker than	was stronger or quicker than anybody
9	anybody else. All this equality was	else. All this equality was due to the
10	due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th	211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments
11	Amendments to the Constitution, and	to the Constitution[2], and to the
12	to the unceasing vigilance of agents	unceasing vigilance of agents of the
13	of the United States Handicapper	United States Handicapper General.
	General.	
14		[1]The expression *"equal before God"*
15		comes from the Bible and means that
16		every Christian is equal to God, no
17		matter its race, gender, abilities or any
18		other individual difference. The
19		expression *"equal before the Law"*
20		means something similar: everyone is
21		governed by the same laws of justice,
22		regardless its race, gender, religion or
23		any other difference. This expression
24		appears in the Universal Declaration of
		Human Rights.
25		
26		[2]The *Amendments to the Constitution*
27		refer to the different modifications that
28		have been made to the United States'
		Constitution.

Table 3. Cultural adaptations.

The first explanation makes reference to the expressions "*equal before God*" and "*equal before law*". Although these are not specific cultural references – they are, somehow, worldwide assumptions that can be seen or heard also in Spain or any other country – students of this age might have not heard about them or do not know what they mean, so there is a footnote explaining its meaning and where it comes from.

The second explanation is more specific, regarding the United States' Constitution. Every student should know what a constitution is, but they might not know what an amendment is, as it is more common to hear it in relation to US Constitution than in relation to Spain's one.

3.6 ASSESSMENT.

To finish with this proposal, we are going to discuss how this proposal will be assessed. The evaluation consists of three parts: first, the continuous assessment, which will value all class-work; then, the final assessment, which will evaluate the final project and finally, attitude and participation in class.

Continuous assessment will be a 60% of the final mark for this unit. It will be divided in turn in two parts: student performance in class and written role-sheets handed to the teacher in every lesson[8] lesson. Regarding the student performance, the teacher will be walking around every group observing how each group works, and watching if every student is adequately adhered to his or her role and valuating their oral skills: how the student handle a conversation, if conventional rules are respected, the adequacy of their content, cohesion and coherence. Then, at the end of the lesson, each student will give their role-sheets to the teacher, which will be evaluated according to the student's writing skill – grammar, adequacy of the vocabulary, cohesion and coherence – and also it will be taken into account if the student has correctly developed his role. For example, the English Guard will have to give to the teacher the summary he has done for that lesson; the Vocabulary Enricher will have to indicate all the words, expressions and any other information about the text that they have learned that day, and so on. Some roles, due to its nature, will be better assessed during the class and some others will be better assessed with the role sheet – but every student will be observed in the class and evaluated by their role-sheets.

Regarding the final project assessment, it will be again divided in two parts: oral skills and written skills. The written skills will be assessed according to the script they have to write – an alternative ending for the story, following the guidelines indicated by the teacher – and that students will use for the later representation. The teacher will take into account grammar and vocabulary used, coherence and cohesion, adequacy of the content and the structure of the text.

The oral skills will be evaluated when the students perform their representation on the alternative ending of the story. As they are going to follow a written script, emphasis will be put in fluency, accuracy, pronunciation and intonation.

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[8] Every role-sheet has been included in the appendix.

Both parts of the final project will be assessed as a group work, so each member of the group will have the same mark in this part. It will be a 30% of the final mark.Finally, the remaining 10% will correspond to participation and attitude of the student in the class. Good attitude and behaviour together with active participation in the group work as well as in some general activities in which all the class together is involved will be valuated positively.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Now, we will explain in detail this proposal for intervention, which has a suggested duration of six hours. The first session will be an introductory lesson on what literary circles are, what text is going to be read, what they will have to do and which is the final project. In the second session, students will start discussing the first part of the text – which is divided into three parts, as it will be explained later – and working in groups. In the following session students will continue working on the text and discussing in groups. The fourth session is slightly different, and the students will start preparing their final project by predicting the ending of the story. In the fifth session, students will have read the last part of the text and will discuss about it, as well as finishing their final project which will be presented on the sixth lesson.

As mentioned before, we modified the original roles suggested by Daniels and added a new one. The roles selected for this proposal are: *Discussion director, connector, illustrator, vocabulary enricher* and *English guard*. There are five different roles because the groups will be composed of five students. The three first roles (*Discussion director, connector* and *illustrator*) are the same that Daniels proposed. The fourth role, *vocabulary enricher,* is a modified version of the original role and, finally, the last role is new.

The *discussion director* is the person in charge of launching a discussion topic. As some topics and questions will be given by the teacher, the *discussion director* will be in charge of developing more questions and also of being a mediator – controlling the set time to discuss, giving turns to speak to the other members of the group and ensuring that every member of the group takes part in the discussion. The second role, the *connector*, will be responsible of linking the text and reality. This student will be in charge of making comparisons between the world represented in the text, other worlds (other books, films, videogames…) and their real world, and also launching any other questions or asking for opinions to the rest of students about this specific aspect. The *illustrator* will have to represent graphically the story and what has been discussed around it – by sketching, drawing, making flow charts or schemes. The *illustrator* will also have to do something similar to the *travel tracer* suggested by Daniels; drawing a temporal line in which the story is represented.

The fourth role, the *vocabulary enricher*, is a combination of the original *vocabulary enricher* and the *investigator*. This student will be in charge of looking up any word that has not been understood, or asking the teacher any doubt that could arise. But this role also includes investigating: searching for information – apart from linguistic doubts – about the text or its background that could be relevant for the discussion. Sometimes this information will be given by the teacher (or the necessary tools in order to find it), but the *vocabulary enricher* will be in charge of reading it and extracting any pertinent detail.

Finally, the *English guard* is the person in charge of controlling that every member of the group is talking in English. This role was designed in order to try to avoid the overuse of the students' mother tongue in the English class. Every member of the group has a number of score points. If any of them starts speaking in any language apart from English – Spanish in this case – the *English Guard* will rest some points. At the end of the lesson, students with the lowest number of points will be penalized in some way (writing a brief essay, bringing some treats to the rest of the class and so on). Apart from this, the *English guard* will also have a similar role to the *summarizer*: at the beginning of each lesson the teacher will ask for a brief summary of the section that had been read for that day, and each *English guard* from every group will be responsible to tell briefly what they have read.

Having determined the roles that students are going to perform, the original role sheets by Daniels have also been modified in order to fit the new roles (Anex X). Each student will have their own role sheet which they will have to fill in during the lesson. There they will be able to find a brief explanation on what they have to do according to their roles, some tips and advices to develop the discussion, and space for making their notes and commentaries.

As our proposal has a duration of six lessons, the students' roles are thought to be fixed – that means, that the same students will perform the same roles during the literature circle. Nevertheless, if the literature circle is extended, it is suggested that new groups are formed and different roles will be assigned to students – following Daniels' key elements for literature circles.

4.1 Session 1

The first session, as we have just said, is an introduction. So in the first 5 to 10 minutes the teacher asks the students if they know what a literary circle is, and then he or she explains how they are going to work according to what a literary circle is: groups of five people in which everyone has a role, and in which they will have to discuss certain parts of the story that they are going to read and fill in some role sheets. Then, the different roles will be explained.

After each role is clearly explained, groups are formed. The teacher will select five students and they will be the *Discussion Directors* of each group. Then, each of these students will select a *Connector*. Again, each *Connector* will select each *Illustrator*; each *Illustrator* a *Vocabulary Enricher* and finally, each *Vocabulary Enricher* an *English Guard*. Students have to justify their election briefly. There are two reasons for forming groups in this way. First of all, as the teacher selects each *Discussion Director* of each group – which is the *leader role* – he has the opportunity to ensure that each group has a leader that is going to develop his role properly. So the teacher will select each *Discussion Director* bearing in mind the personality of the students. The second reason is that making every student responsible of choosing a member of their groups gives them a certain degree of autonomy and responsibility that they would not have if groups were formed randomly or by the teacher.

Once groups are formed, the teacher gives the corresponding role sheet to each member of the group, describing the different parts.[9] Then, in order to introduce the text and its context, the teacher gives each group a photocopy in which there will be an incomplete script and some information about the author and the context of the story. Afterwards, students watch a trailer of a short film based on this story – *2081*[10]. If the class does not have an Internet connection or computers, this 2 minute video can also be recorded on a DVD and played with a DVD player on a TV. If there is no DVD or TV either, the audio could be recorded on a CD and reproduced on a CD player – it is quite probable that the school has, at least, a CD player.

This trailer is reproduced twice, and as students watch it for the second time, they have to complete the script. Then, each group discusses several issues as the differences

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[9] See appendices I-V.

[10] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nL9zg7-rzPc

between the title of the story and the title of the trailer, what could it be about, how many characters do they think there are and so on. In order to develop this discussion, each member of the group has to *play his role*. So the *Discussion Leader* is in charge of writing down and asking questions based on the sample questions given by the teacher before (*What is the trailer about? How many characters we have seen? What could be the story about? When does it seem to be placed?*), as well as controlling that every member talks and collaborates in the discussion. The *Connector* has to contribute to the discussion with reflections on two main aspects regarding reality: if what they have seen and read is similar to reality and in which ways, and also if they know any other book, film, TV series or videogame similar to this story. The *Illustrator* has to draw a mind map in which he reflects what is being discussed (the titles connected to the themes, which are in turn related to the characters, which resemble any other book, etc.). The *Vocabulary Enricher*, apart from looking up in a dictionary every new word, has to note down every key word that he considers relevant for the discussion and the story. Also, he has to contribute to the answers given to the *Discussion Director* searching in the script for relevant information – apart from key words. Finally, the *English Guard* has to record and control who is talking in Spanish and also, has to write down a brief summary of the discussion using the *Illustrator* mind map. Then, each *English Guard* will explain briefly what their groups have discussed to the rest of the class.

To end this first session, after every student hands in their role sheets to the teacher, the teacher gives the students the first part of the story together with the second role sheet. Students would have to read it and fill in their role sheets at home.

The story is divided into three parts, which means that students just have to read one page at a time (the story is 3-4 pages long). The division has been made attending to the structure of the story: the first part corresponds to the introduction (description of the context, introduction of the main characters, etc.), the second part corresponds to the development of the action inside the story (Harrison escapes from prison and breaks into the ballerinas' show) and the last part correspond to the ending of the story[11]. Dividing the story was required in order to carry out the final project, which consists, as it was explained before, in writing and representing an alternative ending to the story.

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[11] See Appendix XXI.

The first lesson corresponds to the contents set by the Spanish Secondary legislation. The Spanish Secondary Education curriculum for the fourth year of *E.S.O.* divides the Foreign Language linguistic abilities in two parts: oral skills (listening and speaking) and written skills (reading and writing):

> *Las habilidades lingüísticas se recogen en el bloque 1, Escuchar, hablar y conversar y en el 2, Leer y escribir […].*(BOCYL 2007: 50)

Every linguistic skill indicated by the Spanish curriculum is practiced in this session. In the first place, oral skills are present all during the lesson: listening skills are practiced in the first activity, in which students have to watch and listen the story trailer and complete the script. And a large part of this lesson consists on oral production – as the core of the lesson is oral discussion. Regarding written skills, students also do reading practices, as they have to read and revise the script in order to develop the discussion. Apart from this, the reading skill is fully practiced all along this proposal, as its main task is to read a short story and work on it. Finally, writing skills are also practiced. Every role involves a writing task as all students have to fulfill their role sheets and hand them in to the teacher later.

4.2 Session 2

In the second session students start working on the story itself. To start, the teacher asks each *English Guard* to explain the key points of their summary of the first part of the story. This activity is thought to help students to understand better the text – as they can see how their classmates have interpreted the story – and also to explain what is the text about in case any student has not read the extract set for this lesson, so they can also work later.

Afterwards, students have to find in the extract of the story three kind of elements: futuristic elements (that we cannot find nowadays), present elements (things that we have nowadays) and past elements (that were also present 100 years ago). Students have to find the verbal tense connected to the element they refer to and indicate if it is

present, past or future tense. Once every student has made a list of the different elements and tenses, they will proceed to discuss with their groups.

The *Discussion Leader* is in charge of asking every member of the group what elements they have identified in the text, and also to set out discussion questions (previously thought at home) such as "*What could have happened in these 66 years? Is Harrison Bergeron's world so different from ours?*" (The teacher will give some sample questions in the role sheet in order to guide *Discussion Directors*). The *Connector*, following the discussion proposed by the *Discussion Leader* has to predict what could have happened in the world – between five and ten crucial events that could have taken place in the story and that could be feasible in the future of our world. The *Connector* has to work together with the *Illustrator,* who draws a temporal line in which it is showed the different elements and events proposed and discussed. The *Vocabulary Enricher* has to record any new and key words and also he has to expose the investigation that he had done for that day – about any curious thing related to present, past and future. Finally, the *English Guard* has to control Spanish speakers, as well as to contribute to the discussion with his summary, thoughts and interpretation of the text, and also to explain briefly at the end of the lesson what has been discussed in his group. All of these guidelines are indicated in the second day role sheet[12].

It is intended that while discussing present, past and future facts and events students use and practice past, present and future simple tenses, as a review of the previous grammar points that could have been seen in previous units.

To end the lesson, each *English Guard* briefly summarizes the main points of their group discussion and the teacher collects the role sheets and gives them the new ones together with the second part of the story.

The skills developed in this session are the same as in the previous one: both oral and written skills are practiced as they have to read the first part of the story, fill their role sheets writing summaries, comparisons, thoughts or answers; listen carefully to their classmates in order to develop the discussion and speak both in conversations and as an individual presentation.

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[12] See Appendices VI-X.

Apart from these, which belong to the first two sections of the Spanish Secondary Education curriculum, the second activity also includes contents from the third section of this curriculum, related to the knowledge of the English Language in terms of grammar and linguistic functions. It refers to different verbal tenses (present simple and continuous, past simple and continuous and future) and also to describe, compare, predict and expressing probability (BOCYL 2007: pps. 63-64).

4.3 Session 3

The third session starts as the previous one, with a brief presentation of the summary made by each *English Guard.* Then, students listen to little extracts of the audiobook "Harrison Bergeron" corresponding to the second part of the written story. These extracts belong to the different descriptions of handicaps that appear in the text. They have to identify what kinds of handicaps are described in the audiobook[13].

The next activity, following with the handicaps topic, consists on *feeling* what a handicap is. So one student of each group covers his eyes, another student wears headphones – or something similar that prevent the student from hearing; another student stays quiet, another one puts on some kind of weight in his arms – backpacks, books, notebooks, etc. – and the last student is not handicapped. Then, they have to try to communicate between them and start the discussion. After five minutes, they remove their handicaps and actually start their discussion on how they felt and the meaning of handicaps, equality and justice.

The *Discussion Director* has to set the discussion topic on equality – previously made at home following the indications on the role sheet – asking questions as *How have you felt wearing the handicaps? What do you understand by equality? And by justice? How it is addressed on the book?.* The *Connector* is in charge of comparing how equality and justice are approached in the text and how they are approached in reality, and thinking about if it would be possible to make people wear handicaps nowadays in the name of equality. The *Illustrator*, following the audiobook extracts listened before, has to depict a handicap and write a little description on what it feels to wear it according to his classmates. The *Vocabulary Enricher* contributes to the discussion by explaining the key words found in the text related to the topic and will also record new words. Finally,

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[13] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aAH_G5hcAg

the *English Guard* has to summarize and present the key points of his group discussion – as well as, obviously, contribute to the discussion and answering what any other member of the group could ask. He will also, as he has previously done, record and control who is speaking Spanish.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher collects the role sheets[14] but in this case he does not give the students another part of the story, as the following lesson will be different from the previous ones.

Again, the four basic language skills indicated by the Spanish Secondary Education curriculum are present in this lesson. They will practice oral skills – listening and comprehension of the extracts from the audiobook as well as listening to their classmates in order to complete their tasks; and speaking, once again, both in conversations and in individual presentations – and written skills – reading the second part of the story together with the composition of summaries, descriptions, explanations, reflections and any other kinds of writing requested in their role sheets.

It is worth mentioning that in this lesson it is intended not only to practice and develop any skill related to the English language but also to think, reflect and discuss on several cross-disciplinary topics, focused mainly on ethical, social, political and moral issues. The Spanish Royal Decree on Secondary Education indicates some key competences to achieve during the Secondary Education in every subject. Among these key competences, we find the social and civic competences. These competences foster cooperation, autonomy, an improvement on social abilities, dealing with conflicts of values and creating its own system of moral values, and behaving in accordance to it when facing a problem or decision. (RD 1631/2006: 689)

This lesson contributes directly to the achievement of this competence as its main objective is to make the students reflect about the issues addressed above.

4.4 Session 4

This session is dedicated to work on the final project. At the beginning of the session, the teacher explains what students have to do and how they are going to do. Taking into

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[14] See Appendices XI-XV.

account what they have read until then, they have to think about a suitable ending for the story. They have to write their ending in dialogues – as they have to represent it on the last session – but they also have to describe other extra-linguistic aspects such as setting, staging, moves, gestures, or expressions. In order to avoid that each group writes similar endings – or too similar to the actual ending of the story – the teacher gives each group a final sentence with which they will have to end their writing.

Somehow different from previous discussions, each group has to work on the same task at the same time. The students' roles are kept in order to organize some specific aspects of this work. The *Discussion Director* has to manage the discussion as well as choosing who is going to represent the different characters of the story. The *Connector*, together with the *English Guard*, is in charge of writing down the story. The *Illustrator* has to think, depict and describe everything related to the staging, and finally the *Vocabulary Enricher* has to correct and revise everything written by their classmates.

Once they have finished their compositions, the teacher collects all the endings and then each group explains briefly what they have done and why. To end this lesson, the teacher distributes the role sheets for the following day and the final part of the story so they can read the real ending at home.

In a departure from previous sessions, session four focuses mainly on writing and speaking skills. Instead of practicing every skill, what we wanted to do in this specific lesson was to give more autonomy to the students in order to create a product on their own. This is a way of fostering responsibility, creativity, reasoning and analytical thinking, which is the basis in which the final project is built.

4.5 Session 5

The fifth session starts with a brief summary of the last part of the story. Each *English Guard* tells the class the key points of their summary. Then, the teacher gives each group their alternative endings corrected and he sets a little time for discussion. Each group has to compare the two different endings, to share their impressions over the real ending and to comment on the story as a whole. For this, the *Discussion Director* prepares some questions guided by his role sheet as *"Which ending did you enjoy the best?" "Do you think that it is better for George and Hazel to forget about what has happened to their son?"*. The *Connector* has to explain the main differences between

the actual ending and the ending written by his group, and discuss it with his classmates. The *Illustrator* has to represent a temporal line of the whole story with all the key events represented in some way: drawings, schemes, mind maps and so on. The *Vocabulary Enricher* records new and key words on the text and explains why key words are key to the other members of the group as well as contribute to the general discussion set by the *Discussion Director*. Finally, the *English Guard* summarizes what it is being discussed and records, once again, who is talking in Spanish.

After this brief discussion which should not last more than fifteen or twenty minutes, the rest of the time is dedicated to rehearse their alternative endings, which will be represented in the following session. At the end of the class, the teacher collects the role sheets[15].

In this session, once again every skill is practice. Oral skills – both speaking and listening – will be put in practice in the discussion as well as in their rehearsal, and written skills will also be seen as they have to read the final part of the story, and fill their role sheets with summaries, descriptions and comparisons among others.

4.6 Session 6

In the last session, as it was mentioned before, each group represents their alternative ending. Every group has to note down the main points of each representation – except for their own representation. Then, when all the groups have finished, students have to write briefly what they think about literary circles and to make a self-assessment reflection both about themselves and about their group. At the end of the class, the teacher collects the summaries of the representations and their self-assessment writing. The self-assessment writing is requested in order to make students think about they work, to make students value it, and also is intended to foster a sense of responsibility and letting them know that their sincere opinion is worthy, and that in fact is taken into account by the teacher.

The skills included in this lesson are speaking – as they have to represent their play – listening – in order to understand and comprehend the rest of the presentations – and writing, as they have to summarize the other alternative endings represented by their classmates and also they have to write the self-assessment reflection.

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[15] See Appendices XV-XX.

To end with this proposal, it is worth mentioning that this is, in fact, a proposal. The type of activities, the chosen text, the duration of the proposal, the final project and any other aspect of this design are suggestions, and every detail can be changed easily. This design is thought to be a more tangible, visual way of depicting literary circles in general, and more important, specifically applied in a Spanish Secondary Education environment. The important issue that should not be changed is the cross-disciplinary aspect of working with literary circles: this way of working in class fosters a deep, creative and analytical thinking, it promotes cooperative work as well as using the foreign language with a purpose, an objective that is materialized on a real product – the final project. Although this proposal differs in a way from the original design made by Daniels, the core idea is there: teaching students how to learn, how to work in an independent way, how to create and elaborate their ideas and, finally, to make them think freely, defend and justify their arguments and accept any different opinions wherever their nature.

5. CONCLUSION

We have insisted all along this paper that the use of literature as a teaching resource in the EFL class is adequate, worthy, effective, innovative and beneficial in almost every aspect regarding the learning of a second language. We have not only insisted, but illustrated it by reviewing a large theoretical framework that firmly supports this idea. And we have not only talked about literature as a whole, but we have focused on a particular aspect – the one that we found more effective in terms of incorporating literature as a teaching resource in a context where it has barely been put in practice – the Spanish secondary context. This specific aspect relates to literature circles and short stories.

Why literature circles? Why not simply applying the same method used in literature classes in the EFL class? Because the purpose of this paper, its main objective, is not to transform a language class into a literature one, but to take advantage of a forgotten resource that contributes in such a large way to the acquisition and learning of a language. And literature circles engage all the benefits that literature in general provides together with a new, innovative approach as it is the communicative, the student-centered and the task-based approach.

The use of literature circles not only has linguistic and literary benefits. It gives the students a chance to practice and develop a great social skill, as its basis is group work; it fosters the students' autonomy, as it is a student-centered approach in which most of the work and responsibility rest on them; it enhances their creativity sense, as they have to create their own project, develop their own discussions, write, draw and talk about their own feelings and ideas; and it promotes an open-minded, respectful, receptive attitude in the students. This list of benefits, supported by the research mentioned before, only reconfirms our assumptions: literature is a perfectly adequate resource in terms of teaching a foreign language.

So, why is literature barely used in the EFL Spanish environment? Why it has not been heard about literary circles in this context whereas in the US, among others, it is a popular and proved effective resource? The predominance of other methodologies, together with the increasing attention put the new technologies, the use of Internet, and

another innovative ways of teaching involving this kind of technological resources might set apart literature and its potential. Also, a restrictive interpretation of the Spanish legislation and the overuse of textbooks – in which literary resources are not contemplated – can contribute to this fact. But, as we have seen repeatedly along this paper, using literature in the EFL class not only is allowed by the Spanish curriculum, but it accomplishes some additional objectives set by this legislation that would not be achieved otherwise.

This is why we decided to design a proposal for intervention in which it can be seen from a practical way the kind of activities, methodology and dynamics that literature can offer. Although our proposal has been designed with a specific methodology and in a specific context, it can be easily adapted to any other environment of different characteristics. We have also tried to suggest different solutions to those difficulties presented in previous researches, and try with this to better fit the original models – in this case, of literature circles – in an EFL context.

Finally, the next step is to put this proposal into practice and prove that, in fact, it supports every theoretical assumption exposed here. But, what is clear, regardless of whether this proposal is put on practice or not, is that language and literature are two sides of the same coin, and we cannot disregard one of the sides: learning a language means learning its culture, its tradition, and its use in every context; and literature provides us every of these ingredients.

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7. APPENDICES

DISCUSSION DIRECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 1_____

Reading today:_____

Discussion Director: Your job is to think, write and ask some questions about today's topic. Start with the sample questions given by the teacher, and then ask your classmates your own ones. Also, you have to make sure that every member of your group is participating in the discussion.

QUESTIONS	GROUP'S ANSWERS
What is the trailer about?	
How many characters have we seen?	
What could be the story about?	

CONNECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 1_____

Reading today:_____

Connector: Your job is to find connections between the reading and the world outside. Today, you will have to connect the trailer to reality and also to other books, films, TV series… Ask your classmates and write down the most relevant connections that you found.

Connections found:

Trailer vs Reality

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

Trailer vs Fiction (books, TV series, films, videogames…)

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

ILLUSTRATOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 1_____

Reading today:_____

Illustrator: Your job is to represent graphically what is going on in the reading or any aspect that you consider relevant to the discussion. Today, you will have to draw a mind map in which it has to be included, at least: the relation between the title and the topics, topics relation to characters and connections to other books. Then, write a brief description of your drawing.

Description:_____

_____

_____

VOCABULARY ENRICHER

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 1_____

Reading today:_____

Vocabulary enricher: Your job is to find and define any puzzling or unfamiliar words in the script, as well as finding important words – repeated, key to the meaning of the text or used in an unusual way – and help your mates to find and discuss them. Also, you will be in charge of finding bits of information that helps your group better understand the script and contributes to the discussion. Indicate in the table if it is an unknown word (U), a key word (K) or relevant information (R), and then briefly define (U) or explain the relevance of (K) and (R).

Line of the script	Word/Sentence	Definition/Relevance

ENGLISH GUARD

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 1_____

Reading today:_____

English Guard: Your job is to ensure that everyone in your group is talking in English. If anyone speaks in Spanish, you will rest them some points from their *Speaking Points* and ask them to speak in English. Also, you will have to prepare a brief summary of the discussion with the help of Illustrator's mind map. Then, you will have to explain it briefly at the end of the class.

Summary

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Key points of the summary

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Speaking Points

Members	Points Rested	Total Points

DISCUSSION DIRECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 2_____

Reading today:_____

Discussion Director: You have to think, write and ask some questions about today's topic: elements from the past, the present and the future in the text. Start with the sample questions given by the teacher, and then ask your classmates your own ones. Also, you have to make sure that every member of your group is participating in the discussion.

QUESTIONS	GROUP'S ANSWERS
What futuristic elements have you found?	
What could have happened in these 66 years?	
Is Harrison Bergeron's world so different from ours?	

CONNECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 2_____

Reading today:_____

Connector: Your job today is to predict what could happen in the next 66 years in order to create the world depicted in Harrison Bergeron. Write between 5 and 10 crucial events that could have happen in the story and that could be possible in the future of our world.

Events from 2015 to 2081:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

5. _____

_____

6. _____

_____

7. _____

_____

8. _____

_____

9. _____

_____

10. _____

_____

ILLUSTRATOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 2_____

Reading today:_____

Illustrator: Today you will have to draw a temporal line in which it is reflected all the events suggested by your classmates, as well as your own ideas, about what could have happened in the past 66 years in the world of Harrison Bergeron. Then, write a brief description of your temporal line.

Description:_____

_____

_____

VOCABULARY ENRICHER

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 2_____

Reading today:_____

Vocabulary enricher: Indicate in the table any unknown word (U), a key word (K) or relevant information (R) that you find in the text, and then briefly define (U) or explain the relevance of (K) and (R). Also, you will have to do a little research about something curious related to the future. Write a brief summary of your investigation below.

Line	Word/Sentence	Definition/Relevance

Today's investigation:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

ENGLISH GUARD

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 2_____

Reading today:_____

English Guard: Your job is to ensure that everyone in your group is talking in English. If anyone speaks in Spanish, you will rest them some points from their *Speaking Points* and ask them to speak in English. Also, you will have to prepare a brief summary of the reading – which you will explain at the beginning of the class - and the key points of the discussion – to be explained at the end of the class.

Summary of the text:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Key points of the discussion:

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Speaking Points

Members	Points Rested	Total Points

DISCUSSION DIRECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 3_____

Reading today:_____

Discussion Director: You have to think, write and ask some questions about today's topic: equality and justice. Start with the sample questions given by the teacher, and then ask your classmates your own ones. Also, you have to make sure that every member of your group is participating in the discussion.

QUESTIONS	GROUP'S ANSWERS
How have you felt wearing the handicaps?	
What do you understand as equality and justice?	
How it is equality addressed on the text?	

CONNECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 2_____

Reading today:_____

Connector: Your job today is to compare, together with your mates, how equality and justice are addressed on the story and how are they in the real world. Find the differences and similarities and write them below.

Equality and justice in Harrison Bergeron:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

Equality and justice in the real world:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

ILLUSTRATOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 3_____

Reading today:_____

Illustrator: Today you will have to draw a handicap, describe it and then write briefly how it feels to wear them according to you and to your mates.

Description:_____

_____

_____

How does it feel to wear a handicap?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

VOCABULARY ENRICHER

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 3_____

Reading today:_____

Vocabulary enricher: Indicate in the table if any unknown word (U), a key word (K) or relevant information (R) that you find in the text, and then briefly define (U) or explain the relevance of (K) and (R).

Line	Word/Sentence	Definition/Relevance

ENGLISH GUARD

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 3_____

Reading today:_____

English Guard: Your job is to ensure that everyone in your group is talking in English. If anyone speaks in Spanish, you will rest them some points from their *Speaking Points* and ask them to speak in English. Also, you will have to prepare a brief summary of the reading – which you will explain at the beginning of the class - and the key points of the discussion – to be explained at the end of the class.

Summary of the text:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Key points of the discussion:

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

Speaking Points

Members	Points Rested	Total Points

DISCUSSION DIRECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 5_____

Reading today:_____

Discussion Director: You have to think, write and ask some questions about today's topic: the end of the story. Start with the sample questions given by the teacher, and then ask your classmates your own ones. Also, you have to make sure that every member of your group is participating in the discussion.

QUESTIONS	GROUP'S ANSWERS
Which ending did you enjoy the most?	
Do you think that it is better for George and Hazel to forget what has happened to Harrison?	
Did you expect that ending?	

CONNECTOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 5_____

Reading today:_____

Connector: Your job today is to compare your own ending to the actual one. Write the similarities and differences below.

Similarities between your own ending and the actual one:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

Differences between your own ending and the actual one:

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

Literature Circles   **APPENDIX XVIII**   **Role Sheet**

ILLUSTRATOR

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 5_____

Reading today:_____

Illustrator: Today you will have to draw a temporal line of the whole story, representing in it every relevant event or aspect. You can make drawings, mind maps, schemes or whatever you prefer. Then, make a brief description of the temporal line.

Description:_____

_____

_____

VOCABULARY ENRICHER

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 5_____

Reading today:_____

Vocabulary enricher: Indicate in the table any unknown word (U), a key word (K) or relevant information (R) that you find in the text, and then briefly define (U) or explain the relevance of (K) and (R).

Line	Word/Sentence	Definition/Relevance

ENGLISH GUARD

Name:_____

Group:_____

Date:_____SESSION 5_____

Reading today:_____

English Guard: Your job is to ensure that everyone in your group is talking in English. If anyone speaks in Spanish, you will rest them some points from their *Speaking Points* and ask them to speak in English. Also, you will have to prepare a brief summary of the reading – which you will explain at the beginning of the class - and the key points of the discussion – to be explained at the end of the class.

Summary of the text:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Key points of the discussion:

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

Speaking Points

Members	Points Rested	Total Points

HARRISON BERGERON © Kurt Vonnegut Jr, 1968

by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

THE YEAR WAS 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God and the law. They were equal every which way. Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else. All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General.

Some things about living still weren't quite right, though. April for instance, still drove people crazy by not being springtime. And it was in that clammy month that the H-G men took George and Hazel Bergeron's fourteen-year-old son, Harrison, away.

It was tragic, all right, but George and Hazel couldn't think about it very hard. Hazel had a perfectly average intelligence, which meant she couldn't think about anything except in short bursts. And George, while his intelligence was way above normal, had a little mental handicap radio in his ear. He was required by law to wear it at all times. It was tuned to a government transmitter. Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains.

George and Hazel were watching television. There were tears on Hazel's cheeks, but she'd forgotten for the moment what they were about.

On the television screen were ballerinas.

A buzzer sounded in George's head. His thoughts fled in panic, like bandits from a burglar alarm.

"That was a real pretty dance, that dance they just did," said Hazel.

"Huh" said George.

"That dance-it was nice," said Hazel.

"Yup," said George. He tried to think a little about the ballerinas. They weren't really very good-no better than anybody else would have been, anyway. They were burdened with sashweights and bags of birdshot, and their faces were masked, so that no one, seeing a free and graceful gesture or a pretty face, would feel like something the cat drug in. George was toying with the vague notion that maybe dancers shouldn't be handicapped. But he didn't get very far with it before another noise in his ear radio scattered his thoughts.

George winced. So did two out of the eight ballerinas.

Hazel saw him wince. Having no mental handicap herself, she had to ask George what the latest sound had been.

"Sounded like somebody hitting a milk bottle with a ball peen hammer," said George.

"I'd think it would be real interesting, hearing all the different sounds," said Hazel a little envious. "All the things they think up."

"Um," said George.

"Only, if I was Handicapper General, you know what I would do?" said Hazel. Hazel, as a matter of fact, bore a strong resemblance to the Handicapper General, a woman named Diana Moon Glampers. "If I was Diana Moon Glampers," said Hazel, "I'd have chimes on Sunday-just chimes. Kind of in honor of religion."

"I could think, if it was just chimes," said George.

"Well-maybe make 'em real loud," said Hazel. "I think I'd make a good Handicapper General."

"Good as anybody else," said George.

"Who knows better then I do what normal is?" said Hazel.

"Right," said George. He began to think glimmeringly about his abnormal son who was now in jail, about Harrison, but a twenty-one-gun salute in his head stopped that.

"Boy!" said Hazel, "that was a doozy, wasn't it?"

It was such a doozy that George was white and trembling, and tears stood on the rims of his red eyes. Two of of the eight ballerinas had collapsed to the studio floor, were holding their temples.

"All of a sudden you look so tired," said Hazel. "Why don't you stretch out on the sofa, so's you can rest your handicap bag on the pillows, honeybunch." She was referring to the forty-seven pounds of birdshot in a canvas bag, which was padlocked around George's neck. "Go on and rest the bag for a little while," she said. "I don't care if you're not equal to me for a while."

George weighed the bag with his hands. "I don't mind it," he said. "I don't notice it any more. It's just a part of me."

"You been so tired lately-kind of wore out," said Hazel. "If there was just some way we could make a little hole in the bottom of the bag, and just take out a few of them lead balls. Just a few."

"Two years in prison and two thousand dollars fine for every ball I took out," said George. "I don't call that a bargain."

"If you could just take a few out when you came home from work," said Hazel. "I mean-you don't compete with anybody around here. You just set around."

"If I tried to get away with it," said George, "then other people'd get away with it-and pretty soon we'd be right back to the dark ages again, with everybody competing against everybody else. You wouldn't like that, would you?"

"I'd hate it," said Hazel.

"There you are," said George. The minute people start cheating on laws, what do you think happens to society?"

If Hazel hadn't been able to come up with an answer to this question, George couldn't have supplied one. A siren was going off in his head.

"Reckon it'd fall all apart," said Hazel.

"What would?" said George blankly.

"Society," said Hazel uncertainly. "Wasn't that what you just said?"

"Who knows?" said George.

The television program was suddenly interrupted for a news bulletin. It wasn't clear at first as to what the bulletin was about, since the announcer, like all announcers, had a serious speech impediment. For about half a minute, and in a state of high excitement, the announcer tried to say, "Ladies and Gentlemen."

He finally gave up, handed the bulletin to a ballerina to read.

"That's all right-" Hazel said of the announcer, "he tried. That's the big thing. He tried to do the best he could with what God gave him. He should get a nice raise for trying so hard."

"Ladies and Gentlemen," said the ballerina, reading the bulletin. She must have been extraordinarily beautiful, because the mask she wore was hideous. And it was easy to see that she was the strongest and most graceful of all the dancers, for her handicap bags were as big as those worn by two-hundred pound men.

And she had to apologize at once for her voice, which was a very unfair voice for a woman to use. Her voice was a warm, luminous, timeless melody. "Excuse me-" she said, and she began again, making her voice absolutely uncompetitive.

"Harrison Bergeron, age fourteen," she said in a grackle squawk, "has just escaped from jail, where he was held on suspicion of plotting to overthrow the government. He is a genius and an athlete, is under-handicapped, and should be regarded as extremely dangerous."

A police photograph of Harrison Bergeron was flashed on the screen-upside down, then sideways, upside down again, then right side up. The picture showed the full length of Harrison against a background calibrated in feet and inches. He was exactly seven feet tall.

The rest of Harrison's appearance was Halloween and hardware. Nobody had ever born heavier handicaps. He had outgrown hindrances faster than the H-G men could think them up. Instead of a little ear radio for a mental handicap, he wore a tremendous pair of earphones, and spectacles with thick wavy lenses. The spectacles were intended to make him not only half blind, but to give him whanging headaches besides.

Scrap metal was hung all over him. Ordinarily, there was a certain symmetry, a military neatness to the handicaps issued to strong people, but Harrison looked like a walking junkyard. In the race of life, Harrison carried three hundred pounds.

And to offset his good looks, the H-G men required that he wear at all times a red rubber ball for a nose, keep his eyebrows shaved off, and cover his even white teeth with black caps at snaggletooth random.

"If you see this boy," said the ballerina, "do not - I repeat, do not - try to reason with him."

There was the shriek of a door being torn from its hinges.

Screams and barking cries of consternation came from the television set. The photograph of Harrison Bergeron on the screen jumped again and again, as though dancing to the tune of an earthquake.

George Bergeron correctly identified the earthquake, and well he might have - for many was the time his own home had danced to the same crashing tune. "My God-" said George, "that must be Harrison!"

The realization was blasted from his mind instantly by the sound of an automobile collision in his head.

When George could open his eyes again, the photograph of Harrison was gone. A living, breathing Harrison filled the screen.

Clanking, clownish, and huge, Harrison stood - in the center of the studio. The knob of the uprooted studio door was still in his hand. Ballerinas, technicians, musicians, and announcers cowered on their knees before him, expecting to die.

"I am the Emperor!" cried Harrison. "Do you hear? I am the Emperor! Everybody must do what I say at once!" He stamped his foot and the studio shook.

"Even as I stand here" he bellowed, "crippled, hobbled, sickened - I am a greater ruler than any man who ever lived! Now watch me become what I can become!"

Harrison tore the straps of his handicap harness like wet tissue paper, tore straps guaranteed to support five thousand pounds.

Harrison's scrap-iron handicaps crashed to the floor.

Harrison thrust his thumbs under the bar of the padlock that secured his head harness. The bar snapped like celery. Harrison smashed his headphones and spectacles against the wall. He flung away his rubber-ball nose, revealed a man that would have awed Thor, the god of thunder.

"I shall now select my Empress!" he said, looking down on the cowering people. "Let the first woman who dares rise to her feet claim her mate and her throne!"

A moment passed, and then a ballerina arose, swaying like a willow.

Harrison plucked the mental handicap from her ear, snapped off her physical handicaps with marvelous delicacy. Last of all he removed her mask. She was blindingly beautiful.

"Now-" said Harrison, taking her hand, "shall we show the people the meaning of the word dance?

Music!" he commanded.

The musicians scrambled back into their chairs, and Harrison stripped them of their handicaps, too.

"Play your best," he told them, "and I'll make you barons and dukes and earls."

The music began. It was normal at first-cheap, silly, false. But Harrison snatched two musicians from their chairs, waved them like batons as he sang the music as he wanted it played. He slammed them back into their chairs. The music began again and was much improved.

Harrison and his Empress merely listened to the music for a while-listened gravely, as though synchronizing their heartbeats with it.

They shifted their weights to their toes.

Harrison placed his big hands on the girls tiny waist, letting her sense the weightlessness that would soon be hers.

And then, in an explosion of joy and grace, into the air they sprang!

Not only were the laws of the land abandoned, but the law of gravity and the laws of motion as well.

They reeled, whirled, swiveled, flounced, capered, gamboled, and spun.

They leaped like deer on the moon.

The studio ceiling was thirty feet high, but each leap brought the dancers nearer to it.

It became their obvious intention to kiss the ceiling. They kissed it.

And then, neutraling gravity with love and pure will, they remained suspended in air inches below the ceiling, and they kissed each other for a long, long time.

It was then that Diana Moon Glampers, the Handicapper General, came into the studio with a double-barreled ten-gauge shotgun. She fired twice, and the Emperor and the Empress were dead before they hit the floor.

Diana Moon Glampers loaded the gun again. She aimed it at the musicians and told them they had ten seconds to get their handicaps back on.

It was then that the Bergerons' television tube burned out.

Hazel turned to comment about the blackout to George. But George had gone out into the kitchen for a can of beer.

George came back in with the beer, paused while a handicap signal shook him up. And then he sat down again. "You been crying" he said to Hazel.

"Yup," she said.

"What about?" he said.

"I forget," she said. "Something real sad on television."

"What was it?" he said.

"It's all kind of mixed up in my mind," said Hazel.

"Forget sad things," said George.

"I always do," said Hazel.

"That's my girl," said George. He winced. There was the sound of a rivetting gun in his head.

"Gee - I could tell that one was a doozy," said Hazel.

"You can say that again," said George.

"Gee-" said Hazel, "I could tell that one was a doozy."