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***ELT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS OF THEIR EXPERIENCES
IN THEIR LITERATURE CLASSES***

***A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE FOR THE DEGREE OF
LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS.***

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**“ELT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS’ REFLECTIONS OF THEIR
EXPERIENCE IN THEIR LITERATURE CLASSES”**

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ABSTRACT

ELT undergraduate students during their academic formation as future teachers of English are related with the language in different aspects such as grammar, morphology, syntax, teaching methodology as well as literature. The ELT Program includes two subjects with English literature; students discover literature through short stories, poems and novels. This study attempts to understand pre-service English teachers' perceptions about English literature and how it is taught in an undergraduate ELT program in Mexico. This is a qualitative interpretative study which used interviews to collect data. As a result the main findings in the research study are related with three categories: the components of the best English literature class, the benefits these undergraduate students found in literature and finally how literature was used in the classroom.

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CHAPTER I

1.1. Introduction to the Problem

It is commonly thought that ELT undergraduate students often consider Literature boring because they tend to think that literature is difficult to understand and often is not related to topics they are interested in.

However, those who read and appreciate literature can find and perceive a world full of new experiences. He or she can imagine a new world through reading; can imagine new places, people, cultures, traditions, and ways of communication. Through reading literature in general the reader can increase his/her vocabulary and learn words he/she had never heard before. The people who are very interested in the literature help the reader take a closer look at the different facets of life. Reading literature can change the readers' perspectives toward life and it can develop language competence and awareness if the student reads literature in English.

In the ELT classroom literature plays a fundamental role in the process of English language teaching. Collie and Slater define literature as a source of authentic material in the sense that most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language. In this sense, students are exposed to a language that is as genuine and undistorted as can be managed in the classroom context (1995). The inclusion of literature in the language classroom provides valuable authentic material, it can develop personal involvement and contribute to readers' cultural as well as language enrichment (Collie & Slater 1987.)

Unfortunately many undergraduate students view literature as just a subject at the faculty of language in Puebla Mexico and not as an opportunity to explore a new world

using their imagination. Students who are not interested in literature always argue that lack of time, lack of reading skills or do not understanding the message of the reading. Thus the main point of this research is to explore some students' reflections about reading literature in English and how their reflections have affected the way they interact with reading literature in English in their literature class.

In previous years Literature in English has been used as topic of research at the faculty of languages such as "A survey of LEMO students and teacher perceptions on the use of literature at intermediate and advanced levels" by Georgina Aguilar González (2004). In this study, the author focused mainly in the way literature was used inside the classroom. Her findings showed that literary texts were commonly used inside the classroom. Another result indicated that the students found several advantages in reading literature in English such as the improvement of reading, the improvement of language proficiency and the possibility of learning about different topics. The author also focused on the disadvantages where the results showed that: some students lacked of interest in literature and literature was difficult to interpret and too complex.

Another study in literature field was "The value of literature on the English Language Classroom" by Fidel Jaime Conde Luna (2010). In this study, Conde explored the genre students preferred in the literature classroom. According to his result, novels and short stories were the preferred genre and the least preferred were poems.

Finally, in the study "An analysis of students' perceptions regarding their literature courses in the LEMO by Abelardo Romero Fernández (2009), the author focused on likes and dislikes of literature. His results demonstrated that some students felt pleasure from reading and not all the students enjoyed reading because of the type of literary genre used.

Another aspect covered by Romero was the value of the two literature courses required in the career at the faculty of language; the results established the students considered important these courses in their academic formation. However others argued that with one literature course it was enough and others suggested a different course like Latin-American Culture.

1.2. Project rationale

During the process of learning a foreign language, students need to learn vocabulary and cultural issues. Many students are not aware that reading literature in English can have a significant amount of benefits.

1.3. Significance of the research

The importance of this study was to explore the ELT undergraduate students' perspectives about their English literature classes and their reading practices. English literature classes are part of the ELT undergraduate program and it is important to explore how literature was used inside the classroom and how students took advantage of literature.

1.4. Context of the research

According to this study the theoretical areas associated with the concept are cultural studies, literary theory, and sociology of language, linguistics, narratives and English grammar.

1.5. Location of the research

This research will be located in the BUAP University at the Language of Faculty in Puebla Mexico. I decided to do this research in the ELT undergraduate program at faculty

of language in Puebla Mexico because the curriculum has literature courses in English as a subject.

1.6. Aims

At the end of this study, I hope to learn more about literature and how this subject can help ELT students improve their level of the English language. My main aim is first to explore students reading literature practices and learn their opinions about the English literature class.

1.7 Research questions

1. How do ELT undergraduate students describe their best English literature class?
2. What were the benefits these students found in literature?
3. How did these students report English Literature being used in their literature course?

1.8 Summary and thesis overview

As mentioned above this study attempts to explore ELT student's beliefs about their literature classes in English. The main purpose of the following research study is to have useful information for students taking literature classes in English and teacher teaching these courses.

The presentation of this research is chapter 1 where there is an introduction of the study and the context in which this study is developed. Afterwards, chapter 2 focuses on the theoretical aspects that help to support the researchers' arguments and ideas. Chapter 3 describes the methodology, subject, instrument and procedures followed in this research;

Chapter 4 provides an analysis of the data collected and finally in chapter 5 the main findings are presented.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to present some theoretical aspects that support the purpose of the research. This chapter is divided into three sections: the first section an overview of literary language and academic language, the second section the literature in the English Language Teaching and, finally the third section discusses studies on students' opinions about their Literature classes in an ELT undergraduate program.

2.1. Literary language

Language is the primary vehicle for learning, instruction, and overall intellectual development. It is not only a means for communicating information; it is also a vehicle for deepening their understanding of important ideas (Kersaint, Thompspon, & Petkova, 2009). In literature sometimes readers use their own language in order to comprehend the meaning of the word, however, Brumfit and Carter (1986) assert that the language used in literature does not possess any exclusive property of characteristics that makes it to be considered as special. The use of language in the literature has a special purpose as Lazar (1993) considers that the notion that the reader of literary text is crucial in assigning meaning to the text and a great variety of factors might influence the meaning that the reader confers on a text ranging from the individual psychology of reader to the social and political milieu in which they live, however, there is some assumptions that literature has its own language. Selden (1989) suggests that the formalists' technical focus led them to treat literature as a special use of language which achieves its distinctiveness by deviating from and distorting 'practical' language. Practical language is used for acts of communication, while literary language has no practical function at all simply makes us see differently. Equally important

about literary language is mentioned by Brumfit and Carter that “some literary language is designedly vague in no bad sense of fudging accuracy, but in its prudent avoidance of specific terms, its reliance on the competence of the reader to recognize time-honored generalities. (Brumfit & Carter, 1986). As a conclusion, the reader through literature can explore a new language in the sense of what has been comprehended according to the experience and knowledge that he or she possesses.

2.1.2 Literary competence

In literature, it is indispensable to understand what has been read. Culler (1975, cited in Lazar 1993) considers literary competence as the implicit understanding and familiarity with certain “conventions” that permits readers to take the words from literary text and transform them into literary meanings. Literary competence, therefore, is necessary in order to read a literary text effectively. Carter and Brumfit (1986, p.18) state that literary competence involves “an interesting combination of linguistics, socio-cultural, historical and semiotic awareness”. In a similar way, literary competence is to be sensible to literature in order to understand its meaning and it is the teacher who helps students to develop this competence (Carter & Brumfit, 1986). Similarly, the only way to explore literature is if students have literary competence, which allows them to interact with literature in a superior level (Lazar, 1993). In other words, literary competence is the process in which the reader understands the literary texts’ purposes.

2.1.3 Literary Academic language

Another key point is to distinguish between literary language and academic language. Academic language is the language that is used in textbooks, articles, books in

general in the classrooms, and in schoolwork. It has differences in structure and vocabulary from the everyday spoken English of social interactions. Zwiers describes academic language as “the set of words, grammar, and organizational strategies used to describe complex ideas, higher-order thinking processes, and abstract concepts” (Zwiers, 2011, p.20). It looks like academic language has its own focus in the academic fields as Anstrom remarks academic language has an academic purpose which helps students to acquire and use knowledge (Anstrom, et al., 2010). In other words academic language is characterized by the specific linguistic features associated with academic disciplines, including discourse features, grammatical constructions, and vocabulary across different language domains. Academic language refers to the language used in school to acquire new or deeper understanding of the content and communicate that understanding to others (Bailey & Heritage, 2008; Gottlieb, Katz, & Ernst-Slavit, 2009; Schleppegrell, 2004). In addition academic language is used in academic fields, it is used in classroom, texts and school; it is very different from the language used in everyday life Academic language has another level, function and it has its own characteristics such as it has its own structure and uses other vocabulary.

2.2 Literature in English Language teaching

The *Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés* (LEI); the B.A degree in teaching English is a degree with the aim to train students to become English teachers with an acceptable level of the language, as well as to raise students awareness about culture of the language. Literature is included in the B.A. degree as part of the academic formation of the students with these two objectives. Students come into the world of literature with two literature courses Literature I and Literature II in English. These subjects are in the

curriculum in the second year (four and five quarter) because the students have a certain English level in order to read, understand and enjoy literature, together with the cultural benefits it provides.

In recent years, the role of literature as a basic component and source of authentic texts of the language curriculum rather than an ultimate aim of English instruction has been gaining power. Among language educators, there has been a hot debate as to how, when, where, and why literature should be incorporated in ESL / EFL curriculum. (Hişmanoğlu, 2005). Vigorous discussion of how literature and ESL / EFL instruction can work together and interact for the benefit of students and teachers has led to the flourishing of interesting ideas, learning, and improved instruction for all. Many teachers consider the use of literature in language teaching as an interesting and worthy concern (Sage 1987). The use of literature as a technique for teaching both basic language skills (i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking) and language areas (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation) is very popular within the field of foreign language learning and teaching nowadays. (Carter & McRae 2001). In the process of learning any language, it is necessary to understand and know other aspects of the language such as culture and the literary language and not only vocabulary and grammar structure. The use of literature in language teaching traces back to the nineteenth century. The dominant method of language teaching was grammar translation and the most popular technique was the translation of literary texts in the mother tongue (Khatib & Hossein, 2012).

Literary works provided additional material of grammar practice, vocabulary learning, and translation (Liaw, 2001). In the grammar translation method, literature was the central component. Literary texts of the target language were read and translated, used

as examples of good writing and “illustrations of the grammatical rules” (Duff & Maley 1990, p. 3).

Literature and language are related concepts. Literature enriches language and it is language that helps to understand literature. If the purpose of learning is communication and literature is communication, these two concepts are inseparable. Literature is constituted by language and it represents one of the most recurrent uses of language (Llach, 2007). One of the main objectives of use of literature in English Language Teaching is the study of words, idioms, syntax, at the highest level of thought and imagination. From the preceding, it can be seen that these two subjects-English Language and Literature-in-English are related. The general belief here is that the knowledge of literature prepares the foundation for language learning.

2.2.1 Benefits of Literature in English Language Teaching

Literature is a world that everybody can visit, but just some people want to travel in it. In English Language Teaching, reading literature has a benefit to students such as learning culture, language, gaining personal enrichment and the fact that literature is authentic material. According to Collie and Slater (1990, p. 3), there are four main reasons which lead a language teacher to use literature in the classroom. These are valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement. Maley (1982, p.12) proposes a list of some the reasons for regarding literature as a potent resource in the language classroom as follows: universality, non-triviality, personal relevance, variety, interest, economy and suggestive power and ambiguity.

2.2.2 Valuable Authentic Material

Literature is authentic material. Literary texts are created to express feeling, ideas and thoughts and most works of literature are not created to teach a foreign language. Thus, in a classroom context, learners are exposed to actual language samples of real life like settings. Literature can act as a beneficial complement to such materials, particularly when the first “survival” level has been passed. In reading literary texts, because students have also to cope with language intended for native speakers, they become familiar with many different linguistic forms, communicative functions and meanings (Hişmanoğlu, 2005).

Collie & Slater (1987, p.3) indicate that literature is “authentic” material; by that we simply mean that most works of literature are not fashioned for the specific purpose of teaching a language.

2.2.3 Cultural enrichment

Reading Literature can rise readers awareness about culture issues; Valdez (1986, p. 137) suggests that using literature can “serve as a medium to transmit the culture of the people who speak the language in which it is written”. Literature is an important window to have a view of the world and culture by means of sharing individual or collective life experience. A reader can discover their thoughts, feelings, and customs. Behave behind closed doors. This vivid imagined world can quickly give the foreign reader a feel for the codes and preoccupations that structure a real society (Collie & Carter, 1987, p.4). The reader through literature can understand the culture of what he/she is reading, different ways of thinking and acting, according to the country where the story takes place.

2.2.4 Language enrichment

Reading literature provides language students new vocabulary and new ways of expression about certain topics in order to improve their English learning. Language enrichment is one of the benefits often sought through literature. While there is little doubt that extensive reading increases learner's receptive vocabulary and facilitates transfer to a more active form of knowledge, it is sometimes objected that literature does not give learners the kind of vocabulary they really need (Collie & Carter, 1987, p.4).

According to Povey (1972) reading literature familiarizes students or learners with subtle vocabulary usage and new and complex syntax and through this contributes to the extension of language usage and linguistic knowledge. McKay (1982) believes that in literary works settings, role relationships are predetermined and social context is taken into consideration, so it can be used for increasing the awareness of the students about language use.

The linguistic criterion defends that literature should be used in language teaching, because it provides the learner with genuine, authentic samples of language, and also with real samples of a wide range of styles, text types and registers.

2.2.5 Personal involvement

Literature can be useful in the language learning process owing to the personal involvement it fosters in the reader. Once the student reads a literary text, he/she begins to inhabit the text. He/she is drawn into the text. Understanding the meanings of lexical items or phrases becomes less significant than pursuing the development of the story. The student becomes enthusiastic to find out what happens as events unfold via the climax; he/she feels

close to certain characters and shares their emotional responses (Collie & Carter, 1987, p.5-6).

2.2.6 Support for the use of Literature in ELT

As mentioned above, literature in the language teaching classroom can provide benefits to the reader. Literature is authentic material that reflects fundamental human issues and provides cultural information that can lead language students to cultural understanding of the people whose language and culture they are learning, as well as their own. (Collie & Slater 1987; Stern, 1991 p. 328). Furthermore, literature stimulates and motivates students to learn (Lazar, 1993). In the same way by reading literature students can grow personally, acquire critical thinking and emotional awareness about the different human situation and conflicts that surround them. Thus, there are powerful arguments why literature should be used in the language teaching context not only for the students in their academic formation and personal life and also for the teacher who faces the challenge of integrating the best ways to use and enjoy literature in the classroom.

2.2.7 Against the use of Literature

McKay (1982) mentions some of the common arguments against utilizing literature. The first one is the lack of contribution of literature to the teaching of grammar which is one of the important goals of a language teaching program. The reason for this is the structural complexity and unique use of language in literature. The second argument is that the literature does not help the students to reach their academic and occupational goals. The third one is the specific cultural viewpoints which are reflected in every piece of literature. Grasping and making sense of the cultural perspectives may be difficult for the students

especially for EFL or ESL students. Linguistics such as Topping (1968) argues that literature should be excluded from the foreign language curriculum because of its structural complexity, lack of conformity to standard grammatical rules, and remote control perspective. Lazar (1993) and Ur (1996) suggest that using literature in teaching a language has disadvantages if it is not well applied. Students can get bored because they do not understand the abstract meaning of the words because they do not have the level that is required to carry out the analysis.

2.3 Students' opinions about their Literature classes

In this context, there are three theses which study students' opinions about literature in their B.A program at the faculty of language Puebla, Mexico: 1. "A survey of LEMO students and teacher perceptions on the use of literature at intermediate and advanced levels" by Georgina Aguilar González (2004), "The value of literature on the English Language Classroom" by Fidel Jaime Conde Luna (2010) and "An analysis of students' perceptions regarding their literature courses in the LEMO by Abelardo Romero Fernández (2009).

In the first place, it is relevant to notice how literature is used in the classroom. Aguilar discusses how literature is used in the classroom. Her results indicated that in literature classes the most common types of literary texts used were short stories and the least commonly used types of literary texts are poetry, plays and novels (Aguilar 2004, p.50).

Aguilar (2004) in the first thesis also discusses some student's opinions about the advantages or disadvantages of using literature in their English Language Teaching classroom. The results showed that the main advantage of using literature according to the

students' perspectives was the improvement of reading, the improvement of language proficiency and the possibility of learning about different topics. Other advantages were the promotion of other skills, reflection and interest in reading. In addition the students were aware of the language enrichment that literature offers them. Most students knew that reading literary texts allows them to expand their vocabulary and develop their abilities for deducing meaning and making inferences, as well as promoting critical thinking and emotional awareness about different human situation that surround them (Aguilar, 2004, p. 61-62).

On the other hand, it is evident that for many students to read literature has no relevance in their academic formation. Aguilar provides some disadvantages of using literature according to students' opinions. The results indicated that the main disadvantage of using literature were the lack of interest, difficult interpretation and complex language. In the case of time, it is also a disadvantage; in addition there were some students who did not see any disadvantages in using literature. These results implied that many students were conscious of the advantages involved in reading literary texts which are related to language and cultural issues. Furthermore, although most students considered literature as a help for their academic needs, they did not find it quite interesting (Aguilar 2004). In fact, reading literature for some students is difficult because of its complexity. Besides that, they did not see any decisive profit in them and in their academic needs. It is important to perceive how literature is taught and studied inside the English language classroom.

Conde explores students' opinions about the genre they prefer in the English Literature classroom and the study indicated that novels were one of the favorite; second short stories and the less preferred literary genre were poems (Conde Luna 2010.) Another

aspect studied by Conde Luna is related to how literature can provide meaningful language and information to students. The results indicated that all the eighteen participants agreed in that literature should be considered as very useful and meaningful resource in English Classroom (Conde. 2010).

Another important aspect of the students' opinions about their literature classes is to know what they liked and did not like. According to Romero some students really liked and enjoyed reading literature, some students felt pleasure when they read different literature genres. Some other students considered literature as an opportunity to know different cultures, which contributed to enrich their own perception about the world. Not all the students enjoyed reading all literary genres. Some students commented that for them not all the literary genres are attractive. However this dislike for some literary genres, such as poetry or novels, was possibly caused because of the lack of guidance or orientation on how literary works should be read; another negative aspect for students was the academic issues. In addition, students considered not enough knowledge in order to figure out the cultural aspects in the literary text, the lack of vocabulary to perceive the main ideas of the text and some idiomatic expressions all these aspects make the reader have difficulties in the process of reading (Romero, F. 2009. pp. 54-55).

Romero's results were that students considered the two literature courses as a necessary and essential element of the curriculum in their academic formation. In addition, some other students suggested that there should be more than only two courses and that the new courses should be about Latin-American culture. According to Romero, it is a great idea to ask students' suggestions and comments about their literature classes. The results of this thesis also showed how students commented on the way in which the course was carried out by the teacher. They really enjoyed reading literature when it was not presented

as a tedious and boring task or assignment but as something that they were doing because they liked it. This is one of the most important and difficult objectives that a literature teacher must achieve. In addition, some other students commented on the books that they were asked to read. Furthermore, the lack of interest in reading literary texts by students is related with the books selected by the teachers because the books' titles are not attractive for them (Romero F. 2009, pp. 57-58). As mentioned above one of the most constant dilemma in the literature classes was the material used; for many students the material selected by the teacher was not interesting for them and this is the cause for their lack of interest.

After exploring and analyzing these three studies related to Literature, ELT undergraduate students found literature as a powerful tool with which they can receive valuable elements that were mentioned previously; on the other hand, they also found factors that made them avoid literature in their academic formation.

In previous chapters, some research studies with the same topic "Literature" but with different objective were presented, in order to know them and observe how they differ; this research study focused primarily in experiences from students in their literature class and the participants' views on their best English Literature class as well in their reading habits. Aguilar's study focused in the use of literature only at intermediate and advance level, on the other hand Conde's study focused in the genre preferred by student and how literature can provide some benefits in their academic formation; finally Romero's study focused in likes and dislikes of reading, how literature is carried out in the classroom and the material used.

The theses look similar in some aspect, the difference is the instrument, in the three studies the authors used basically questionnaires, in the case of this study, the instrument

used was interview in which the participants can express what they think according to their experience.

Conclusion

Studies of students' opinions were discussed. The conclusions of this section are the fact that there are positive and negative opinions about the use of literature in the academic program. Most of the students saw positive elements, basically in their academic formation. The disadvantages that students contemplate were the fact that for them is very difficult to comprehend the literary text because of its complexity.

After this overview of chapter 2, it is necessary to emphasize the importance that literature possesses when it is applied in an English Language Teaching classroom and all the benefits it can provide for students and teachers. Moreover it is relevant to appreciate literature and use it in a satisfactory way.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used to carry out this research. The subjects, the instrument, the setting and the collection and analysis the data are presented.

The purpose of this research was to examine the perceptions of the participants about their experiences in their English Literature classes at the Faculty of Languages in Puebla Mexico.

3.1 Participants

The participants were six students of English Language Teaching between 21 to 25 years old, they were three female and three male. They were students from the Faculty of Language in Puebla, these participants have studied the two English Literature courses, and the level of the students was upper intermediate to advanced. The participants in this study were selected according to the semester in which they were studying; they were in the last two semester of the major, so they had passed the two English literature courses.

3.2 Setting

The physical environment to carry out the study was located at the Faculty of Language in the Mexican state of Puebla; this place was chosen because it facilitated access to students of English Language teaching. Furthermore the place was selected because in English Language teaching program offers two courses about English Literature.

3.3 Instrument

The instrument used in this research in order to collect the data was an interview; according to McNamara (1999), interviews are particularly useful to get the story behind a participant's experiences. The interviewer can pursue in-depth information around the topic. Interviews may be useful as follow-up to certain respondents to questionnaires to further investigate their responses (McNamara, 1999).

Using an interview as the instrument in this research allowed the participants to express their own experiences, beliefs, and thoughts using their own words.

The type of interview used, in this study, was a structured interview because it is a formal interview. This type of interviews follows a specific set of questions. The answers were recorded.

3.4 Procedure

The procedure consisted of interviewing six participants, their answers recorded, transcribed and analyzed.

According to the research questions mentioned in the chapter 1, the interviews were used as the main instrument of data collection because this instrument allowed us to understand the participant's experience in their English Literature classes more in depth.

3.5 Data collection

To collect the data, the interviews were applied to the six participants; the interviews were recorded, in order to facilitate the analysis of the information.

3.6 Data analysis

Once the interviews were formally applied and recorded, the following step was to examine the student's perceptions. The data were classified into some categories according to the student's answers; these categories are mainly focused on the English Literature classes.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results from the data collected through six interviews in order to research on what participants consider their best literature classes in English. The instrument used were interviews with eight questions, in order to understand the students' perceptions about their English Literature classes, the results will be presented according to the questions formulated in the interview.

The following step is to present the results according to the participants' answers in three different categories. The names of the participants were changed in order to keep their identity. The main purpose of this research was to answer the following questions established at the beginning of chapter 1.

4.1. Research Question

1. How do ELT undergraduate students describe their best English literature class?
2. What were the benefits these students found in literature?
3. How did these students report English Literature being used in their literature course?

4.2 Reading for pleasure

Even though this research was carried out with only six participants, it is important to mention the participants' answers one by one because it is most visible and easy to understand what the participants said. It was important to perceive the pleasure for reading, in view of this relevant item; it is significant to appreciate what the students think about reading using the question: "Do you like reading?" These were the answers.

Alejandro:	“Yes, a lot.”
Veronica	“Yes”.
Jose Luis:	“In the past I didn’t like it, but now I like it”.
Ana	“Yes”.
Elias	“Yes, I like reading”.
Gabriela	No”.

Most of these students said that they felt pleasure for reading; one participant does not like reading and one started began to like reading in the program.

As mentioned previously most of these students reported a pleasure for reading. Having this in mind it is necessary to know the reason of why reading for them is an interesting activity. For this reason the participants answered the follow question: “*Why do you like reading or why do you not like reading?*”

Alejandro	Because if you have enough imagination you can imagine everything, you can go out of this world and arrive to another.
Veronica	Because is a way to know new things, to know a different world, to go to different places without you travel.
Jose Luis	I have in mind that reading is the key of knowledge.
Ana	Because is an important manner to have more knowledge in the life and in the professional life.
Elias	Because when I read, it’s like if I go to another world and you can identify you with

Gabriela:	the story's characters. I think reading is boring and I fall sleep, when I read, sometimes I don't understand what I am reading because my mind is in other place.
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Reading is a new world for most of the participants. According to Collie and Carter (1987, p. 5-6), literature can be useful in the language learning process owing to the personal involvement it fosters in the reader. Once the student reads a literary text, he/she begins to inhabit the text. He is drawn into the text. Understanding the meanings of lexical items or phrases becomes less significant than pursuing the development of the story. The student becomes enthusiastic to find out what happens as events unfold via the climax; he/she feels close to certain characters and shares their emotional responses.

On the other hand, according to Romero (2009) some students really like and enjoy reading literature, some students feel pleasure when they read different literature genres. Some other students consider literature as an opportunity to contact different cultures, which contributes to enrich their own perception about the world.

These ELT undergraduate students were in contact with at least three languages: Spanish their mother tongue, English as second language, and another language that they prefer learning as a requirement in order to graduate. So in the process of learning the students interact with many readings and books in English, at the same time they are in contact with books in Spanish with this in mind the following question was applied to the participants : “*Do you read for pleasure in English or Spanish?*”.

Alejandro	In both. Most of the time by pleasure; sometimes in the school is necessary read
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	something that you usually don't do it.
Veronica	In both.
Jose Luis	In both, I like reading in Spanish because I can enrich the vocabulary, also when I read in English I can practice and improve the language.

Jose Luis focused on how the two languages helped him to enrich his vocabulary. Collie & Carter (1987) establish that reading literature provides language students new vocabulary and new ways of expression about certain topics, and they use the language better. Language enrichment was a benefit often sought through literature.

Ana	In both. Yes, I like reading a lot.
Elias	Mostly in Spanish, in English I have read but most in Spanish.
Gabriela	In both, mostly in English, because it's the language we are learning.

Reading in both language English and Spanish could have benefits, according to the answer of the participants, reading was an activity in which the reader can experience several sensations, feelings and emotions. They did not care in which language the texts were written; on the other hand, reading in English can be beneficial for those who are learning the language. In the same way, reading in the mother tongue in this case Spanish can help the readers to understand their own language better.

For readers literature could be something interesting or could be boring, but it depends of the literary genre they are exploring; in addition to this, the students responded

to the question: *What kind of literary genre do you prefer to read?* The participants' answers were

Alejandro	I like horror, thriller and research most.
Veronica	Science and interesting topics.
Jose Luis	Adventures fictions, things about action and adventures and legends.
Ana	I really like the novels and books and histories about science fiction.
Elias	I really like novels.
Gabriela	I mostly like horror, suspense, novels or romantic novels.

Coming back to Condes' study, fifteen students in that study research pointed out that horror and novels are the most popular genre literary, but according to Conde in the English Literature classroom novels was one of the favorite; in second place short stories and the less preferred literary genre were poems (Conde Luna 2010.)

In contrast with the answers provides by the participants, according to Romero some students did not like some literary genres, such as poetry or novels. This was possibly caused because of the use of literature in the class.

All aspects inside this category show that according to the participants reading was an activity that they appreciate literature and they could see what the literature could provide them.

4.3 Practices using English Literature

It is important to know how literature is used inside the classroom, for this reason the students shared some comments about their best English Literature class with the following question: What did you like most?

Alejandro	We read different types of poems and the teacher explained the structure of the poem and what it meant.
Veronica	The way the teacher explained, the way we read in order to understand more about what the author expressed.
Jose Luis	I liked it mostly because the teacher really knew what he talked about; I liked the class because he gave us readings.
Ana	I liked mostly the story, is about the slaves, and the way they wanted freedom.
Elias	I liked it mostly because of the teacher gave us readings and according to the readings we discussed, formulated questions and saw different points of views.

The answers above provide useful information, and gave a wide point of view about what the participants liked most in their English Literature classes. Some of them liked to read poems, stories and the way the teacher taught the class. Another aspect they mentioned was the material used in the English Literature class. According to Aguilar (2004) in literature classes the most common types of literary texts were short stories and the least commonly used types of literary texts were poetry, plays and novels. This showed several ways in which literature can be used inside the classroom. As mentioned by Hişmanoğlu

(2005) in the sense that learners are exposed to actual language samples of real life like settings and literature can act as a beneficial complement to such materials.

In order to understand more about this subject it is important to analyze the answers to the following question: *Could you describe the class, how it started, how it finished, what was the procedure the teacher followed and the activities?*

Alejandro	We read a poem individually and then in teams we shared what the poem meant, at the end we got a final conclusion and the teacher told us what the poem really meant.
Veronica	The teacher gave us some copies and asked us to read them and at the end she asked us what we understood from the copies, we expressed our ideas and then the teacher also expressed her point of view of the reading.
Jose Luis	The class was focused on readings, she gave us some readings, we read them at home as homework and in the classroom we discussed about them and the teacher told us his point of view, it was the same with the poems.
Ana	The teacher asked to read the story then we commented each chapter of the story with our classmates, we did a collage in which we gave expression to what we thought about the story.
Elias	We read the stories as homework, and then in the classroom we commented about the reading. We did some activities from the book and we gave our opinion and at the end we got conclusions.
Gabriela	We read a short story by week, we had to comment everything about it, each class we presented important information about some writers, and we worked with the same way with the poems.

In order to understand question seven about how the literature was taught and comprehended by the students. As mentioned before was carried out in a school of language in which there were several teachers who taught English literature and only some teachers had a degree in teaching literature. On the other hand the fact that several teachers taught the English literature classes provided a great variety of ways to teaching these subjects, as shown above in the participants' answers.

4.4 Students' perceptions about the benefits of English Literature classes

Students considered some benefits related to using literature inside the classroom the answers to the following question: After reflecting on your last answers, what do you consider the effects that literature had had in your academic formation? The answers indicated the following.

Alejandro	I can learn more things about what I read and not only the grammar and look for what the writer wants to express.
Veronica	I read many books; they can help me in the future with my classes and I can give it to my students.

In order to clarify what Veronica said about the benefits of reading. According to Collie and Slater (1987), literature is authentic material that can help students in their process of learning the English language.

Jose Luis	"I believe that literature is complex, there are readings difficult to understand, that sometimes I could not comprehend".
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Taking into account the point of view of Jose Luis, it comes to mind what Aguilar asserted: Reading literature for some students is difficult because of its complexity (Aguilar 2004, pp. 66).

Ana	“I really like to know more about English Literature, because I always read in Spanish but after this class is important to know more about English writer”.
Elias	“This class helped to take into account the other points of view”.
Gabriela	“I have a great experience before I didn’t know some writers and now I learned more things about them and I read interesting stories that I still remember”.

As mentioned in chapter 2, literature provides some benefits, according to this; the participants said that for them the main benefits were to understand what the author wanted to share with the readers. The participants also argued that the other benefits were to know some important writers, to read interesting stories, to know books and to perceive different points of view and how this subject can help them to implement the material that literature provides it will be used inside their classroom as future teachers of English.

As mentioned above, according to Aguilar’s results “many students are conscious of the main advantages involved in reading literary text, which are related to language and cultural issues. Furthermore, although most students consider literature as a help for their academic needs, they do not find it quite interesting”. (Aguilar 2004, pp. 66).

As indicated in the results from question eight, in chapter 2 Collie and Slater mention some benefits that English Literature provides and they mention four main reasons

which lead a language teacher to use literature in the classroom. These are valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment and personal involvement.

The reader could find many benefits in literature and as seen that reading was not just an activity in which some the students were forced to do. The results indicated that literature was something enjoyable for most of the participants.

In this chapter, the results were shown in order to answer the research question established in the chapter 1 and at the beginning of this chapter, the research question 1: How do ELT undergraduate students describe their best English literature class?

The results show that according to the participants' answers the best English literature classes implies:

1. The teacher (knowledge and experience)
2. The material used in the class (poems or short stories)
3. The procedure followed by the teacher

As mentioned above, there are certain factors that make an English literature class different and interesting for the students. According to the results, in this study, a better English literature class first has to have a teacher with the knowledge required in this subject and the experience teaching English literature. Secondly, the material used in the class, the participants argued that poems and the stories used inside the classroom had to be appropriate and at the same time interesting for them. Thirdly, the participants considered that it is fundamental how English literature was presented to them. Finally, they mentioned critical thinking because during the literature classes in English they experimented a

process in their mind that makes think differently, or go beyond what the writer wants to express and the students were open to new and different points of view.

The second research question is: What were the benefits these students found in literature? The results show that

- 1.To know about English writers.
2. To read interesting poems, and stories and books.
3. To perceive different points of view.
- 4.To understand the writer's aim.

The students found four main benefits provided by literature: to know English writers, to read interesting poems, and stories and books, to perceive different points of view, to understand the writer's aim. With this in mind, the participants could enjoy their reading and at the same time get these benefits.

Finally, the results from the research question three about How did these students report English Literature being used in their literature course? The results show that

- 1.Reading and commenting
2. Expressing points of view
3. Doing activities related with the reading

As mentioned above the procedure followed in the literature classes in English was that in this study the students read, commented and carried out certain activities about the reading.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter 4, the results were analyzed and written in order to know more about what students thought about their English literature classes. The results were taken from six interviews to participants who took the two subjects of literature in English. The main aim was these the results could provide more in depth information about how their literature classes were taught, and what benefits they obtained from those classes.

5. Chapter overview

In this final chapter, the conclusion and all the elements presented during the whole process of doing this research are mentioned, in order to accomplish the final step which is to know the undergraduate students' reflection about their English literature classes.

5.1 Findings and significance

The main purpose of this research was to understand student's reflections about their English literature class. The findings show that the participants consider the importance of some components of the English literature class such as: first the teacher (knowledge and experience), the material (poems and short stories) and the procedure followed by the teacher. In a second place, the participants found benefits in the literature class such as: learning about English literature, writers, reading interesting poems, and stories and books, perceiving different points of view and understanding the writer's aim. Finally, they talked about what they valued in the way literature was used inside the classroom. The results show the most common techniques used by the teachers. These were to have students comment, express points of view and carry out activities related with the reading. As mentioned above, these findings are significant because they give us more information about how these students view literature classes and how it is taught in this program.

5.2 Research aim

At the beginning of this research, I had some aims; one of my aims of this study was to know how English literature can help the students to improve their English level. This aim was accomplished with the reading some books about English literature teaching (see chapter 2). I found that literature can improve the vocabulary of the students with the real

use of the language; another aim was to know the opinions about an English literature class; this aim was accomplished with the interviews applied to the participants (see chapter 4); my third aim was to know if students enjoy literature (see chapter 4) and also to describe some benefits literature provides (see chapter 4).

In addition to my aims and the relationship with the results, some aims were not accomplished with the methodology such as interviews and others were accomplished during the process of the literature review. On the other hand, it is important to realize that the aims always were focused with the English literature field.

5.3 The reflective account

In this section, I want to express my experience in the process to carrying out this research. In the first place, during my professional training I always had in mind the research project as a requirement to get graduated, so it was something that I started visualizing, in seminar research 1. I did not know what I wanted to research; at that time I was not interested in teaching so I started thinking about the English title for the project. Chapter 1 was not difficult for me. Chapter 2 implied a lot of time dedicated to read and understand the topics that were related to my thesis. My literature review was a little long, but I consider it has the information necessary for my study. Another problem I faced in this process was to select the instrument after analyzing some instruments I chose the interview. I had some problems in applying the interviews, mainly time, however I could obtain useful data. The next step was to present my results; it takes time and effort, it was necessary to dedicate time in order to get good results.

After reflecting about the whole research process to carry out my research project I want to say that writing a research project is something that can be difficult and it looks like

impossible. Now I feel happy to finish this important step in my life and academic life, I am proud of myself.

5.4 Recommendations

Some recommendations taking into account this research project are principally to research some techniques that are appropriate for teaching and learning English literature class.

5.5 Limitations of the research

In the process of doing this research there were some limitation such as time, The first limitation was time, during the process of this research we had four months in which just two months were used to apply the instrument, the second limitation was the number of participants and the third limitation was the participants' answers for the reason that some of their answers were difficult to understand, analyze and classify, also because some of their answers were not very related with the questions during the interviews.

5.6 Further research

This research project analyzed students' reflections about their literature classes in English, as a result this research could be used as a guide in future research about the teaching of literature. In particular to try to research about how to teach literature in English in an ELT undergraduate program and what are the most common procedures are followed by the teacher inside the classroom and how to improve them.

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BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

FACULTAD DE LENGUAS

LICENCIATURA EN LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

SEMINARIO DE TESIS II

APPENDIX A

STUDENTS' INTERVIEW

1. Do you like reading?
2. Why do you like reading or why do you not like reading?
3. Do you read for pleasure in English or Spanish?
4. What kind of literary genre do you prefer to read?
5. What did you like most about your Literature class?
6. Could you describe the class, how it started, how it finished, what was the procedure the teacher followed and the activities?
7. what do you consider the effects that literature had had in your academic formation