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Literary Works and Technology Aids Inclusion in Foreign Language Learning: Case of Kosovo Students' Approach

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The research in this paper was adapted to provide insight into the expectations, prejudices, and openness of higher education students of the University of Prishtina to the inclusion of literary material in the teaching/learning of English and French as a second foreign language (FL2). Simultaneously, as the modern and technologically developed world requires, the paper deals with the opinion on the contribution of appealing teaching material and technology aids in the acceptance of literary works (LWs) in foreign language learning (FLL).

Purpose: Apart from some excerpts in the course books, LW inclusion in foreign language learning (FLL) is almost non-existent in the Kosovo education system. Through this study, we concurrently aim to raise the awareness of the students of the advantages that literary works can bring into the foreign language classroom incurring learner-centred teaching/learning, progression of critical thinking and judgment skills as well as sharing experiences and opinions through non-linear and more spontaneous manner.

Method: In this study, 69 respondents are freshmen at the University of Prishtina (UP), Faculty of Philology who are mainly future teachers of foreign languages and elected English and French language as their FL2. The method used in this paper consists of quantitative and qualitative approaches aiming for a more thorough analysis through the SPSS statistical computer program and descriptive statistics.

Conclusion: The findings revealed that the students have a positive approach to the merge of LWs and foreign language learning, less through printed LWs and more through digitized literature. Hence, applying the merging of literature with language, in the new pedagogical practices and English/French language curricula can be optimistic expectations.

Significance: The significance of the study lies in the fact that this under-investigated issue can help in creating insight into the current condition in FL classrooms and help FL curriculum changes in the Kosovo middle and upper high schools as well as higher education FL course curriculum. This study raises hope for merging language and literature in FL classrooms.

KEYWORDS

approach, affiliation, English/French foreign languages, inclusion, literary works, technology aids

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FL – Foreign language
FL2 – Second foreign language
FLL – Foreign language learning
LL – Language learning
LW – Literary works
UP – University of Prishtina

INTRODUCTION

Curricular Framework of Undergraduate Education of the Republic of Kosovo includes the English language as a first FL and French, German, and Italian as FL2s (one to be selected) besides Albanian as the mother tongue or mother tongues of other minorities such as Turkish and Bosnian. The field of Language and

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Communication, within the Curricular Framework, states the importance of the aesthetic value of foreign languages, highlighting the inclusion of literature in the language courses.¹ As per Course Curricula (2019), in Kosovo's education system English language classes start from the pre-school level, while other FL2s (selected one between French or German), start from the sixth grade. While in Upper-secondary schools of Social Sciences, the English language is held 3 academic hours per week (45min.x3) and other FL2s 2 hours per week (45 min. x 2), a distinct difference is seen in Upper-secondary schools of Natural Sciences which include 2 academic hours per week for both English and other second FLs (ex. French). Although the twelfth-grade course curricula within the "Concept unit" asserts "The Literary and Non-literary texts" (Kurrikula Lëndore/Course Curricula, 2019, p. 22), as part of the course material, there are no LWs mentioned in any of the FL syllabi. Moreover, the English and French language program of the twelfth grade includes various communication activities and cultural inputs, yet it does not refer to any LW as suitable material for reaching specified objectives.²

The current state of the FL classrooms in Kosovo witnesses a very low presence of literature in the forms of several paragraphs of novels, short poetry, or occasional short stories included in the course books. Language instructions mainly focus on grammar rules, such as tenses, and the application of those rules (Kelmendi, 2018). The weakness of this long-lasting methodology is the monotony and limitation of the students with the grammar instructions not offering real situations. Nevertheless, this approach offers clarity and is familiar to students hence do not create panic among them. This raises the question of whether higher education students are hesitant to this approach due to their FLL in the previous education process, and if this mindset can be altered if the students get motivated with new methods and activities. As per Khatib et al.'s (2011) extensive research on the topic of literature and FLL, and our thorough inquiry on the historical development of the literature-language merging in FL classrooms, some of the benefits which source out of the FLL and literature unity are the authenticity of the material, motivation, cultural/intercultural awareness, intensive/extensive reading practice, sociolinguistic/pragmatic knowledge, grammar and vocabulary knowledge, language skills, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking.

Once students' interest is properly determined and they are convinced of the benefits of this fusion, changing of

thus far applied methodology can be planned. In support of the blending of language and literature in boosting receptive and productive skills, it was further sought affiliation through the introduction of technology and media in the classroom as the aiding element which gained an increase in usage among Generation Z. At this point, within FL classrooms there were demonstrated embracing features and was shown advance in learning language through literature, additionally including literature activities through digitized text and activities.

The exploration of the possibility of integrating the fields of language with literature was urged by the authors'/professors' engagement in the departments of German and French language and literature where English and French were elected as second foreign languages. Evaluation of the actual state of Kosovo's education system and UP students' attitudes about the approach of inclusion was planned as a precedent to spread this merging method county-wide.

The future steps towards the inclusion of LWs will be determined by the responses of the students since as per Kozinski it is a sustainable medium in language learning based on the fact that modern time learners prefer involvement in their learning process. The paper is based on the idea that LWs offer sufficient involvement in the author's and characters' experiences which will cause the transition from one topic to another and more practice in all four skills in language learning.³ Furthermore, Viana & Zyngier in their study with empirical results proves that language-literature integration equips students with autonomous thinking without repetition of teacher's and critics' interpretations and that this mastery is necessary for the students of every geography (e.g. United Nation's fourth development goal on 'quality education'), (2020, p.349).

Kasumi (2016) raises his concern that Kosovo Curricula cannot be complied with concerning the Communicative Approach in English language teaching in secondary schools due to the lack of teachers' qualifications, as well as lack of resources. Kasumi is referred hereby due to the lack of studies regarding literature inclusion in FL classrooms in Kosovo, which is similarly disheartening in terms of teachers' preparation, and students' openness to new methods, besides the availability of learning material and technology aids, the fact which emphasizes the necessity of the issue to be studied. When speaking about teachers' knowledge acquisition, we rely on Krivokapic who writes that practical ap-

¹ For more on Curricular Framework of Pre-University Education of the Republic of Kosovo (eng.) refer to, *Korniza Kurrikulare e Arsimit Parauniversitar të Republikës së Kosovës*. (2017). p.40. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The Republic of Kosovo. <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2017/03/korniza-kurrikulare-finale.pdf>

² For more on Course Curriculum/Lesson Programs-Twelfth (eng.) grade refer to, *Kurrikulat lëndore/programet mësimore-klasa e dymbëdhjetë*. (2019). p.20. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The Republic of Kosovo. <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2019/08/klasa-e-dymbedhete-gusht-2019.doc>

³ For more on new generation's leaning on immersive learning: Kozinsky, S. (2017). *How Generation Z is shaping the change in education*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sievakozinsky/2017/07/24/how-generation-z-is-shaping-the-change-in-education/?sh=125f51b65208>

plication is learned during academic education (2018, p. 11). Hence, the acquaintance with this approach during bachelor studies will make students, who are statistically 70 % future teachers of FLs in primary, lower-middle, and upper-middle schools, the ultimate means of spreading this approach. The acquaintance will widen the benefits of this authentic, and attractive material which can provide students with rich vocabulary, develop their imagination and creativity, trigger their emotions which leads to a connection to the material, improve their analytic approach, urge conversation, and interaction all through attractive and technologically aided material, the combination of which will raise the cultural awareness in our students who are designated to be global citizens.

This research paper aims to answer the following questions:

- (1) How hesitant/open were higher education students to learn FLs through literature?
- (2) Could attractive material change the approach of the students/respondents?
- (3) Could technology aids/multimedia contribute to embracing the learning of FL through literature?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Progression of the Language-Literature Blending Approaches

Tracing the historical development of literature usage in LL, we deem it important to mention Kramsch & Kramsch (2000) who in their study of the twentieth-century articles write, "Literature has been used for the aesthetic education of the few (the 1910s), for the literacy of the many (1920s), for moral and vocational uplift (1930s-1940s), for ideational content (1950s), for humanistic inspiration (1960s-1970s), and for providing an 'authentic' experience of the target culture (1980s-1990)." Further, it is noted the issue of the level pertinence, hence advanced level suitability for the inclusion of the literature in FL classroom as a popular approach of the mid-twentieth century, outreaching the ends of the twentieth century with literature inclusion for the communication, vocabulary enrichment, and critical thinking development purposes (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000, p. 567; Granath, 2017, p. 7). Regarding the twenty-first century, we referred to Carter who celebrates the increased profile of literature in FL acquisition after its withdrawal in the field of research in 1986 (2007, p.10).

Benefits of Literature in Foreign Language Classroom

In order to support the conviction of the benefits of literature-FLL union, it was turned to, Almeida et al. (2020) who advocate the inclusion of literature in FLL due to its enrichment with the intercultural skills which make one more adaptable and versatile, all required skills for the contemporary world; as well as, Romero et al. (2018) who enforce the idea of picture books, film, and multimodal texts usage and creation as pedagogic tools in language teaching. Stefanova & Bobkina write on the enthusiastic stance of the students regarding the LW incorporation as it affects their critical thinking among other benefits (cited in Widiastuti & Ayamsi, 2023). Similarly, Zengin et al. (2019) present a 95% positive answer on students' consideration of the literature as benefiting language learning material. Likewise, Hismanoglu was referred to as a supporter of LW integration in the FL classroom as a diverse, authentic material (2005).

Oppositions of Language-Literature Blending

We cannot deny multiple oppositions of the integration of literature in FL classrooms, for various reasons starting from the syntax as per Savvidou, as literary text not being written in Standard English "the creative use of language in poetry and prose often deviates from the conventions and rules which govern standard, non-literary discourse, as in the case of poetry where grammar and lexis may be manipulated to serve orthographic or phonological features of the language" (2004, p.1); further, from language level suitability to the appropriate themes. Nevertheless, "the opponents to using literary text as a language learning resource should most probably realize that the objective is not to study literature, but to exploit it to study the language in its many forms of use against usage" (Petriciuc, 2019, p. 128).

Power of Technology-Literature-Language Learning Triad

Focusing on technology and multimedia, we referred to Hughes (2007) who states that linguistic, auditory, and visual "modalities" used in written words change in the digital environment, subsequently, changing our understanding of the text. Hughes further writes about the students' positive impression and their seeing LWs, respectfully "see poetry differently" after the "sound/music, text, and images to synthesize their ideas" (2007). Further, a study dedicated to the use of technology in teaching LWs writes of the positive outcome due to the "increase of the students' comprehension level and critical thinking skills" with a focus on "creating visualizations of the texts, showing compatibil-

ity with the digital versions of literary texts, being comfortable with interactive hypertexts and eventually achieving higher learning outcomes" (Alfaruque et al., 2023, p. 283). Having this starting point, the hope for the technology-literature-language learning triad was encouraged even further.

Cases Which Proved Benefits of Language – Literature Merging

Examples like the ones of South Asian structure using literary text as the main source in their textbook or the idea of Sweden which based on studies proved the benefits of literature integration in English classrooms hence making it compulsory in upper-secondary schools (Granath, 2017), were stronger catalysts, to follow these examples, at least partially. Moreover, in Swedish upper-secondary schools:

For English 5, literature and other fiction are mentioned as central content, but no examples are provided. For English 6, both "[t]hemes, ideas, form and content in film and literature; authors and literary periods" and "[c]ontemporary and older literature, poetry, drama, and songs" (Skolverket, 2011, n.p.) are listed. For English 7, "[c]ontemporary and older literature and other fiction in various genres such as the drama" (Skolverket, 2011, n.p.) are mentioned. The teaching of literature is advocated, in other words, and some specifics regarding what is to be taught are given. (Granath, 2017, p. 2)

This kind of research was an enormous encouragement to instilling literature in FLL courses in the Republic of Kosovo enforcing this blend and hopefully laying the foundation for its sustainability as a new pattern. This outline does not promote the 'memorizing' of a speech or poetry as a form of language mimesis which is likewise mentioned by Gilroy and Parkinson (1997) and considered dangerous by Carter and Long (1991), but it is meant to be used for its inciting nature of discussion and argumentation, and not sole acceptance of the offered opinion. Additionally, we referred to the Common European Framework of Reference that suggests learning from "real-life situations" to be able to act in real-life situations.⁴

METHOD

Aiming more systematic research, mixed method approach was employed, where through the quantitative research, respectively survey, detailed insight on the scale of differing approaches were identified, which was presented through descriptive statistical analysis; while through the application of qualitative research, through unstructured interviews students' true feelings and perceptions on their openness

to the issue of LW inclusion in FL classroom was reached, since as per Salkind, "qualitative research methodology also lends itself to a mixed methods approach that employs both qualitative and quantitative procedures to expand the depth and scope of a research study" (2010, p. 1127). On the other side, the literature review was referred to just to find reference points and supporting elements of this study.

Participants

Subjects of the survey were the first-year students of the Faculty of Philology, UP, Department of German Language and Literature and French Language and Literature who had the opportunity to elect English and French as an FL2 between English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, or Croatian (student of German department electing other than the German language, while students of French department electing other than the French language). The total number of respondents is 69 who are students of English and French as FL2 groups. At the beginning of their education, the generations of our respondents in Kosovo, started learning FLs, initially English language, from the sixth grade of lower-middle school, and later other FLs in upper-middle school (different from the current generations who start English in preschool and other FL in the sixth grade), therefore have learned FLs for eight years, nevertheless never used them as a medium of instruction for other subjects (ex. biology, physics, history, etc).

Respondents' ages vary between 17 and 19, and 98 % graduate from public upper-secondary schools and only 2% from private schools which are usually very expensive for the general population, hence majority send their children to public schools. The Faculty of Philology statistics show gender disbalance in the faculty of 79% female and 21% male students. Similarly, the gender distribution among our respondents is 92% female, 8% male.

Instruments

A questionnaire of 22 questions in total was distributed to the respondents, students of UP, Faculty of Philology. The instrument questionnaire in the first part required information on respondents' opinions of language level suitability and approach toward the inclusion of literature in FLL, while the second part inquired if there could appear a change in their approach if the technology/multimedia is involved in the classroom activities which included language learning through LW.

The survey did not include questions that would lead students toward certain answers. The questionnaire included mixed-type questions and most of the questions required

⁴ For more information on learning foreign languages from real-life situation refer to Council of Europe. (2018). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Companion Volume with New Descriptors*. p.27. <https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989>

additional explanatory information which were conducted through unstructured interviews. The analysis of the questionnaire was descriptive, re-counting both statistic results and the open-ended questions. With the aim to encourage students to be more factual in their responses, the questions were kept simple and specific, while the interview was conducted in a friendly atmosphere.

The survey was deliberately conducted by the end of the second semester to ensure that the students/respondents were familiar with the various LWs (such as poetry, short stories, and excerpts from novels) related activities in the FL classroom, which included online sources such as videos, trailers, quizzes, digitized texts, and hypertext.

Data Analysis and Procedure

Data analysis is a systematic method of examining the data which was gathered for gaining results and reaching conclusions.⁵ Within the data analysis, the collected data from the questionnaire was processed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 15.0) as a statistical computer program, to gain precision of the quantitative results. On the other side, the open-ended questions were subject to qualitative data analysis which added narrative to complement the numeric data. Initially, data entry was done as both qualitative responses and quantitative unstructured interview data were entered. This entry provided percentage circulation and descriptive statistics which is used to summarize data meaningfully. Similarly, to the unstructured interview results, the findings of the quantitative research were presented flexibly with the combination of graphs and narrative since as per Merriam (2009) "no standard format is required for reporting qualitative research, but that a diversity of styles is allowed with room for creativity. Narratives may be accompanied by commonly accepted methods such charts and graphs or may be illustrated by photographs or drawings."

Upon this, the questionnaire and interview aimed at revealing students'/respondents' stance regarding the continuation and intensification of the language-literature activities, along with uncovering their opinion on technology aid benefits in their language learning through literature.

RESULTS

The results present both qualitative and quantitative information where in between the description of the table con-

tent it includes more insight gained from the unstructured interviews besides the percentage shown in the tables. The results of the combined information reveal students' attitudes regarding the use of literature less for literary purposes and more as a language learning tool.

Results of Students' Anticipations in FL Learning and FLL Background

The opening question of the survey inquired about students' expectations on the focal points in FLL (grammar, literature, culture), which it is believed is prejudice based on their previous high school education as per curricula in the Republic of Kosovo (Table 1). The results show that the expectations of students during their studies in the elected English/French language course are anticipating mastering grammar over culture and literature, a fact which proves students' alienation from the literature-language combination and not even expecting to read any kind of literary material during FL courses.

Table 1

What did you expect to study in the foreign language course at university?

	N	%
Grammar	63	91.3%
Culture	3	4.3%
Literature	3	4.3%

Note. a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1. \$P1 Frequencies

Tables 2 and 3 are incorporated to help comprehend the readiness and capability of students' comprehension of LW in their elected English/French language course due to their language level. Herewith, they point out their ability and confidence to use literature in English language learning.

Table 2

What is your level (previous knowledge) of the foreign language?

	N	%
A2 (Pre-Intermediate)	3	4.3%
B1 (Intermediate)	31	44.9%
B2 (Upper-Intermediate)	32	46.4%
C1 (Advanced)	3	4.3%

⁵ For more information on data analysis refer to: Fitzpatrick, J.J. & Wallace, M. (2006). *Encyclopaedia of Nursing Research* (2nd. ed.). Springer Publishing Company. https://rlmc.edu.pk/themes/images/gallery/library/books/Nursing/Encyclopedia_of_Nursing_Research_Second_Edition_Fitzpatrick_Encyclopedia_of_Nursing_Reserach_.pdf. (Accessed: 28.01.2024)

Table 3

Do you think your foreign (English/French) language level is suitable for using literary works for further improvement?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	48	69.5%
No	9	13%
Not sure	12	17%

Although the prevailing percentage of respondents say that their English/French language level is not an obstacle to including literary work for further improvement of the language, none of them is ready to learn a language solely through LWs, yet they choose a combination of the traditional method and literary material or only traditional method (Table 4), which shows “some” openness to adding “new” material in classroom disregarding the fact that literature was rarely used in their thus far English language learning (Table 5).

Results of students' preferences about FLL approaches

Table 4

Which method do you prefer in English/French language learning?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Traditional	20	29%
Combination of both	42	61%
Only through literary works	7	10%

Table 5

How often was literature included in English/French language teaching/learning in your previous education?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Very often	3	4.3%
Often	16	23.2%
Rarely	50	72.5%

With the assessment of the additional unstructured interview responses to the question in Table 6, it is noticed that the students show a binary stance where half of them find that literature helps them to acquire more language, learn other skills, and enrich their vocabulary, while others see it as unnecessary and redundant.

Practically almost 50% balance seen in the previous question (Table 6) does not remain in the following question where appears an inconsistency as a group on whether they would prefer more literary material in the classroom, which results in the prevailing acceptance of the advantages coming from the LW inclusion in particular in the development of their critical thinking where they would question issues in

the storyline, interpret and evaluate the plot developments, argument their own ideas (Table 7) in the English/French language.

Table 6

Would you like to have more literary texts in language learning?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	33	47.8%
No	33	47.8%
Not sure	3	4.3%

Table 7

Do you think that including literature in an English/French language course could help you in improving your critical thinking?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	46	66.7%
No	6	8.7%
To some extent	17	24.6%

Regarding the topics used during the exercise of the productive skill of speaking, students express their preferences for discussion of their personal life/experience since as they state, the matter does not require any additional information or general knowledge in addition to any English/French terminology over the information outside their comfort zone (Table 8). They are in control of their personal life and the information they want to share, the language they want to use without fear of being corrected by the teacher or classmates. Furthermore, during the interview, students express their hesitance in discussing LW due to its requirement for content knowledge, which validates Han's (2007) statement on students' beforehand preparation as a poking agent of self-confidence for speaking in the English language.

Table 8

What topic urges you the most to discuss during the class of English/French language?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
About your personal experience/life	39	56.5%
About developments in the world/your country	27	39.1%
About a literary work (poetry, short story, novel)	3	4.3%

While in the possibility to choose whether to use literary or non-literary work for discussion, students prove their lack of affiliation with the literary texts, hence stating the prevailing motive in favor of non-literary work “due to being fond of its factual nature” (Krasniqi, Hykolli, 2021, p. 90). When limited among LWs, respondents state that short stories are favourite due to their features of being brief, without many elements, settings, and characters, and easier to follow the

pace. The remaining part which selected poetry accepts the fact that poetry is brief yet sometimes challenging due to its limited form and elision of information (Tables 9 & 10).

Table 9

Do you prefer literary or non-literary texts for discussion?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Literary	28	40.6%
Non-literary	41	59.4%

Table 10

Which literary material would you prefer in language learning?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Novel	20	29.0%
Short story	34	49.3%
Poetry	15	21.7%

One of the benefits provided by using LWs in language learning is learning new vocabulary. LWs provide the reader with vast fields and terminology which sometimes results in students' incomprehension of the words in the text. According to students' responses, when they encounter an unknown word, they in almost equal percentages either check up the unknown words or guess them from the context (Table 11); the act which results in new vocabulary learning, since as per Collins "Experiences with storybook reading, involvement in conversations, and exposure to rare words influence early vocabulary development" (2005, p. 408).

Table 11

Do you prefer to check up on the unknown word in the dictionary or guess it from the context?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Check-up	31	44.9%
Guess	32	46.4%
N/A	6	8.7%

The result concerning the speaking activities about the literary material reveals their interest in human issues and concerns which are representatives of the real-life which surrounds them as a part of society. Characters' troubles to some measure reflect students' troubles, and characters' struggles conveyed through the themes and settings in the LW are the struggles they have experienced or heard of in their daily life, which is the element that contributes to their affiliation with the material (Table 12). While speaking on the themes varies due to their personal affiliation percentage of their interest in time and place (settings) is lower due to students' lack of knowledge regarding the social, political, and economic background of certain periods and places.

Table 12

Do you prefer discussing about... (speaking activities)

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Characters	27	39.1%
Setting (place, time)	18	26.1%
Themes	21	30.4%
Other	3	4.3%

Further, the results show that the students are not very fond of creative writing, as a productive skill and part of the classroom activities, through speculating or imagining new endings of the stories, hence expressing their emotions and creativity. Consequently, they prefer reading and commenting on the developments in the plot to creative writing (Table 13, 14), where besides the receptive skill of reading they lean on the productive skill of speaking considering it easier and "gone with the wind" in case of making mistakes during their expression.

Table 13

Do you like reading the story in half, stopping and speculating/imagining what is to happen next (creative writing)?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	21	30.4%
No	41	59.4%
Not sure	7	10%

Table 14

Do you prefer to read the story as a whole and comment on the developments?

	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Read and comment	44	63.8%
Imagine and write/complete	25	36.2%

Results on Students' Opinion on Technology Aid Involvement in LW Comprehension

Students coming from Generation Z are known to receive their first phones and use computers before their teenage, are prone to digitalization. Hence, they display a higher connection to digitized LWs, especially hypertexts as opening doors to further information, in comparison to printed text which is considered plain and boring in terms of attraction and interest (Table 15, 16).

Students show their interest in technology and materials offered online expressing the boost of their motivation and

longer connectivity to the material read. With the inclusion of technology aids, they exhibit an immense increase in their enthusiasm and further affiliation with the material (Table 17). Even the opinion of idle reading, presented in Table 13, is changed with the introduction of the digitized version of the literary text.

Table 15

Do you think literature can be a suitable material for language teaching using technology aids/multimedia?

	N	%
Yes	52	75.3%
No	9	13%
Not sure	8	11.5%

Table 16

Do you think that the inclusion of digitized text and hypertexts will help you comprehend a literary work?

	N	%
Yes	51	73.9%
No	10	14.4%
Not sure	8	11.5%

Table 17

Do you think your creative writing would boost if used digitized literary works?

	N	%
Yes	53	76.8%
No	8	11.5%
Not sure	8	11.5%

Students show their interest in the LWs prepared as an illustration that they were presented during the classes believing that the explanation or description of these illustrations gives them consistency in their speaking or writing activity. Adding to this, as addicted to novelty and allurements, they consider this different form of LWs can equally be entertaining and inducing to speaking skills (Table 18).

Table 18

Do you think that illustrations/manga editions of the LWs would induce you to speak in the target language?

	N	%
Yes	56	81%
No	9	13%
Not sure	4	5.7%

Besides the illustration and manga editions of LWs, students express even vaster interest in visualizing the LW which was made in a movie or series, be it the entire movie or a trailer where in the open questions they point out that this tech-

nological aid used in the classrooms through connecting on the YouTube, or any other source which offers the material, would help them put a face to the name/character, thus, enforce the emotional connection and creation of opinions consequently the expression of the opinions and interacting activities induced (Table 19).

Table 19

Do you think seeing a movie or a trailer (based on a novel) would help your comprehension?

	N	%
Yes	60	86.9%
No	6	8.6%
Not sure	3	4.3%

Similarly, respondents' interest in digitized texts and hypertexts as material aiding in their comprehension of the literary text, hence enhancing their connection; in almost the same percentage they consider online activities (such as quizzes, trailers, and Wheel of Fortune game) regarding appointed literary text as more attractive and more engaging in terms of more modernized approach and suitable to their interest (Table 20).

Table 20

Do you think that online activities on literary works would increase your engagement?

	N	%
Yes	59	85.5%
No	7	10.1%
Not sure	3	4.3%

Knowing the fact that literary material inclusion in language learning is not common practice in Kosovo schools and universities, students show uncertainty in 42.0% of cases if literature should be included in new English/French language curricula, 40.6% is welcoming this practice, while 17.4% is not leaning towards it (Table 21).

Results on Students' Perception about the Curricular Changes

Table 21

Do you think literature should be included in new English/French language curricula?

	N	%
Yes	28	40.6%
No	12	17.4%
Not sure	29	42.0%

While we witness dichotomy and indecision in literature inclusion in new English/French language curricula without specifying the involvement of digitized text and activities,

with the inclusion of technology, the gap in the interest vs noninterest becomes bigger and the stance more decisive, where more than 75% are favouring the idea and more than 13% are doubtful of its benefits (Table 22).

Table 22

Do you think literature should be included in new English/French language curricula with the use of digital activities?

	N	%
Yes	52	75.3%
No	9	13%
Not sure	8	11.5%

DISCUSSION

Without overlooking the fact that FL2 learners in language courses, high schools, and universities in Kosovo mainly rely on coursebooks and linear learning, this paper strived to reveal the stance on changes in the FLL approach. The beginning was pessimistic due to the rooted and accustomed system and the fact that English classrooms are dominated by course books which limit language learning and prevent the creative side of the LWs (Sivasubramaniam, 2006, p. 254-255 retrieved from Petricius, 2019, p. 127).

Students' Anticipations and FLL Background

In an attempt to answer the first research question on the *openness/hesitance of higher education students for learning the English/French language through literature*, although students show openness to combining traditional language learning through course books, with learning through LWs, they demonstrate a dosage of uncertainty and imparity when asked more directly if they would truly like to have more LWs in language courses. Herewith, they are split into two where half of them consider literary material interesting and attractive, and the others display uncertainty since they are not very fond of literature in general, and it causes them stress even in their mother tongue. This is not a surprising result since it is a well-known fact, among the Kosovar population, that reading LWs is not a strong side of Kosovar culture. This is also proven in the most recent research done by the 'Dukagjini' publishing house and ETEA an NGO which revealed the bitter reality of Kosovar society where 17% of respondents do not read any books within a year, while only 7% of respondents are involved in activities dedicated to book promotion, furthermore, Kosovo citizens cannot give even one title of a book they have read in 31% cases, and cannot tell three books they know about in 52%.⁶

Students' Approach Preferences in FLL

Despite the difficulty in instilling interest in book-reading, students do not disregard the benefits of literary works since they count advantages such as stimulating their imagination, developing expressions, enriching their vocabulary, improving critical thinking, and growing more confident in speaking and writing in the English/French language, the awareness which approaches the students to Karakoc's (2016) argument on the importance of the critical thinking as crucial for the labour market.

A very small number have doubts about the benefits as they consider themselves forced to read in the English/French language or consider it not of their interest while learning a language, leaving the impression of the misconception of the "presence" of literary material in the FL course, similar to what Khatib (2011) mentioned that this sources out of students' uncertainty, lack of confidence, and inexperience of how to use this material. Their hesitance can further be justified by another Khatib et al. study who writes on possible potholes literature can bring where it emphasizes the syntax, lexis, phonetics, semantics, literary notions, and cultural barriers (Khatib et al., 2011).

In the cases when given closed-ended questions and only the choices among LW genres, although students favour short stories, their justification is that they can easily comprehend them, emphasizing that short stories are "catchy" material. Regarding speculating or imagining the ending of the newly started book, though not admirers of this activity and preferring to read the story "idly" until the end relying on the author's imagination, several liked the activity saying it would activate their brain and involve them in the plot. Likewise, in some cases "writing" would rather be avoided, since it requires inspiration and creativity, as well as demands knowledge of the writing elements, all the prerequisites which discourage them from applying this method. A smaller number of the respondents who expressed their love for writing solely relied on their personal interest and not the procedure previously practiced in the classroom, commenting, "Reading is a good way to learn but writing is the best way to show what we have learned" (Respondent x).

Mentioning the benefits of LW for new vocabulary acquisition, respondents are split in almost half on the question if they would rather "stop and check the unknown word" in the dictionary or simply "guess" it from the context, as some express their dislike to depend on something in the process of reading, moreover, to stop the reading and turn to some other source; others prefer to guess the meaning

⁶ For more on reading interest of the Kosovar populations refer to: Sefa, R. (2023). For Book Day, research is published: Over 30% of Kosovo citizens do not know how to name any book they have read [Eng.]. Nacional Nacional, <https://nacionale.com/kulture/dita-e-librit-hulumtim-me-shume-se-gjysma-e-popullsise-se-kosoves-nuk-lexojne-fare-libra>

but certainly check-up for the sake of accuracy and joy that correct guessing would give them.

Striving to answer the second research question on the *effectiveness of attractive material* as an element which can change students' approach to merging literature and LL, it was noticed that students are generally open to the inclusion of literary material in FL classrooms, for various reasons, starting from the novelty that this method brings to the boosting of their speaking skills following their increased receptive skills. Material preferred is the short story and in a particular reading of the same, placing the writing behind due to the prejudice on its requirements of talent and creativity. It is believed that the dosage of hesitance towards literary material which comes from the traditional methodology used in the classroom and skepticism towards changes can be converted and change their opinion with the right material and activities which would entertain them, there while, teaching new expressions, new vocabulary, and fluency in the target language and therewithal overturn their expectancy of mainly studying grammar in the English/French language course. Simultaneously, it has strived to prove to the students the rationality of the opposition to Edmondson who disregards literature's influence on cognitive skills over other texts (Paran, 2008, p. 477) and validates Jose's point on the fact that LWs provide students of different language competences, cognitive styles, and cultures, with information which simplifies their comprehension of the text (2021, p. 897). Further to support our persistence on the benefits of the LW in FL classrooms Lin et al. write on Communicative-culture (Cc) as an element where cultural understanding facilitates communication of people of different cultural backgrounds, as a fact that will steer students to reading an LW if it has common elements with their own culture (2020, p.123). Moreover, LW inclusion in FL classrooms promotes the development of literary, stylistic, cultural, linguistic, and educational competencies per Barette et al. (2010, p. 216).

Students' Opinion on Technology Aid Involvement in LW Comprehension

The students' skepticism was not a surprise, knowing the methodology used thus far in the language learning courses starting from the primary school to the university level, as well as relying on the given percentage of their expectations on what they are going to learn in their English/French language course at university, which was based on the prejudice and traditional learning methodology. Students being obliged to read any LWs were rarely introduced to entertaining activities yet were in a read-comment manner which resulted in grading and seldom for fun.

With the attempt to come closer to Generation Z who depend on technology in their everyday life and observe their maintained or changing approach when technology aids/

multimedia is involved, we referred to the research results which through empirical observation prove the impact of ICT on our lives, including education (Sulistiyo et al., 2022, p. 17). Similarly, Hughes (2007), writes on the wide-ranging power of the new media which boosts students to better perceive an LW. Furthermore, Alfaruque et al. write on the benefits of COVID-19 which hastened 'technology-assisted teaching practices' and effacing of traditional, passive literary text reading strategies in the EFL classroom which vary from visual to auditory skills. Subsequently, Alfaruque et al. assure the usefulness of technology in education facilitating the designing of the teaching material; and boosting students' communication through the use of hyperlinks, digital documents, and audio-video recordings (2023, p. 278). Hence, to answer the third research question on *technology aids/multimedia contribution to embracing FLL through literature*, the inquiry as expected shows more enthusiasm as digitized literary text and technology involvement in learning language through literature display students' attraction to the idea since it challenges traditional learning. The revolution which happens in the world through technology and digital tools hit language and literature as well. Hence, the inclusion of digitized text and hypertexts is seen as more acceptable even as enhancing elements for respondents' productive skill of writing. Similarly, Sastre and Garcia (2022) write on digital reading and digital creation of literary text adding that it creates a versatile learning style (p.4).

The remaining productive skill, speaking and comprehension is believed to be aided by the illustration or manga editions of the LWs among other online activities, which were introduced to the students from various Internet sites such as Actively Learn, where they welcomed novelty methods. This can be backed up by Sun's (2023) inquiry on illustrations in the LWs who mentions British Book Trust laureate Pauline Baynes' illustrations of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis where Lewis himself admits the help of illustrations in comprehension of his book (p. 204).

The interest rises even further when respondents are introduced to visualized versions of the LWs, in the form of a movie or at least a trailer, watched via YouTube or similar available sites. This again can be supported by the meta-analysis study of the movie trailer use in FL classrooms which writes on the importance of the film and trailers as support tools due to its visual and emotional effect on the learner (Saidah&Islam, 2017, p. 7).

Students' Perception of the Curricular Changes

The results of the survey showed that students are not wholly convinced of LW's official inclusion in syllabi in FLL until involvement of the digital aids, proving the importance of engaging material in the classroom with Generation Z.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to reveal the approach of the students of the UP, Faculty of Philology in regard to LW inclusion in FLL. A high percentage of the students of the Faculty of Philology are employed as foreign language teachers, or at any point in their career work as a teacher. Therefore, their readiness to get acquainted with this approach during bachelor studies will give students, who are statistically 70 % future teachers of FLs in primary, lower-middle, and upper-middle schools, the ultimate means of spreading it.

Surprisingly, a high number of students list the benefits of the literary work, nevertheless, as expected, students initially showed hesitance in LW inclusion in the FL classroom because of the lack of experience with this 'new' method which was never introduced to them through entertaining activities.

As anticipated, students' reaction changes drastically with adding the technology aids into LW-FLL combination, whether this be through videos, movies, trailers, illustrations, and games, it further converges attractive teaching-learning. This facilitates receiving of the information through visualization and, consequently, provides information that increases the interest of the students with various language cognition styles. In conclusion, the revolution which came with the technology ought to be incorporated in the FL classrooms as well, which will bring a positive impact on the acceptance of the teaching material by Generation Z students. Hence, the problem lies in the design and preparation of teaching material selected by the teachers rather than students' inability to learn with new methods and approaches.

In terms of the implications, based on the advocacy of Almeida (2020), Stefanova & Bobkina (2023), Zengin et al. (2019) in favor of increasing the literature work inclusion in FL classrooms, the paper aimed to reveal the attitude of the students in Kosovo by comparing the situation in Kosovo vs abroad. Further, being inspired by the examples of South Asian structure and the idea of Sweden to integrate various LW based on the students' FL level (such as poetry, drama, or short story as per their interest) there were obtained optimistic results to follow the examples and integrate literature in FL classrooms as mandatory. This study simultaneously discloses students' stance on the implication of digitized aids based on similar studies which proved their positive impact on communication and learning outcomes as per Alfaruque (2023), Hughes (2007), Saster and Garcia (2022) due to hybridity and versatility of the method as per C.S. Lewis.

Therefore, we can conclude that the provided results are considered innovative and contributing assets and can serve to the improvement of foreign language curricula in secondary schools and in higher education systems where each UP faculty includes at least two FL (one to be selected).

Limitations and Suggestions of the Study

Students who are the subject of this research and the product of Kosovo's lower and upper high school system have limited experience in the literature inclusion in FLL. Thus far used course books include short poems or excerpts from the various LWs with no improved teaching approach of complying with the age, cultural background, or similar elements which would increase their interest in this new method.

On the other side, the Faculty of Philology, where the respondents come from, statistically is prevailed by female gender, thus the research does not have gender division nor results on gender taste differences.

Studies on the merging of language and literature in FL classrooms are neglected in Kosovo which subsequently limits the study. On the other side, while in other parts of the world, recent studies show optimistic results in merging the field of language and literature, the curriculum and the teachers still hesitate to undertake changes in their classrooms. Hence, this research can serve as a recommendation for the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST) to review the Language and Communication section of the Core Curricula and its subdivision of the FL (English, German, and French) which are taught in primary and secondary education and add to English/German/French language syllabuses of each level, and particularly upper secondary schools, adding more LW as an effective medium of FLL. This study can further be backed up with the research done in the primary and secondary education students as well as students of other faculties around Kosovo, for more accurate results.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

None declared.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Seniha Krasniqi: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Supervision; Validation; Visualization; Writing – original draft; Writing – review & editing.

Lendita Gjickolli: Conceptualization; Data curation; Formal analysis; Funding acquisition; Investigation; Methodology; Project administration; Resources; Software; Validation; Visualization; Writing – original draft.

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