

10 Literature and Film—Approaching Fictional Texts and Media

- 10.1 Literature matters: a rationale for teaching literature and film
- 10.2 Literature and film—concepts and competences
- 10.3 Literary genres and text selection
- 10.4 Teaching literature and film—approaches and methods
- 10.5 Perspectives for the literature classroom
- 10.6 Conclusion

»Literature is back, but wearing different clothes«, as Maley (1989, 59) pointed out some years ago. In recent years, the **role of texts** in the teaching of literature in ELT has developed a number of new facets and dimensions that have completely changed in comparison to earlier decades. The didactics of literature has explored many questions such as **how and why** texts—both literary and audio-visual formats—should be introduced to the English language classroom and which **goals** might be followed at different levels. The advent of new media or transcultural and global issues, the inclusion of younger or generally neglected learner groups, broader definitions of what constitutes literature and, consequently, broader concepts of classroom methodology in ELT are mirroring current trends in literary and cultural studies and in foreign language pedagogy. This chapter provides an introduction to basic concepts and competences of teaching literature and refers to questions of text selection and different literary genres. Different approaches and methods of teaching literature and film as well as perspectives and challenges for the literature classroom will be discussed.

10.1 | Literature matters: a rationale for teaching literature and film

The question why we teach literature at all, particularly in the context of foreign language education, has raised a lot of interest among literary scholars and teacher educators in the relatively new research field of *literature didactics* which first emerged at universities in the German-speaking countries in the 1970s. Influences from neighbouring disciplines such as literary studies and pedagogy as well as the general impact connected to developments in education policy and curriculum design must also be taken into account.

Why literature?

Long tradition: The teaching of literature in modern language lessons has played a prominent role ever since the 19th century and has undergone considerable changes over the decades. Originally, learning objectives as well as teaching practice were both modelled on ancient languages and focussed strongly on the translation of significant works of

English and French literary history (cf. also chapter 1 in this volume). The goal was to convey cultural achievements of the so-called target cultures with a strong educational, rather than specifically linguistic focus in literature lessons, which were often taught in German (cf. Surkamp 2012, 488). Back in 1943, Leavis (34 f.) characterised literature study as a »supremely civilising pursuit«, in fact, his view was that it »trains, in a way no other discipline can, intelligence and sensibility together, cultivating sensitiveness and precision of response and a delicate integrity of intelligence«. Such a view has now been discarded as a purely academic if not downright elitist opinion. Similarly, the establishment of an allegedly elite literary »canon« was seriously challenged and led to a gradual opening for new texts—and films.

Two major
currents

The twentieth century witnessed the development of two major currents in literary studies, i.e. the New Criticism in the first half of the century and Reader Response Theory in the 1970s and 1980s. The **New Criticism** can briefly be summarised as a text-centred current with a focus on »objective literary studies« and structuralist methods of interpretation and the formal elements of literary texts. As a contrast, the influence of the **Reader Response Theory** focussed on the reading process as a creative act involving the reader and his or her exchange with the literary text which was more received as a process of negotiation and not so much as a kind of decoding of the »hidden meaning« of a text. Both currents have influenced the teaching of literature and led to a number of coexistent classroom approaches mirroring also diverse paradigm shifts in literary and cultural studies. New notions of culture and text developed that fundamentally changed the role of the reader, in other words the learner in the foreign language classroom in an attempt to educate »the whole person« (cf. Gilroy/Parkinson 1997, 215).

Experiencing literary texts: Literary texts and films can help learners to experience multiple perspectives provided through the narrative structure or the character constellation. The limitedness of one's own world views, the ability to possibly even empathise with others and to change perspectives are important facets of the literary experience—not only with regard to inter- and transcultural learning. In addition, experiencing a sense of ambiguity of literary language is an important issue, ideally leading to some degree of **tolerance of ambiguity**, a prerequisite both for indulging in literature as well as for analytical approaches. In fact, the experience of literary texts and films is not restricted to issues of personal response and motivation but serves an important function concerning the distinction of fictional and non-fictional texts. Developing an **awareness for the differences between fictional and non-fictional texts** is eminently important. Reading a newspaper article about, for example, migration, offers a very different kind of reading experience than reading a short story or novel on the same topic.

Reasons for the teaching of literature sometimes refer to the long tradition of literature but frequently also stress a number of different dimensions hinting at its potential for the foreign language classroom.

Motivational-affective dimension: One aspect of experiencing literature is the possibility of **entering a »new world«** via texts and films. Im-

mersing oneself in this new world conjured up by an author or filmmaker can be an exercise that appeals to the learner's emotions and also focuses on the »literariness« of literary texts taking into account descriptions of people, places and settings (cf. Paran/Robinson 2016, 19). Although sometimes discarded as being a rather »escapist« reason, according to many authors, the genuine feel of literary texts acts as a powerful motivator and touches on themes to which learners can bring a **personal response**. Ideally, texts arouse the learners' interests, involve them emotionally and can even encourage their individual feedback. To be sure, not every literary text may be equally interesting for every learner and in some cases there might even be downright rejection. However, literary texts (as opposed to non-fictional texts like newspaper articles) quite generally have the potential to evoke a personal response, i.e. positive, negative or ambivalent reactions that can lead to interaction in the EFL classroom and prepare for communicative and creative tasks.

Aesthetic and formal dimension: The experience of literary texts and films offers encounters with formal, for example genre-specific features that constitute the language of literature. Analytical approaches dominated the teaching of literature for a long time but should not be regarded as obsolete in the context of learner-oriented approaches. A focus on formal aspects of literary language and aesthetic enjoyment are often interdependent. Literary language is sometimes regarded as challenging, it may be intense, memorable, even sometimes question syntactic norms. Aesthetic enjoyment can partly be derived from innovative variations of literary genre conventions. Formal aspects of literary texts play an important role both in analytical and creative approaches of teaching literature.

Dimension of language learning and competence development: Among the reasons for teaching literary texts in the EFL classroom, competence and skills development, namely reading skills are also frequently mentioned. Literature can also be employed for oral and written work and encourage learners to become more creative and adventurous. Connected with this line of argumentation, it is commonly assumed that learners may thus begin to appreciate the richness and variety of the language they are trying to master. It seems important to stress that the teaching of literature and allegedly more practical and »sober« aspects of language learning need not be seen as an antagonism.

The cultural dimension of language learning: Cultural approaches have had an influence on the teaching of literature—or in fact sometimes referred to as *literatures* in the plural form, addressing different ethnic backgrounds and literary traditions. As important authentic cultural products, films as audiovisual texts have strongly influenced the role and perception of literature in the classroom (see 10.2 below). Both print text and its mediated forms such as film are regarded as sources for cultural learning. A perspective on literary texts and films as a medium in which culture materialises has fundamentally changed text selection as well as teaching goals and methods (cf. Delanoy 2015).

In fact, literary texts and films can be used for a multitude of reasons, not all of which can or must necessarily be fulfilled in every single literature lesson. Summarising the above one may largely categorise the fol-

lowing different dimensions concerning the teaching of literature and film:

Motivational-affective dimension	Dimension of language learning and competence development	Aesthetic and formal dimension	Cultural dimension
Literature and film ...			
involve learners personally and can be motivating	provide extensive and authentic language input from the target culture	are aesthetically satisfying or challenging and therefore often memorable	allow for the change and coordination of (different) perspectives
allow for emotional and individual reactions	help develop reading competences and film literacy, oral and written skills	enable learners to experience aesthetic learning	can provide specific insights into stories narrating about other people or cultures
provide <i>protective spaces</i> for learners' imagination and personal response	can help develop critical abilities concerning text reception and production	enable learners to encounter the formal characteristics of different text genres	can connect literary and inter- and transcultural learning
provide the potential for creative follow-up activities	can support the development of general text and media competences	help learners to experience the connection of formal analysis and aesthetic enjoyment	may sensitise for the representation of cultural topics in literary texts

Table 10.1:
Dimensions
concerning the
teaching of literature and film

Depending on the goals of the respective lesson, different dimensions of working with literary texts may be accentuated. It is important to note that there is no functional mapping, i. e. that a certain text does not automatically address a certain dimension only.

10.2 | Literature and film—concepts and competences

The role of literary texts and films on ELT is sometimes regarded as ambivalent. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (cf. Council of Europe 2001) has been reproached for neglecting or marginalising literary and aesthetic learning. The *German educational standards* and the examination requirements issued by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German Länder (cf. KMK 2004) have partly been criticised for focussing too strongly on testable output in the areas of communicative, intercultural and methodological competences. Usually, these refer to competences like understanding and reproducing content, analysing and re-organising

texts, evaluating and producing texts. However, the aspect of individual cultivation (for the German word *Bildung*) is sometimes felt to be lacking in the reception of language policies and curricula. Multiple educational purposes of literature and film or the pleasure of reading texts and watching films exceed more functional aspects of literary learning by far. Recent publications refer to the significance of literary texts and films on **competence development**, thus integrating different dimensions of foreign language learning and literary learning with a view to *functional*, *aesthetic* and *communicative goals* (cf. Hallet 2015; Surkamp 2012; Grimm et al. 2015, 176; Kimes-Link 2013).

Development of communicative competences: In fact, literary texts are also ideally suited for developing the competences required in the foreign language classroom. Here, communicative competences are at the centre of foreign language teaching. Fostering these competences with literary texts and films can address aspects of *spoken and written interaction*, *interpretation* and *identity formation*. As with non-fictional texts foreign language reading competences play an important role. These refer to questions of automatising the recognition of words and sentence structures, of expanding the vocabulary and acquiring strategies for extensive reading. With regard to literary texts, the development of hypotheses about the literary text, of relating back to one's own experiences and reflecting about the reading process is particularly important. Literary competences, sometimes also referred to as literary literacy, can be based on some of the following and partly interrelated aspects (cf. Grimm et al. 2015; Burwitz-Melzer 2007; Diehr/Surkamp 2015; Lütge 2012c):

- **motivation, orientation and emotional involvement with literature:** involvement with the text, pleasure of reading, recognition of the relevance of literature for life
- **subjective response and creative production:** individual reactions, personal perspectives
- **cognitive understanding and co-creation of meaning:** gap filling, forming hypotheses, forming of mental models
- **linguistic-discursive competence:** in interaction with literary reading, follow-up activities, negotiation of meaning
- **cognitive-aesthetic understanding and methodological competences:** contextual readings, textual impact and functions, media literacy, narrative, performative and poetic competence
- **reflection and critical judgement** of cultural dimensions of literature, (inter)cultural and critical reflections

Inter- and transcultural learning with literature and film: Literary texts and films are **authentic cultural products** and can provide insights into foreign cultures and contexts. This is based on the assumption that fictional characters and settings can help develop an understanding for other norms, values and world views. Encountering alternative worlds, changing and coordinating perspectives, developing empathy and sensitivity—these concepts are most commonly referred to as central cornerstones of inter- and transcultural learning with fictional texts (cf. Bre-della/Burwitz-Melzer 2004; Eisenmann 2015; Volkmann 2015; Surkamp/

Nünning 2016). However, a word of warning should be addressed with a view to a naive perception of ›understanding otherness‹ via literature and film. Literary texts do not automatically—let alone simplistically—lead to cultural learning. They can, however, support reflection processes about the literary and medial presentation of cultural contexts. Foreign language literature lessons should therefore not be restricted to thematic aspects of cultural learning but should themselves be subject to media-critical or aesthetic analyses. The following three stages have been suggested in order to account for cultural learning with literature and film (cf. Lütge 2017):

Stages of cultural
learning

1. Culture-sensitive perception: Working on a culture-sensitive perception is an important goal of inter- and transcultural teaching. Among other things, the dramatisation of cultural and global topics in literature and in films should take into account the ›constructedness‹ of all literary representation and the depiction of otherness in text and film. Possible tasks may include questions like:

- What roles do specific nations/ethnicities play in the context of the text?
- How are members of different ethnic groups depicted?
- How are intercultural encounters dramatised?

2. Evaluating cultural images and global views: Coming to terms with and evaluating the representations put forward in literary texts with regard to the depiction of cultural topics requires careful analyses which take into account literary devices and the focalisation of attention in different narrative stances. Starting-points for discussions may include questions like:

- How does an author construct perceptions of cultural or global issues?
- Which characters are depicted positively/negatively? Can they be ascribed to specific cultural or ethnic groups?
- Are there stereotypical views about cultural topics? What problems or topics are displayed most prominently? Are they connected with specific cultural backgrounds?
- Which solutions for global problems are offered? Are they culture-specific?

3. Developing a cultural and global awareness: Understanding ideological undercurrents and developing an awareness for cultural subtleties is an important goal that may be focussed on in the literature classroom. Questions may include examples like:

- Are there clichéd views and conventions about the narrative?
- Does the text (or film) follow a specific ideology or a certain culture-specific bias?

10.3 | Literary genres and text selection

Beyond the canon: Planning teaching units requires a careful selection of texts and films and their relevant organisation within a sequence of lessons. Debates about the usefulness of a literary canon in the EFL classroom have had a long history (cf. Surkamp 2013). Certain shifts away from an emphasis of more traditional texts towards more recent and contemporary texts—and films—mirror changing discourses in literary studies and in the TEFL discourse. In some federal states there are fixed texts for the school-leaving certificates (*Abitur*), which impacts on publishing houses and their production of teaching materials.

Criteria for text selection: While there is no recipe for text selection, which must always account for the specific requirements of the individual group of learners, there is some general agreement as to the following aspects (cf. Grimm et al. 2015; Surkamp/Nünning 2014; Heinz/Hesse 2012). Texts and films should be:

- manageable in length and difficulty
- interesting, engaging, motivating and appealing to pupils
- authentic and ideally also representative, for example with regard to the depiction of cultural phenomena
- adequate in terms of the topic and age group

However, any selection of criteria may hardly serve as a simple checklist because different dimensions may interact and have to be evaluated with close reference to the specific goals of a teaching unit. Thus, it may be adequate to work with a short, but highly demanding text (e. g. a poem), which has a special importance for the specific learner group, that ideally suits the teaching unit and may just be in line with the goals of the teacher. Authenticity and representativeness may also be criteria that are quite hard to match. Not only is it extremely difficult to define what makes texts both authentic and representative but it is also highly questionable whether these alleged norms are fixed or whether they rather mirror an attitude of common sense in teaching practice. As hardly any single literary text or film may qualify as fully authentic and representative (according to whose standards?) such a criterion may rather be considered as an approximation towards general principles of text selection. There are other criteria in addition. The text/film:

- can easily be structured into a number of different sections
- provides various options for follow-up communication
- offers multiple perspectives that can be made use of in formal and aesthetic analyses and creative text productions

One may concede that there is a certain split between teachers who wish to *teach* literature and literary skills and teachers whose aim it is to *use* literature in the foreign language classroom primarily for language development purposes. Accordingly, as Paran (2010, 143) points out, *teaching* literature and *using* literature are not necessarily the same. Ideally, different dimensions of teaching literature (e. g. language learning and competence development *and* the aesthetic and formal dimension as mentioned

above) are taken into consideration simultaneously. While all fictional texts as well as films offer an abundance of options also for foreign language classrooms, the major challenges concerning text selection, classroom methodology and the question of evaluation are all more or less dependent on the decision of the teacher to define the goals of a literature lesson. It is a decision that cannot be separated from questions of **content**. A Shakespeare drama such as *Macbeth* requires different decisions than a short animation film such as *The Present*. In addition, the respective **genre** with its special characteristics has an impact on questions of text selection and methods.

Narrative texts—novels and especially short stories, but also picture books—are most commonly used in the foreign language classroom. For younger learners an early encounter with literature can be motivating and foster extensive reading, while more advanced learners might focus on cognitive and aesthetic approaches. Telling stories—and listening to them—mirrors a basic anthropological need. Narrative texts can be analysed and discussed with a view to the *event structure* as well as the *discourse structure* (cf. Paran/Robinson 2016, 61). In more detail, the following different aspects of narration in literary texts can be distinguished (based on Surkamp/Nünning 2014, 39):

- **story-level of characters (what?):** plot (content, topic, structure), characters (techniques of characterisation, character constellation), setting (presentation of space, depiction of setting)
- **discourse-level of narration (how?):** communicative situation (Who speaks?), presentation of the narrative stance (Who perceives? Who feels?)
- **extra-textual level:** context of origin, historical background, biographical information

It is vital not to restrict oneself to an analytical approach. These aspects are supposed to provide starting-points for a more detailed and integrative approach that does not necessarily and exclusively focus on the above-mentioned ›wh‹-questions in brackets. Instead, the exploitation of the narrative stance or the depiction of the setting for creative purposes may be emphasised so as to focus the learners' attention to the fact that a certain novel or short story has been meticulously designed and deliberately composed into the form that we encounter as readers.

Poetry is not always adequately represented in foreign language teaching in spite of its great potential in terms of brevity and memorability. The specific features of poetry can be made fruitful for creative and student-oriented approaches to literature, also for creative writing purposes, for gap-filling exercises or more complex forms of text production (cf. Heinz/Hesse 2014; Lütge 2012d; Paran/Robinson 2016).

The connection of form and content should not be marginalised and—depending on the age group, be part of teaching (about) poetry. The following aspects are particularly important (for more details see Surkamp/Nünning 2014, 34):

- **content:** topic and content structure, atmosphere
- **structure:** composition, metre, rhythm, rhyme

- **rhetorical devices:** on a phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic or pragmatic level
- **historical background:** context of origin, historical background, biographical information

Poetry often displays emotions, provides insights into an individual's interior thoughts or mirrors a certain moment in time—almost like through a looking glass—and sometimes seemingly distorted from a specific perspective. In order to come to terms with these (and other) features of poetry some of the above-mentioned aspects may be addressed in tasks specifically integrating formal and creative approaches. Alliterations and other repetitive structures serve a function, for example create a certain mood and possibly even stick in the learners' mind, which allow for a playful or more serious response, thus enabling readers to see the connection between form and function.

Dramatic texts: Considering the nature of drama it is important that its special features are taken into account, especially the lack of a narrative stance as a contrast to narrative fiction. Dramatic texts offer experiences that go beyond the printed text. Performative approaches have become very popular in the foreign language classroom, not only in terms of acting out but also through reflecting and discussing performances or film versions. A wide selection of short plays is available for young and intermediate learners (cf. Ahrens et al. 2008; Lütge 2015b; Paran/Robinson 2016). The following aspects are particularly important for classroom discussion and can be made fruitful also for creative and action-oriented activities (for more details see Surkamp/Nünning 2014, 37; Surkamp 2015):

- **characteristics of dramatic texts:** verbal and non-verbal codes, relation between text and performance
- **plot and composition:** structure, scenes and acts, open and closed forms
- **characters:** *dramatis personae*, character constellations
- **dialogues:** dialogues and monologues and their functions in a play, structure of speech
- **presentation of space and time:** setting, techniques of presentation of time and space

Dramatic texts are based on the development of action through dialogues and introduce their characters in a different way than narrative texts do. Learners should develop an awareness for these differences. Discussing the passing of time as represented in a dramatic text (and in contrast to a narrative text) or the depiction of character traits require careful observation and an understanding for the subtleties of this literary genre.

Films have become very popular in the EFL classroom. For many learners, they are even more accessible than print texts. Film is an important part of popular culture and can be used in the classroom for various aspects of competence development in the foreign language, for developing **film literacy** and also in order to promote an understanding of literature and culture. Audiovisual aspects of language teaching (*Hör-Seh-Verste-*

Aspects of
narration

Aspects of
dramatic texts

Aspects of poetry

hen; cf. chapter 6 in this volume) are integrated into the curricula of most federal states and have been discussed in detail in many publications, also with a view to activities and methods (cf. Henseler et al. 2011; Lütge 2012a; Thaler 2014; Viebrock 2016). The following aspects of approaching films should be considered so as to ensure the multitude of dimensions of the medium film (cf. Surkamp/Nünning 2014; Lütge 2012a; Viebrock 2016):

Aspects of films

- **literary aspects:** character constellations, symbolism, plot structure, presentation of space and time
- **dramatic aspects:** casting, dialogues, non-verbal communication, props
- **cineastic aspects:** editing, montage, composition of pictures and cuts, colours, sounds and lighting

In order not to use films exclusively for communicative follow-ups or as simple ›quarries‹ for discussions about the film's topic or context an awareness for these different dimensions and various different devices of the medium should be systematically developed. The appreciation of a literary work of art can also be additionally supported through literary adaptations and comparisons of different film versions of the same literary text (cf. Lütge 2012c).

10.4 | Teaching literature and film—approaches and methods

Approaches to teaching literature, questions of text selection and classroom methodology have always been influenced by underlying concepts from literary studies and foreign language pedagogy. The formal analysis of texts and films—usually following a teacher-centred pattern—was partly informed by the school of the **New Criticism**. Here, the sequence of summary of content was followed by the formal analysis of stylistic devices and often rounded off by a comment on ›the message‹ of the text, thus implicitly aiming at an alleged author's ›intention‹, which only needs to be carefully dug out and laid bare for meticulous academic inspection.

Today's didactics of literature is influenced by the **Reader Response Theory**, which builds on the learners' cognitive and emotional processes of sense-making. Methodologically, this led to activities that not only focus on the text but more on the reception process of a text or film. The learners' individual response gained ground so that individual reactions and subjective readings came into play. In spite of diverse theoretical pendulum swings and their reverberations in didactic materials there is some interaction between different and in fact complementary approaches to teaching literature that ideally interact with each other (cf. Grimm et al. 2015, 189):

- subjective response and reflection
- creative transformation and performance
- aesthetic and cultural analysis and interpretation

Phase	Pre-reading/ pre-viewing	While-reading/ while-viewing	Post-reading/ post-viewing
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ activation of schemata and prior knowledge ▪ facilitation of language input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ enhancement of involvement ▪ support of text-reader-interaction and more intense reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reflection on the reading/viewing experience ▪ creative or analytical follow-up work
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brainstorming on the topic/title/book cover/film poster ▪ predicting plot or central conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ step-by-step reading or viewing ▪ reading/watching for gist ▪ reading/watching for details 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ filling imaginative gaps (creative writing) ▪ transforming or amending a text/film

Table 10.2:
Examples of pre-,
while- and
post-reading/
viewing activities

Recently, the foreign language classroom has seen the rise of student- and action-oriented as well as holistic approaches. The focus on the learner with attention to affective and human factors has led to an interest in more personal approaches. Thus, ideas from communicative language teaching and humanistic schools of language teaching that put the learner more in focus seem to converge with recent developments in Reader Response Theory (cf. Gilroy/Parkinson 1996).

In line with this development a certain task sequence has emerged, a **three-phase model of pre-, while- and post-activities**, which in itself does not automatically guarantee high quality lessons. This tripartite division, however, has the potential to support the learners' processes of constructing meaning with regard to the content, the textual or aesthetic structure, the (literary or filmic) language or cultural implications. The goal is interaction between the learner and the text, both in written or oral language production and an enhanced sense of reflection about the ambiguities of a literary text or film, and thus about a basic characteristic of literature, for example questions of perspectivity and interpretation. With a view to the challenge of mastering a literary or filmic experience in a foreign language this sequence of processing a text is particularly relevant in order to overcome linguistic or cultural obstacles and to reduce the complexity of the reading or viewing process (cf. Surkamp 2012; Surkamp/Nünning 2014).

A word of warning should be addressed here concerning the schematic application of the three-phase-structure, which, if over-exerted, may tend to appear ›prescriptive‹ and thus possibly be rather detrimental than conducive to goals of the literature classroom. This sequence of processing a text may, however, be regarded as a kind of methodological scaffolding rather than a universal remedy or recipe, based on the very same heavily-used ingredients.

Much more intricate and specialised types of methods and activities—depending on the age level and the literary genre—open up a wide scenario of tasks that foster motivation and help build up competences. The most often cited are usually categorised as **production-oriented** or **ac-**

tion-oriented activities, both of which can of course be integrated into the pre-/while-/post-sequence of working with a text (cf. Surkamp 2012).

Examples

Production-oriented activities

Production-oriented activities aim at generating new texts, at rewriting, creatively expanding or alienating the original. Examples include:

- personal response in a reading or viewing diary or log, email or blog
- transformation of a film scene into a poem, a poem into a newspaper article, a film clip into a vlog
- poster, a character profile of a protagonist, digital collage
- book or film reviews edited digitally in teams and published online
- alternative endings and various forms of rewriting from different perspectives or in different genres

Action-oriented activities

Action-oriented activities aim at acting out or transposing a text into a different medium. Examples include:

- reconstructions of a text or film script from jumbled fragments
- scenic re-enactments of a film scene or a dialogue, freeze frames and spatial arrangements of certain scenes or conflicts
- fake interviews with the film director or author
- transformations into a different type of medium, for example text into film, an image, a pantomime, music or radio play

In this context, **creativity and performativity** are important keywords for the teaching of literature, sometimes overlapping with concepts of action-oriented or student-oriented approaches to literature. Generally, creative approaches tend to focus on individual recreations and try to open room for less desk-based or teacher-centred activities. However, sometimes used as a buzzword, creativity can materialise very differently in foreign language literature lessons, for example regarding oral or written response, out-of-classroom scenarios, joint teaching formats with arts or music teachers, innovative and original forms of response and recreation in groups or individually (cf. Hesse 2016). Considering the goals for an individual lesson, teachers should be aware that creative approaches are not *per se* 'better' (or 'worse') than analytical approaches but that ideally the two complement each other. It is indispensable, therefore, to always closely connect one's decision for the activities with the goals of the respective literature lesson:

- What are the main goals for the literature lesson I am planning?
- What competences are to be fostered in this literature lesson?
- How can those be best achieved? What methods/tasks can be helpful in order to reach that goal?
- Are my planned activities/methods really in line with the overall goal?

Or:

- Have I chosen creative tasks that seem original and interesting but that may not be fruitful for the text I have in mind? (E.g. brainstorming or prediction activities about a book or film title everyone knows anyway.)
- Am I constantly following a (maybe even predictable) sequence of some three to five pre-, while- and post-reading or viewing activities?

Performance-based approaches such as role-play, simulations, the creation of audio plays, improvised dialogues etc. regard the role of the learner as a constitutive part of the literary reception process. Here, learners are asked to actively take up another person's perspective, to imaginatively swap places with a literary character or protagonist of a film and thus interact with the text or film more deeply and—hopefully—with more motivation. Innovative performance-based activities can foster the reader's sense of engagement and his or her willingness to interact with the text in the foreign language.

It is important to be aware of the enormous range of performance-based approaches and not to restrict oneself to the demanding task of staging a scene with foreign language learners. Examples for slowly progressing formats of performativity in the context of literature and film can be remodelled on the following ideas for using a dramatic text (Shakespeare's *Hamlet*) and its literary adaptations as a starting point (cf. Lütge 2007):

Activities with drama

Example

- **active silences:** group presentation of a monologue, decisions about the number and length of pauses
- **nonverbal text responses:** pantomime and nonverbal presentations of a monologue
- **verbal improvisations:** changes in intonation, volume, pitch and other forms of verbal presentation
- **group encounters with the text:** group presentations or joint recitations of monologues

Resulting from the shift away from cognitive and teacher-centred approaches to more innovative formats of teaching literature there is a rising dimension of complexity and involvement required on the part of the learner and the teacher. 'Doing' literature as a synonym for increasingly demanding literature projects refers to the more active role of the learner (cf. Grimm et al. 2015, 187).

Aesthetic aspects: However, the **aesthetic and cultural analysis, interpretation and evaluation** of fiction must not be neglected. Context and culture shape the conditions in which literature materialises. In order to teach literature one needs to be aware of the fictional character of literary and filmic works. Thus, asking questions like 'what can be learned from this text/film about India?' would be reductionist and possibly lead to stereotypical or single-minded perspectives. Fiction is not an imitation

of reality and should not be misinterpreted as a mirror of reality. Thus, both essentialist as well as mimetic approaches should be avoided. Quite generally, different texts and films about the same topic or cultural background might be combined so as to provide a context for encountering a specific target culture. Alternatively, it is the *depiction* of cultural phenomena themselves that should be scrutinised, for example:

- How are camera angles, lighting or music employed to create a certain atmosphere in a film about India (e.g. *Slumdog Millionaire*)?
- How can the narrative stance, the choice of figurative language and the composition of flashbacks evoke an impression of India in the corresponding novel?

Formal aspects: Questions concerning the form as well as the content of literary works need to be taken into account. While it may well be recommendable to start off teaching a Shakespearean sonnet by inviting the learners' personal response, the question how **form shapes meaning** requires careful analysis, too. Literary or filmic devices and their functions including a reflection on the connection of form and content are indispensable. Depending on the framework of the chosen genre aspects like voice, style and structure play an important role. The narrative stance and its different realisations need to be systematically approached, also concerning production-oriented activities: without a basic understanding of how a narrator's presence or absence shapes meaning no creative transposition into a different genre would be possible.

Overcoming the dichotomy of analytical versus creative approaches is an important goal for any conceptualisation of literature didactics. Both perspectives are significant and may indeed be merged in activities stressing both formal aspects of a text or film and their creative transformations, for example in tasks that allow for personal responses to certain formal devices. Rather than just using (or abusing) literature and film for communicative follow-up activities, i.e. as a kind of quarry for topics and plots, the potential of literature in its ambivalence, complexity and multiperspectivity should be systematically developed (for detailed accounts see Surkamp/Nünning 2014; Delanoy et al. 2015; Lütge 2015b).

10.5 | Perspectives for the literature classroom

Whereas some recent criticism regarding the neglect of aesthetic learning in various educational curricula has been voiced, the field of literature didactics has developed various new trends and topics introducing innovative projects for teaching and research. Among the most visible developments **literature for all levels** can be identified as a consequence of student-centred approaches and a generally renewed interest in the reader. Literary texts and films should in fact be employed from the very beginning starting with **picture books**, **short poems**, **nursery rhymes** and songs but also **short animation films**. Storytelling and the playful repetition of rhyme and rhythmic patterns, of nonsense songs and ele-

mentary children's literature should be systematically integrated into beginners' foreign language classrooms.

Basic and intermediate levels of literary learning often refer to visual elements, on the interplay between words and pictures, watching and listening, for example in storytelling events in a classroom. Suspense, adventure, imaginative gaps and surprising twists are important elements of literary encounters for younger learners and they are constitutive for what is essential in reading for pleasure or extensive reading (cf. Krashen 2004). Visually supported materials (texts and films) can be used for different levels and age groups.

Picture books

Barack Obama: *Of Thee I Sing* (2010)

Drew Daywalt: *The Day the Crayons Quit* (2013)

Neil Gaiman: *The Day I Swapped my Dad for Two Goldfish* (2004)

Short animation films

The Present (2014. Dir. Jacob Frey, 4:18 minutes)

John und Karen (2007. Dir. Matthew Walker, 3:56 minutes)

Father and Daughter (2000. Dir. Michaël Dudok de Wit, 9:22 minutes)

The potential of multimodal literature addressing different modes of understanding is gaining ground in recent literature didactics (e.g. Mark Haddon's novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, 2003 or Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, 2007). Graphic novels (in some cases in word/image combinations like Shaun Tan's *The Lost Thing*, in some cases completely without language like Shaun Tan's *The Arrival*) can be used as starting-points for developing students' visual and critical literacy and for introducing skills that are also important for film literacy. An understanding for the aesthetics of composing a film as a sequence of pictures can be prepared by an analysis of the different panels of a graphic novel, which may be judged as a 'missing' and very welcome 'link' between literature and film.

With the goal of supporting literary learning in the foreign language classroom, one may concede that pictures can provide a narrative scaffold to help the reader follow the story and to provide a meaning-anchor effect that supports inexperienced L1 readers. The potential of multimodal texts for foreign language learning can be seen in the contribution to the narrative in multiple forms (e.g. pictures, words, design, the peritext of picture books), which may either overlap, complement, amplify or contradict each other. Multimodal literature can thus provide rich opportunities for negotiation of understanding and meaning (cf. Bland 2015; Bland/Lütge 2013). According to Bland (2015), the following aspects play an important role in this context:

- Pictures can be used as a shortcut to deep reading.
- Access to cultural context can be provided through pictures.
- Amplification through simplification can serve as an important principle for visual literacy.

Example

Global topics: Newer thematic developments in literature and film integrate topics of a more global scope. Concepts like global issues in ELT are mirrored in materials, often in the context of inter- and transcultural learning (cf. chapter 9 in this volume). **Global Education** strives to promote the awareness of social values, ethics and the environment. Similarly, **Global Citizenship Education** is focusing on goals that emphasise cultural and political issues. Increasingly transcultural approaches to ELT with an interest of overcoming the binary model of ›us‹ and ›them‹ lay more emphasis on the commonalities between people from different cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds (cf. Byram 2008; Lütge 2015a).

While the ultimate goal of a ›global citizen‹ may not always realistically be in the centre of the foreign language literature classroom, it is important to note that these concepts have partly been mirrored in texts and films now available for teaching, for example (cf. Lütge 2015a):

- **films** such as *An Inconvenient Truth* by Davis Guggenheim
- **short stories** such as *FREE? Stories Celebrating Human Rights* (2009), an anthology of fourteen short narratives
- **picture books** with a global focus such as *We Are All Born Free. The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights in Pictures* by Amnesty International (2008)

Children's and young adult literature (CYAL) has been another prospering field over the past 10 years. This increase of popularity has been fruitful for the EFL classroom and has contributed massively to a widening of the literary canon. The advantages of these—sometimes—shorter literary works include more straightforward plotlines, simpler forms and often less complexity in their character constellations, which can help young readers to identify with protagonists of their age groups (cf. Bland/Lütge 2013; Bland 2015; Hesse 2016; O'Sullivan/Rösler 2013). Often CYAL takes up the experience of ›secondary worlds‹ (e.g. historical fiction, religious, mythical figures, supernatural powers).

Debates about the teaching of literature in a foreign language are also led with regard to the legitimacy of using **graded or simplified readers**, i.e. adaptations of original texts to be applied for extensive reading and with a view to their most recent transformation into digital formats. Graded readers can be helpful in order to introduce younger learners to literature and to allow for reading experiences at a very early stage. In some cases, extreme simplifications of classics are felt to be counter-productive, though, for example when the literary language is ripped off all its challenges—and charms (cf. Hermes 2017b for a detailed discussion).

The interplay of texts, their intermedial connections and various media adaptations, sometimes simplifications, provides a rich web of literary and filmic encounters for EFL teaching. In the case of Neil Gaiman's prize-winning **young adult novel** *Coraline* (2002), the charming **graphic novel** illustrated by Craig Russell with the same title (2008) allows for film-analytical tasks (e.g. camera angles) or pre-viewing activities for the **film version** (animation film by Henry Selick, 2009). Reading images in literature and film in various forms, for example using picture books, graphic or multimodal novels or films as literary adaptations and feature

films plays an important part in establishing literary and film literacy (*Text- und Medienkompetenz*) (for more details see Henseler et al. 2011; Lütge 2012a). Comparing different realisations of *Coraline* can make it very obvious for learners that the same story can be told, shown, narrated or mediated very differently. An awareness for the intricacies of the narrative stance, for necessary omissions, specific visual elements, music and sound can be fostered systematically considering the following questions:

- How is atmosphere created in the novel and in the film? What literary or filmic devices contribute to this impression? How would other choices have changed the impressions of the reader or viewer?
- How is the narrative stance depicted in the literary text? And how does narration work in the film?
- What are the differences between different versions or formats of the same text (novel, graphic novel, film, different film versions)?

Multiple texts and media are assumed to generate communication and to attract learners with their rich input. However, critical literacy as part of media-sensitive approaches to teaching literature in the foreign language must also take into account questions concerning the dispersal of the learners' attention. Digital tools can also support collaboration in and beyond the literature classroom but more research into this field is still lacking. Modern classroom technology and media-based innovations do not necessarily pose a threat to creativity or individual enjoyment. Educational apps might even facilitate the following methodological aspects: reflection, modification, communication, multiplication, creation and collaboration. Interactive digital narratives can allow for individual response and creative approaches (cf. Merse/Schmidt 2012; Cope/Kalantzis 2013; Grimm/Hammer 2015).

Digital Apps

Example

These digital apps can be used in the context of literary learning:

popplet: visualises (changes in) character constellations, plot lines, timelines, etc.

flipsnack: creates flip books and/or book brochures

little bird tales: creates stories with pictures and sound

glogster: creates an interactive book poster with text boxes, pictures, audio and video files and links

Testing and evaluation: Another challenge often mentioned in the context of teaching literature refers to aspects of testing and evaluation (cf. chapter 14 in this volume). Depending on the overall goals of individual lessons or teaching units, teachers are confronted with a number of questions:

- What is the role of testing and evaluation in my foreign language literature classroom?
- Does testing refer to language and reading skills or literary aspects of the fictional text?

- Does testing refer to knowledge about content and form or rather to the individual appreciation of literature and its personal response?
- What tasks are adequate?
- How can individual response be judged?

Current models on literary competences integrate aesthetic aspects as well as questions of language development and evaluation. Various suggestions for task-based foreign language learning scenarios try to overcome alleged contradictions of the foreign language literature classroom (cf. Hallet et al. 2015).

10.6 | Conclusion

As has been pointed out above, *using* literature and *teaching* literature may not always be the same thing, thus implying different approaches to texts and films, questions of text selection and classroom methodology. Referring to another dichotomy mentioned in this chapter, for example analytical and creative approaches, it is important to consider that integrating different dimensions of teaching literature and film is helpful in overcoming apparent contradictions. Similarly, content and competence-orientation should ideally complement each other; the goals for a lesson or a teaching unit will necessarily define the road to be taken as a starting-point into the complex world of literature. Literature lessons in the foreign language classroom are not supposed to be static units following simplified recipe-like routines. Teachers are faced with various challenges considering questions of text selection, methodological flexibility, evaluation and competence development, as well as foreign language development and literary learning.

Literature in the digital age will pose even more challenges (cf. Hammond 2016) but may open up new doors into imaginative worlds. Interactivity instead of passive reception is very interesting from an educational perspective in this context and might offer some chances for the future—and especially for the literature classroom. Whether Alan Maley (1989, 59) is right in pointing out that »literature is back, but wearing different clothes« may be a completely new chapter in the (digital) future of teaching literature.

Further reading

- Delanoy, Werner/Eisenmann, Maria/Matz, Frauke (eds.) (2015): *Learning with Literature in the EFL Classroom*. Frankfurt a. M. et al.
- Hallet, Wolfgang/Surkamp, Carola/Krämer, Ulrich (eds.) (2015): *Literaturkompetenzen Englisch. Modellierung, Curriculum, Unterrichtsbeispiele*. Seelze-Velber.
- Lütge, Christiane (2012a): *Mit Filmen Englisch unterrichten*. Berlin.
- Paran, Amos/Robinson, Pauline (2016): *Literature*. Oxford.
- Surkamp, Carola/Nünning, Ansgar (⁴2016): *Englische Literatur unterrichten. Grundlagen und Methoden* [2006]. Seelze-Velber.
- Viebrock, Britta (ed.) (2016): *Feature Films in English Language Teaching*. Tübingen.

Christiane Lütge

11 Principles and Methods—Focus on Learners, Content and Tasks

- 11.1 The communicative turn and its implications
- 11.2 Focus on learners
- 11.3 Focus on content
- 11.4 Task-based language learning
- 11.5 Conclusion

The question of how languages are taught and learned most effectively has been controversially discussed throughout the history of foreign language teaching. To answer this question, a variety of language teaching methods have been promoted over the years (cf. chapter 1 in this volume). The choice of method influences the activities learners will be expected to perform in the classroom, the roles teachers and learners are assigned, the content they are expected to work with and the material that is being used (cf. Harmer 2015, 62; Richard/Rogers 2014, 29).

What is a method? The term »method« is used in a variety of contexts in foreign language teaching. Methods can be used to describe comprehensive concepts of language teaching such as the audiolingual or the grammar-translation methods (cf. chapter 1 in this volume). They are based on specific theories of how languages are learned and can be understood as links »between the actions of a teacher in the classroom and the thoughts that underlie the actions« (Larsen-Freeman/Anderson 2011, 1). It is also common to use the term »approach« for these underlying theoretical principles of language learning (cf. Richards/Rogers 2014, 3).

In contrast, the term »method« as it is commonly used by teachers also describes specific classroom **activities** and **techniques** (cf. e.g. Grieser-Kindel et al. 2016). With these techniques, approaches to language learning and teaching are put into practice and certain principles are realised: for example, the activity »think-pair-share«, in which students first think individually about a problem and then share results with their classmates, might be an activity that learners do in a classroom that subscribes to **task-based language learning** (cf. section 11.4) and helps to implement the principle of **learner-orientation**.

While some methods and approaches come with a fixed set of procedures (for example, the audiolingual method that relied heavily on repetition and pattern-drill), others are characterised by a wide variety of activities and procedures and are therefore more difficult to be labelled as methods. Another reason why the concept of »method« is rather fuzzy is that their implementation will vary from teacher to teacher and classroom to classroom. Teachers will interpret methods depending on their own experiences as students, their beliefs and their teaching style (cf. Larsen-Freeman/Anderson 2011, xiii f.). The same is true for learners who also have considerable influence on the success of methods and will bring their experiences, needs, interests and motivation to the classroom.

Questions
of terminology