

**PRE-SERVICE EFL TEACHERS' ATTITUDE
TOWARDS THE USE OF LITERATURE IN
PRACTICE TEACHING**

İngilizce Öğretmen Adaylarının Öğretmenlik Uygulamasında

Edebiyat Kullanımı İle İlgili Tutumları

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the attitudes of teacher candidates at an English Language Teaching (ELT) program of Çukurova University in Turkey about the use of literature during practice teaching. Through a 13-item questionnaire prepared by the researchers, they gathered the beliefs and attitudes of 137 senior student teachers enrolled at this ELT program. Categorized and thus analysed under four main sections, the questionnaire consisted of a mix of open-ended and close-ended questions. The findings suggest pre-service teachers' positive attitude towards using literature in practice teaching by including the literary texts into their classes since they state that literature is useful for language teaching/learning, personal development, and literary appreciation of the students. However, the same pre-service teachers also admit that they cannot easily use literary texts because they are in doubt about either self-efficacy on teaching and/or their students' linguistic capability in the target language for processing literary texts. In addition, they highlight the fact that there are some limitations imposed upon by the practicum schools or by the framework of the practicum program of the university. In conclusion, the present study has some important implications for teacher training institutions in terms of the use of literature in ELT.

Key Words: *Literature, English Language Teaching, practicum, attitude, pre-service teachers.*

Özet

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de Çukurova Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili Eğitimi programındaki öğretmen adaylarının stajda edebiyatın kullanılması konusundaki tutumlarını araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. 13 maddelik bir anketle İngiliz Dili Eğitimi programına kayıtlı 137 son sınıf öğrencisinin görüşleri alınmıştır. Dört ana başlık altında sınıflandırılmış ve bu şekilde analiz edilmiş olan anket, açık ve kapalı uçlu sorulardan oluşmuştur. Çalışma sonuçları, öğretmen adaylarının staj döneminde sınıflarına edebi metinleri dahil etme konusunda olumlu bir tutuma sahip olduklarını ifade etmektedir çünkü bu öğretmenler edebiyatın dil öğretimi/öğrenimi, öğrencilerin kişisel ve edebi zevklerinin gelişimi gibi konularda faydalı olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Fakat aynı öğretmen adayları edebi metinleri verimli bir şekilde işlemek için gereken yetkinliğe sahip olup olmadıkları ve/veya staj okulundaki öğrencilerin İngilizce dil becerilerinin yeterliği hususunda şüphe duyduklarından edebi metinleri kullanamayacaklarını itiraf etmişlerdir. Buna ek olarak, staj okullarından veya üniversitedeki staj programından kaynaklı bazı kısıtlamaların olduğu gerçeğinin de altını çizmişlerdir. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma öğretmen yetiştiren kurumlar için edebiyatın İngiliz Dili Eğitiminde kullanımı ile ilgili bazı önemli çıkarımlar içermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Edebiyat, İngilizce Öğretimi, öğretmenlik uygulaması, tutum, öğretmen adayları.*

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1. Introduction

Literature is an indispensable element of a language learning experience (Bassnett and Grundy, 1993), and the use of literary texts in English language teaching has already been proven to be beneficial for many reasons. Some of those benefits are that literature promotes language development (Moody, 1983; Carter and Long, 1991; Mckay, 2001; Ghosn, 2002; Khatib, Rezaei and Derakhshan, 2011); it makes the learners see and appreciate various cultures and ideologies similar to or different from theirs (Carter and Long, 1991; Jay, Latosi-Sawin, Knight, and Crain, 1993; Clark, 2000; Mckay, 2001; Khatib et al., 2011), and it increases learners' appreciation of literature (Widdowson, 1975; Moody, 1968). Arslan (2001) in her thesis study found out that most of the English language teacher candidates (92%) in ELT Department of Çukurova University remarked about the necessity of learner exposure to the literary texts during their education. However, she concluded that it still remains as a big challenge for the public schools to implement the use of literature into the curriculum.

As for the other studies conducted on the use of literature in ELT, Arıkan (2005), for example, in his study that he conducted with 100 students at ELT Department of Hacettepe University- found that 98% of the participants think that the literature courses are necessary for their development as an English language teacher, and 92% of the participants put forward that they will use what they have learned in literature courses in their future teaching contexts. In the same vein, as a result of their study with 30 Turkish senior students at ELT Department of Middle East Technical University, Çıraklı and Kılıçkaya (2011) concluded that all the participants agree on the necessity of literature courses for their occupation as an English language teacher; however, the same participants state that they cannot benefit from literature courses in their practice teaching.

When the issue turns into pre-service teacher education, it has been specified with pedagogical content knowledge, where pedagogy refers to the specifics about the nature of learning and teaching issues; content refers to the subject matter (Shulman, 1986, 1987). The subject matter knowledge gained through content-based readings and pedagogy courses is called "received knowledge"; on the other hand, the experience gained through practice teaching is called "experiential knowledge" (Wallace, 1991). The combination of both via reflective thinking cycles is usually phrased as *theory into practice* or *linking theory and practice* in various studies on teachers' professional learning (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Fullan, 2006; Farrell, 1999; Korthagen, 2001). During practicum, student teachers try to combine theory and practice constantly by referring to one another, from theory to practice or vice versa to assess what they know, to re-evaluate their personal and professional knowledge so far with a reference to the practical experience they gain. Russell (1988) also notes that linking theory and practice is not a linear two-step process such as they accumulate the content knowledge first, and then apply it to the practical matters. Support at this point usually comes from the supervisors and mentors, and this is invaluable for the student teachers to solve the problems encountered during and after practice teaching. Feiman-Nemser (1983) points out that teacher knowledge is beyond what teacher education programs offer. Learning to teach is also related to the beliefs, expectations, experience in classroom practice, interpretations of the work of their peers, supervisors, mentors, other experienced teachers as well as teacher educators.

Pertinant to the complexity of teacher knowledge, the beliefs and the attitudes of the pre-service teacher have been one of the main foci of teacher research. The term *beliefs* has also been used interchangeably with *personal theories*, *personal constructs*, *implicit theories*, *perspectives*, *assumptions and images* (Cabaroglu, 1999; Roberts, 1998). For Pajares (1992), beliefs are “individual’s judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition, a judgment that can only be inferred from a collective understanding of what human beings say, intend, and do” (p. 316). Teacher beliefs are defined as “tacit, often unconsciously held assumptions about students, classrooms, and the academic material to be taught” (Kagan, 1992, p. 65). While the knowledge is based on experience (Orton, 1996), beliefs are not necessarily a result of some logical process in mind, rather general conceptions on the issue (Thompson, 1992). Attitudes, on the other hand, are more inclusive; they can be defined as ‘predispositions to respond to a class of stimuli with certain class of responses’ (Rosenberg & Hovland, 1960, p.3) Attitudes may influence behaviour; moreover, attitudes are one of the most prominent qualities of a teacher that directly affects student learning and personal development (Kucukahmet, 2003).

Beliefs in this study are used as the participant student teachers’ abstract conceptions about the actions teachers take, for example, in problem solving, or their understanding of the events in classes. Attitudes are the positions where the teacher prefers to take against issues regarding teaching and learning, i.e., whether to add literary text in the content of teaching English language or not.

Similarly using literature in English Language teaching is another dimension of teacher beliefs for EFL. Relevant literature cited the benefits of using literary texts in ELT classes as well as potential difficulties. Ghosn (2002), for instance, states four reasons for utilizing authentic literature in the primary school EFL class, and first reason is that literature presents motivating and meaningful context for language learning. Secondly, literature enhances language learning; that is, via literature the learners find an opportunity to see the best uses of language thus leading to an improvement in their language. Third reason for the inclusion of literature in language learning is that it enhances academic literacy and thinking skills, and the last reason touches upon the idea that literature develops the child emotionally and helps them promote interpersonal and intercultural attitudes.

Parallel to what Ghosn (2002) states above, Jay et al. (1993) asserts that literature should be the primary reading in freshman English classes basing on the four grounds they put forward. According to them, reading literature is practical and enjoyable. What is more, reading literature helps students to become critical thinkers, and makes students to be aware of and respect for cultural diversity.

In addition to these, the benefits of literature as a tool for language learning in EFL/ESL is summarised by Khatib et al. (2011) under the following nine headings: exposure to authentic material, motivation, cultural/intercultural awareness and globalization, intensive/extensive reading practice, sociolinguistic/pragmatic knowledge, grammar and vocabulary knowledge, language skills, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking.

In spite of all aforementioned uses of literature, Khatib et al. (2011) also mentions some probable difficulties in using literature in EFL/ESL settings as below.

- Syntax: difficult syntactic structures,
- Lexis: difficult or outdated vocabulary,
- Phonetics and Phonology: deviation from normal phonetic and phonological system,
- Semantics: changes in meaning,

- Selection of Materials: many factors to take into consideration such as age and gender of the learners,
- Literary Concepts and Notions: Unfamiliarity with literary genres and conventions,
- Literature and Academic English: place of literature in specialized fields such as biology and zoology, where educational goals are given priority over aesthetic values of literary texts, and
- Cultural Barriers: different cultural concepts.

There are still some problems experienced by language teachers when they try to teach English via using literary texts. One of the major problems relate to the selection of appropriate texts since the text selection is "difficult, controversial and ultimately pretty subjective" (McRae, 1991 p.44). During the process of text selection, there are some crucial factors to take into account; such as the level of grammatical structures used in those texts. As Littlewood (1986) states "[t]he linguistic structures are, of course, the gateway or barrier to other levels, and it is fruitless to expect pupils to appreciate literary works for which they are not linguistically ready" (p.181). In the same vein, Hişmanoğlu (2005) points out that there are problems related to the learning/teaching material as pedagogically-designed appropriate materials are scarce. Another problem is that preparation stage in the field of literature teaching in TESL/TEFL programs is absent. Still another is that the objectives as to the role of literature in EFL/ESL are not sharply outlined. "Many instructors try to include literature in their classroom, but lack the background and training in that field" (Hişmanoğlu, 2005, p. 65).

Based on these findings, the present study aimed at discovering the nature of literary use in English classes and the attitudes of student teachers towards implementation. Their beliefs on the use and their reasoning for the spaces of its use were explored to contribute a better understanding between the teacher training institutions and schools for designing more effective training and practicum programs.

2. Method

The study is designed as a descriptive one. We collected the data via semi-structured 13-item questionnaire which investigates and sorts pre-service English language teachers' attitudes towards using literary texts in teaching English during teaching practice. We also qualitatively attempted to seek their reasons behind via open-ended questionnaire items.

2.1. Participants

137 out of 165 fourth year senior ELT Department students of Çukurova University participated to this study. Their age ranged from 20 to 23, and the majority of the students graduated from English-intensive high school, where 30% of their course was on learning and mastering English language. 90% of the students who returned the questionnaire were female, which is usually the case in ELT departments in Turkey in terms of sex of the students enrolled. 85 out of 137 students (62%) have had a teaching experience previously, mostly tutorials to primary school kids. Participants taught a variety of different school subjects including English (83%), Turkish (10%), and other subjects (7%) such as geography or drawing. In addition, some of them taught general English (mostly focusing on vocabulary and grammar) to high school and university students. 30% of participants had teaching experience ranging from 1 to 3 years while 54% of them had 1 to 5 months. However, it should be noted that these teaching experiences were classified out of departmental *teaching experience* that consists of

systematic school observation and practice teaching in a public school setting for graduation from ELT Department.

2.2. Context of the Study

The present study was conducted with the students enrolled at an ELT Department of a university in Turkey. ELT Departments have four years of education where in the end of this duration the graduates are appointed as English Language Teachers in public schools at primary or secondary levels by the Ministry of National Education. They are required to pass an official professional proficiency test as well to be recruited by the ministry. Due to norm-staffing procedures since 2001 (UNESCO Report, 2008), the need for teachers at primary level is greater than the secondary levels (Kırkgöz, 2007). Experienced teachers have been mostly placed at secondary schools, where the novices are extensively appointed to primary school.

During the four-year tertiary education before 2006 teacher education reform, participants of this study had to complete 240 credit coursework which is comprised of “200 hours of practicum experience and 280 hours of other courses including planning and evaluation, growth & learning, special teaching methods, materials development, classroom management, and teaching methodologies in ... [the] subject...” (UNESCO Report, 2008, p.132). The students in ELT Department of Çukurova University receive four-semester literature courses: two semesters (3 hours a week) in their second year, and two more semesters (again 3 hours a week) in their third year. The 200-hour practicum work is divided into two parts: one is realized during the second year and the other is in the senior year before the graduation. The first part is to make the student teachers familiar with the teaching atmosphere with all its dynamics such as the headmaster, the students, the textbooks, teachers’ lounge and so forth. On the other hand, the practicum in the senior year is to make the student teachers gain experiential teaching knowledge (Kolb, 1984). During this time, the classroom performance of these seniors are evaluated both by their mentor in the practicum school and the supervisor from the university. Practicum schools are arranged by the ELT Department practicum coordinators among the public primary and secondary schools in urban areas. The socio-economic levels of the schools vary from one to another, and student teachers are to some extent free to choose their practicum schools; that is, since the practicum schools have a limit of maximum ten practitioners, the students have to nominate three schools in case there is any agglomeration for a certain choice.

2.3. Data Collection Tool and Procedure

Data were collected through a specifically designed questionnaire (see Appendix) consisting of 13 questions, a mix of open-ended and close-ended, categorized under four different parts:

- (A) demographic information (the first four questions),
- (B) teaching experience (questions 5 to 8),
- (C) lesson planning (questions 9 to 12), and
- (D) use of literature (question 13).

The researchers developed the questionnaire solely for the present study and sought advice from two scholars in the field who are working in the same department in terms of instrumental validity and reliability before collecting the data. After reaching a consensus, the questionnaire was piloted with 28 fourth-year ELT students and -in line

with the results- administered to the participants of the present study. This process of collecting the information via the questionnaire was realized in Turkish, the native language of the participants, so as to elicit their responses more freely and openly.

2.4. Data Analysis

As for the data analysis, descriptive and content analysis techniques were applied. Frequency and percentage were calculated for close-ended questionnaire items; procedures of coding, labelling and categorizing were done for the open-ended questionnaire items. Both researchers, who are also the authors of this article, examined the data to sustain the validity and reliability check. For this purpose, Miles & Huberman's (1994) *inter-rater reliability formula* was employed. The items were grouped as "Agree" and "Disagree" to compare each rater's decision; inter-rater reliability was calculated through utilizing Miles & Huberman's (1994) formula ($\text{Reliability} = \frac{\text{Number of Agreement}}{\text{Total Number of Agreement} + \text{Disagreement}} \times 100$). As a result, co-efficiency level was found .92, which was accepted as an "excellent agreement" according to the given formula.

3. Findings

In the questionnaire, Part D is about the beliefs of the student teachers on the use of literary texts in teaching EFL during practicum stage. We will particularly focus on this part and present the analysis, accordingly. In Part D of the questionnaire, the participants were supposed to complete the following sentences.

- a) Literary texts should be used because...
- b) I want to use literary texts but...
- c) Literary texts shouldn't be used because...

Despite the fact that there was no statement in the questionnaire indicating that the participants can choose more than one option, some of them did so. By taking into consideration of all the possibilities, Table 1 below was prepared accordingly.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics on the Beliefs on the Use of Literary Texts in Practise Teaching

Options	f	%
a. Literary texts should be used because...	68	50
b. I want to use literary texts but...	39	28,2
c. Literary texts shouldn't be used because...	17	12
Both a and b	9	7
Both a and c	-	-
Both b and c	1	0.7
a, b, and c	2	1.4
No answer	1	0.7

As it can clearly be seen in Table 1 above, although it seems that 50% of the students thought that the literary texts should be used, it is more, indeed, adding all the other options including a ('both a and b' with 7% and 'a, b, and c' with 1.4%). Also, the students showed their preference on using the literary texts in their practice teaching by choosing "b" as the second most preferred choice with 28.2%. This option is also included in the other combined preferences ('both a and b' with 7%, 'both b and c' with 0.7%, and 'a, b, and c' with 1.4%). On the other hand, option 'c' has been preferred by only 14.1% of

the students with the inclusion of the options: 'both b and c' with 0.7% and 'a, b, and c' with 1.4%. As a result, the majority of the participants agree on the idea of using literary texts during practicum with a total of 85%.

After the completion of the content analysis, it was seen that the participants who stated that 'literary texts should be used' in practice teaching put forward the reasons displayed in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Reasons for Using Literary Texts in Practice Teaching

Themes	Categories	f	%
Language teaching/learning	a. Motivation enhancement (both for the learner and the teacher) b. Linguistic improvement (grammar/speaking/reading/vocabulary) c. Exposure to the authentic material (a variety of different language styles) d. Meaningful learning/teaching e. Practice in teaching	89	61
Personal development	a. Knowledge about the target culture b. Critical thinking c. Developing creativity	50	35
Literature for pleasure of learners	a. Literary appreciation b. Knowledge about the literary works	6	4

According to Table 2 above, students view literary texts as useful under three headings: language teaching/learning, personal development and literature. As for the language teaching and learning, 61% of the students consider literature as a tool for enhancement of the motivation, linguistic improvement in regards to grammar, reading, speaking and vocabulary, exposure to the authentic material, creating a meaningful learning/teaching environment and providing practice in teaching. Some key remarks made about those are as follow:

Literary texts make the lesson more enjoyable, creates curiosity in the students, and their motivation to learn increases. Student Teacher (it will be referred to as ST henceforth)15

Literature is essential for the students to comprehend the sentences, to read between the lines and to exercise grammar. ST86

If we use literature during practicum, we gain experience in how to analyse and teach literary texts. ST120

Apart from language teaching and learning, 35% of the participants thought that literary texts can also be used for personal development. Culture, creativity and critical thinking are the categories belonging to this theme, and the students elaborated especially on the accessibility to various cultures across the world via the use of such texts. On this issue, the participants stated the followings:

It is widely believed that literature lights the road leading to the culture of that society; oral and written literature are the means for cultural transmission. ST5

To analyse literary texts changes the world view of the students and thus their abilities for analysing and criticising enhance. ST12

We can make our students much more creative by using literature. ST118

In addition to language teaching/learning and personal development, a small number of students (4%) indicated that by using literary texts, they gain some knowledge about literary texts, especially the canonical ones. They also believe that students should learn to appreciate literature. Two statements about this theme are given below:

Students should read the classics in accordance with their language level. ST8

Students should have a general view about what literature is. ST57

Participants who chose "I want to use literary texts but..." gave their reasons on what prevents them from using those texts in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Reasons for not including Literary Texts in Practice Teaching

Themes	Categories	f	%
Students enrolled at practicum schools	a. Low proficiency level of the students b. Low level of understanding of literature c. Disinterest in English language learning	31	46
Practitioners' views about their professional competence	a. Inefficacy in teaching English b. Inefficacy in teaching literature	19	28
Quality of Practicum schools	Lack of opportunity for implementing a lesson plan based on a literary text	13	19
Framework of practicum program	Limited time	5	7

As it is clear from Table 3 above, the participants reflected their reasons for not utilizing literary texts during practicum under four main themes, and these are students at practicum schools (46%), practitioners' views about themselves (28%), practicum schools (19%), and framework of practicum program (7%). Major problems related to the students at practicum schools are their being disinterested in English as a course and their low level in terms of proficiency and their understanding of literature. Some statements of the participants in relation to the issue at hand are given below:

Proficiency level of the students at my practicum school is not so good. ST23

I don't use literary texts because I think the students will not comprehend them and then they will get bored. ST49

The motivation of the students towards English is low due to our education system. They study English only to pass the exams. ST106

When we consider the issue from the practitioners' perspectives, it is clear that 28% of them view themselves as inefficient both in teaching English and in teaching literature. The comments of some practitioners below summarize this idea best:

I don't know exactly how and for which language skills literary texts can be used in teaching English. ST10

I view literature as difficult from time to time. As a matter of fact, I don't trust myself when it comes to literature. ST69

I believe that I'll have difficulty in knowing what kind of things the students are interested in and also which teaching techniques I have to use. ST137

In addition to the aforementioned problems, the participants stated that practicum schools do not let them implement a lesson plan based on a literary text (19%). Framework of practicum program is, also, another reason for not using literary texts since the participants think that they have a limited time (7%). Statements of the participants regarding these themes are given below:

We have to teach in accordance with the curriculum and the technique of the mentor; thus, we cannot use literary texts. ST65

I think such a practice will not be thorough in a limited time. ST102

Participants who claimed that 'literary texts should not be used' in practice teaching gave the reasons demonstrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Reasons for Objection to the Use of Literary Texts in Practice Teaching

Themes	Categories	f	%
Students at practicum schools	a. Low proficiency level of the students b. Disinterest in literature c. Negative attitude towards the practitioners' professional efficacy	10	38
Practitioners' views about themselves	a. Inefficacy in teaching b. Disliking the use of literature in teaching English	10	38
Practicum schools	Lack of opportunity for implementing a lesson plan	4	16
Framework of practicum program	Limited time	2	8

It is demonstrated in Table 4 that the participants think that "literary texts should not be used in practice teaching" because of the following reasons.

- Students at practicum schools (38%),
- Practitioners' views about themselves (38%),
- Practicum schools (16%), and
- Framework of practicum program (8%).

By focusing on the students at practicum schools, the participants stated the followings:

If the students at practicum schools are very far away from comprehending a piece of literary text, then there is no point of using it. ST4

Most of the students at practicum schools are not interested in literature. ST26

The students at practicum schools do not behave us as their teachers. ST43

The second major theme centered on the practitioners' views about themselves (38%), and the following quotations on their reflections clarify their point.

It can be difficult for us to control the class and at the same time teaching some language skills by the use of literary texts. ST33

Practitioners are inexperienced during practicum. ST72

I don't like to teach English via using literary texts. ST91

Adding to these reasons, some participants focused on practicum schools (16%) and framework of practicum program (8%) by remarking as in the followings:

Neither the mentors nor the school administration view us as teachers. For this reason, we could not have any chance to use literary texts. ST123

We have very short time with the students. It would not be meaningful. In the future, I can use literary texts with my own classes. ST130

4. Discussion

Findings of the present study demonstrated that most of the participants agreed upon the benefits and necessity for the use of literature in ELT classes. However, they do have hesitations about how they can manage that. These results display close parallelism with the related literature. In other words, the participants stated the benefits of the use of literature like the scholars in the field (*cf.* background section and Table 2). The main items (in the order of first what the scholars stated and secondly what the participants wrote) about this issue are given below in Table 5.

Table 5

Findings across Relevant Literature on the Benefits of Literature Use in ELT

Relevant Literature	Categories from the Qualitative Data
Motivating context (Ghosn, 2002)	Motivation enhancement
Language learning (Moody, 1983; Carter and Long, 1991; Mckay, 2001; Ghosn, 2002; Khatib et al., 2011)	Linguistic improvement in terms of grammar, speaking, reading and so forth
Authenticity (Khatib et al., 2011)	Exposure to the authentic material
Meaningful context (Ghosn, 2002)	Meaningful learning/teaching
Cultural diversity and cultural awareness and globalization (Clark, 2000; Carter and Long, 1991; Jay et al., 1993; Mckay, 2001; Khatib et al., 2011)	Knowledge about the target culture

Critical thinking (Jay et al., 1993; Khatib et al., 2011)	Critical and reflective thinking
Appreciation of literature (Widdowson, 1975; Moody, 1968)	Literary appreciation

As it is apparent from Table 5 above, the participants are quite aware of the fact that literature presents a motivating and meaningful context. Not only it assists learners on the issue of language learning, but also it provides opportunities for seeing different cultures and thinking in a critical fashion. In addition to these, the participants have perceived that the literary texts are authentic materials, and literature should be read for its own sake.

Aside from the positive sides of using literature during practicum, the problems which were written by the participants concerning the use of literature during practicum are also similar to the difficulties stated by the scholars (*cf.* background section and Table 3 and 4).

Table 6

Findings across Relevant Literature on the Difficulty of Literature Use in ELT

Relevant Literature	Categories from the Qualitative Data
Difficulty in syntax, lexis, phonetics and phonology, semantics (Littlewood, 1986; Khatib et al., 2011)	Low proficiency level of the students
Unfamiliarity with literary concepts and notions (Khatib et al., 2011)	Low level of understanding of literature
Absence of background and training (Hişmanoğlu, 2005)	Inefficiency in teaching English and literary competence

As it is seen in the above comparison in Table 6, the participants in this study are aware of not only the advantages of using literature but also the possible problems that can come along with it. Those problems may stem from low proficiency level of the students and/or low level of understanding of literature. Another problem may occur resulting from the absence of background and training. Apart from these, there is another issue beyond the students' or student teacher participants' capabilities in this study: the teachers at practicum schools are bounded to the ELT textbooks that lack literary texts or issues. This problem has to be dealt by the textbook authors and thus publication companies in markets.

Another issue to be addressed is about the student teachers' experience in teaching. Though many (62%) delivered tutorials individually in one-to-one classes, prepared their own teaching materials and thus planned the course, they stated the lack of confidence in their course delivery competence to a group of students at the same time. However, it should be noted that there seems to be a significant difference between informal one-to-one classes and formal school teaching. Participants' tendency in stating their apprehension about their teaching competence might originate from their sense of becoming a member of a formal network of teachers working in state schools as the practicum schools they attended are all public schools.

Similarly, practicum program in ELT that usually includes some field observation and then practice teaching might also be re-organized to include EFL teaching via the use of literary texts. Some of the supervisor feedback might also prioritize student teacher's

competence on improving the instruction for benefiting from literary text on teaching reading skills, for instance. One another suggestion might also be for the practicum schools which is about also extending reading skills for reading literary texts and improve literature appreciation and embracing this for the whole school culture. For instance, INGED (English Teachers' Association in Turkey) holds drama festival each year nationally, which in fact is a good strategy to motivate schools to include literary texts into their student's English language learning. Mainly, private schools join this competitive festival, which also has positive implications for the public school curriculum. This can also be managed to enhance school culture via opening drama clubs not only in English but also in Turkish where learners can develop literature appreciation both in their mother and target language. There are many good examples to benefit from different countries such as USA, where English classes go hand-in hand with American history and literature, and UK, where pupils are exposed to British literature from earlier grades.

There is no doubt that teacher attitudes and thus behaviour influence the success of students in their classrooms. Therefore, teacher training programs should pay attention in shaping these attitudes through positive education experiences as it is well-known that teachers' beliefs are heavily steeped in their own experiences while they were student teachers (Pajares, 1992). It is worthwhile for the teacher training institutions to design rich activities both to discover and be aware of their own ideas and also modify and re-modify them, when necessary (Acker, 1990; D'Andrade, 1981).

5. Conclusion

Literature is an essential component of language learning, and most of the participants of this study fortunately are aware of this fact. They assume that literary texts should be used during practicum because of the benefits such as that literature can bring into the context of language learning. Those who are hesitant and those who think that literature should not be used during practicum are not confident either about the linguistic level of the students or their own teaching competence. Taking the novice teachers' concerns about classroom management, being new to the school and unable to handle the workload (Almarza, 1996; Calderhead cited in Diamond, 1991; Johnson, 1996) etc. into consideration, these doubts about integrating literature into their classes as student teachers are not surprising.

It is good news that after conducting this study, the contents of two of the literature courses in the third year of ELT teacher training curriculum were changed in order to embody the instructional implications via the teacher education reform in 2006. In this new course, it is aimed to combine pedagogical principles with EFL practices. Thus, it is hoped that the prospective teachers would be much more confident in themselves regarding the use of literature during practicum and in their further professional careers. As it is universally acknowledged, nothing is gained without an effort.

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Appendix

The purpose of this questionnaire is to elicit your opinions about "The Use of Literature in Practice Teaching".

Thank you for your participation.

Research Team

A. Personal Information

1. Name/Surname:
2. Gender:
3. Age:
4. Name of the High School you graduated:

B. Teaching Experience:

5. Have you ever had a teaching experience (Except for the second-year practicum)?

Yes No

If your answer is YES:

6. Which graders (primary school, tenth graders, etc.) have you taught?

7. How long have you had that teaching experience?

8. Which course(s) (English, History, Turkish, etc.) have you taught?

C. Lesson Planning:

9. Have you ever prepared a lesson plan?

Yes No

If your answer is YES:

10. Which skills (reading, listening, writing, etc.) have you focused in the lesson plan?

11. Have you implemented that lesson plan?

Yes No

If your answer is YES:

12. For which graders have you implemented that lesson plan?

D. Literature:

13. What do you think about the use of literature in practice teaching? Complete the sentence which you think as suitable

- a) Literature should be used because
- b) I want to use literature but
- c) Literature should not be used because