



*Asesorías y Tutorías para la Investigación Científica en la Educación Puig-Salabarría S.C.  
José María Pino Suárez 400-2 esq a Lerdo de Tejada. Toluca, Estado de México. 7223898475*

RFC: AT1120618V12

**Revista Dilemas Contemporáneos: Educación, Política y Valores.**

<http://www.dilemascontemporaneoseduccionpoliticayvalores.com/>

**Año: VII    Número:3    Artículo no.:23    Período: 1ro de mayo al 31 de agosto del 2020.**

**TÍTULO:** El aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras a través de literatura juvenil.

**AUTORES:**

1. Dra. María Encarnación Carrillo-García.
2. Dra. Antonia Cascales-Martínez.

**RESUMEN:** El artículo presenta una búsqueda cuyo objetivo principal era saber si los profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) están familiarizados con la literatura para adultos jóvenes y si incluyen textos literarios en sus lecciones. Para llevar a cabo este propósito, 40 profesores de inglés que enseñan inglés como lengua extranjera en la educación secundaria en la región de Murcia (España) han completado un cuestionario en formato de escala Likert dividido en tres secciones: literatura, metodología y evaluación para jóvenes adultos. Para la fiabilidad de los resultados de este estudio y para calcular los porcentajes de cada sección del cuestionario, se utilizó el Alfa de Cronbach. Los resultados indican que el uso de literatura para adultos jóvenes puede involucrar a los estudiantes, y los maestros comienzan a incluir literatura en sus lecciones.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** literatura para adultos jóvenes, metodología, evaluación, inglés, idioma extranjero.

**TITLE:** Learning foreign languages through young adult literature.

**AUTHORS:**

1. Dra. María Encarnación Carrillo-García.
2. Dra. Antonia Cascales-Martínez.

**ABSTRACT:** The article presents a searching whose main objective were to know if teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) are acquainted with young adult literature and whether they include literary texts in their lessons. To carry out this purpose, 40 English teachers who teach English as a foreign language in secondary education in Murcia region (Spain) have completed a questionnaire in Likert scale format divided into three sections: young adult literature, methodology and assessment. For the reliability of the results of this study and to calculate the percentages of each section of the questionnaire, the Cronbach Alpha was used. The results indicate that the use of young adult literature can engage students, and teachers start including literature in their lessons.

**KEY WORDS:** young adult literature, methodology, assessment, English, foreign language.

**INTRODUCTION.****On young adult literature.**

During the past several decades, we have observed an expansion in the publishing of young adult literature. Young adult literary texts are being published every year, and many educators use young adult literature in the classroom as resource (Nelson, 2016). Scholars of the history of young adult literature state that the first golden age of this genre was in 1967, with the publication of S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, since young adult literature is defined as "realist fiction for teens" (Cart, 2001).

Contemporary young adult literature is normally targeted to readers between the ages of 12 and 20 approximately. This literature offers a "unique window on societal conflicts and dilemmas" (Bean & Moni, 2003). According to Herz and Gallo (1996) much of young adult literature's lies on the relationship between the immediacy of a first-person narrative and the point of view offered by an

adolescent as a main character, and these characters are normally perceptive, sensitive, intelligent, mature and independent. Therefore, adolescent readers can obtain a representation of their own real problems and experiences as teenagers from young adult fiction.

The characters in young adult novels share identities and values of its most readers, because of that, several categories to describe a framework for reading and discussing young adult novels can include structural prompts that consider cultural and ideological relationships reflected in character identity (Nodelman, 1996) that can be matters of gender, ethnicity, urban or rural, and other contexts (Bean & Moni, 2003). In this sense, Alvermann (2001) defines culture as a term that is “generally thought to include the routines, artifacts, values, and concerns that people produce, make meaning of, and share as they work communally with others in their group”, and relate to culture, the circumstances of the characters in young adult fiction lead to the exploration of character identity in their societies and to question the representation of the social values, that can be, feminism or racism in their culture, as some examples. As we can see, culture and identity are elemental keys for the pedagogical implementations when using literature.

McDonald (1999) carried out case studies of urban Australian teens to map the development of their identities. These case studies firstly seemed “chaotic, unpredictable, and unstructured”; in essence, youth is not a journey towards a certain future but a condition; and the contemporary secondary school is, in McDonald’s words, a place where a youth culture and a school culture face each other, while young people are navigating between the two.

According to Younger (2003), young adult plots are more complicated and less predictable than it is usually supposed, specially by literature critics and scholars. These plots include themes like identity formation, the relationships among young people or between young people and adults, social justice, love, racism and sexuality. The expansion of young adult fiction has led to the rise of several

contemporary subgenres such as sports; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered (LGBT); or historical and multicultural young adult literary texts (Rubinstein-Avila, 2007).

It is worth to highlight that young adult literature can also be found in the form of graphic novels and in its subgenres like comics and manga. The scholars Meyer, Mahalingappa, and Brugar (2019) state that “stories presented in graphic novel format provide an opportunity for students to learn in a format that is more natural and easier to engage with than textbooks”. For secondary education the graphic novel can help to introduce a way to consolidate and extend their language processing learning. On one hand, the adaptability form of graphic novels “scaffolds the linguistic components of the text” (Meyer et al, 2019).

### **Young adult literature for the teaching and learning of a foreign language.**

What are the pedagogical implications for classroom teachers for high school students? Teachers are required to engage directly with young people assuming how their backgrounds, beliefs, experiences and ideologies transform their social constructions. Thus, readers are able to recognize how these factors affect the types of texts that educators select (Rubinstein-Avila, 2007). From this point of view, literature, for the teaching and learning of a foreign language, is going to be used as a resource to improve the global linguistic competence of the students, the motivation and involvement in their learning process (Jáimez, 2003). The need for learning the second foreign language in secondary school is integrated into a desirable broader pedagogical trend, concerned with an education in values (Adams, 1997; Adenyanju, 1978) where literary texts have their main role, therefore, the use of literature as an authentic resource can help the teacher with both type of contents, that is, sociocultural and linguistic contents.

As we saw before, one of the reasons par excellence in favor of reading and studying literature is its cultural nature. Taking into consideration the progressive interest that the role of the cultural is gaining (Byram & Zarate, 1997; Kramsch, 1998; Salaberri & Zaro, 1998) in the English teaching in

secondary education programs, these cultural values can be explained in the following statements: to provide information about the targeted language's culture (McRae, 1996; Sanz, 1999), to help the students to understand and appreciate the second language (Stern, 1987), to get a better understanding of one's culture (Kramsch, 1998). Besides, among the linguistic reasons that literature offers to understand the communicative competence of students are: the improvement of reading skills, the encouragement of other skills, such as, oral comprehension and oral and written expression, the facilitation in the acquisition of a language and the enrichment of the knowledge and use of grammar and vocabulary (Jáimez, 2003).

Hymes (1972) associates communicative competence with the "tacit knowledge of language structure", that is, knowledge that is not usually conscious or available for a kind of "spontaneous report", but implicit in what the listener-speaker is expected to say. Therefore, communicative competence presents "ideal objects in abstraction from sociocultural features that might enter into their description" (Hymes, 1972). As a matter of fact, the common learner of a second language is a person in a social world, not a merely isolated individual with an unmotivated cognitive mechanism (Hymes, 1972). In short, communicative competence integrates linguistic competence, grammatical competence, strategic competence and sociocultural competence; and in this sense, literary texts can be a useful resource for the teaching and learning of this group of subcompetences in order to achieve the communicative competence of the students.

In addition, we will focus the teaching of a foreign language in the need of looking for a more humanistic approach, such as, the *Whole language approach* (Richard and Rogers, 2001: 110) that uses authentic literary texts in order to practice the oral and written skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), an approach more focused on students as responsible of their own learning, that considers their needs, expectations, feelings and interests (Arnold & Brown, 1999; Brown, 1994; Madrid, 1999; McLaren 1995; Oxford, 1997; Tudor, 1996; Numan, 2000) when planning the

educative activities; and as Torrano-Guillamón, Cascales-Martínes and Carrillo-García (2019) argue in favor of the using of literature as a resource for the teaching of a foreign language, because is an authentic material that provides cultural and language enrichment, as well as personal involvement. Different kind of texts can help the teacher with this matter, and because of that it is important to curate the most useful literary texts in relation to the linguistic and sociocultural contents, taking into account the students' interest to involve them in an emotional way, because in this way we favor the learning process.

As a matter of fact, the psychological and neuroeducational reasons that have to do with the way of involving the person in the learning process are worth mentioning and include the following aspects: motivation and interest (Lazar, 1990; Mora, 2016), appeal to emotions (Goleman, 1995; Ibarrola, 2013) and enjoyment (Carrillo-García and Martínez-Ezquerro, 2018; Crystal, 1998) and to interactional instinct (Lee et al, 2010). Hall (2019) explains that motivation is considered a key element in the process of teaching a second language successfully, and claims that although early research has been used motivation in an operationalized way as a static individual feature, contemporary research consider motivation as a dynamic construct that is continuously changing because of the interrelations between individuals and their social contexts. The main role that motivation plays in language learning is the interactional instinct that Lee et. al. (2010) defines as the innate drive that makes learners to be looking forward to regarding relationships with others which can lead to build a comfortable community between the second language learners.

It is worth mentioning Nelson (2016) research published in her article “‘Lexical Trends in Young Adult Literature: A Corpus-Based Approach’”, because argues that young adult literature serves to expose secondary education students to new words, and this is very important for the natural acquisition of vocabulary. The theory that Nelson proposes is that the more a student reads, the more words they will be exposed to and this fact increases the ability to acquire it. Nelson claims: “Working

hand-in-hand with this method of instruction is a focus on student-motivated reading. Current pedagogical practices prioritize helping students to love reading”. In other words, by promoting a love for reading, students are expected to read naturally more, leading them to the vocabulary acquisition anticipated by the extensive reading approach.

There are a variety of reasons for using literary texts in the class, ranging from the most general and traditionally recognized to more novel and more specific for the acquisition of a foreign language, and because of that, the object of investigation of this paper is based on the use of young adult literature as a pedagogical resource for the classes of English as a foreign language.

The main objective of this research is to collect data of English as the first foreign language teachers who work in secondary education if young adult literary texts are part of their lessons. This objective is specified in two specific objectives:

1. To determine the opinion of secondary education teachers with respect to: young adult literature for the teaching of English as a foreign language, methodologies and evaluation.
2. To establish a relationship between the socio-demographical data and the information collected.

## **DEVELOPMENT.**

### **Empirical development.**

This empirical research consists of a non-experimental study, with a descriptive approach because the main objective as expressed by Cubo, Martín and Ramos (2011), is to describe in the most objective way those facts and situations of a part of the educational community. For this reason, we have opted for a descriptive design, and to extract the information we use a questionnaire, designed *ad hoc*, which it is described in a later section.

Participants in this study have been selected by intentional non-random sampling. The inclusion criterion for creating the sample is to be an English teacher for the levels of compulsory and non-compulsory secondary education in the Región de Murcia (Spain). The final sample consisted of 40

English teachers, who participated anonymously and freely. The sociodemographical data collected in the questionnaire are presented in the table that shows the sociodemographical data collected in the survey.

Table 1. Sociodemographical frequency data from the sample

Gender		Age							
M	W	25 years or less	26-35 years	36-45 years	46-55 years	More than 55 years			
15	25	2	4	18	12	4			
Work experience					Stage in which you currently teach				
More than 3 years	3-9 years	10-19 years	20-30 years	More than 30 years	Compulsory Secondary Education	Bachelor	Compulsory Secondary Education and Bachelor		
2	7	18	9	4	30	2	8		
Employment situation				Type of centre					
Titular	Temporary employee			Public		Subsidised			
36	44			14		26			
Teacher's reading habits						Book format			
1 book per week	2-4 books per month	Less than 15 books per year		More than 15 books per year		Paper	Digital	Both	
2	8	26		4		1	2	3	
Book genres most read by the teacher				Book genres most read by the teacher					
Historical	Autobiography	Fiction	Non-Fiction	Crime	Romance	Poetry	Science-Fiction	Graphic novels Comics manga	Psychological /Spiritual
1	0	14	2	15	0	0	0	9	0

As it can be seen in table, the sample is made up of a higher number of women. Most of them are between 36 and 55 years old, with a work experience higher than 10 years. In the following section of the table, it is worth to highlight that most of the teachers who were surveyed teach English in the Compulsory Secondary Education courses as opposed to the teachers who teach in the Bachelor

courses and the teachers who teach in both courses: Compulsory Secondary Education and Bachelor courses.

### **Information collection instrument and procedure.**

Firstly, once we have reviewed the bibliography that was decided to be selected (Bean & Moni 2003; Alvermann, 2001; Jáimez 2003; Cart 2001;) and not being able to find any instrument that would respond to the initial objectives, it was decided to design an *ad hoc* instrument. Consequently, for this reason we designed an initial questionnaire with 39 items that consisted of two parts, a sociodemographical one and another one referred to the objective of this research.

The designed instrument contained 39 items which are divided into three categories: young adult literature, methodology and evaluation. Subsequently, to ensure the validity of this instrument was submitted to validity of content by expert judgement that consist of three English university teachers and English teachers as the first foreign language teachers in secondary education. Accepted the guidelines of the experts, the final instrument was finally fixed and is composed of two parts.

A first sociodemographical part that asks about: the gender of the person questioned, their age, their work experience, their employment situation, the type of the center where they work, the stage in which they are currently teaching, their reading habits, the literary genre they read the most and the book format they usually choose. The second section is a part of contents that consists of: three dimensions referring to young adult literature, its methodology and evaluation in the subject of English as a foreign language in secondary education in Murcia region (Murcia, Spain). Each dimension will consist of 10 items. The questionnaire the participants: 40 English teachers of secondary education of Murcia region (Murcia, Spain).

These items are elaborated from a Likert scale and whose answers are categorized from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest gradation (never) and 5 the highest gradation (always).

Table 2. Description of the questionnaire.

Categories	Description	Items
<b>Young Adult Literature</b>	The aim of this section is to gather data of the teachers' knowledge about this literary genre	<b>1-10</b>
<b>Methodology</b>	The aim of this section is to gather information of teachers' knowledge about the methodologies that include young adult literature	<b>11-20</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	The aim of this section is to gather information of teachers' knowledge about the ways of evaluating students' language knowledge that include young adult literature	<b>21-30</b>

In order to determine the reliability of this questionnaire, we have performed the Cronbach Alpha test and the result is .968, which according to Develis (2005) is considered excellent.

### **Data Analysis.**

The screening and analysis of information have been done through the statistical package IBM SPSS Statistics (Statistical Package for the Social Science) version 24 for Windows.

The performed analysis includes: Cronbach's Alpha for the reliability of the instrument, and the descriptive-frequency analyses, standard deviations, means and percentage of each item corresponding to the intended dimensions for this work. In order to make the relevant comparisons we apply non-inferential statistics, specifically the non-parametric tests: the Mann-Whitney test U and Kruskal-Wallis test K.

### **Results.**

Therefore, we present the results obtained in this research divided into objectives:

***Objective 1: Determine the opinion of English teachers in Secondary Education with respect to: young adult literature, methodology and evaluation.***

The following table gathers the data of the mean collected participated in the young adult literature section.

Table 4. Mean of descriptive data of the scores obtained in each of the items in the young adult literature dimension.

Item	Mean
1.1. I know about the young adult literary genre	3.45
1.2. Literary books are suitable tools for teaching English in secondary school	4.00
1.3. I consider young adult literature a suitable resource to teach social values in the subject of English in secondary education	4.10
1.4. I consider adequate for English students in secondary education for learning social matters like racism and feminism	4.03
1.5. Young adult literature builds community confidence in the classroom	3.73
1.6. The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English in secondary education can promote students' interest in reading outside the classroom	4.28
1.7. Young adult literature is a suitable tool for teaching other cultures in the subject of English in secondary education	4.28
1.8. Young adult literature allows students from secondary education in the subject of English to get a better understanding of their own culture	3.70
1.9. Young adult literature deals with topics that are closely related to secondary education students from the subject of English	3.93
1.10 Young adult literature helps students from secondary education in the subject of English to understand better the emotional and physical changes they are going through	3.73

Calculating the averages of the responses of the participating teachers, the results show that items with the highest score mean are item 1.6. (The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English in secondary education can promote students' interest in reading outside the classroom) ( $\bar{X}$  =4.28) and item 1.7. (Young adult literature is a suitable tool for teaching other cultures in the subject of English in secondary education) ( $\bar{X}$  =4.28). The item with the lowest score mean is the 1.1. (I know about the young adult literary genre) ( $\bar{X}$  =3.45).

The table 5 will explore the means of the following ten items that belong to the second section of the questionnaire. The following results will show which items are the ones that have the highest and the lowest means related to the presence of young adult literature in the methodology in the subject of English as the first foreign language in the curriculum in secondary education.

Table 5. Mean of descriptive data of the scores obtained in each of the items in the methodology dimension.

Item	Mean
2.11. I know about the communicative competence for teaching English	3.45
2.12. The academic centre offers a range variety of resources for the English teachers	4.00
2.13. I use other young adult literary texts rather than books like comics and graphic novels in the English subject	4.10
2.14. Young adult literature promotes and nurtures a focus on teaching and learning	4.03
2.15. I use adapted literary texts in the English subject	3.73
2.16. The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English can engage students by means of using the target language in real life practice activities	4.28
2.17. Young adult literature texts are part of my lessons teaching in the subject of English	4.28
2.18. To implement creative writing activities in the subject of English is beneficial for students	3.70
2.19. Activities in the subject of English in secondary education are adapted by using the ICTs	3.93
2.20. Young adult literature is a resource specially for reading comprehension and writing production activities	3.73

After having obtained the mean of the responses of the participating teachers, the results present that the items with the highest score mean are item 2.16. (The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English in secondary education engage students by means of using the target language in real life practice activities) ( $\bar{X} = 4.28$ ) and item 2.17. (Young adult literature texts are part of my lessons teaching in the subject of English) ( $\bar{X} = 4.28$ ). The item with the lowest score mean is the 2.11. (I know about the communicative competence for teaching English) ( $\bar{X} = 3.45$ ).

The following table presents the data obtained by the 40 teachers who participated in the questionnaire on the evaluation section.

Table 6. Mean of descriptive data of the scores obtained in each of the items in the evaluation dimension.

Item	Mean
3.21. Secondary students' level of English is advanced enough for using literary texts in the classroom	3.33
3.22. To include young adult literature in the subject of English enables teachers to adjust curriculum and instruction to meet all students' individual needs	3.50
3.23. Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' grammatical competence in the subject of English	3.75
3.24. Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' linguistic competence in the subject of English	3.83
3.25. Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' communicative competence in the subject of English	4.00
3.26. Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' social competence in the subject of English	3.95
3.27. Young adult literature can help students of the subject of English to succeed academically	4.03
3.28. Literature develops and maintains high standards in the teaching of the subject of English	3.90
3.29. Literature emphasizes academic standards in the subject of English at all levels of the system	3.78

3.30. The use of young adult literature in the subject of English is committed to develop high standards for every student in the productive skills (speaking and writing)	4.15
--	------

Once calculated the averages of the responses of the participating teachers, it can be seen that items with the highest score mean are item 3.30. (The use of young adult literature in the subject of English is committed to develop high standards for every student in the productive skills (speaking and writing)) ( $\bar{X} = 4.15$ .) and item 3.27. (Young adult literature can help students of the subject of English to succeed academically) ( $\bar{X} = 4.03$ ). The item with the lowest score mean is the 3.21. (Secondary students' level of English is advanced enough for using literary texts in the classroom) ( $\bar{X} = 3.33$ ).

***Objective 2: To establish a relationship between the sociodemographical data and the information collected.***

In the following section, we will analyse whether there are statistically significant differences between the sociodemographical data, and the information collected in the questionnaire.

*Gender.*

First of all, we will analyse whether there are statistically significant differences in the gender of the participating teachers. For this reason, we have used the Mann-Whitney test U. The results show that, considering the first section of the questionnaire about young adult literature, there are statistically significant differences in item 1.3 (I consider young adult literature a suitable resource to teach social matters like racism or feminism in the subject of English), being favourable for men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 28.50 > RM_{\text{female}} 15.70$ ). Additionally, calculated the Mann-Whitney test U the data indicate that there are differences in item 1.5. (Young adult literature builds community confidence in the classroom) being favourable to men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 28.10 > RM_{\text{female}} 15.95$ ). The Mann-Whitney test U data also indicated that these disparities are also found in item 1.6. (The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of

English can promote students' interest in reading outside the classroom) being favourable to men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 27.73 > RM_{\text{female}} 16.16$ ).

Regarding the second section of the questionnaire, methodology, once calculated the Mann-Whitney test U the data indicate that there are also statistically significant differentiations in item 2.20 (Young adult literature is a resource specially for reading comprehension writing production activities) being favourable to men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 28.03 > RM_{\text{female}} 15.98$ ).

Finally, the third section of the questionnaire, evaluation, once having calculated the Mann-Whitney test U the data indicate that there are substantial differences in item 3.21 (Secondary students' level of English is advanced enough for using literary texts in the classroom) being favourable to men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 29.20 > RM_{\text{female}} 15.28$ ). The Mann-Whitney test U also shows the data that represents that there are as well statistically meaningful differences in item 3.25 (Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' communicative competence in the subject of English) being favourable for men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 28.13 > RM_{\text{female}} 15.92$ ).

Consequently, the Mann-Whitney test U as well indicates that there are dissimilarities in item 3.27 (Young adult literature can help students of the subject of English to succeed academically) being favourable to men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 27.40 > RM_{\text{female}} 16.36$ ). Also, calculated the Mann-Whitney test U the data indicate that there are statistically variances in item 3.28 (Literature develops and maintains high standards in the teaching of the subject of English) being favourable to men ( $RM_{\text{male}} 27.30 > RM_{\text{female}} 16.42$ ).

#### *Age.*

Firstly, in the first section of the questionnaire, young adult literature, once calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data indicate that there are not statistically significant differences in the items collected in this section.

Secondly, in the second section of the questionnaire, methodology, the Kruskal-Wallis test K gives us data of the existence of differentiations in item 2.13 (I use other young adult literary texts rather than books like comics and graphic novels in the English subject) that are favourable to teachers of an age of 25 years old or less ( $RM_{25\text{yearsoldorless}} 37.50 > RM_{\text{morethan55yearsold}} 4.25$ ).

Thirdly, in the third section of the questionnaire, evaluation, the Kruskal-Wallis provides that there is data that indicates that there are not dissimilarities in the items collected in this section.

#### *Work experience.*

Regarding the first section of the questionnaire, young adult literature, once calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data indicate that there are statistically significant disparities in item 1.4 (I consider that the curriculum is able to include the use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English). This means that it is favourable to teachers with less than three years of work experience ( $RM_{\text{lessthan3years}} 34.00 > RM_{\text{morethan30years}} 10.25$ ).

Following the second section of the questionnaire, methodology, after having used the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data indicate that there are as well statistically inequalities in item 2.13 (I use other young adult literary texts rather than books like comics and graphic novels in the English subject) being favourable to teachers with less than 3 years of work experience ( $RM_{\text{lessthan3years}} 37.50 > RM_{\text{morethan30years}} 4.25$ ).

In the last section of the questionnaire, evaluation, after calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K, the data informs us that this time, it cannot be found statistically significant differences in the items collected in this section.

#### *Type of the centre.*

Calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data indicate that there are substantial differences only in item 2.20 (Young adult literature is a resource specially for reading comprehension and writing

production activities) in the second section of the questionnaire, methodology, being favourable to subsidised centres ( $RM_{\text{subsidisedcentres}} 24.31 > RM_{\text{publiccentres}} 13.43$ ).

*Teacher's reading habits.*

In the first section of the questionnaire, young adult literature, the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data indicate that there are disproportions in item 1.5 (Young adult literature builds community confidence in the classroom) being favourable to teachers who read more than 15 books every year ( $RM_{\text{morethan15peryear}} 34.50 > RM_{\text{1bookperweek}} 4.00$ ). Also using the same test, we can find data that show that there are also statistically significant differences in item 1.8 (Young adult literature allows students in the subject of English to get a better understanding of their own culture) and it is favourable to teachers who read more than 15 books every year ( $RM_{\text{morethan15peryear}} 36.00 > RM_{\text{1bookperweek}} 4.00$ ).

The data used with the Kruskal-Wallis test K indicate that exist variations in item 1.9 (Young adult literature deals with topics that are closely related to students in the subject in English) too, which means that it is favourable to teachers who read more than 15 books every year ( $RM_{\text{morethan15peryear}} 36.50 > RM_{\text{1bookperweek}} 1.50$ ).

Considering the second section of the questionnaire, methodology, once having calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data is like the previous section because it can be seen statistically significant variances in item 2.20 (Young adult literature is a resource specially for reading comprehension and writing production activities) being favourable to teachers who read more than 15 books every year ( $RM_{\text{morethan15peryear}} 32.50 > RM_{\text{2-4bookspermonth}} 7.25$ ).

Regarding the third section of the questionnaire, evaluation, calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data that indicate that there are weighty differences in item 3.23 (Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' linguistic competence in the subject of English) that is favourable to teachers who read more than 15 books every year ( $RM_{\text{morethan15peryear}} 30.00 > RM_{\text{1bookperweek}} 5.00$ ). The

data as well show that there are statistically significant differences in item 3.25 (Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' communicative competence in the subject of English) being favourable to teachers who read more than 15 books every year ( $RM_{\text{morethan15peryear}} 32.00 > RM_{\text{1bookperweek}} 9.00$ ).

*Book genres most read by the teacher.*

In the first section of the questionnaire, young adult literature, calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data that indicate that there are disparities in item 1.1 (I know about the young adult literary genre) is most favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 28.50 > RM_{\text{non-fiction}} 8.00$ ). Moreover, the data that resulted from the Kruskal-Wallis test K also indicate that there are differences in statically terms in item 1.2 (Literary books are suitable tools for teaching English) so it is favourable for teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 30.17 > RM_{\text{crime}} 12.43$ ).

Calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data that indicate that there are meaningful differences in item 1.3 (I consider young adult literature a suitable resource to teach social matters like racism or feminism in the subject of English) is being favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 30.83 > RM_{\text{non-fiction}} 12.00$ ).

The Kruskal-Wallis test K indicates that the data show that there are was well statistically significant differences in item 1.4 (I consider that the curriculum is able to include the use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English) is being favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 32.33 > RM_{\text{crime}} 15.17$ ). The same test shows that there is data that confirms that there are dissimilarities in item 1.5 (Young adult literature builds community confidence in the classroom) and it is favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 31.83 > RM_{\text{crime}} 13.00$ ).

Calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data that indicate that there are significant differences in item 1.6 (The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English can promote students' interest in reading outside the classroom) is being favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 28.11 > RM_{\text{crime}} 12.87$ ). The Kruskal-Wallis test K also indicates that there are statistically eloquent differences in item 1.7 (Young adult literature is a suitable tool for teaching other cultures in the subject of English) is being favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 28.22 > RM_{\text{non-fiction}} 13.30$ ).

Furthermore, in the second section of the questionnaire, methodology, calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data shows that there are considerable statistically disparities in item 2.16 (The use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English can engage students by means of using the target language in real life practice activities) is being favourable to teachers who read fiction books ( $RM_{\text{fiction}} 27.00 > RM_{\text{crime}} 11.90$ ). Additionally, the data from the Kruskal-Wallis test K that indicate that there are statistically differences worth of mentioning in item 2.17 (Young adult literary texts are part of my lessons teaching in the subject of English) which means that it is favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 32.94 > RM_{\text{crime}} 14.90$ ).

Regarding the third section of the questionnaire, evaluation, calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data that indicate that there are dissimilarities in item 3.23 (Young adult literary texts are adequate to improve students' grammatical competence in the subject of English) is being favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 30.33 > RM_{\text{crime}} 13.00$ ). Calculated the Kruskal-Wallis test K the data that affirms that there are variances which are important to highlight in item 3.28 (Literature develops and maintains high standards in the teaching of the subject of English) is being favourable to teachers who read graphic novels/comics/manga ( $RM_{\text{graphicnovels/comics/manga}} 31.50 > RM_{\text{crime}} 13.07$ ).

*Employment situation, stage in which you currently teach and book format.*

After calculating the Mann-Whitney test U, the data indicate that there are not statistically significant distinctions in either of sections of the questionnaire.

### **Discussion.**

It is worth noting the rapid increase and the higher presence of young adult literature in recent years. As a result, more empirical and academic studies have been carried out on this literary genre and the increased consumption of young adult novels by mainly adolescent readers. As more young adult literatures are being published and have an impact on its readers, there are more and more teachers that have decided to include young adult literature texts on their teaching lessons.

According to the results obtained in our research, the hypothesis that the use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English in secondary education could promote students' interest in reading outside the classroom, which it refers to motivation, is an important element to consider. Consequently, to take full advantage of implementing literary texts in the curriculum these texts should be interesting enough to catch the attention of the adolescent reader. As Jáimez (2003) mentions, this resource can improve the global linguistic competence of the students, the motivation and the involvement in their language learning process. Nelson (2016) provides a theory that states the more a student reads, the more words they will be exposed to and that would enhance their vocabulary gains. Nowadays, teachers are incorporating current pedagogical practices as extensive reading that promote love for reading.

Furthermore, the results also show that the participants think that young adult literature is a suitable tool for teaching other cultures in the subject of English in secondary education. This statement follows the ideas of Rubinstein-Avila (2007) that affirm that teachers are in charge of engaging directly with their students assuming how factors like their backgrounds, beliefs, experiences and ideologies shape their social construction. Hertz and Gallo (1996) highlights how young adult

literature shows different cultures due to the relationship between the immediacy of first-person narrative and the point of view of the main character. Therefore, through the reading samples of young adult literature texts students can access to the knowledge and perception of other cultures apart from their own culture.

Although in countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, France and Germany more and more works of the literary genre young adult are being published and teachers use literary texts of this genre to teach English as the first foreign language in their teaching lessons, the situation in Spain is much more different. Young adult literary genre, although in Spain it is beginning to emerge and it is being translating works of this literary genre, a great part of the teachers in the Región de Murcia does not know this type of literary works and the benefits that they can offer their students, especially in those subjects like foreign languages where the ability of reading comprehension plays an important role.

Considering methodology, the results indicate that the use of young adult literary texts in the subject of English in secondary education can engage students by means of using the target language in real life practice activities and teachers are beginning to include young adult literary texts in their teaching lessons. Jáimez (2003) argues the importance of using literary texts in teaching lessons because literature is an authentic resource, that is, it has not been altered and therefore it is a resource that makes students of English as the first foreign language closer to perform real life activities.

Additionally, the normative that determines the curriculum of secondary education in the Región de Murcia (Murcia) is the *Decreto n.º 220/2015, de 3 de septiembre de 2015, por el que se establece el currículo de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en la Comunidad Autónoma de la Región de Murcia* in which literature can be found as one of the domains in teaching the subject of English as a second language. The distribution of the subject of English as the first foreign language into four

blocks of content listed in the *Decreto n° 220/2015* mentioned makes easier to include young adult literature as a support for secondary education students to achieve the standards of each block.

The results of this research also show that teachers barely know the communicative. According to Hyme's theory, communicative competence is conceived as "ideal objects in abstraction from sociocultural features that might enter into their description" (Hymes, 1972). Therefore, the communicative competence is considered a suitable approach to teach languages and specially to strengthen the productive skills which are speaking and writing.

In relation to this, regarding the third section of the questionnaire about evaluation, the results affirm that the use of young adult literature in the subject of English is committed to develop high standards for every student in the productive skills which are speaking and writing. It is important to mention that the results also claim that most of the teachers think that secondary students' level of English is not advanced enough for using literary texts in the classroom. The communicative competence is an alternative that could be effective in improving the process of teaching the subject of English as the first foreign language.

Summing up, in order to improve the English level of secondary students, it is advisable to change the traditional teacher-centred teaching approach for another student-centred and humanistic one such as Whole Language. A teaching approach that covers not only the linguistic aspect of the language but also the others like the sociocultural aspect of the language, and this teaching approach should be more student-centred that emphasizes the students' necessities and motivation. The communicative competence in conjunction with young adult literary texts could be an appropriate option for improve not only the English level of the students but also to generate motivation and interest for the culture of the target language and promote the love of reading.

## **CONCLUSIONS.**

The prospective of this research is to achieve the objectives previously presented. On one hand, to determine the opinion of English teachers in secondary education with respect to: young adult literature, methodologies and evaluation. On the other hand, to establish a relationship between the sociodemographical data and the information collected. However, according to the data from this research, we can affirm that young adult literature is increasingly booming.

Young adult literature is increasingly becoming one of the principal entertainment activities that younger readers do in their spare time. Therefore, suggestions are proposed such as including the pedagogical value of young adult literature in the ongoing training of teachers, and on the part of the administration to strengthen the curriculum in order to integrate the literary texts of youth literature. Even so, it is important to mention the limitations of this research. One of the main difficulties encountered in this study is the number of participating teachers. Forty teachers, even if they are from different secondary schools, are not enough to have the most reliable results possible. In addition to this, it is worth adding that the number of schools is also insufficient to give us a clear idea if the objectives we are trying to find out are equivalent to the current situation of English teachers in secondary education.

To conclude, we would like to propose a new field of research on the different uses and purposes of young adult literature for learning foreign languages, always with the aim of improving and updating the teaching model to today's students.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY REFERENCES.**

1. Adams, E. (1993). Promoting personal involvement and interaction in the classroom through poetry. *Actas de Greta de las IX Jornadas Pedagógicas para la Enseñanza del Inglés*, 10-23.
2. Adenyanju, T.K. (1978). Literature and human values in English second language objectives and selection. *ELT Journal*, 32(2), 133-138.

3. Aparicio, A. (1997). Film and literature: Representational materials. *Le Grove*, 4, 53-67.
4. Arnold, J. & Brown, H. (1999). A map to the terrain. *Affect in language learning*, 1-24.
5. Alvermann, D. (2001). Reading adolescents' reading identities: Looking back to see ahead. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 44, 676-690.
6. Brown, H.D. (1993). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
7. Byram, M. & G. Zarate. (1997). *The Sociocultural and Intercultural Dimension of Language Learning and Teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.
8. Carrillo-García, M. E. & Martínez-Ezquerro, A. (2018). Neurodidáctica de la Lengua y la Literatura. *Revista Iberoamericana De Educación*, 78(1), 149-164.  
<https://doi.org/10.35362/rie7813243>
9. Cart, M. (2001). From Insider to Outsider: The Evolution of Young Adult Literature. *Voices from The Middle*, 9(2), 95-98.
10. Carter, R. (1994). "Language, discourse and literature: perspectives for teaching". *The European Messenger*, 3(2), 24-36.
11. Carter, R & McRae, J. Look both ways before crossing: developments in the language and literature classroom. *Language, Literature and the Learner Creative Classroom Practice*, 149-156.
12. Collie, J. & S. Slater. (1998). *Short Stories for Creative Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
13. Córdoba, P. (2001). Teaching Shakespeare in the EFL classroom. *Greta*, (9)1, 19-22.
14. Cook, G. (1996). Making the subtle difference: literature and non-literature in the classroom. *Language, Literature and the Learner. Creative Classroom Practice*, 151-165.

15. Cubo, S., Martín, B & Ramos, J.L. (2011). Métodos de investigación y análisis de datos en ciencias sociales y de la salud, 173-223.
16. Crystal, D. (1979). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
17. Decreto n.º 220/2015, de 3 de septiembre de 2015, por el que se establece el currículo de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria en la Comunidad Autónoma de la Región de Murcia.
18. De Vellis R. F. (2003) *Scale development: Theory and applications* (2ªed.) Thousand Oaks: Sage.
19. Durant, A. (1993). *Interactive Approaches to Teaching Literature in Hong-Kong*. *Teaching Literature: A World Perspective*, 150-172.
20. Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence*. *English Literature in a world Context*, 65-88. New York: Bantam Books.
21. Goshn, I.K. (2002). Four Good Reasons to use literature in primary school ELT. *ELT Journal* (56)2, 173-179.
22. Hall, J. K. (2019). *Essentials of SLA for L2 Teachers: A Transdisciplinary Framework*. New York: Routledge.
23. Herz, S., & Gallo, D. (1996). What is young adult literature anyway? Can it be any good if students like it?. In S. Herz & D. Gallo, *Hinton to Hamlet: Building bridges between young adult literature and classics*, 7-12 Westport: Greenwood Press.
24. Hymes, D.H. (1972) On Communicative Competence In: J.B. Pride and J. Holmes. *Sociolinguistics. Selected Readings*, 269-293. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
25. Ibarrola, B. (2013). *Aprendizaje emocionante. Neurociencia para el aula*. UE: Editorial SM.
26. Jáimez, S. (2003). *El uso de textos literarios en la enseñanza de inglés en la educación secundaria* (PhD). University of Granada.
27. Kramsch, C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

28. Lazar, G. (1990). Using novels in the language learning classrooms. *ELT Journal*, 44(3), 113-115.
29. Lee, N., Mikesell, L., Joaquin, A., Mates, A. & Schumann, J. (2009). *The Interactional Instinct: The Evolution and Acquisition of Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
30. Madrid, D. (1999). *La investigación de los factores motivacionales en el aula de idiomas*. Granada: University of Granada/ Grupo Editorial Universitario.
31. Maley, A. (2001). Literature in the language classroom. *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, 180-185.
32. Mora, F. (2016). *Neuroeducación. Solo se puede aprender aquello que se ama*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial.
33. McDonald, K. (1999). *Struggles for subjectivity: Identity, action and youth experience*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
34. Meyer, C., Mahalingappa, L. & Brugar, K. (2019). Thinking Inside the Box: Using Graphic Novels to English Language Learners in the Social Studies Classroom. In L. Oliveira, *Teaching the LContent Areas of English Language Learners in Secondary Schools*, 311-325. Switzerland: Springer Nature.
35. Nelson, K. (2016). *Lexical Trends in Young Adult Literature: A Corpus-Based Approach (Master of Arts)*. Brigham Young University.
36. Nieto, J.M. (1997). La estilística como materia integradora en el campo de la filología. *Le Grove* (4), 543-552.
37. Nodelman, P. (1996). Literature and ideology. In P. Nodelman, *The pleasures of children's literature*, 2, 117-139. New York: Longman.
38. Numan, T. (2000). The stories learners tell. Conferencia de Clausura de GRETA. XVI Jornadas Pedagógicas para la Enseñanza del Inglés. Richmond Publishing.

39. Orden ECD/65/2015, de 21 de enero, por la que se describen las relaciones entre las competencias, los contenidos y los criterios de evaluación de la educación primaria, la educación secundaria obligatoria y el bachillerato. Boletín Oficial del Estado, 25, de 29 de enero de 2015.
40. Peach, L., & A. Burton. (1995). *English as a Creative Art. Concepts linked to Creative Writing*. London: David Fulton Publishers.
41. Real Decreto 1105/2014, de 26 de diciembre, por el que se establece el currículo básico de la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria y del Bachillerato. Boletín Oficial del Estado, 3, de 3 de enero de 2015.
42. Reid, J. (2001) Writing. *Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages*, 28-33.
43. Rubinstein-Avila, E. (2007). Examining Representations of Young Adult Female Protagonists through Critical Race Feminism. *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education*, 14(3), 363-374.
44. Sainz, I. (1999). El texto literario como fuente de conciencia lingüística y cultural. *Greta* (7)1, 15-27.
45. Stern, H.H. (1983). *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
46. Thompson, A. (2003). Listening and its Asymmetries. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 21, 251-256.
47. Torrano-Guillamón, L., Cascales-Martínez, A. & Carrillo-García, M.E. (2019). Use of Literature, Resources and Innovative Methodologies in the English Classroom. *Portalinguarum*, 32.
48. Tudor, I. (1995). What have my students got to contribute? *Actas de GRETA de las XI Jornadas Pedagógicas para la Enseñanza del Inglés*, 101-116.
49. Younger, B. (2003). Pleasure, Pain and the Powers of Being Thin: Female Sexuality in Young Adult Literature. *NWSA Journal*, 15(2), 45-56.

**DATOS DE LOS AUTORES.**

1. María Encarnación Carrillo-García. Doctor in Didactics of Language and Literature. Department of Didactics of Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, University of Murcia (Spain). Associate Professor. Email: [mariaencarnacion.carrillo@um.es](mailto:mariaencarnacion.carrillo@um.es)
2. Antonia Cascales-Martínez. Doctor in Education. Department of Methods and Diagnosis in Education, Faculty of Education, University of Murcia (Spain). Adjunct Professor. Email: [antonia.cascales@um.es](mailto:antonia.cascales@um.es)

**RECIBIDO:** 17 de marzo del 2020.**APROBADO:** 27 de abril del 2020.