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**USING FANFICTION IN ADVANCED ENGLISH
CLASSROOMS
MA THESIS**

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ABSTRACT

Creativity is one of the 21st century skills that students should acquire to succeed after graduation. Fanfiction has the potential to combine developing creativity, critical thinking, language skills and extensive reading. The aim of the study is to compare the vocabulary, text difficulty and narrative complexity of two fanfiction tasks written by secondary school students to identify whether this task indeed helps develop both language skills and creativity.

The introduction explains the importance of including more creative tasks in secondary school as creativity is one of the 21st century skills necessary for the students after graduation. The literature review introduces the role of literature in language teaching as a way of learning about different cultures and for developing general competences. An overview of different ways of integrating fanfiction in language learning is also provided, focussing on three previous studies on using fanfiction in EFL lessons.

The empirical chapter is based on an experiment in which a group of secondary school students in an advanced English class were instructed to write two fanfiction tasks based on a previously assigned novel. Nine pairs of texts were assessed using three different tools respectively focussing on fanfiction characteristics, difficulty of the text, and narrative complexity. Almost all the stories were written in compliance with general fanfiction rules and contained references to both facts and the style of the canon they are based on. The difficulty of the text varied depending on the prompt the students used but generally texts that were telling a story scored higher than the ones describing the characters' lives. This also affected the narrative complexity of the stories as descriptions lack some elements such as dialogue or reasoning for the actions.

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INTRODUCTION

Two important skills that sometimes are somewhat neglected in foreign language lessons are reading (Sagar 2019: 4) and writing (Harmer 2015: 360). One of the possible reasons might be that these are more time-consuming than listening or speaking tasks for both students and teachers. In addition, students are more likely to engage in listening and speaking outside of the classroom when consuming English-language media but reading and writing are more likely to be relegated to social media posts or other similar shorter and more informal texts. However, according to the National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2014), by the end of secondary school students are expected to reach a level where they can read and produce longer and more complex texts in various genres.

A quite common way of including longer reading texts in foreign language lessons is by using extensive reading or home-reading (Harmer 2015: 314). This usually means that students read a book outside of class or during specific lessons over the span of a certain number of weeks and usually have to write a reading journal entry, make an oral summary of what they have and/or learn a certain number of new words from the pages they have read (Harmer 2015: 320). However, in these tasks the focus is on the vocabulary or on the overall impression of the book and not that much on the content of the book or the characters. One possible way of integrating a literary focus into reading literature would be by combining reading with creative writing tasks. For example, the *I Love English 6* student's book (Jõul & Kurm 2009) has several reading texts where one of the post-reading tasks is to come up with an ending to the story in groups, a task that could also be done individually and in writing. In addition, the *I Love English 5* workbook (Kurm & Soolepp 2018: 30-31) includes a task where students read a blog and add two entries to it. However, the focus in secondary school tends to be on persuasive or informative texts, especially the kinds of texts that are more likely to be part of either the national examination or an

international examination (for example reports, various types of letters, essays), as all students need to sit an exam in a foreign language to graduate from secondary school.

This is not just a matter of language acquisition. Over the last two decades, more attention has been paid to various new skills that students will need in their future workplace that differ from those that have been taught in the past (Scott 2015: 2). As jobs evolve, so will have to the skills necessary for doing them and the education system that provides these workers to the labour market. These skillsets have different names and the list has evolved over the years but the most generic term for them is 21st century skills (Scott 2015). These skills cover various aspects of what students will need later on in life for work, navigating the increasingly technology-influenced world and inhabiting a globalising world.

The Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 (Haridus- ja teadusministeerium et al 2020) also lists most of these competences as part of the benefits of the new approach to learning that should be adopted in Estonia. Broadly speaking, the spectrum of 21st century skills can be divided into three groups of skills that should all be supported by key subjects, the list of which also includes world languages and English. The three groups of skills are life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, and information, media and technology skills (Battelle for Kids 2019: 2). Learning and innovation skills consist of what are called the 4Cs: critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity (Battelle for Kids 2019: 2). While communication and collaboration could be considered integral elements of teaching foreign languages at any level, the topics of critical thinking and creativity should be focused on more in language lessons, especially in secondary school. This is one of the places where creative writing could be relevant as it includes at least some element of creativity. Depending on the genre or topic, there is an element of communication as the writer has to convey their idea in a way that the reader understands it

in the same way and there can also be an element of critical thinking in planning the plot and the characters. The National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2014) lists reading authentic fiction and using creative writing tasks as possible study activities in foreign languages.

One possible way of fostering creativity in foreign language lessons could be through creative writing. While creative writing can be used in isolation, reading provides the students with examples of genre conventions and stylistic elements. Lazar (2009: 12) states that to understand a work of literature the reader has to have a certain extent of 'literary competence' which could be developed through exposure to a variety of literary texts. Similarly, to write one has to know certain stylistic conventions that could be acquired through exposure to them while reading. However, if the teacher wants the students to read a book and engage with the contents a bit more but not in typical literary analysis or close reading form, one option would be to integrate reading and creative writing by having the students write fanfiction based on the novel. Writing fanfiction could be a useful link between reading and creative writing for language classes. The creative writing tasks integrated into existing basic school materials that were mentioned earlier could be seen as an example of already including fanfiction in foreign language classes. As such, fanfiction is already present in lessons and textbooks in a way, even if not acknowledged as such.

From the author's personal experience, students mostly find creative writing tasks interesting but intimidating at first. However, fanfiction and the scaffolding it provides would potentially make it easier for them to focus on telling the story and not as much on coming up with the plot or the characters. This would then perhaps help them express themselves better. The aim of the study is to test if secondary school students in an advanced elective course in English show a higher level of vocabulary, a wider variety of language structures and higher narrative complexity after writing fanfiction-based tasks.

The thesis is divided into five main parts: the introduction, an overview of the different issues related to using literature and fanfiction in the language classroom, description of the methodology, analysis of the results and a conclusion. The literature review chapter gives an overview of using literature in learning English as well as the role of fanfiction and literature to identity-building and language skills. The empirical chapter describes the process of carrying out the lessons on fanfiction and the selection of novels and tasks for the experiment. This is followed by the discussion of the results.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature in language teaching

An important aspect of foreign language learning, especially at a higher level of proficiency, is the use of authentic texts. Two most common ways of doing that in language lessons are using news stories or fiction. Most texts used in the Estonian National Examination in English are also news stories, albeit sometimes somewhat simplified and adapted versions (SA Innove n.a.: 3). While news articles provide important knowledge about the world around us, literature, on the other hand, can be a method of escape from everyday life into a world that can be slightly different from the usual or involve fantastical locations and creatures. This helps develop the reader's imagination as they encounter things or places that they have not seen before. Reading fiction also gives a deeper insight into other people's minds or into how people used to live in different times or in different cultures. In addition, literary texts, especially fiction, tend to use figurative language more and this can help to enrich students' vocabulary.

The intersection of literature and teaching language can be viewed differently, depending on the focus. Paran (2008) has demonstrated this in terms of the intersection of two axes: literature focus and language learning focus. Based on this model, typical literature-based tasks used in language lessons tend to fall into the two quadrants where there is no apparent literary focus. According to Paran (2008: 467), using literature as simply another type of text where the focus is on the vocabulary and grammar usually does not involve any literary analysis or literary knowledge. Extensive reading also does not necessarily have a literary or language learning focus (Paran 2008: 467). Extensive reading, however, seems to be the most common way of integrating literature into foreign language classrooms, outside of excerpts used in textbooks. In other words, it could be said that literature in the English language classroom is usually treated as just another text, not

as specifically literature. Textbooks sometimes include excerpts or adapted segments from literary works but they most often do not seem to be treated as literature per se but more on the same level as other texts in the textbooks such as newspaper and magazine articles or opinion pieces.

Bloemert et al (2019: 372) have outlined a Comprehensive Approach to foreign language literature learning that involves overlap of the language, the text, the context and also the reader. However, this model mostly applies in countries like the Netherlands where teaching literature in foreign language classes is part of the curriculum. In Estonia, this is the case in only specific elective courses focusing on literature of English-speaking countries, not in the curriculum as a whole. In the study carried out by Bloemert et al (2019), secondary school students from 15 different Dutch schools were surveyed and although literature is a compulsory part of language lessons in the Netherlands, the students mostly saw literature as a tool for learning the language. However, over half of them also noted the cultural benefits of learning about the context surrounding the work of literature. In contrast, the reader approach was only mentioned by a third of the students and the text by only 12%, which means the focus in the schools surveyed is either on the context and the language or the students did not acknowledge those aspects when responding to the survey. However, both Paran (2008) and Bloemert et al (2019) stressed that teaching literature also requires special training for the teachers and since that is scarce, it can be said some teachers either feel they are not qualified to teach literature but still do so, feel they are unqualified and thus do not involve it in their lesson, or teach it in a teacher-centric way.

In contrast to other texts, literature provides insight into other cultures and countries, whether fictional or more realistic ones, helping to foster intercultural competence and empathy (Alter & Ratheiser 2019). Learning about the culture of the countries where the

target language is spoken is also an integral part of language learning. Reading about a variety of different people and perspectives can also help promote acceptance and tolerance in students, providing them with a chance to experience situations through the eyes of the fictional characters. This in turn helps develop several of the general competences outlined in the National Curriculum of Upper Secondary Schools (2014). Through analysing how other cultures and people operate, the students can strengthen their cultural and value competence and social and citizenship competence. In addition, for this purpose the culture does not have to be that of the target language as even fictional cultures and worlds can be valuable sources for illustrating cultural differences and different perspectives. The Common European Framework of Reference 2020 Companion volume (Council of Europe 2020: 125) includes pluricultural competence, which at a B2 level of building on pluricultural repertoire includes being able to “identify and reflect on similarities and differences in culturally determined behavioural patterns,” a skill that could also be developed through reading about different cultures, both real and fictional.

Fanfiction and education

One way of interacting with literature is through fanfiction, either by writing fanfiction based on a work of literature or by reading it. Fanfiction is a transformative work of fiction based on an existing source text or several texts. In short, it is a reimagining of an existing narrative or an element of one, such as changing a plotline, the setting or adding characters from other works (Lehtonen 2017: 106). While fanfiction as it is known started as mostly stories written about TV shows, famously about Star Trek, nowadays sources for fanfiction cover a wide variety of different media and genres from TV shows to books to things like inanimate objects that are either significant to the fandom or relatively famous. Coppa (2017: 13) describes fanfiction as a series of “What if?” questions about the

characters, changing their settings, social identity, class or another distinguishing marker to explore endless possibilities and combinations between characters (what if in the first Harry Potter book Harry had made friends with Draco Malfoy instead of Ron) or fandoms (what if Q from the new James Bond films were the youngest Holmes brother). As such, fanfiction gives the writer a foundation to start the story from either in the form of an existing plot or a set of fully formed characters in contrast with an original work where the writing process involves coming up with the plot and the characters as well.

Fanfiction has mostly been studied from a genre or community perspective, focusing on why people write fanfiction or on works of fanfiction themselves (Jamison 2013, Pugh 2006). In *Textual Poachers* Henry Jenkins (1992) focuses on fan culture and how fans interact with the media they love, including writing fanfiction. Derecho (2006) explores fanfiction in the broader context of intertextuality in writing, placing fanfiction within the tradition of writers drawing inspiration from other writers' works. Kaplan (2006) analyses narrative techniques used in novel-length fanfiction as a tool for character development, looking both at the portrayal of characters who have either minor or major roles in canon and also at using original characters to reframe canon characters. Busse (2017) describes how a lot of fanfiction is tailor-made to a very narrow audience, in contrast with pro writing, which is aimed at a larger audience and thus cannot include elements that only a very specific subset of readers will like. However, fanfiction as a community genre allows for such niche stories, either as response to prompts from other members of the fandom or as the writer's spontaneous idea, allowing the author to explore a wide variety of situations and identities.

Helping students connect their learning with the things they like, such as a film or a television series could be beneficial in language learning as well. Most students consume some form of media, whether it is binge-watching a television series or playing a video

game, and all of those could be connected to fan interactions, either through reading or writing fanfiction. The narrative techniques mentioned by Kaplan (2006) could also be used as scaffolding for writing tasks or for analysing a reading text as characters in both fiction and non-fiction still are described through the narration. The freedom that fanfiction as a rather liberal form of writing provides also lets the students explore their own identity, helping them develop their self-awareness competence. They play on the existing character traits from the canon and interpret that through different situations. By that they might also re-evaluate some of their own values and understand why they find something in the canon to be problematic or relatable.

There have also been some studies into fanfiction writers whose first language is not English. Most studies connected to fanfiction and speakers of English as a foreign language have focused on authors who write fanfiction as a non-classroom activity. Black (2005) found that fanfiction provides an opportunity to use language in context, helps the writers be more aware of genre conventions and, by being a member of the fanfiction community, gives them an opportunity to develop their communication skills. The latter mostly happens through commenting but also through adapting their work based on the feedback they get either from the readers who have left reviews or from editors known as beta-readers. Black (2009) also discovered that the three authors in a case study of young fanfiction writers learning English as a second language successfully used fanfiction to express their own views of the world and their identity by interacting with popular media via fanfiction. In that particular study the attention was not just on the language aspect but it also focused on how writing fanfiction develops critical media literacy and 21st century skills (Black 2009: 76). When writing fanfiction and uploading it to a website, the writer has to navigate the site, figure out what their online persona will be and how they will present themselves, both as a reader and as an author. This involves considering how much

of their own identity they want to expose, whether they want to create a connection between their fanfiction writer persona and their regular online presence or whether they want to remain relatively anonymous.

Fanfiction as an intertextual genre provides the writer with a familiar source text with mostly already established characters as a medium through which the writer can explore different social issues and to also reflect on themselves as people. It gives the writer a framework where to start in their writing: instead of having to come up with original characters and a plot, writing fanfiction involves already established characters and a general plot on which the writer can build and add elements. All three writers interviewed by Black (2009) use fanfiction to interact with the world and to combine and analyse their own cultural background through either writing about a different cultural context or by interacting with the readers through comments. While the language the work of fanfiction is in is perhaps not that important from a general cross-cultural perspective, the use of language still reflects some of the writer's attitude.

The concept of fanfiction and reviews left by readers acting as feedback in the middle of the writing progress has also been analysed by Thomas (2011) who focused on the interaction between the readers and the author in the reviews section that is present in most fanfiction archives. The comments are a tool where the readers can communicate directly with the authors, show their appreciation for their writing and encourage them to keep writing but also a place to provide constructive criticism, either on the plot, the language or some element of the story. This shows that fanfiction can be used as a tool for process writing, for collaboration and as a way of critiquing the world through a cross-cultural lens. Writing fanfiction or comments in English in an English-speaking space also lets them develop their writing skills, not only the linguistic aspect but also literary skills like the use of metaphors or different other literary devices. Beta reading, which means

asking someone more proficient to read and edit the text before posting, is also a common practice in fanfiction communities. Beta readers, depending on the fandom and the background of the author, can also function not just as language editors but also as experts of a specific culture or field, pointing out, for example, Americanisms in a story that has British characters or is set in the UK and vice versa or correcting inaccuracies about a specific area like medicine or history. They also give the writer feedback on different aspects of the story such as the pacing or plot points. Beta reading in a way functions as informal feedback, much like what students would get from their teachers or peers in response to writing assignments but with perhaps more attention paid to cultural accuracy and the storytelling aspect. Through this the writer gets suggestions on their language use and also on how well their ideas have transferred from their mind to the page.

Fanfiction in EFL lessons

Although the majority of studies of using fanfiction in lessons have focused on English as a first language classes, recently the topic of teaching English as a foreign language by using fanfiction has also emerged as a field of study. Using fanfiction in teaching provides some scaffolding for less-experienced writers as what they produce is founded in the source text, at least to some extent. If there is also a personal interest in the fandom, the students might be more encouraged to work on the task.

So far there have been only a few studies on using fanfiction as an in-class task where the students are not native speakers of English. Sauro and Sundmark (2016) used a task-based fanfiction project with a group of first year undergraduate students enrolled in an English language class in a Swedish university and at the end of the project the majority of the students claimed the task fostered their language learning and helped with the literary analysis of the text. The project involved analysing J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*,

collectively creating a missing scene in blog form from the point of view of several characters, followed by an individual reflective paper and an oral group presentation. While writing the missing scene involved mostly paying attention to literary aspects such as plot, themes, the author's style and characterisation, in the reflection the students were asked questions about the language learning aspect of the task. The students said the task made them pay more attention to the less common and slightly archaic vocabulary and various lexical patterns used in the source text so they could mimic the style and language in their writing (Sauro & Sundmark 2016: 420); in addition, they also reported an overall improvement in their ability to write in English (Sauro & Sundmark 2016).

Schattenhertz (2016) had a group of general education students and two groups of vocational education students in Norway read and write fanfiction based on one particular book, focusing on how the students perceived reading books before the task, on the length of the fanfiction text compared to the literary analysis of the same source, the students' attitudes towards the task and also on the teachers' perception of fanfiction as a possible subject to use in English lessons. On the whole, the students were more motivated to work with the source text and the accompanying fanfiction than with the previous novels they had to analyse (Schattenhertz 2016: 35).

Sauro (2014) describes four possible technology-enhanced learning tasks for language classrooms that are based on actual fan practices in different online communities, from a simple turn-based story building task that is suitable for beginners to the more advanced tasks such as fandom-based wikis or fan subbing, the practice of fans writing subtitles for their favourite TV programmes or films so those who do not speak the language could also watch them. However, it could be said that these tasks are mostly applicable also outside of fandom, as tasks such as creating a story line by line or roleplaying through blogs do not necessarily have to be rooted in an existing source text.

The three existing studies on using fanfiction in an EFL context and in language classes that were mentioned earlier have focussed on very different elements. Sauro (2014) only describes possible task types without actually explaining their effect or their implementation with a group of students. Sauro and Sundmark (2016) used *The Lord of the Rings*, a fantasy classic that uses quite a bit of archaic vocabulary, poetry and even fictional languages. In addition, the group of students in that study were university students training to become teachers of English and the focus was on collaborative tasks and feedback from the students. In contrast, Schattenhertz (2016) used a modern fantasy novel that integrates mythology and the students were a combination of secondary school and vocational school students. The study compared a literary analysis text and a work of fanfiction, focussing on the mark given for the task, the change in word count and the feedback from the students. However, there has not been a study with a genre other than fantasy or involving a group of students that would fall somewhere between these two levels. In addition, the focus has been mostly on the students' feedback, not on the writing.

METHODOLOGY

The participants of the study were a group of 13 students – 6 boys and 7 girls – in their final year of secondary school who were enrolled in an elective course of English. The students were not from the same class but from the same English group and thus had been learning English together for at least two and a half years already. As one of the tasks before the start of the course, they were asked to suggest a few books for extensive reading. Out of the books suggested by the students, two that were recommended more than once were selected by the teacher. Those were *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky. *Mort* by Terry Pratchett was added by the teacher as a possible fantasy novel. The latter was done as several of the students had recommended fantasy novels but none of them were mentioned more than once and most of them were a lot longer than the other two novels in the selection. Coincidentally, all three novels in the final selection deal with the topic of growing up in one way or another. Eight students, which is more than half of the group, chose to read *The Catcher in the Rye*, four students read *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* and only one student chose *Mort*. However, not all students managed to complete all the tasks.

As the first post-reading task, during one of the lessons the students who were present were put into smaller groups according to the novel they had read to have a brief discussion on their first impressions after finishing the book and on the main themes and characters of the novel. The aim of this was to give the students an opportunity to share their opinions and to perhaps even the level a bit as some students perhaps did not focus that much on the characters as they did on the plot. This was followed by the first writing task. In the first task the students had to write a very short summary of the novel, adding their impression and a brief analysis of the book. The students were given some guiding

questions for both parts of the task to discourage them from simply writing a plot summary or a review, two task types they are more familiar with from previous tasks involving reading stories or watching films. After the first task, the group was forced to switch over to asynchronous distance learning.

As the second writing task the students were encouraged to think of a significant plot moment in the novel they had read and to imagine a different outcome for that scene. Fanfiction stories of this nature are usually called fix-its as their aim usually is to fix a scene that went wrong in the fanfiction writer's opinion. As a guiding element for those who perhaps could not come up with a scene of their own, the option of rewriting the ending of the story was also given as the final or penultimate scene usually are also very significant. In addition to coming up with the storyline, the students were encouraged to pay attention to the style and language of the novel and instructed to keep their writing true to the style of the novel. For example, if the novel used first-person narration, the students also had to use that and try to include any peculiarities about the language used by the characters. The students were given a limit of at least 300 words for the task to discourage them from giving in to the temptation of only writing a few sentences.

Before the final writing task the students were briefly introduced to the concept of Alternate Universe (AU) stories after a short discussion on tropes used in film and literature as a lead-in. After that, they were given a selection of AU ideas to choose from. The prompts could be divided into three groups. The first group was crossovers where the students could pick their own second universe. The second group listed the most common AU prompts: coffee shop, bakery, tattoo parlour, superheroes, and celebrities. The final option was an epilogue set 10 years in the future. Again, a minimal word count of 400 words was given. In both cases, it was emphasised to the students that the word count is the minimum they should write, not the optimal length. From the students who submitted

both fanfiction tasks, three students based their writing on *The Catcher in the Rye* and six students on *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*.

The texts were first evaluated using the Text Inspector tool that is provided on the Cambridge EnglishProfile portal (<https://languageresearch.cambridge.org/wordlists/text-inspector>). The version chosen for analysis is the full version, which allows one to analyse longer texts and has more metrics than the simplified version. The Text Inspector is a type of software that analyses a given text according to several criteria, including word class, number of sentences, number of words in sentences, average number of syllables and so on. The vocabulary profile option of the tool looks up the CEFR level for each word in the text and groups the words according to their CEFR level. The final report provides both the number and percentage for words in each category. The feature also provides an option to categorise the words it does not have a CEFR level for in the database. There is no information on the Text Inspector website as to exactly what database it uses for categorising words but considering it collaborates with Cambridge English and the words seem to have the same CEFR classification, or lack thereof, it seems to be Cambridge Dictionary. The standard subscription version also provides a range of other metrics, for example, the lexical diversity of the text, the number of metadiscourse markers used and a general CEFR level for the text based on the vocabulary and sentence structure of the text. As the website says, the aim of the basic Text Inspector tool is to check how difficult the text is according to the level of the words used. This is useful for teachers, students and for anyone who is creating materials that should be understood by people with a certain language level. As language exams also assess the complexity of the vocabulary used by the candidate, this could be a tool the students or the teachers could use to determine if the text is at the necessary level or some substitutions should be made to lift the level.

As a potential method for assessing such tasks, especially from a narrative

perspective, two rubrics will be tested. The first one is a fanfiction-specific rubric from the *FanTALES Teacher Handbook* (2020). The rubric uses a 0–3-point scale and assesses the following criteria: overall fictional writing conventions, task completion, presence of original elements, canon compliance for both content and language, and cohesion. The rubric includes descriptions for the different levels of the criteria and the handbook also provides examples for assessing some of the criteria. However, those are quite extreme as in most cases the examples are either for maximum points or the minimum, not for the middle sections that usually are more difficult to distinguish. For example, the 2- and 1-point descriptors for assessing the use of canon specific language include the quantifiers ‘some’ and ‘few’, which can be quite difficult to measure.

The second rubric used to assess the texts is the Index of Narrative Complexity (Chamberlin et al 2017). The index assesses 13 different narrative elements on either a 0-2- or 0-3-point scale. The narrative elements include features to do with the plot, such as the presence of (named) characters or an event that prompts a reaction from the characters, as well as some more detailed elements, for example, the use of causal adverbial clauses or whether the characters encounter any complications. The full list of elements for the rubric is as follows: character, setting, initiating event, internal response, plan, action/attempt, complication, consequence, formulaic markers, temporal markers, causal adverbial clauses, knowledge of dialogue and narrator evaluations. The elements are all described in the rubric with specific numbers of occurrence provided for scoring.

ANALYSIS

As the focus is on comparing stories written at two different points in time, those stories where the student had only submitted one task, not both, were excluded from the final selection. That left a total of nine pairs of texts for analysis as two students only submitted one task and another two students did not submit anything. It is hard to determine why so many students failed to do the tasks. One of the reasons might have been a general lack of motivation as the same students also had problems submitting other tasks as well. In addition, the majority of students who did write their stories submitted them around the time when they were first assigned but two students posted their tasks several weeks after the initial deadline. This in turn influenced the process and timeline of the experiment as the original intention was to move on to the next stage when all the students had finished the previous task.

Out of the nine stories submitted for the first fanfiction task, three did not fully correspond to the task that had been set and were more like summaries of potential events, not missing or alternate scenes as was instructed. In two of those cases, the text was more of an analysis of what the student thought might happen if a scene had had a different twist. Furthermore, these students included some comments explaining their reasoning for the events and the consequences instead of writing it out in story form with the appropriate dialogue and narration. In a way, it could be said that they have presented some of the thinking that goes on in the writer's mind before (or during) writing the story itself: they have analysed the characters and their behaviour in different situations, describing the different outcomes this change would have either to the main character or to several characters in the canon and commenting on why they think so. In addition, one possibility could be to direct the students to rewrite such 'drafts' into properly formatted stories but due to time constraints it was not possible this time.

In comparison, the remaining six stories have followed the style and narration of the canon they are based on. This means the students have used first person narration as was used in the source text and used the appropriate format; in the case of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* this means writing the story as a letter from the main character. As an additional criterion, the minimal word count for the first task was set at 300 but four students wrote more than 400 words, the longest story being 503 words. This could be taken as proof that the students put more effort into the story and were not just attempting to reach the minimal word count, as they sometimes tend to do. Only in one case it was very clear that the student had only thought of reaching the word count as the text was exactly 300 words long. However, in most cases the students have also included some lines from the novel to indicate the scene they are reworking which inflates the word count somewhat. As the scenes themselves diverge from the original considerably in some cases, including some of the preceding material from the original helps to set the scene and give some context to the story.

Another technique that is used in fanfiction in addition to including some of the dialogue from the original or instead of it is describing the scene in the summary. Fanfiction stories usually have summaries for any background information or context necessary to understand the story fully but the stories the students wrote did not have the usual header that precedes a work of fanfiction. Thus, adding the information to the beginning of the story was very rational. In contrast, only one student did not provide any explicit markers to indicate where exactly their story is placed in the source text but there are some indicators that allow the reader to at least assume the location on the timeline.

As for the length of material the students decided to change, two of the students rewrote an entire chapter while seven students only changed a specific scene. As the chapters are not uniform in length and some include many events, it is understandable that

some students only chose a smaller segment to reimagine. Only one student chose to rewrite the final scene and add an epilogue of sorts to the novel whereas others chose a specific event somewhere in the middle of the novel. This could be seen as an indicator that the students have interacted with the story enough to find a particular scene they either felt dissatisfied with or simply wanted to change something about it. Furthermore, three students chose to explore a more negative storyline whereas the other six students opted for a more positive storyline, changing scenes that had a negative outcome for the main character in the novel.

In their first fanfiction stories the students mostly display a high grammatical accuracy with occasional slips in complex structures. Overall, the mistakes were mostly to do with punctuation issues with direct speech and occasional shifts from the past to the present tense and vice versa in the narration. In addition, one student also had used a double negative. However, the punctuation mistakes stem from the difference in Estonian and English direct speech markers, something they have probably had less contact with in English, and the rest are potentially mistakes the students could correct on their own when made aware of these issues. As the students are learning English at an advanced level, the lack of prominent mistakes is not that surprising and the opposite would be more out of the ordinary.

For the second task the students could choose from three prompt groups and all were represented in their submissions in some form. Most students – 6 out of 9 – opted for the epilogue prompt, describing the characters' lives 10 years after the final chapter of the novel. Five out of those six are snapshots in the style of the canon text, giving an update on what has happened to the main characters from the novel. In contrast, one student narrates a specific event that happens at the 10-year reunion. However, the style of that story does not correspond to that used in the novel as it is in third person, not narrated by the main

character. Two students from the group opted to write a crossover, one of them describing a potential crossover where Holden from *The Catcher in the Rye* meets the main characters from *The Fast and the Furious* film franchise, only the student mistakenly used the names of the actors, not those of the characters they portray in the films. The other crossover was in a way the reimagining of the beginning of *Spirited Away*, a popular anime film, but with Charlie from *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* reliving what the main character in the anime does. Finally, one student wrote an alternate universe story with Charlie and some of the other characters as police detectives solving a crime that turns out to be the suicide of a character from the very start of the book and is the catalyst of the events in the novel.

One of the aspects that was analysed is the vocabulary and general difficulty of the texts. According to the Text Inspector, at least 95% of the words in the texts for are at B2 level or lower. While all stories had a few words from C1 or C2 level vocabulary, there were also some that were uncategorised and were not proper nouns. Therefore, it is hard to say exactly how many of those uncategorised words are B2 or above that. In addition, the canon texts are narrated by teenagers, which means the vocabulary used in the novels themselves is not that sophisticated to begin with. In this sense, for these novels, it would be out of character for the narrator to suddenly start using more complicated vocabulary, at least for those stories set in the same timeline as the novel and written in the first person. In contrast, for the alternate universe tasks, it would perhaps be more suitable to include more advanced vocabulary, especially when the story references obtaining some sort of a higher education degree. However, as it is first person narration, the narrator's inner monologue may still include lower level vocabulary than what they would use in formal contexts.

The paid subscription version of Text Inspector also provides the user with an overall score card that assesses all the different metrics using an expanded form of the CEFR scale with in between plus levels such as B2+ also available as well as separate D1 and D2

levels to denote more advanced and academic vocabulary and style than the typical C1 and C2 levels. According to the score card, the number of metrics used in formulating the final score card was different from story to story, ranging from 15 to 30. There does not seem to be a specific pattern for this or a possibility for the user to individually select the metrics for the overall score. One possibility for the contrast might be that the number is to do with the lack of data or the low level of the specific metric, but there are no explanations on the website for it and it is hard to determine at what point it starts calculating the level. This means the overall results might not be very accurate if part of the data is not used.

The highest overall level for a text was C1+ which was for one of the first task texts that was more like an essay in format than a story. The genre difference also potentially explains the higher level as the essay-like rumination has more complex sentences and academic vocabulary than a typical Young Adult novel like the novels and works of fanfiction in question. The lowest level was surprisingly B1+ for one of the epilogues, which seems to have been assigned mainly based on the vocabulary. However, as the system is not very transparent, it is hard to determine what exactly was the reason for the score. When comparing the scores of the first and second texts by student, surprisingly four students received a lower score for the second text by half a level (for example, C1 for the first text and B2+ for the second), two students went down a whole level from C1 to B2 and two students had the same level for both texts, B2+ and C1 respectively. For those whose second text was an entire level lower, the result might also be because the first text included a passage from the novel and one of the metrics used in calculating the level might also have been either sentence length or readability. Only one student improved their level with the second text from B2+ to C1. Coincidentally, this student added a comment about their second task that they focussed on reaching the minimal word count more than on the plot, therefore it is difficult to say how accurate the result is. However, all the

students who scored lower for the second task also chose the epilogue task. Perhaps as a more descriptive text there were not as many opportunities to use advanced vocabulary or more complex structures that could add up to a higher overall level. In contrast, the students who chose one of the other two prompts either had the same level both times or improved with the second task. Therefore, one of the reasons for the change might be the task and how this particular prompt was phrased.

The texts were also assessed using the FanTALES rubric. The first thing that should be pointed out is that the stories that were in the format of summaries or essays were marked lower in several criteria. To keep the assessment uniform, these stories got lower scores for Fictional Writing as they included a plot and imaginary events but, unlike most of the other stories, they did not have any dialogue or point of view. What is more, they also received lower scores for Meets Expectations as they only included the prompt aspect of the task but not the structure or the language of the novel as was specified in the instructions. For the same reason, these stories received no points for Language as there was nothing canon-specific used in terms of sentence structure or vocabulary whereas all the other stories included either vocabulary or the sentence structure that is typical of the narrator.

Using a rubric to assess any task is very assessor specific unless there has been some instruction or it comes with specific guidelines as to which results fall in which category. Therefore, the scores for these texts are also somewhat subjective. However, as the texts were mostly assessed at the same time, the scores should be comparable. As explained before, the texts that did not comply with the assigned format received lower scores, amassing a total of only 9 points out of the possible 18. While all the students received feedback on their texts before the second assignment was introduced, due to distance learning the feedback was in written format and there is no way of determining whether the

students had read the feedback before writing the second text or not. In one case, the second text received 12 points as it was still a summary like the previous one but this time with dialogue and no comments from the author, adding points for Fictional Writing and Originality.

Structurally and stylistically, most of the remaining 12 stories correspond well to the fandom they were based on. This means that the language contains elements from the canon like specific slang elements or phrases that are frequently used in the novel. For those based on *The Catcher in the Rye* this meant using certain slang phrases and swearwords that the main character uses quite often but also recreating the somewhat chaotic sequence of events with the narration that seems to jump from one action to another very quickly. The use of these shows that the story is clearly set in the same universe as the text it is based on whereas a lack of such markers would indicate that the author is perhaps not as familiar with the canon and the characters could be seen as out of character by the readers, especially if they are quite familiar with the source text. This is something that is usually frowned upon in fandom unless there is a specific reason for the characters to behave differently from the norm. For those stories set in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* universe, it mostly means writing the story in letter form. Out of these 12 stories, the lowest score was 15 and the highest 18, the highest possible score in this rubric. For three students, the score remained the same with both stories receiving a total of 16 points. In one case, the first story from a student received the maximum score and the second task one point less for Fictional Writing. In contrast, in two cases students improved their results with the second task.

To get a better overview of the narrative aspect of the stories, the Index of Narrative Complexity was used to assess the texts. As fanfiction stories always include at least one main character with a specific name and all the stories in question also included some

reference to places or time, Character and Setting were left out of the assessment as all stories would get the maximum score for those elements. However, the presence of all the remaining 11 elements was assessed.

The first difficulty that arose in the process of assessment was determining the Initiating Event, one of the elements that is the basis for assessing several other elements in the rubric. On the one hand, a lot of the stories did not really have an initiating event but were either snapshots with a lot of descriptions but no actual events or reactions to an event that had already happened. On the other hand, as they are works of fanfiction based on a novel, a lot of them could be approached as reactions to the novel, making what happened before in the novel the catalyst and the initiating event to the story. However, for alternate universe fanfiction, this would not be the case as the event along with the setup has to be in the fanfiction story itself. For this purpose, the analysis considers the novel as the initiating event where applicable. Otherwise, nearly all the stories written for the first prompt where the students had to reimagine a scene would be disadvantaged as in most cases the original content is a different version of the aftermath of an event in the novel, providing only the resolution, not the event or problem itself. For the stories written for the second task, those written for the epilogue will be approached similarly as the first group whereas the crossovers and alternate universe prompts will be considered as separate from the novel.

With this in mind, all the stories have at least one initiating event that the characters respond to. For the epilogue set 10 years in the future, it could have been specified in the prompt that it should not simply be an overview of the character's lives but include actual plot events. However, as both novels in question are from the narrator's point of view and as letters in *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, it is not very out of character to have such an epilogue.

All stories also include at least one statement about the main character's mental state,

giving all of them maximum points for Internal Response. This is quite understandable as both novels end with the main character in the hospital due to mental health issues. Quite a few of the epilogues referenced the recovery process and the stories written for the first task mentioned the confusing emotions the characters felt. However, three texts written for the second set of prompts only included one reference to the psychological state of the character as those focussed more on chronicling the events that happened to the main characters, not evaluating them. For the two that were meant to be epilogues, one reason for that might be because of the poor wording of the prompt. In contrast, the third of these texts was a crossover story where the student interpreted the prompt as requiring a summary of a longer story, not just a snippet or a scene. Furthermore, the student also left an author's note stating they did not put much effort into the story, which probably also influenced the structure and the content of the story. While author's notes are quite common in fanfiction (Thomas 2011) and sometimes include similar comments about the writing process as well, in this case it was probably a coincidence. However, it might be beneficial to encourage students to comment on their writing process in a similar fashion.

For Plan there were only a few instances where the students had described the actions the characters are planning to take using cognitive verbs, not just described the actions themselves. This might be because the students were more plot-oriented in their writing, focussing on what was done and on its aftermath, not as much on the planning. In terms of Action/Attempt, one of the stories for the first task did not describe any overt actions, either related to the initiating event or not. As that story described the current situation in the main character's life and his internal monologue rather than any actions, it is understandable. Similarly, the same applies for most of the responses to the epilogue prompt as well as all but two of them were descriptions of what the characters were doing at that point in life without a lot of actual plot. This again is perhaps due to the prompt

itself, not as much to the students' writing.

For Complication, only a few stories included some sort of a stumbling block for the characters. Again, this might be due to the prompts and that the narrative did not get developed that much in the short snippets that the students had to write. Perhaps assigning longer tasks would invoke a different response where a complication would make more sense for the plot. Less than a third of the stories included at least one consequence that was related to the main event and explicitly stated. However, that could be debatable as in many cases it depends on whether the story itself is seen as a consequence of the events in the novel as for the first set of stories, the plot of the story resolves an event from the novel itself. Furthermore, in the stories that focussed more on the internal monologue or functioned as an update on the characters' lives, it depends on whether their career or life choices could be considered as consequences to the novel or not. Finally, all the stories had some commentary from the narrator that justified their actions.

From structural elements, most of the stories had Formulaic Markers of some sort. In the stories based on *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* that adhered to the structure of the novel and were written as separate chapters in that style, there was already the presence of a salutation and sign-off that are typical to the letter format used in the novel. In contrast, the texts written as parts of chapters for both novels in the first task only had a marker to indicate the end of the scene. For the two essay-like stories, linking devices mark both the introduction and the conclusion which function as the start and the ending of the narrative. Two stories for the second task also included final markers that indicate the ending of the narrative but are suitable for a chaptered story as in both cases it was a cliffhanger, not an actual ending. Considering that one of these was an alternate universe story and the other one a crossover, it would make sense for the story to continue after the first 400 words and for the student not to write everything out in the task. In addition, the stories use several

temporal markers throughout the texts to organise events, *after* being the most common one used. Causal adverbial clauses are present in all the stories, all stories using between 3 to 8 logical connectives, one of which obviously being *and*.

In terms of dialogue, the problem of what to count as dialogue arises as only some of the stories include direct speech and a few more include reported speech. Due to the nature of the source texts that are first-person narratives with a lot of introspection and the epilogue prompt being not that plot-driven, a lot of the stories lacked dialogue altogether. However, both direct and reported speech were considered as dialogue in this case. 8 stories out of 18 included dialogue, 5 of those included at least one instance of direct speech. In some cases, the lack of dialogue is understandable as the epilogues, especially those for *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* that are in the form of letters, which mostly describe the characters and that does not provide an opportunity to include dialogue in a natural way. The same applies for those written about *The Catcher in the Rye*. In this case, the prompt and the style of the canon are not conducive to including dialogue unless the story is expanded to include specific scenes between the characters. Overall, the Index expects a specific text with certain elements present and unfortunately, the epilogue prompt was worded in a way that the students focussed on describing more than telling the story.

Although the first task included either an option to find a specific scene to rework or to change the end of the novel, only one student chose the latter. This could be seen as an indication of their imagination and critical thinking approaching the story and identifying potential changes as most of the students chose the more complicated option. In contrast, the student who chose the second option also put the least effort into the second task, which might also be reflected in their approach to the first task. Although that story was not that elaborate in terms of style, there were a few plot twists, including a dream

sequence, that showed some creativity. Out of the remaining 8 stories that focussed on specific scenes, three were more negative spins and five were more positive when compared to the original scenes in the canon. The latter was also reflected in the students' comments about the novels after finishing them. They were mostly disappointed in the novels and it seemed to be a combination of *The Catcher in the Rye* not living up to its cult status and the rather bleak endings to both novels.

The Catcher in the Rye was criticised by one of the students for having a lot of swear words and repetitive slang phrases and two out of the three students who read it mentioned that they would not recommend it to others, even though one of the students mentioned that it was a quick read because of the fast pace of the novel. One student also mentioned that the main character, Holden is very negative. In a way, it is understandable that the students could not relate to this novel that much as it is from a completely different era for them. This was also reflected in their epilogues where all the characters got a happy ending.

For *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* the students' feedback was more positive and they praised the novel for talking about topics that are relatable or important to young people. However, still a few students mentioned that the novel was a bit depressing, which is understandable given the content. One student even mentioned that they would have liked to see what happened next in the novel, something that can be the first step to either imagining a potential outcome or writing it down in fanfiction form. Surprisingly enough, all three negative spin stories were written for this novel, all three changing integral details of the novel that then acted as a domino effect on the rest of the plot. The three positive fix-it stories written for this novel were also to do with major changes to the plot. In one case, the outcome was a relationship between two of the main characters, the second changed a fight scene with Charlie's sister's boyfriend to a more mature solution and the

third added an original character as a potential friend and perhaps love interest for Charlie.

For the second set of story tasks, the prompts again included a less creative alternative – the epilogue task – and more complicated options that included more original content. The epilogue was the most popular option. One reason might be that the students opted for the easiest and quickest option as the task was assigned in early April when the students had a high workload in general. The second reason might be because the other options were not as relatable for them. Nevertheless, the epilogues were mostly optimistic about the characters' futures but with all of them referencing the main characters' psychological problems and integrating it to the future outcome.

One of the reasons for including a crossover task, in addition to it being a popular fanfiction trope, was that it provides a way to combine a text that the students perhaps are not that interested in with one that they are more engaged with (Sauro et al 2020: 332). As some of the students expressed hesitation about the novel they had read, this would have been an option for them to react to that by adding a set of characters they are more interested in. In contrast, only two students out of nine wrote a crossover and these were not students who disliked the novel. Nevertheless, one student wrote an alternate universe where they combined *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* with a police drama, in a way perhaps still adding a twist to the story that they found more interesting than the original novel itself.

No matter which prompt the students chose, they had to analyse the characters and the canon to identify specific elements that they could and should use in fanfiction, a task that required critical reading and thinking. In addition, the tasks all involved some level of creativity and the ability to convey their ideas clearly. In this sense it could be said that the tasks supported the acquisition of some 21st century skills. They also had to adapt their ideas to suit the cultural context of the novel and the era the story or their version was set

in. For example, one of the epilogues taking place 10 years after the events in the novel that the student chose to set in the 1960s (the correct timeline would place the epilogue somewhere in the late 1950s but the mistake perhaps stems from the fact that *The Catcher in the Rye* was published in 1951) referenced purchasing a lava lamp, something that is quite characteristic to the era and likely to happen, whereas another one story set in 1991 mentioned a band that was not yet founded for more than a decade, a detail that stands out as not canon compliant.

CONCLUSION

Usually extensive reading focusses on the language and perhaps the plot as well, treating the novel as a text and not literature. However, by doing that the full potential of reading literature as a way of learning about other cultures, how people behave in different situations, and even about oneself, is not realised. Furthermore, reading literature could also be combined with fanfiction as a form of creative writing in an integrated skills task. This would be a way to foster creativity, critical thinking and language skills while also analysing the content of the novel. Fanfiction gives the writer an opportunity to explore how already fully fleshed characters may operate in different situations, but also a chance to interact with the source text and improve it. The aim of the thesis was to compare two fanfiction tasks written by advanced EFL students, paying attention to the narrative complexity, compliance with general fanfiction rules, and the difficulty of the texts in terms of vocabulary and language structures.

In this study a group of nine students in their final year of secondary school read a novel and later wrote two fanfiction tasks based on it. The novels – *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky – were selected from a list of students' suggestions. As these are two famous and popular novels targeted to young adults, these seemed suitable for the task. As a fantasy option *Mort* by Terry Pratchett was also offered but was not selected by any of the students who submitted both fanfiction tasks.

The students were given a minimum word count for both sets of tasks and both times they got to choose the angle from which they wanted to approach their story. Both times there was one option that should have been easier in terms of coming up with the plot. For the first task the students were expected to rework a scene from either somewhere in the middle of the novel or think of an alternate ending. The first option should have involved

more critical reading and thinking as students they needed to first identify a scene for the task. It also gave the students a chance to analyse what they did not like about the novel, why, and how it could be changed. All but one student chose a specific scene or point in the novel for the task. Two thirds of the group also followed the set style of the novel, which also meant identifying elements that are characteristic to the narration and integrating them into their own writing.

The second task involved choosing between three prompts that involved different levels of creativity in an increasing order: an epilogue set 10 years in the future, transporting the characters into an alternate setting, and a crossover between the novel and another work of their own choice. Six students chose the epilogue, two wrote a crossover of the novel with a film, and one student wrote an alternate universe story that could also be seen as a crossover with any crime drama. However, despite the epilogue task being perhaps the least original of the three options, the students still approached it very creatively and their theories were different from another.

The tasks were assessed using three tools: the FanTALES fanfiction-specific rubric that assesses how well the story complies with the characteristics of a work of fanfiction, the automatic Text Inspector tool for assessing the text from a language and vocabulary standpoint, and the Index of Narrative Complexity for the narrative elements in the text. The texts that complied with the task instructions also scored high according to the fanfiction rubric. In two cases the students improved their score with the second task and in one case the student got one point less for the second task. Overall, the students managed well with the task and while some were not in the correct format, they mostly lost points for that and not for the content. While many of the epilogue tasks were very optimistic in nature, they included references to canon to explain some of the author's decisions.

The Text Inspector assigns a level to the text according to CEFR. The highest level assigned was C1- and the lowest B1+ with more than half of the texts being at a B2+ or C1 level. However, when comparing the two tasks, only one student had a higher level for the second task, two students had the same level for both tasks and two thirds of the students wrote the second text at a lower level than the first one. The students who scored lower also chose the epilogue prompt which might have influenced the results as their interpretation of the prompt was more about descriptions of the characters' lives than events happening during the story. In addition, no definitive conclusions can be drawn as the number of participants was small.

The results for the Index of Narrative Complexity rubric were very varied and probably again influenced by the prompts. The rubric assesses the presence of certain narrative elements but the epilogue prompt was worded in a way that some of the elements like the presence of dialogue or sequences of events were not expected from the students. However, other necessary elements were mostly present, where applicable.

Overall, given a suitable prompt that includes actions and not just descriptions it could be said that the students at this level showed a slight improvement in the vocabulary and structure of their writing. The tasks also enabled them to develop their critical thinking skills and creativity as they had to select certain details and characteristics from the canon to include in their writing but also add an original element, not just write an analysis. In addition, the novels that were chosen for the tasks included cultural contexts and customs that are perhaps somewhat foreign or unusual for current students. Therefore, in their analysis before writing the tasks they had to try to interpret the situations from the perspective of a teenager in that era. As it was an integrated skills project that combined reading and writing, the students had to not just focus on the plot and new vocabulary but also analyse the content and style of the novel, something that does not seem to be that

common for extensive reading tasks. Through this they developed their general competences as determining the style and recreating it involves communication competence whereas analysing the characters actions and motivations contributes to cultural and value competence, self-awareness competence and social and citizenship competence as well.

While the previous studies in using fanfiction in EFL lessons either focussed only on the students' reflections or combined that with comparing a literary analysis text with fanfiction, this study compared two fanfiction texts. When it comes to students' opinions, it is likely there are always some who put more effort into the tasks and others that do as little as possible. In addition, the students' opinion probably is also influenced by their attitude towards the canon. This is one of the reasons this study only analysed texts, attempting to keep the students' feelings towards the texts, either their own or the novel, to a minimum. Despite that, the students' motivation to work on the stories was still evident in this study as well as most of them wrote more than just the bare minimum needed to pass.

What became evident from the analysis is that a lot is determined by the prompt and how the students interpret it. Overall, the FanTALES scale is useful for assessing fanfiction tasks but there should be additional categories if the aim is to analyse improvement. If the first text already fulfils most of the criteria, if not all, there is no room for improvement with the second task. One option would be to create a rubric with more degrees for either all the categories or at least for some that can be split into more stages. Similarly, it was found that the Index of Narrative Complexity is not suitable for all types of narratives and when using it in assessment, the prompts should be worded accordingly. Furthermore, fanfiction is different from a typical story and comparing two different texts is rather difficult. While the Text Inspector is a very useful tool, there could be more

transparency as to how the different metrics are calculated and how the final score is established. What is more, the free version is rather limited in capabilities while the subscription is an investment that expects a certain degree of commitment to using the tool regularly.

There could also be more tasks that recreate the fanfiction community in the classroom, something that was originally planned for this study but unfortunately was left out due to fluctuations in deadlines and difficulties that arise when attempting group discussion tasks in distance learning. This could give an opportunity to either include reviewing or beta reading as part of the tasks, making the authors perhaps put more effort into their stories, but also enable the students to exchange ideas and see what has the intended impact. The sense of community is an important element in fanfiction but finding a canon that all students could relate to already could be difficult.

Furthermore, with the necessary technological knowhow and capabilities, there could even be a separate web environment where the students could also practice digital literacy or even basic coding if the site does not have text formatting tools but does support HTML code. In addition, the tasks could involve longer or even chaptered stories where the students could have more room for developing the narrative and, given enough opportunities to interact with the readers, improve their writing according to feedback. This would enable the students to develop their communication and group work skills which are also part of 21st century skills.

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RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Kristi Kaldmäe

Using Fanfiction in Advanced English Classrooms.

Fännikirjanduse kasutamine edasijõudnud õppijatega inglise keele tundides

(magistritöö)

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Annotatsioon:

Töö eesmärk oli testida suunatud fännikirjanduse ülesannete mõju kõrge keeleoskustasemega gümnaasiumiõpilaste sõnavarale, keelestruktuuridele ja narratiivi keerukusele. Töö koosneb neljast peatükist. Sissejuhatus annab ülevaate loomingulisusest ja fännikirjandusest õppekavas ning õppematerjalides, teine peatükk kirjeldab ilukirjanduse lugemise rolli võõrkeelesõppes, fännikirjandust inglise keele kui võõrkeelesõppes ning kirjeldab varasemaid uuringuid selles valdkonnas. Järgnevalt kirjeldatakse metoodikat ning antakse ülevaade tulemustest.

Õpilased lugesid üht etteantud raamatutest ning kirjutasid loetu põhjal kaks juttu. Tekste analüüsi kasutades fännikirjanduse hindamiseks mõeldud skaalat, narratiivi keerukuse skaalat ning veebitööriista Text Inspector, mis analüüsib tekstide ülesehitust ning sõnavara. Analüüsi käigus selgus, et kuigi kõige populaarsemaks ostunud töökösk ei andnud võrdlemiseks kõige paremini sobivaid tekste, sest neis kasutati pigem kirjeldusi, mitte sündmusi ning narratiivi keerukuselt olid need pigem madalama tulemusega, siis teiste töököskude puhul jäi teksti keerukus kas samaks või tõusis. Mõlema teksti puhul pidid õpilased leidma loetud raamatust detaile, mis tähendas sisu ja teksti analüüsimist ning kriitilise mõtlemise arendamist, ning neid kasutades looma uue jutu, mille käigus õpilased arendasid oma loovust.

Märksõnad:

fännikirjandus, inglise keele õpe, kirjutamise õpetamine, loovus, 21. sajandi oskused

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