



# The Literary Classroom. From Primary to Upper Secondary

(abridged, selected slides)

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1. *Bildung* and the literary classroom
  2. Literary competences
  3. A curriculum of literary competences
  4. Implementing the curriculum

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# 1 *Bildung* and the literary classroom

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## The 'pragmatic turn' in teaching foreign languages

- focus on practical use of language in everyday life and work life
- standardization in the wake of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
- focus on skills
- testability
- national standards, test-oriented curricula

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## The 'pragmatic turn' in teaching foreign languages

- lack of a systematic place of literature in the language learning process and the FL curriculum
- exclusion of literature from skills-oriented frameworks
- marginalization or exclusion of literature from curricula
- pragmatic function of literary texts in the language classroom (language structures, (inter-)cultural learning, ephemeral function)

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*Bildung*: adoclescents are

- individuals and free personalities
- respected in their human dignity
- able to pursue a self-determined life
- able to fully and equally participate in and contribute to societal and cultural processes in a democracy ('citizenship')
- able to make sense of the world, reflect upon the world and themselves as well as upon their place in the world (self-and-world reflectedness)

(all of these: concerns of and in literary texts!)

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## 2 Literary competences

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## Literature

- models all of the individual/society relations mentioned above, often displaying their problematic, precarious, conflictual sides
- evokes reflections on the reader's world and experiences
- elicits higher order thinking, negotiations of meaning, complex communication and exchange of ideas
- requires imagination
- adds an aesthetic dimension to peoples' experiences and their ways of making sense of the world



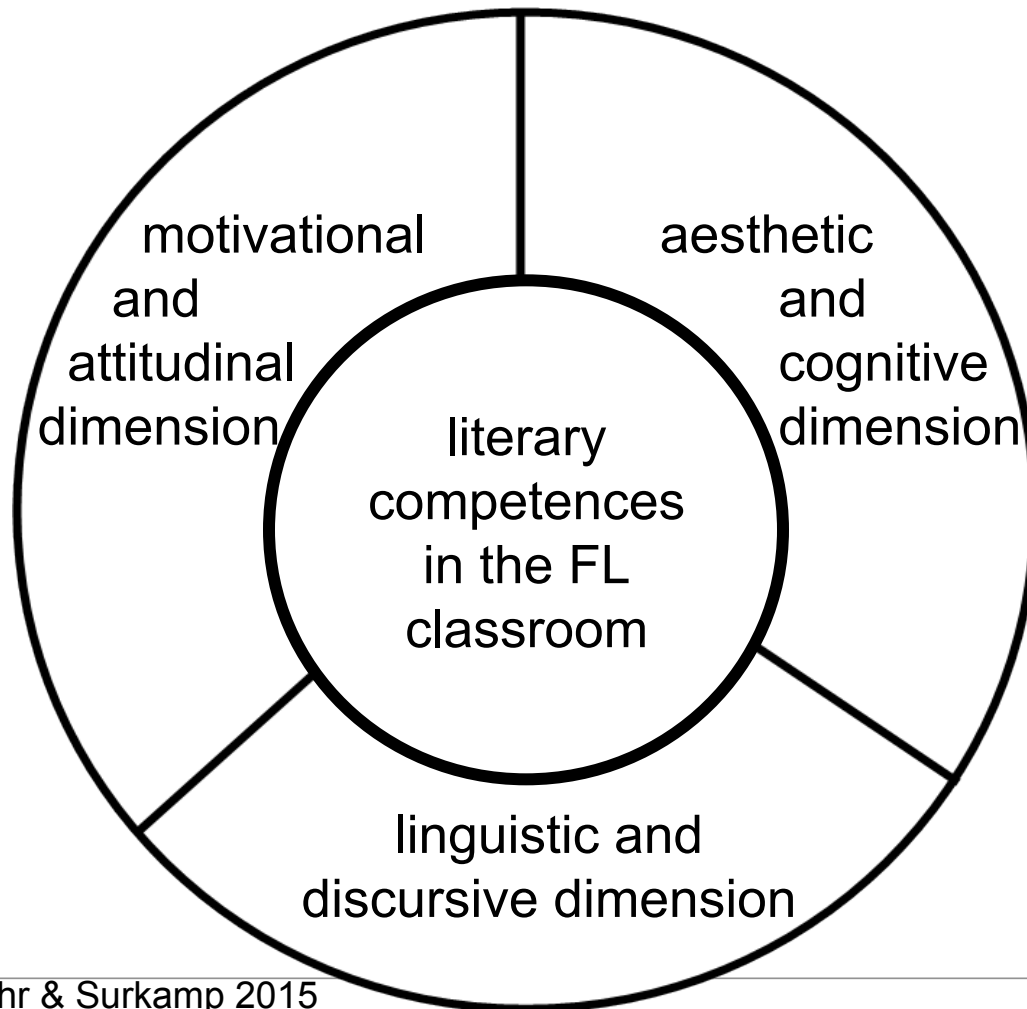
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## Literature in the FL classroom: desiderata

- literary and aesthetic education / *Bildung* for all ...
- ... as part of school education / *Bildung* ...
- ... from the primary through the upper secondary classroom
- a systematic and curricular development of literary competences
- curricular stages of literary learning
- reliable descriptions of literary knowledge and abilities
- teacher training: developing good pedagogical designs and tasks for the literary classroom

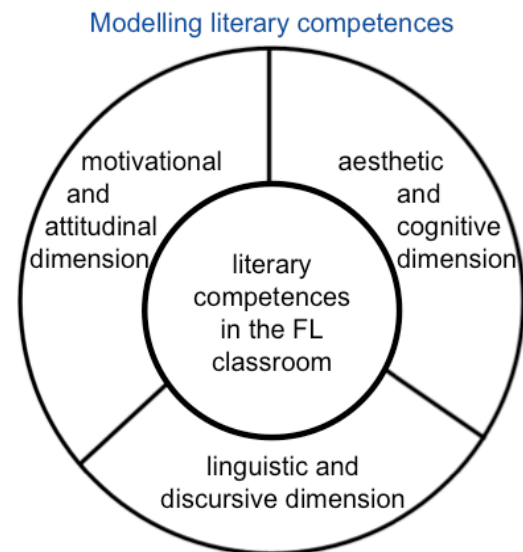
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## Modelling literary competences



## The motivational and attitudinal dimension

- interest in the content and meaning of non-expository texts
- motivation to read/listen/view (on)
- frustration tolerance
- willingness to immerse in the fictional world ('suspension of disbelief')
- the ability to imagine
- empathy
- interrelating the fictional and the empirical world

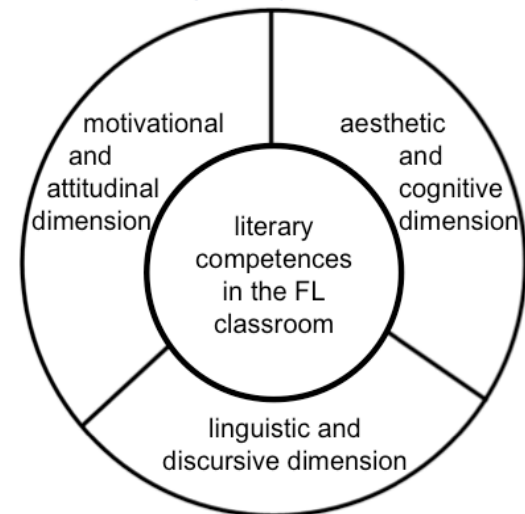


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## The aesthetic and cognitive dimension

- fictionality competence
- filling gaps and blanks
- analysis and interpretation of forms of literary (re-)presentation (close reading)
- historical and cultural contextualization (wide reading)
- recognizing intercultural differences (values etc.)
- critical evaluation and judgement of content and form
- reflecting on one's own ways of reading the text

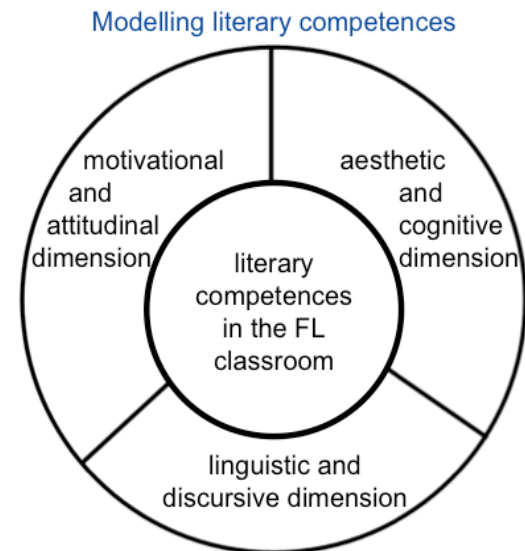
Modelling literary competences



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## The linguistic and discursive dimension

- text comprehension, understanding literary language
- communication of emotional and critical responses to literary texts
- classroom negotiation and communication of meaning
- communicating and explicating results of analysis and interpretation
- creative use of literary generic patterns (e.g. fictional narratives)



# Literary Competences for the Lower Secondary Classroom

## Can-do descriptions, stage 3, grades 9/10 (selected examples)

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### The motivational and attitudinal dimension

#### Students can ...

- develop attitudes that are required for reading and understanding literary texts,
- engage in reading literary texts (*suspension of disbelief*), take on other perspectives and interrelate the cultural world of the literary text and their own experiences
- enjoy playful or creative approaches to literary texts

# Literary Competences for the Lower Secondary Classroom

## Can-do descriptions, stage 3, grades 9/10 (selected examples)

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### The aesthetic and cognitive dimension

#### Students can ...

- understand the content of literary texts (including longer texts in original) according to age and language abilities
- recognize and name aesthetic devices (e.g. *character constellation*, *suspense curve*, *temporal structure*, *perspective*) in various literary genres (prose, poetry, drama or (audio-) visual texts, *close reading*)
- find access to selected aspects of the historical and/or cultural context of a literary text with the help of materials (*wide reading*)

# Literary Competences for the Lower Secondary Classroom

## Can-do descriptions, stage 3, grades 9/10 (selected examples)

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### The linguistic and discursive dimension

#### Students can ...

- activate their language knowledge and abilities in the reading/listening/viewing process
- express and communicate in a linguistically differentiated and argumentative, evaluative and critical manner and in different medial forms their imaginations, associations, emotions and responses to a literary text
- articulate and communicate the results of their analyses and interpretations of literary texts (support possible), engage in negotiations of meaning with others and use appropriate basic terminology



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## 3 A curriculum of literary competences

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## Developing and acquiring literary competences: curricular principles

- connecting to the young learners' encounters and experiences with literary and aesthetic texts and forms in the primary school: picture books, storytelling, rhyme and verse, songs and poems, games, plays and shows
- continuous, systematic development of literary competences from the beginning of foreign language learning through the matura
- progression: from easy to complex literary texts and forms, from comprehension to deeper understanding and reflection, from simple responses in the FL to complex, differentiated comments and interpretations
- ensuring and facilitating transitions from the primary to the lower secondary and from the lower to the upper secondary level

## Literary competences for the lower secondary classroom: curricular stages

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Example: aesthetic and cognitive competences, stage 1, grades 5/6  
Students can ...

- understand (short) literary texts according to their language abilities and experiences (literary texts in course books, graded readers, picture-based stories etc.)
- recognize selected aesthetic devices of literary texts in an exemplary manner, e.g. rhyme, dialogue, narration)
- recognize the textual world in its difference and contextual situatedness
- express likes and dislikes concerning literary texts

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## 4 Implementing the literary curriculum

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## Competence development and cross-curricular connections

### Connecting the English literary curriculum horizontally with

- literary and aesthetic learning in the other languages, including the school language
- genre-curricula in other subjects
- interpretive and creative forms acquired in other subjects

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## Competence development and curricular connections

### Connecting the literary curriculum with the language curriculum

- enhancing and developing reading, listening and viewing comprehension
- acquiring and establishing linguistic and discursive structures (e.g. narration, dialogue etc.)
- building up thematic vocabulary as well as a more and more differentiated general lexicon
- developing forms and genres of utterances about literary texts

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## Outlook: the place of literature in the language curriculum

### The description of literary competences and the literary curriculum

- assign a well-defined, systematic place and space to literary texts in the English classroom
- add the important literary-aesthetic dimension to school education and *Bildung*
- are aimed at establishing literary-aesthetic education / *Bildung* in the language curricula and in teacher education



*Presentation based on:*

Chapters 1 (W. Hallet), 2 (B. Diehr & C Surkamp) and 3 (W. Hallet & D. Nöth) of:

Hallet, Wolfgang, Surkamp, Carola & Krämer, Ulrich (eds.).  
*Literaturkompetenzen Englisch.  
Modellierung, Curriculum,  
Unterrichtsbeispiele.*

Seelze: Klett Kallmeyer, 2015.