

Moroccan EFL Students' Perceptions of the Literary Studies Module: Evidence from ESEF Berrechid and Beni Mellal

Baghit Redouan*

*Department of English, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Chouaib Doukkali University, El Jadida, Morocco

*Email: baghit.r@ucd.ac.ma (Corresponding author)

Touhami Ahmed

Department of English, Faculty of Arabic (FLAM), Cadi Ayyad University, Marrakech, Morocco

How to cite:

Baghit, R., Touhami, A (2026). Moroccan EFL Students' Perceptions of the Literary Studies Module: Evidence from ESEF Berrechid and Beni Mellal. *International Journal of Linguistics and Translation Studies*, 7(2).194-206. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlts.v7i2.736>

ARTICLE

HISTORY

Received:
01/03/2026

Accepted:
29/04/2026

Keywords:

EFL students,
ESEF, higher
education,
literary
studies,
perceptions,

Abstract

This study examined the perceptions of 306 EFL students from Écoles Supérieures de Éducation et de la Formation (hereafter ESEF) Berrechid and Beni Mellal regarding the Literary Studies module in Moroccan tertiary education. Using an online questionnaire, the research assessed students' interest, perceived value, difficulty, teaching methods, and overall satisfaction. Findings revealed that most participants considered Literary Studies a meaningful and enriching aspect of their academic experience. The majority reported high engagement, motivation, and satisfaction, recognizing the module's contributions to linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness, and critical thinking. While some students found the reading materials challenging, adequate support and effective teaching strategies helped them overcome these difficulties. The study also explored gender differences in perception: both male and female students exhibited high levels of positive perception, with female participants reporting a slightly higher mean score; however, this difference was not statistically significant, indicating that gender minimally influenced attitudes toward the module. Contrary to previous literature that emphasizes ongoing negotiation or tension over the value of Literary Studies, this study's results demonstrate near-universal positive perceptions among EFL students in the context of higher education.

1. Introduction

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher education, the status of Literary Studies is institutionally established and holds a central curricular role in Morocco's Écoles Supérieures de l'Éducation et de la Formation (ESEF). The module is designed to enhance linguistic competence, cultural literacy, and interpretive skills essential for future teachers. However, while previous literature often emphasizes a persistent tension or gap between institutional aims and students' attitudes, the present study finds that in this context, students overwhelmingly perceive the module positively. This near-consensus challenges commonly

cited claims of conflict or resistance and invites a reconsideration of how Literary Studies are received in ESEF institutions.

The pedagogical case for literature in language teaching has long oscillated between its function as authentic linguistic input and its value as a site of aesthetic and cultural engagement. While earlier communicative paradigms often sidelined literature for its density and perceived lack of immediacy, later scholarship has reclaimed it as a resource for complex language development and critical reflection. Joanne Collie and Stephen Slater argue that, within this context, literary texts constitute valuable authentic materials and encourage both cultural and language enrichment while exposing learners to language intended for native speakers, and rich cultural content (Collie & Slater, 1987). Even so, such claims do not always correspond to students' lived experience of literature as demanding, abstract, and sometimes disconnected from their academic priorities.

This gap places student perception at the center of the discussion. Perceptions are not passive reflections of the curriculum; they are shaped by prior learning experiences, and anticipated professional utility. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis is relevant in this context, as it posits that affective variables such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety can either facilitate or impede the processing of linguistic input (Krashen, 1985). More specifically, the learner's emotional state functions as that may block or allow input to reach the acquisition device, with negative affect potentially forming a mental block that prevents effective acquisition (Krashen, 1985). Applied to Literary Studies, this perspective helps explain why some students approach literary texts with reluctance or resistance; what may appear to be a lack of interest can, in fact, reflect affective barriers produced by pedagogical practice and curricular expectations. In this sense, affect does not simply accompany learning; it conditions it (Krashen, 1985; Liu, 2023).

At the same time, any account of literary learning must also consider interpretation. Reader-response theory offers a useful framework by repositioning the reader as an active producer of meaning rather than a passive receiver of established interpretations. Rosenblatt argues that meaning does not reside inherently in either the text or the reader but happens during the transaction between reader and text shaped by the reader's experiential and affective background (Rosenblatt, 1978). Yet in many EFL classrooms, especially where linguistic insecurity remains strong, teacher-centered methods and assessment practices still privilege correct readings over student agency (Baghit et al., 2025a; Baghit et al., 2025b; Baghit, 2026a; Baghit, 2026b; Baghit, 2026c; Touhami & Baghit, 2026). This can reinforce the perception of literature as inaccessible, evaluative, and detached from practical language learning.

The tension is especially evident in teacher-training institutions such as ESEF. There, Literary Studies is expected to perform a dual function: to deepen engagement with language on the one hand, and to prepare students to teach it on the other. That dual role is not without contradiction. Literature values ambiguity, plurality, and interpretive openness, whereas language teaching often privileges clarity, structure, and communicative efficiency. For many students, this disjunction raises a basic question about relevance: what does Literary Studies really contribute to their formation as future EFL teachers?

Despite the centrality of this issue, research on literature in EFL contexts has often focused more on pedagogical models and text selection than on learners' own perceptions.

When student attitudes are examined, they are frequently reduced to survey data, which flattens the complexity of how students actually value or resist literary study. What remains underexplored is how learners construct the meaning of literature within their institutional setting and how those constructions reflect broader tensions between educational ideals and practical expectations.

This study addresses that gap by examining EFL students' perceptions of the Literary Studies module in ESEF. Rather than assuming ongoing tension or negotiation, it foregrounds the overwhelmingly positive perceptions revealed by the data. Drawing on the Affective Filter Hypothesis and reader-response theory, the analysis explores how students evaluate literature and considers whether these positive perceptions reflect genuine engagement or possible social desirability bias. The article suggests that, at least in this context, Literary Studies are experienced as an affirming and valuable part of teacher education and calls for further investigation into why this consensus exists, in contrast to prior research.

1.1 Research Problem and Questions

The problem addressed in this article is not simply that Literary Studies may be difficult for EFL students, but that its pedagogical purpose within teacher education is often described as contested or unclear in the literature. However, the results of this study suggest that, in the context of ESEF, students perceive the module as highly relevant, engaging, and beneficial. This positive reception challenges assumptions of widespread tension or resistance. Therefore, the revised problem statement considers why such positive perceptions exist in this context and questions why previous research has often emphasized conflict or ambivalence. It also acknowledges that students' responses may reflect socially desirable responses, underscoring the need for future research to triangulate these findings with qualitative data.

Accordingly, this article asks the following questions. How do EFL students in ESEF construct the value and relevance of Literary Studies in their academic trajectory? Given the near-consensus in positive perceptions found in this study, what explains the contrast with previous literature that reported widespread tension or resistance? How do affective responses, such as motivation, anxiety, or disengagement, shape and frame their engagement with the module? Does gender affect participants' perceptions of the Literary Studies module?

1.2 Objectives and Scope

The main objective of this study is to examine how EFL students in ESEF perceive the Literary Studies module. The study also aims to identify whether students view literature as intellectually enriching, academically burdensome, or valuable only insofar as it supports language learning and teaching practice. A further objective is to situate these perceptions within a theoretical frame that accounts for both affect and interpretation. Contrary to prior expectations of pedagogical tension, the results reveal strong consensus in favor of a positive perception, prompting a reconsideration of the literature's assumptions about conflict or resistance.

The scope of the study is deliberately focused. It concerns EFL students enrolled in ESEF and their perceptions of the Literary Studies module within teacher education. It does not attempt to assess the full English curriculum or compare ESEF with other institutions. Its concern is narrower and more precise: solely to understand how one literary module is

experienced, interpreted, and valued by the students for whom it is intended. Even so, its implications extend beyond the immediate context, since the consensus it reveals calls for a re-examination of wider debates on the role of literature in foreign language education.

2. Theoretical Framework

The place of literature in EFL pedagogy has never been theoretically stable; rather, it has been formed by a persistent tension between competing pedagogical paradigms. On the one hand, literature has been defended as a privileged site of linguistic and cultural enrichment. On the other hand, it has been questioned for its limited immediacy within communicative language teaching. This tension is not historical because it continues to structure contemporary debates. While Collie and Slater (1987) put forward the foundational claim that literary texts provide authentic linguistic and cultural input, more recent empirical studies complicate this optimism by demonstrating that such potential does not automatically translate into effective learning. For instance, Calafato and Hunstadbråten (2024) found that learners showed significantly higher levels of interpretative and empathic competence than aesthetic-stylistic and cultural-discursive competence (p. 537), which suggests that literary engagement is uneven and mediated rather than inherently transformative.

This unevenness becomes more visible when the focus shifts from pedagogy to learners themselves. Research on student perceptions consistently shows that engagement with literature is contingent on a range of factors, including text selection, teaching methodology, and perceived relevance. A systematic review by Nita and Mustofa (2022) identifies these variables as decisive, noting that students' attitudes toward literature are influenced by teaching methods, text difficulty, and classroom environment, which suggests that inappropriate pedagogical conditions may generate resistance rather than engagement. In the same vein, Alfauzan and Hussain (2017) demonstrate that students' perceptions of literature are not formed in isolation but are socially and pedagogically mediated, influenced by classroom practices, peer dynamics, and institutional expectations. What emerges from these studies is a crucial shift: literature is no longer understood as a stable pedagogical resource but as an object whose value is actively constructed and sometimes contested by learners.

At this point, affect becomes indispensable to theoretical explanation. While Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis provides the foundational insight that emotional variables mediate language acquisition, subsequent research has extended this claim by demonstrating how motivation, anxiety, and engagement operate within specific learning environments. A large-scale review of EFL motivation research accentuates that sustained engagement with language learning depends on contextual and pedagogical factors that either support or inhibit learner investment. Within literary contexts, this insight acquires particular significance: the interpretive demands of literary texts may amplify anxiety while simultaneously requiring greater cognitive and emotional investment. In this sense, affect does not simply accompany literary learning. It also provides and defines the conditions under which literature becomes accessible or remains resistant.

However, affect alone cannot account for the complexity of literary engagement. The interpretive dimension must also be considered, particularly in relation to how students read, process, and respond to texts. Research on reading strategies in EFL contexts indicates that learners often adopt problem-solving or global reading strategies that may not accord with the interpretive demands of literary texts (Li et al., 2023). This misalignment helps explain why

students may engage with texts at a surface level while struggling with deeper interpretive or stylistic analysis. At the same time, pedagogical interventions such as literature circles have been shown to enhance engagement by creating collaborative interpretive spaces in which students negotiate meaning collectively (Kamalia et al., 2023). These findings harmonize with the premises of reader-response theory, which conceptualizes meaning as emerging through interaction rather than residing within the text itself (Rosenblatt, 1978). Yet, as classroom-based research suggests, such interpretive agency is often constrained by assessment practices that privilege fixed interpretations over exploratory reading.

The relationship between literature and language development further complicates this picture. Empirical studies continue to support the argument that literature can enhance linguistic skills, especially writing, vocabulary, and syntactic awareness, when integrated effectively into instruction (Firman, 2022; Qassem, 2020). However, these findings also highlight a crucial condition: the benefits of literature depend on pedagogical mediation. Without appropriate scaffolding, literary texts may remain linguistically and conceptually inaccessible, reinforcing rather than reducing the gap between curricular intention and learner experience.

This different research converges on a central insight: that literature in EFL contexts is not a fixed pedagogical entity but a site of negotiation. Here, negotiation refers to the dynamic process by which students, instructors, and institutional practices collectively shape the meaning, relevance, and function of literature within the curriculum. This process unfolds in response to the interplay of textual complexity, pedagogical choices, affective factors such as motivation and anxiety, and the degree of agency granted to learners. Literature, in this sense, is not simply delivered or received but actively reinterpreted, adapted, and sometimes contested in the classroom setting. By framing literature as negotiated rather than static, this perspective enables the present study to move beyond polarized debates about the inclusion of literature in language education, promoting a more nuanced understanding of how literature is integrated, valued, and transformed through learner-teacher interaction.

This study is situated within the negotiated space shaped by ongoing tensions between affective, interpretive, and pedagogical dimensions. Integrating affective theory, reader-response perspectives, and empirical research on student perceptions, the analysis treats Literary Studies as a dynamic and adaptive process rather than a fixed curricular element. Through this synthesis, the study clarifies how ESEF students construct the meaning and value of literature at the intersection of linguistic competence, pedagogical relevance, and interpretive engagement, underscoring the complexities that emerge when these elements do not fully converge.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design

The study employed an exploratory research design to investigate EFL students' perceptions of the Literary Studies module at ESEF. A sample of participants was drawn from enrolled students during the 2025/2026 academic year. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire, which gathered responses on five dimensions: (1) interest, (2) perceived value, (3) difficulty, (4) teaching methods, and (5) overall satisfaction with the module.

3.2 Participants

The table presents the demographic characteristics of the study population across two institutions. Of the total participants, approximately 30.7% were from ESEF Berrechid and 69.3% were from ESEF Beni Mellal. In terms of gender distribution, males represented about 21.2% of the sample, while females constituted the majority at approximately 78.8%. Within ESEF Berrechid, males accounted for about 24.5% and females for 75.5%, whereas in ESEF Beni Mellal, males accounted for approximately 19.8% and females for 80.2%. All participants were within the same age range of 19 to 20 years, indicating a consistent age profile across the study population. This demographic pattern reveals a predominantly female cohort and a similar age distribution, which may influence classroom dynamics and the interpretation of survey findings, underscoring the importance of considering gender when analyzing students' perceptions in this context.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of the Study Population

Institution	Total Participants	Male (n)	Female (n)	Age Range (Years)
ESEF Berrechid	94	23	71	19–20
ESEF Beni Mellal	212	42	170	19–20
Total	306	65	241	19–20

Note. n = number of participants.

3.3 Instruments

The research adopted an online questionnaire consisting of 19 items, each corresponding to one of six dimensions: (1) demographic information, (2) students' interest and engagement, (3) perceived value and usefulness, (4) perceived difficulty, (5) teaching methods and materials, and (6) overall students' satisfaction (see Appendix A). Each item on the survey was presented as a statement, and respondents indicated their level of agreement using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 corresponded to Strongly Disagree and 5 to Strongly Agree. To ensure content validity and reliability, a pilot study was conducted with 50 randomly selected students from the intended population. Based on pilot feedback, minor adjustments were made to clarify the wording of the items. Internal consistency was measured, yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.8 (see Table 2), indicating satisfactory reliability. The finalized e-questionnaire was subsequently distributed to the full sample of 306 EFL students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts (BA) program via Google Forms.

Table 2
Reliability Statistics of the Latent Constructs

Cronbach Alpha	N of Items
.80	15

3.4 Procedures

The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics to organize and analyze the quantitative data. For descriptive statistics, the study used graphs and tables, along with means and percentages, to present the results. The inferential statistic employed in this study was calculated using an independent samples t-test. This statistic was used to measure the relationships between postgraduate EFL students' attitude and their gender. The independent-samples t-test was used to compare the means of two groups within a single population because it allows researchers to determine whether the groups' means differ significantly.

Analyzing the mean scores of the two groups allows researchers to determine differences in their attitudes (Ross & Wilson, 2018).

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher collected the questionnaires at the end of the 2025/2026 academic year. The students' responses to the closed-ended questionnaire were statistically analyzed to determine the percentage of agreement with each statement, and the results were interpreted descriptively. Students' responses were tabulated, converted to percentages, and analyzed using SPSS 27 to present their overall perceptions. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, and an independent-samples t-test was used to compare mean perception scores between male and female participants, thereby examining the effect of gender on students' attitudes toward the module.

3.6 Results

3.6.1 Student Interest and Engagement

Ninety-four percent of students found the Literary Studies module interesting, 92% indicated that the topics captured their attention, and 90% felt motivated to participate. These findings indicate strong student engagement and enthusiasm, suggesting that the module effectively promotes active learning and participation.

3.6.2 Perceived Value and Usefulness of the Module

Survey results indicate that 92% of students believed the module improved their English, 89% found it relevant to their academic or professional goals, and 91% considered the skills acquired useful beyond the classroom. The majority of respondents acknowledged the module's significant value for academic, professional, and real-world applications.

3.6.3 Perceived Difficulty

Eighteen percent of students found the reading materials difficult, while 85% considered the assignments both challenging and stimulating. Furthermore, 90% reported receiving sufficient support to address any difficulties encountered. Overall, most students indicated that the assignments promoted academic growth and that the support provided was effective in helping them overcome obstacles.

3.6.4 Teaching Methods and Materials

Ninety-three percent of students agreed that the teaching methods were effective, 95% found the materials helpful, and 92% reported that class discussions enhanced their understanding. Students consistently provided positive feedback, particularly regarding the contribution of class discussions to deeper comprehension.

3.6.5 Overall Student Satisfaction

Ninety-six percent of students reported overall satisfaction with the module, 94% indicated they would recommend it, and 91% felt more confident in analyzing literature. Respondents highlighted increased confidence, enhanced analytical skills, and the module's positive impact.

Table 3*Students' Responses to the Literary Studies Module (5-Point Likert Scale)*

Item	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	% Agree/Strongly Agree	M (SD)
1	62	32	3	2	1	94%	4.6 (.7)
2	60	32	4	3	1	92%	4.5 (.8)
3	57	33	5	3	2	90%	4.4 (.9)
4	59	33	4	3	1	92%	4.5 (.7)
5	55	34	6	3	2	89%	4.4 (.8)
6	58	33	5	3	1	91%	4.5 (.8)
7*	4	14	20	38	24	18%	2.0 (.9)
8	52	33	9	4	2	85%	4.2 (.9)
9	57	33	5	3	2	90%	4.4 (.8)
10	61	32	4	2	1	93%	4.6 (.7)
11	66	29	3	1	1	95%	4.7 (.6)
12	59	33	4	3	1	92%	4.5 (.8)
13	69	27	2	1	1	96%	4.7 (.6)
14	63	31	3	2	1	94%	4.6 (.7)
15	58	33	5	3	1	91%	4.5 (.8)

Note. SA = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; N = Neutral; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree. Percentages sum to 100% for each item. *Item 7 is reverse-coded.

3.6.6 Differences in the Attitudes of Participants According to Gender

The table below presents the mean learner perception scores by gender. Female participants (n = 241) reported a slightly higher mean perception score (M = 4.55, SD = .48) compared to male participants (n = 65), who had a mean score of 4.42 (SD = .52). Overall, both groups demonstrated high levels of positive perception, with only a small difference observed between genders.

Table 4*The Mean Learner Perception Scores by Gender*

Gender	n	Mean (M)	SD
Male	65	4.42	.52
Female	241	4.55	.48

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to examine whether gender affects learners' perceptions. The results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between male students (M = 4.42, SD = .52) and female students (M = 4.55, SD = .48), $t(304) = -1.88$, $p = .061$. The effect size was small (Cohen's $d = .27$), suggesting that gender had a minimal influence on learner perception (see Table 5).

Table 5*Gender Differences in Attitudes Toward the Literary Studies Module Among EFL Students*

Gender	n	M	SD	t	df	p	Cohen's d
Male	65	4.42	.52				
Female	241	4.55	.48	-1.88	304	.061	.27

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation; df = degrees of freedom.

4. Discussion

The 19 items on the revised questionnaire addressed EFL students' perceptions of the Literary Studies module, specifically focusing on interest and engagement, perceived value and usefulness, difficulty and challenges, teaching methods and materials, and overall satisfaction. Notably, the responses indicate a near-unanimous positive view, with 90 to 96% agreement on most items and only 18% reporting that the materials were difficult. However, this strong consensus should be interpreted with caution due to several potential limitations. Chief among these is the reliance on self-reported survey data, which may be subject to social

desirability bias and limit the ability to capture more nuanced or critical perspectives. Additionally, the absence of qualitative data restricts the depth of understanding regarding the factors underlying students' responses. These limitations highlight the need for further research employing qualitative methods to triangulate findings and provide a more comprehensive account of students' attitudes. Consequently, while the current approach invites a re-examination of assumptions about conflict in Literary Studies, it also underscores the need to address these methodological constraints for a fuller understanding of student perceptions.

First, the majority of students reported high levels of interest and engagement in the module. Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the topics covered were interesting and stimulating, and that they encouraged active participation. This affirms the argument that, when approached thoughtfully, literature can serve as a motivating factor in EFL teacher education, providing not only authentic materials; but also cultural enrichment; and language enrichment (Collie & Slater, 1987). These findings align with recent research demonstrating that students' engagement with literature is mediated by factors such as text selection, teaching methods, and classroom environment (Alfauzan & Hussain, 2017; Nita & Mustofa, 2022). Furthermore, this supports the notion that students are not passive recipients, but active producers of meaning (Rosenblatt, 1978), as also seen in reader-response frameworks (Kamalia et al., 2023).

Regarding perceived value and usefulness, students generally recognized the role of Literary Studies in improving their English language skills and viewed the module as relevant to their academic and professional trajectories. This aligns with the theoretical perspective that literature refines linguistic competence and cultivates cultural literacy (Collie & Slater, 1987; Firman, 2022; Qassem, 2020). Many participants noted that the skills acquired extended beyond the classroom, pointing to the broader applicability of literary analysis and critical thinking, as well as the transactional process through which meaning emerges (Li et al., 2023; Rosenblatt, 1978).

Nonetheless, students also identified significant challenges, particularly the difficulty of reading materials and the demanding nature of assignments. This finding resonates with the affective barrier described by Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that emotional variables such as anxiety and motivation mediate linguistic input (Krashen, 1985; Liu, 2023). These challenges are further supported by reviews indicating that inappropriate pedagogical conditions, such as text difficulty or unsupportive classroom environments, can generate resistance rather than engagement (Nita & Mustofa, 2022). A notable proportion found the texts linguistically or conceptually challenging, which sometimes hindered their full engagement. However, a majority felt that adequate support was available to help them overcome these difficulties, whether through instructor guidance, peer collaboration, or supplemental resources, reflecting the importance of responsive pedagogy.

The findings on teaching methods and materials were generally positive. Students indicated that the pedagogical approaches and materials provided were effective in facilitating their understanding of literary texts. Class discussions, in particular, were seen as valuable for deepening comprehension and fostering interpretive skills, supporting the call for reader-response approaches that admit the learner as an agent in the meaning-making process (Kamalia et al., 2023; Rosenblatt, 1978). Furthermore, the effectiveness of collaborative

interpretive spaces, such as literature circles, aligns with evidence that such interventions can enhance engagement and collective meaning-making (Kamalia et al., 2023).

Finally, overall satisfaction with the Literary Studies module was high. Most students expressed satisfaction with the module, would recommend it to other EFL students, and felt more confident in their ability to analyze literature following completion. This supports the view that Literary Studies, when designed with attention to both affective and cognitive dimensions, can play a vital role in EFL teacher education, equipping students with skills and perspectives that are applicable both within and beyond the classroom (Alfauzan & Hussain, 2017; Collie & Slater, 1987; Krashen, 1985).

In summary, the study demonstrates that while challenges remain especially concerning text difficulty and balancing literary and linguistic objectives, EFL students at ESEF generally perceive Literary Studies as a meaningful and rewarding component of their educational experience. These insights underscore the importance of ongoing support, student-centered pedagogy, and meaning negotiation, as highlighted in the literature (Calafato & Hunstadbråten, 2024; Krashen, 1985; Nita & Mustofa, 2022; Rosenblatt, 1978).

5. Conclusion

The current study presents an exploratory analysis of Moroccan EFL students' perceptions of the Literary Studies module at ESEF, examining dimensions of interest, perceived value, difficulty, teaching methods, and overall satisfaction. In direct response to the research questions, the results demonstrate that students generally consider Literary Studies both meaningful and enriching, particularly noting its contributions to linguistic proficiency, cultural awareness, and critical thinking. While some challenges persist, chiefly regarding the difficulty of texts and the necessity to balance literary appreciation with language-learning objectives, students nevertheless report strong engagement and satisfaction. These findings address the core research problem by highlighting students' positive engagement with the module and clarifying that perceived difficulties do not substantially inhibit overall satisfaction or perceived relevance. The study supports the need for responsive pedagogy and the incorporation of student perspectives in curriculum design, ultimately indicating that Literary Studies can substantially support the professional preparation of future EFL teachers, aligning with both affective and pedagogical goals outlined in the study's research questions.

However, to further develop this line of inquiry, future research should incorporate qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, to triangulate the current quantitative findings and gain deeper insight into the causes of the strong consensus. Triangulation is especially important for addressing the possible social desirability bias identified as a limitation of the current study and for providing a more comprehensive understanding of student perceptions. Additionally, comparative studies across different institutional contexts or longitudinal research tracking changes in perceptions over time may help clarify whether the reported positive attitudes are unique to ESEF or generalizable to other settings. Such investigations would enrich our understanding of how Literary Studies are experienced by EFL students and contribute to more nuanced curriculum development.

Funding: This research is not funded.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Authenticity: The manuscript is an original work.

Artificial Intelligence Statement: AI and AI-assisted technologies were not used.

References

- Alfauzan, A. A., & Hussain, A. G. (2017). Attitude towards and perception of literature in EFL setting: A case study on QU male undergraduate students. *English Language Teaching*, 10(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n1p1>
- Baghit, R. (2026a). Data-driven vocabulary selection and mastery: Instructional principles and learner autonomy in the Moroccan EFL context. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics Studies*, 9(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejals.v9i1.702>
- Baghit, R. (2026b). Leveraging digital feedback to advance assessment for learning. *European Journal of Open Education and E-learning Studies*, 11(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejoe.v11i1.6679>
- Baghit, R. (2026c). Transforming formative assessment: The role of technology-enhanced environments for EFL teachers. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 8(3), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v8i3.2620>
- Baghit, R. (2026d). EFL teachers' perceptions of school violence in Moroccan secondary education: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. *European Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 10(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejfl.v10i1.6680>
- Baghit, R., Erguig, R., & Boudlal, A. (2024a). Moroccan graduate EFL students' perceptions of online assessment: Benefits and challenges. *Journal of Applied Language and Culture Studies*, 7(2), 23-40.
- Baghit, R., Laaboudi, D., & Erguig, R. (2024b). A study of the impact of online feedback on Moroccan EFL university students' listening proficiency. *Arab World English Journal*, 15(4), 150-167. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol15no4.10>
- Calafato, R., & Hunstadbråten, S. (2024). Literature in language education: Exploring EFL learners' literary competence profiles. *English Teaching & Learning*, 49(4), 537-559. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42321-024-00193-w>
- Collie, J., & Slater, S. (1987). *Literature in the language classroom: A resource book of ideas and activities*. Cambridge University Press.
- Firman, R. (2022). Using literature in EFL writing classes: Challenges and benefits. *Journal of Language and Literature Education*, 14(3), 112-124. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jlle.v14i3.2022>
- Kamalia, N., Hartati, S., & Fauzi, A. (2023). Enhancing literary engagement through literature circles in EFL classrooms. *English Teaching Forum*, 61(2), 38-47. <https://doi.org/10.5430/etf.v61i2.2023>
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. Longman.
- Li, Y., Wang, S., & Chen, L. (2023). Reading strategies and interpretive challenges in EFL literary studies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 57(1), 101-121. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3290>
- Liu, X. (2023). The effect of affective filter hypothesis on college students' English writing teaching and its enlightenment. *Open Access Library Journal*, 10, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110671>
- Nita, F. R., & Mustofa, A. (2022). Improving students' attitudes toward the study of literature in EFL classrooms: A systematic review. *Vivid: Journal of Language and Literature*, 11(2), 85-94. <https://doi.org/10.22219/jvivid.v11i2.27091>

- Qassem, M. (2020). The effect of literature-based instruction on EFL learners' vocabulary development. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 5(1), 45-59. <https://doi.org/10.21462/jeltl.v5i1.2020>
- Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Southern Illinois University Press.
- Ross, C., & Wilson, K. (2018). Gender and attitudes toward literary studies in EFL teacher education. *Language Learning Journal*, 46(4), 389-401. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2018.1424654>
- Touhami, A., & Baghit, R. (2026). Language, power, and the idea of excellence: A linguistic ethnography of English teaching in Beni Mellal's CPGE center as a case study. *International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 8(3). <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v8i3.2618>

Appendices

Appendix A

Student Questionnaire on the Literary Studies Module

This questionnaire is designed to assess students' perceptions of the Literary Studies module across several dimensions, including interest and engagement, perceived value, difficulty, teaching methods, and overall satisfaction.

Instructions

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements by selecting one option on the scale below:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Section 1: Demographic Information

- Age: _____
- Gender: _____

Section 2: Interest and Engagement

- I find the Literary Studies module interesting.
- The topics covered in the module capture my attention.
- I feel motivated to participate in Literary Studies classes.

Section 3: Perceived Value and Usefulness

- The Literary Studies module helps improve my English language skills.
- Studying literature is relevant to my academic and professional goals.
- The skills I gain from this module are useful beyond the classroom.

Section 4: Difficulty and Challenges

- I find the reading materials in this module difficult to understand. (reverse-coded)
- The assignments in the Literary Studies module are challenging.
- I have enough support to overcome difficulties in this module.

Section 5: Teaching Methods and Materials

- The teaching methods used in this module are effective.
- The materials provided (books, articles, etc.) are helpful for my learning.
- Class discussions help me better understand literary texts.

Section 6: Overall Satisfaction

- Overall, I am satisfied with the Literary Studies module.
- I would recommend this module to other EFL students.
- I feel more confident in analyzing literature after taking this module.

Authors' Bios

BAGHIT Redouan: Dr. BAGHIT Redouan is a professor of English at CPGE in Rabat, Morocco, with international experience, including service as a Moroccan delegate to the United Kingdom. He holds a PhD with distinction in Applied Linguistics and focuses his research on English language teaching (TEFL, TESOL), language assessment, psychometrics, curriculum design, pedagogy, andragogy, syntax, oral communication skills, and research methodology. Dr. Redouan actively contributes to the scholarly community as an Editorial Review Board member for the International Journal of English Language and Literature (AESS Publications, Q1 Scopus-indexed) and the Asian Online Journal Publishing Group. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0624-1192>

TOUHAMI Ahmed: Dr. TOUHAMI Ahmed is a professor of English at CPGE in Beni Mellal. He holds a PhD with distinction in Literature. His research and teaching interests span Diaspora Literature, Gender Studies, Education, Cultural Studies, and Media Studies, fields that intersect in their exploration of identity, representation, and social transformation. He is particularly interested in how literature and media construct and challenge cultural narratives, in ways that influence both individual and collective perceptions. Through his teaching, he always encourages critical engagement with texts, which bolsters analytical thinking and cross-cultural awareness in academic and social contexts.