

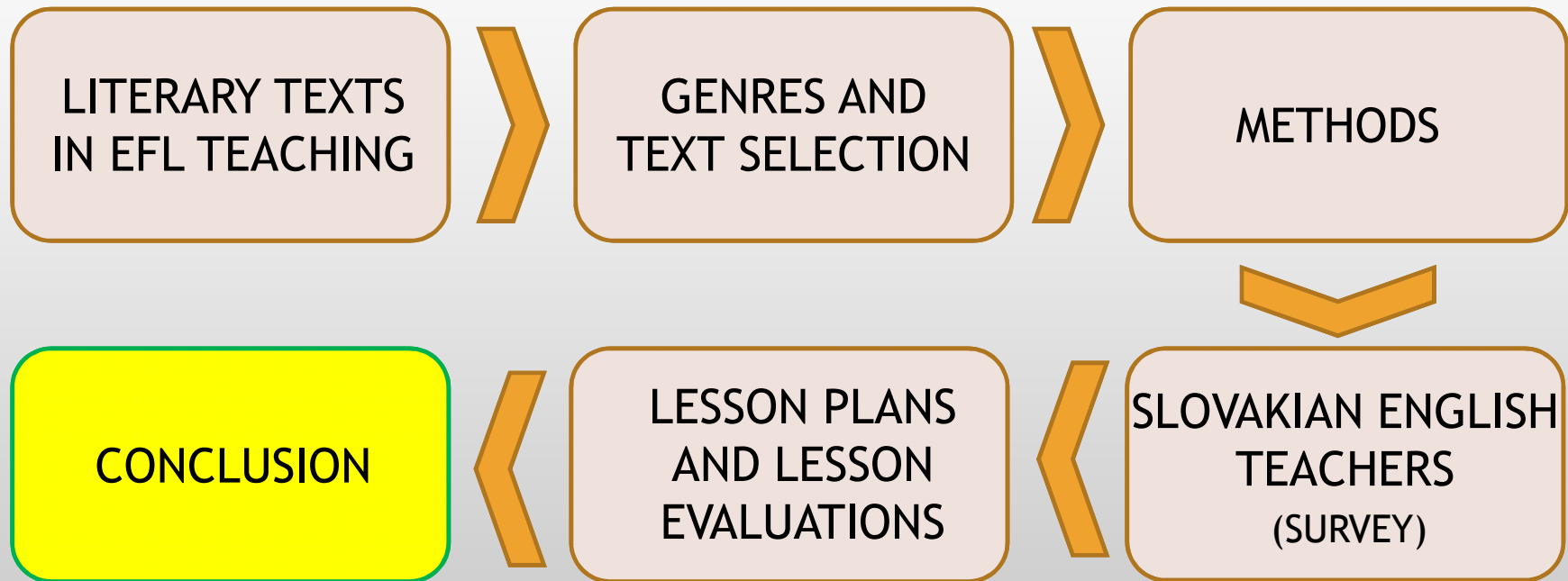


Using Literary Texts to Teach Language in the EFL Classroom

Bc. Ľudovít Belák

SJ-AJdm15

Timeline



Literary Texts in EFL Teaching



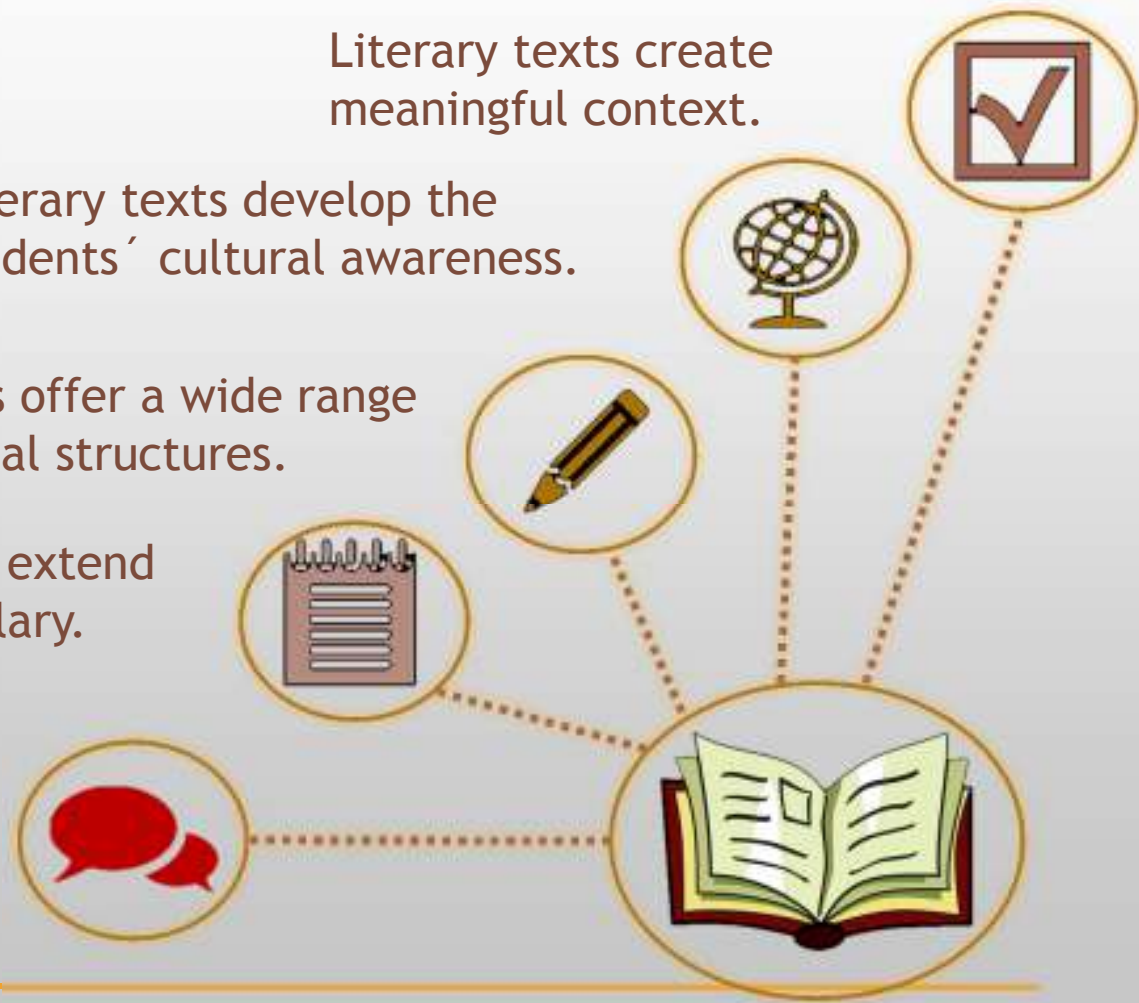
Literary texts create meaningful context.

Literary texts develop the students' cultural awareness.

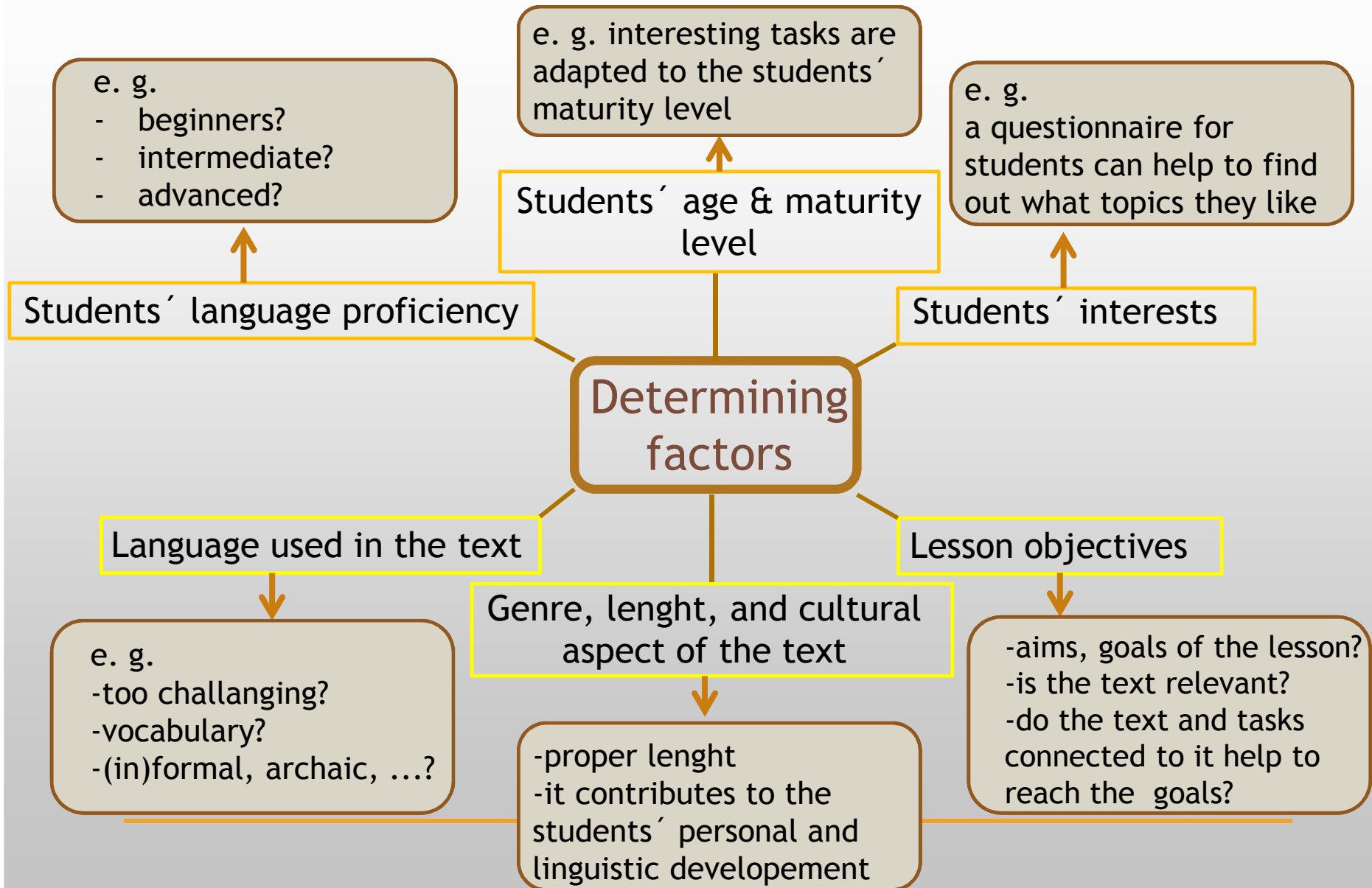
Literary texts offer a wide range of grammatical structures.

Literary texts help to extend the students' vocabulary.

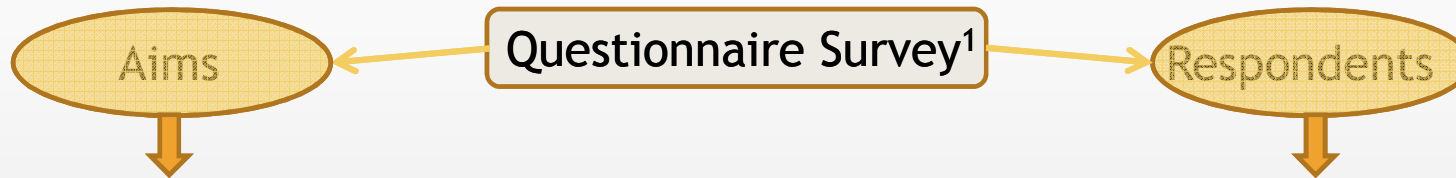
Literary texts motivate the students to use the target language.



Text Selection



Methods



1. to find out the teaching habits, opinion & feedbacks of Slovakian teachers of English on using literary texts

2. to find out if they participated in a teacher training on using literary texts

3. to find out if they want to receive materials on using literary texts in teaching EFL



- 334 teachers of English of different age groups teaching in different regions of Slovakia

- teachers of different types of school (e. g. lower & primary level, language school, etc.)

- teachers of schools with different language of instructions (e. g. Slovak, Hungarian, bilingual, etc.)

¹Before carrying out the questionnaire survey, a pilot survey had been conducted.

Methods



Lesson plans prepared for 4 different classes
(upper-primary, secondary grammar)



Lesson plannings preceded by lesson observations
and consultation with the English teacher of the
classes involved

4 different literary texts used

General aim in each case: to motivate students
to read English literary texts and to use the
English language communicatively

Further aims included in each lesson plan



Lessons realized in a Slovakian school with
Hungarian language of instruction

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

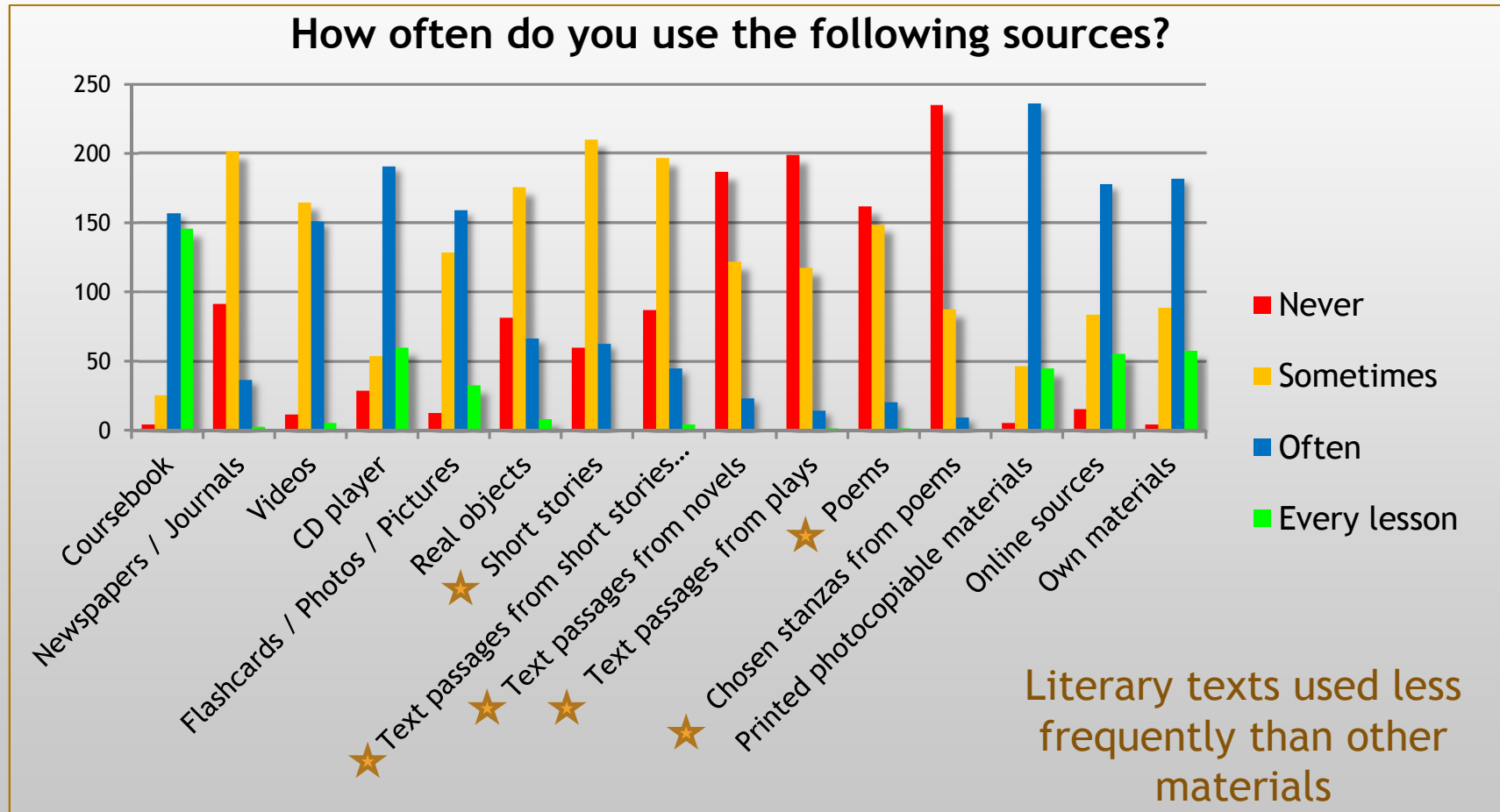


Figure 1. The frequency of using the given sources by the respondents

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

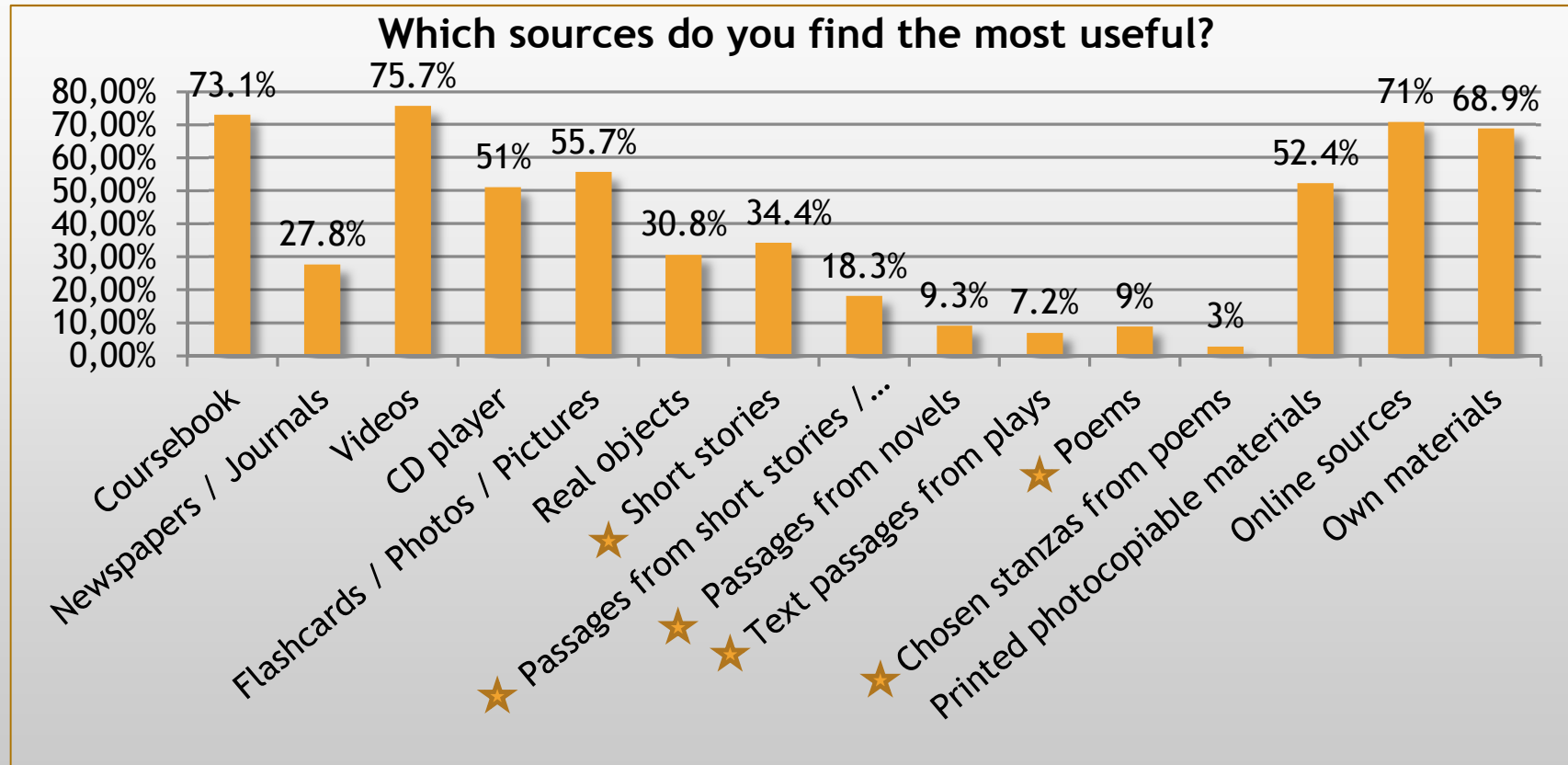


Figure 2. The most useful sources in the respondents' teaching

Literary texts (except short stories)
claimed to be less useful than other

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

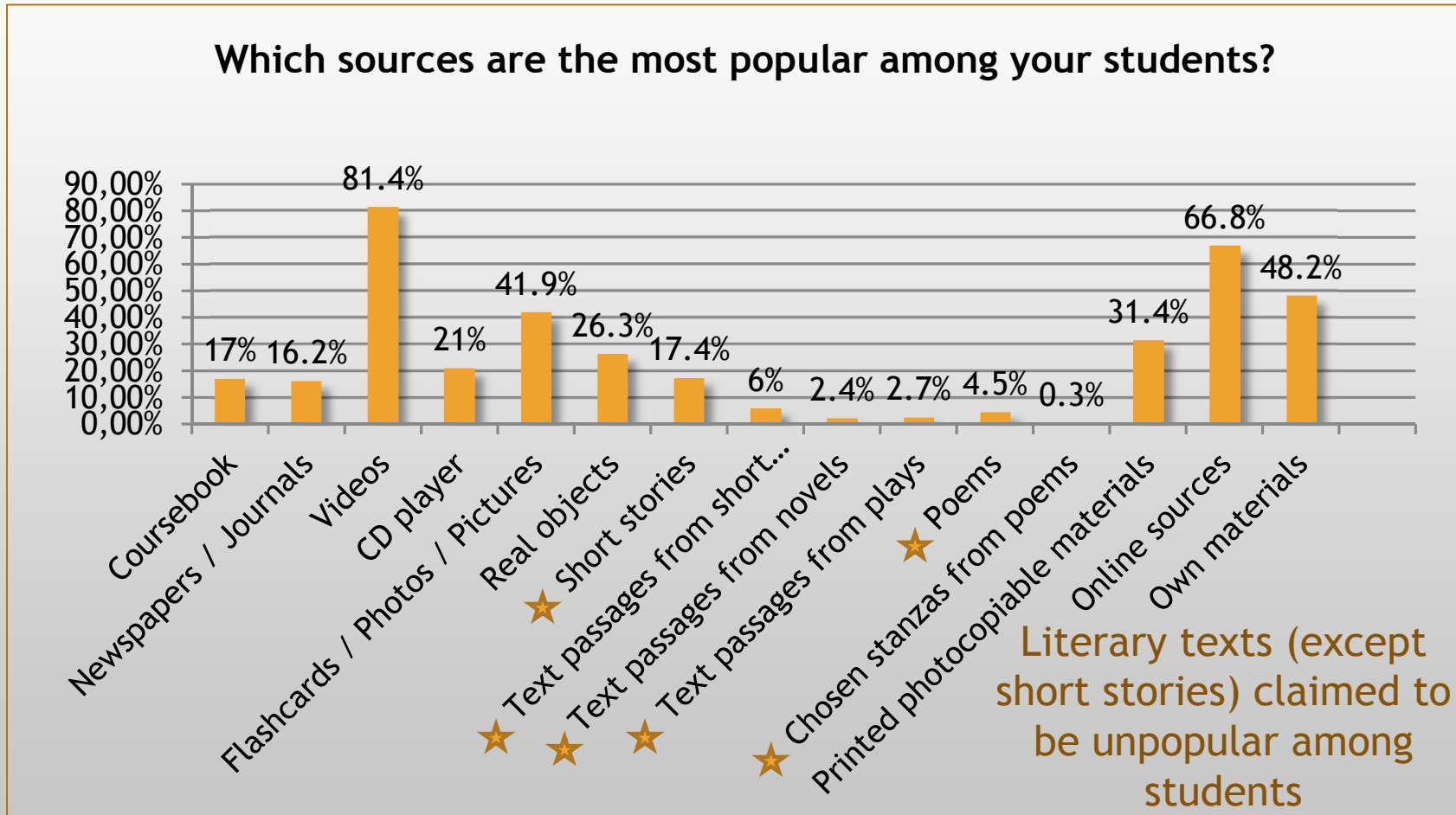


Figure 3. The most popular sources among the respondents' students

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

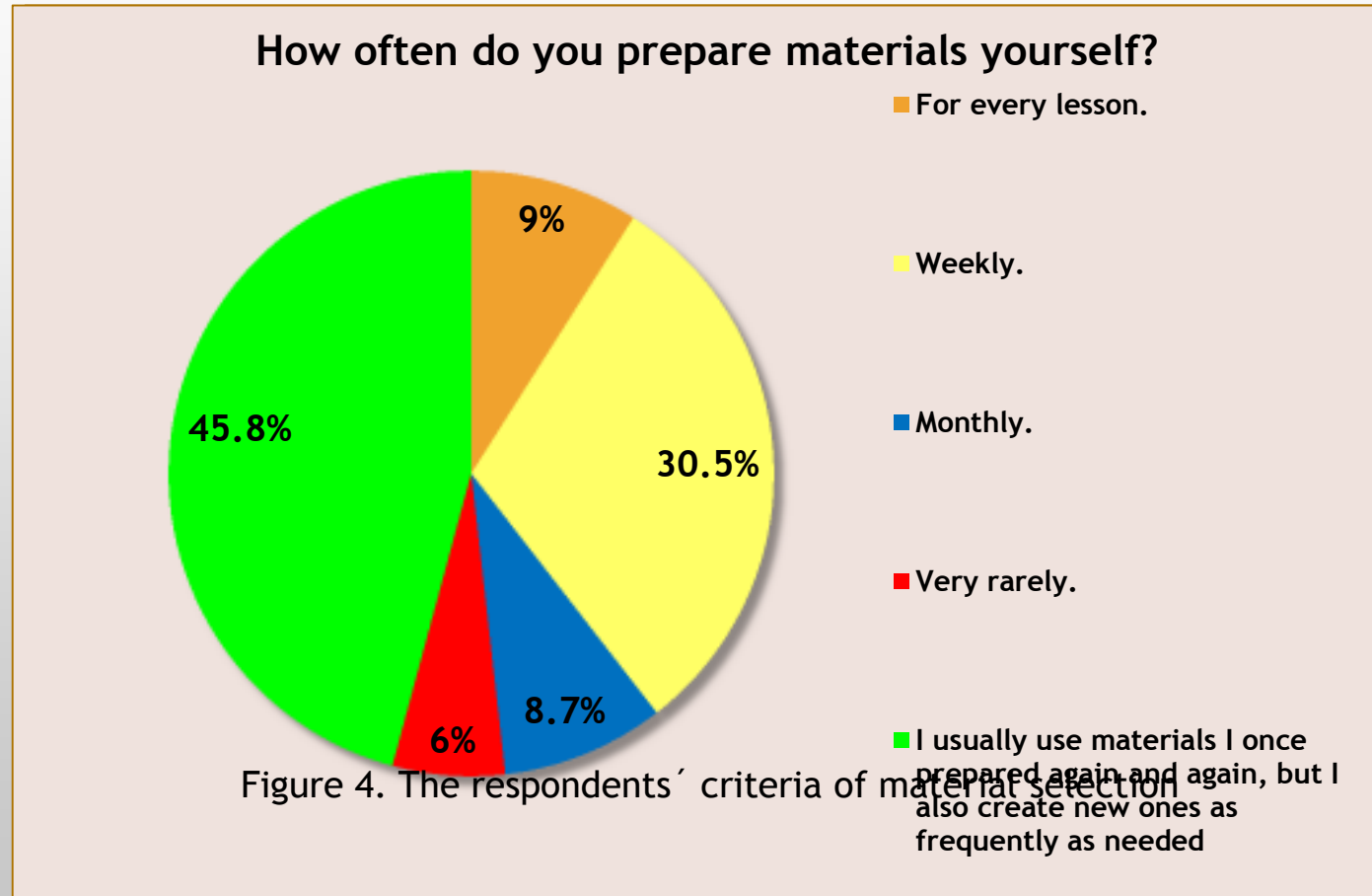


Figure 5. The frequency of preparing new materials

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

Do you use original English literary texts? (e. g. unmodified novels, stories, poems, plays...)



Figure 6. The frequency of using original English literary texts in EFL teaching

Do you use abridged literary works in your teaching?

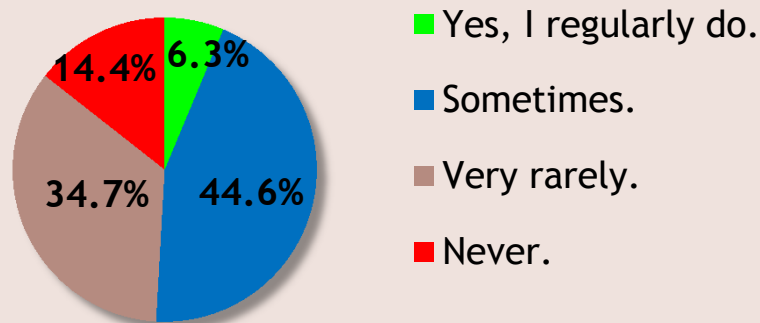


Figure 7. The frequency of using abridged literary works in EFL teaching

Do you use extracts from literary works?

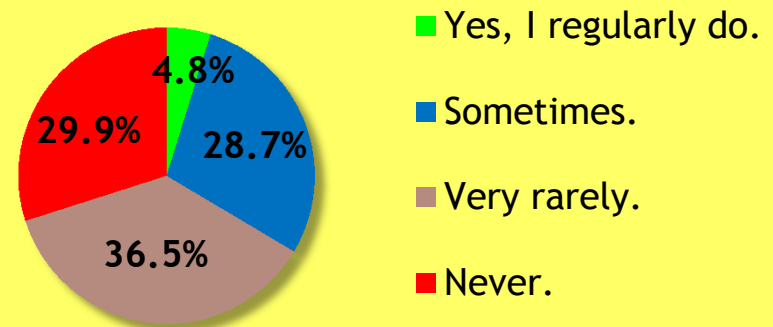


Figure 8. The frequency of using extracts from literary works in EFL teaching

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

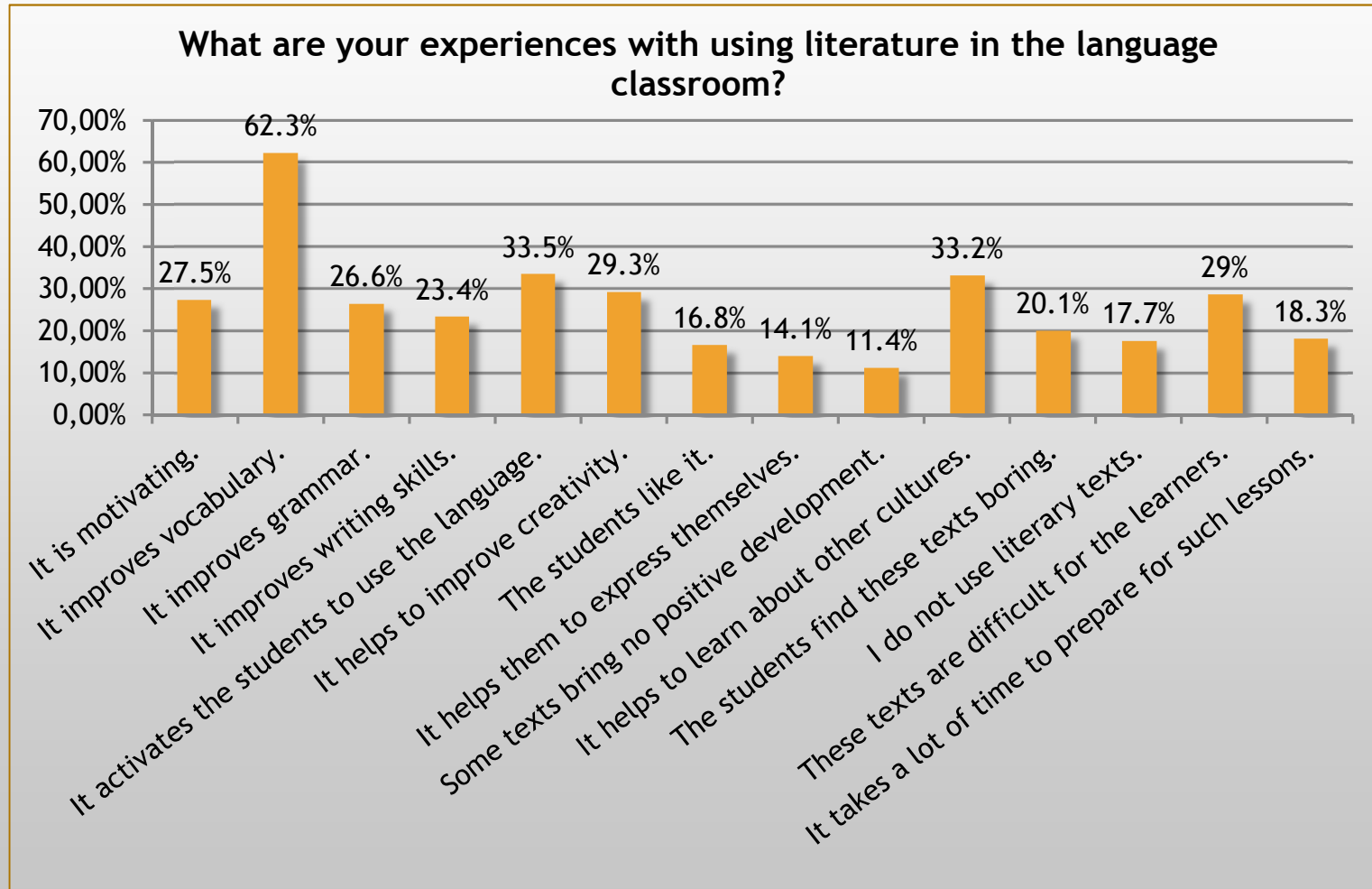


Figure 9. The respondents' experiences with using literature in the EFL classroom

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

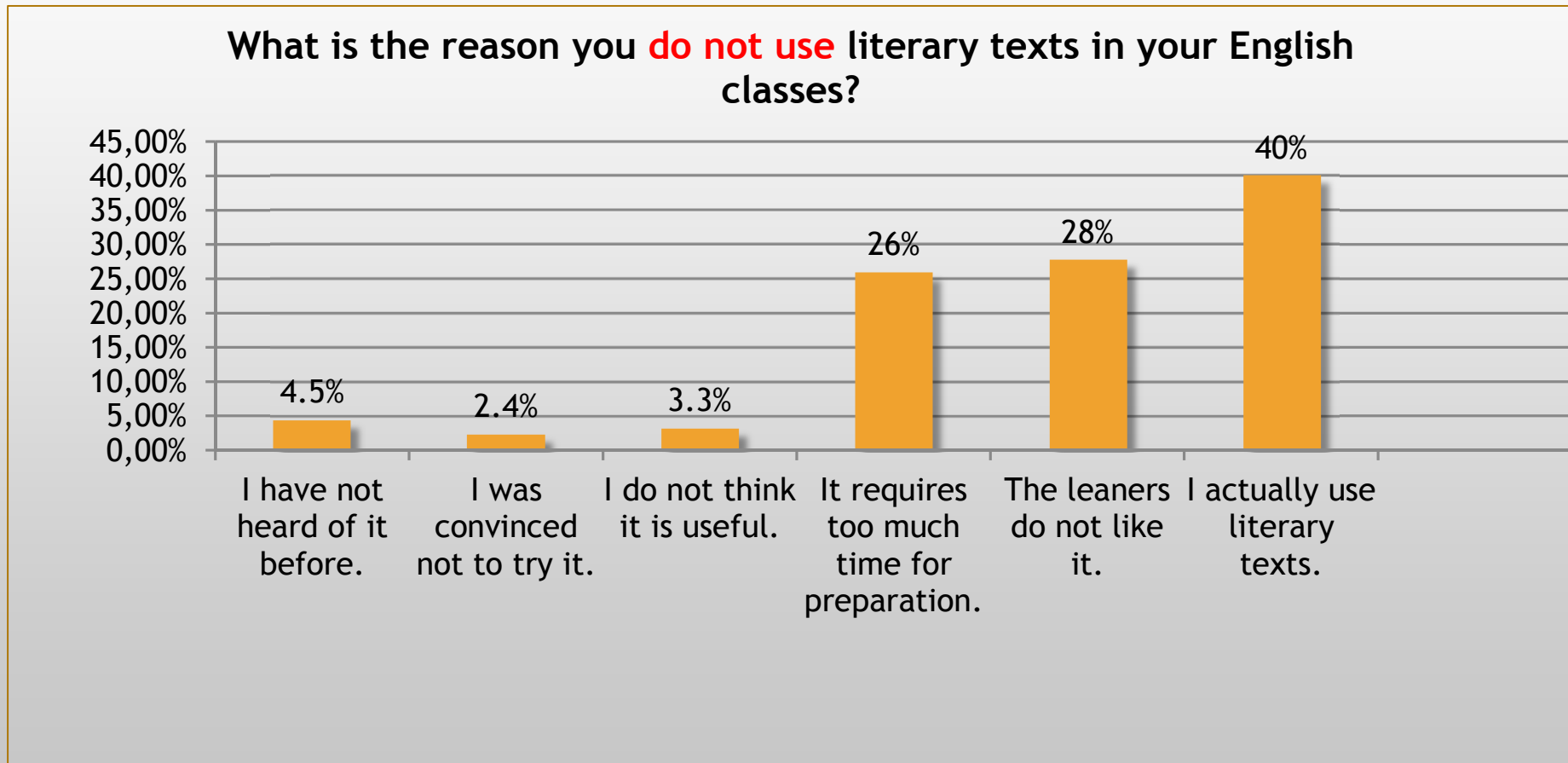


Figure 10. Reasons for not using literary texts

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

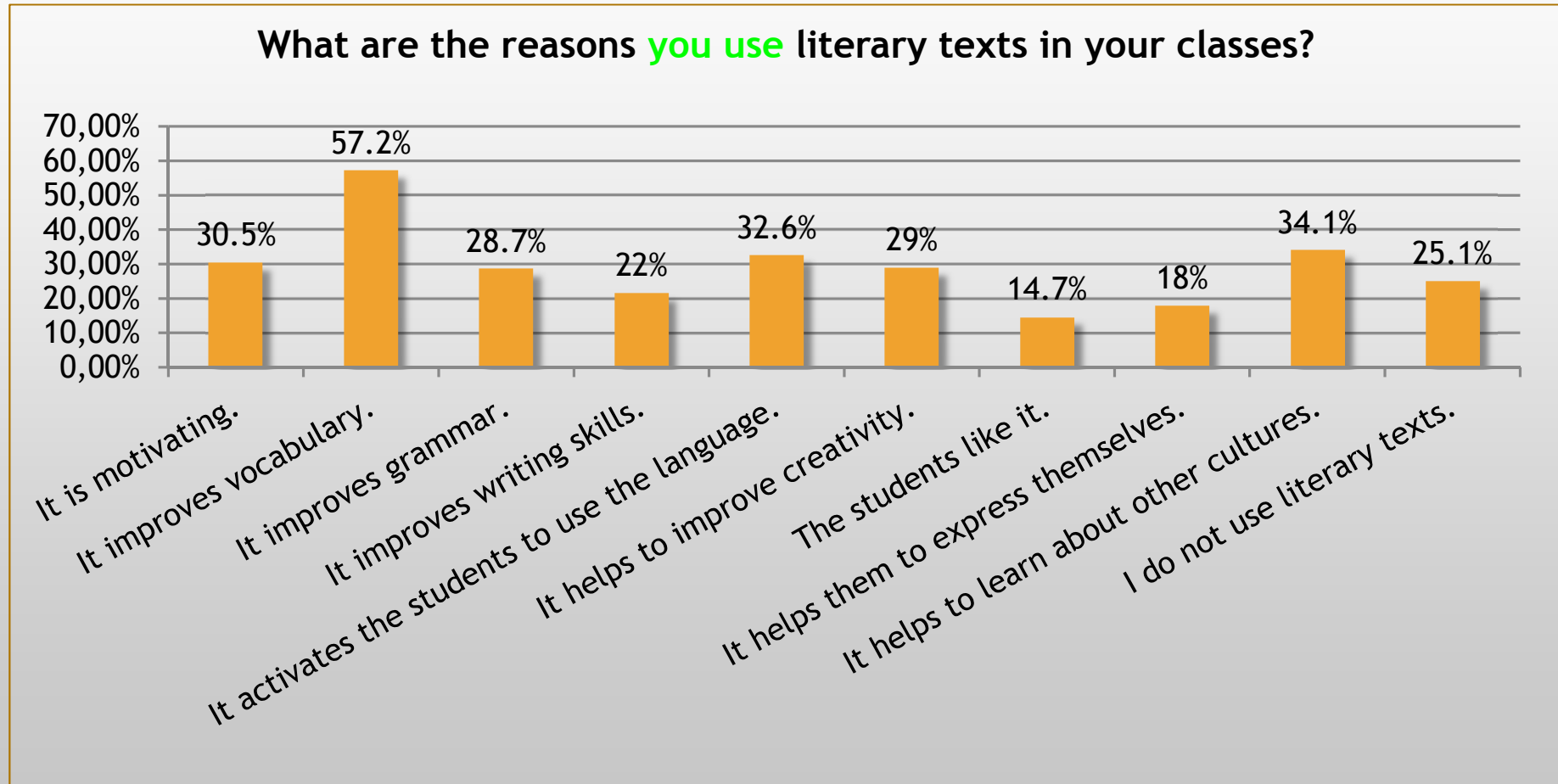


Figure 11. Reasons for using literary texts

Questionnaire Survey Results: Summary

If you were provided with a publication of photocopiable materials, lesson plans on using literature in the EFL classroom, would you use it in your classes?

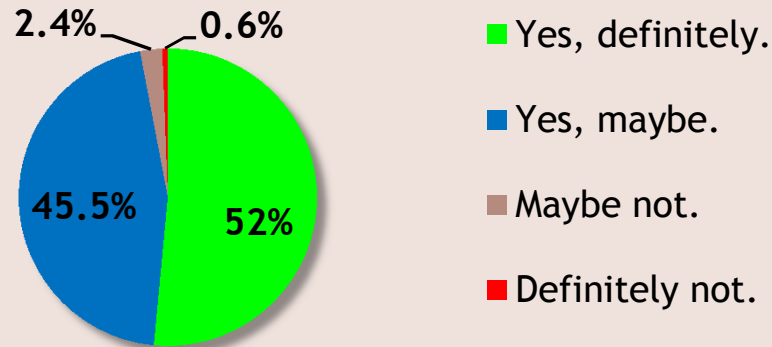


Figure 12. The respondents' interest in a publication of photocopiable materials on using literary texts in the EFL classroom

Would you participate in a training for teachers on using literature in the foreign language class?

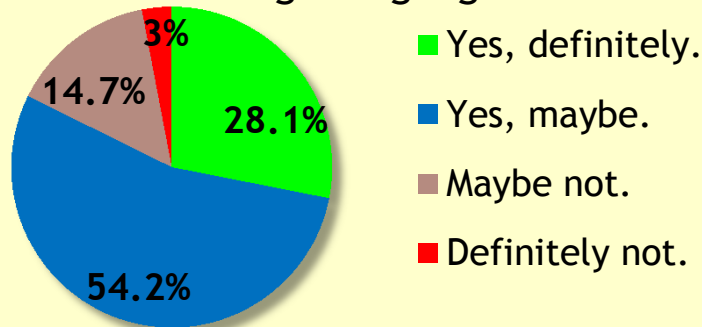


Figure 13. The respondents' interest in participating in a training for teachers on using literature in the foreign language class

If you were provided with electronic materials, lesson plans on using literature in the EFL classroom, would you use it in your classes?

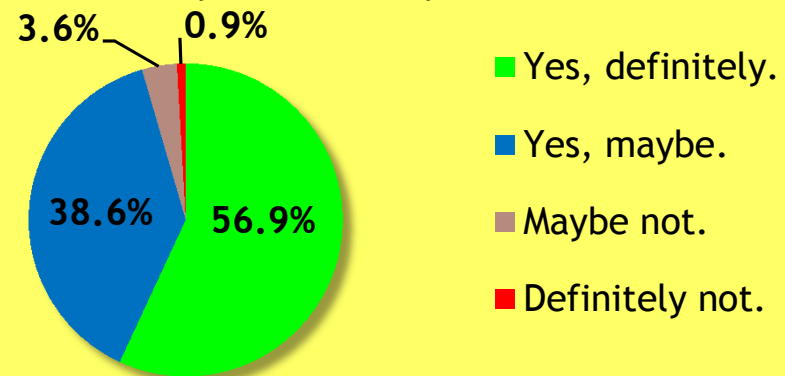


Figure 14. The respondents' interest in electronic materials on using literary texts in the EFL classroom

Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 1

Oscar Wilde: The Selfish Giant

Date: 21st January 2020
Class: IV.G (18 students)
Level: Intermediate
Age: 16+
Length: 90 min.
Form of work:
pair / group work

Objectives

- to motivate students to read English literary texts
- to provide positive reading experience
- to practise the 'used to' structure
- to be able to characterize a selfish person
- to express ideas on some Christian values present in the story (the notion of resurrection, forgiveness, repentance)

Proceedings

- the text divided into 7 parts / passages to be read
- each reading followed by an activity encouraging the students to think and speak
- a whole-class discussion about the values / symbols present in the story
- 14 handouts for practising reading, speaking, listening, and grammar



Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 1

Observations

- The text (language) → easily **comprehensible**
- Interest shown toward reading the story
- The tasks **encouraged the students to think and brainstorm** about the story
- **Cultural aspect:** close to the students' culture → it made the **students more confident** when sharing their thoughts
- **English used** in 85% of the lesson

Issues

Jigsaw reading → **requires more time** generally

Expressing own ideas in English → troubles in case of two students

Timing: better students finished the tasks quicker than average students → **extra activities needed** for better students



Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 1

Conclusion

- The story / reading → created a context / frame for the lesson
- Carefully planned activities connected to the story → significant role in achieving goals

The short story was successfully used as a basis of:

- guessing activities
- grammar activities
- a matching activity
- a vocabulary activity
- reading activities
- speaking activities



Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 2

Robert Frost: The Pasture

Date: 27th January 2020

Class: IV.G (16 students)

Level: Lower-Intermediate

Age: 17+

Length: 45 min.

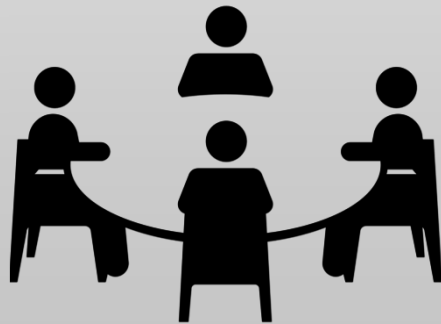
Form of work: group work

Objectives

- to encourage the students to read English literary texts, poems
- to motivate students to express and defend their opinions
- to encourage the students to use their imagination
- to motivate the students to work in groups
- to encourage students to communicate and to be active during the lesson

Proceedings

- figuring out the right order of the lines; guessing the 'content' of the poem
- exploring vocabulary, meanings, and events in the poem; reading the poem
- speculating about the author's intention
- the poem is used to evoke ideas about the life on a farm
- debate: pros & cons of life in a village / in a town



Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 2

Observations

- Poem analysis through activities: **helped to interpret the poem** in different ways
- Any opinion accepted: it **motivated the students to speak**
- The landscape / events described in the poem: **helped to create the context** of the discussion (partially)

Issues

- **Mixed ability class** → **some students struggled** when they had to speak
- **Expressing own ideas in English** → troubles in case of more students
- **Some students showed a little interest:** it may root from **the lack of English knowledge or speaking experience**
- **Lack of interest:** the poem was chosen in accordance with the topic indicated in the syllabus and not the students' interests



Lesson Plan 2

Conclusion

- The poem → successfully used as a **starting point to a debate**
- Mixed ability class of **high number of students** → less proficient students could not keep up with the others
- Lack of interest in the topic of the poem led to loss of motivation in some cases



Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 3

Samuel Beckett: Waiting for Godot (an extract)

Date: 28th January 2020

Class: II.G (14 students)

Level: Lower-Intermediate

Age: 16+

Length: 45 min.

Form of work:

pair / group work



Objectives

- to show the students how spoken language can be used
- to point out some differences between spoken language and the standard form of it
- to motivate the students through a literary text to use creativity and express their opinions in English
- to use English and be creative and spontaneous in a communicative situation

Proceedings

- guessing the scene, defining the meaning of some words / phrases
- the extract broken into 2 parts
- reading; comparing formal language with everyday language use presented by the dialogue
- discussion based on the extract
- spontaneous role-play based on the extract

Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 3

Observations

- The students liked the extract from the play
- Incorrect sentence (in the extract) found with difficulties - probably due to the influence of everyday language (or slang) heard in English songs and films
- Mysteries in the literary text raised the students' interest



Observations

- Dialogue analysis (to see everyday language use) → the stress to speak was reduced and the students were willing to perform their role-plays
- Role-plays (based on the extract) performed out spontaneously (as it was the goal)
- The extract was successfully used to achieve the goals

Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 4

Leo Marks: The Life that I Have

Date: 13th February 2020

Class: 8.A (13 students)

Level: Elementary to pre-Intermediate

Age: 13+

Length: 45 min.

Form of work:

pair / group work

Objectives

- to teach the students the relative clause
- to encourage the students through a poem and interesting activities to get involved in the lesson and be creative
- to develop positive attitudes toward English poems
- to encourage the students to write own poems in English (developing writing skills)

Proceedings

- speculating about secret or coded messages; reading the poem
- figuring out the meaning or message of the poem
- understanding the usage of the relative clause through the poem (it contains some examples); practise
- writing own poems that contain the relative clause; reading them out; voting for the best one



Lesson Plans and Lesson Evaluations

Lesson Plan 4

Observations

- Students showed a **little interest in the poem itself**
- The **gap-fill activity** contributed to better understanding the usage of the relative clause
- **Writing own poems triggered the students' interest**
- The students created own poems containing the relative clause
- Creating own poems gave the students autonomy; thus, their motivation was increased

Final Conclusions

(Questionnaire Survey)



- Literary texts used less frequently than other materials
 - Literary texts claimed to be less useful than other materials (except short stories)
 - Literary texts (except short stories) claimed to be unpopular among students
 - Proper lesson planning is time-consuming
 - A publication of photocopiable / electronic materials on using literary texts in the EFL classroom would be appreciated by Slovakian English teachers
 - A training on proper using of literary texts for English teachers would be worth it
-

Final Conclusions

(Lessons)



- The text selection has to be made in accordance with the students' interest
 - EFL classes have to be colourful: overusing literary texts leads to no success
 - Well-planned activities & tasks connected to the selected literary text have a key role in achieving the aims
 - Literary texts (as well as extracts) can be used for different purposes
 - Teachers should be provided with materials on using literary texts in the EFL classroom; a collection of materials and lesson plans is needed (lesson planning & preparing new aids is time-consuming)
 - Literary texts can contribute both to the personal growth and language improvement of the learners
-



Thank You for Your Attention!
