

ATINER CONFERENCE PAPER SERIES No: EDU2015-1422

Athens Institute for Education and Research

ATINER



ATINER's Conference Paper Series

EDU2015-1422

Literary Therapeutics

Juan Eliseo Montoya Marín
Professor
Pontifical Bolivarian University
Colombia

An Introduction to
ATINER's Conference Paper Series

ATINER started to publish this conference papers series in 2012. It includes only the papers submitted for publication after they were presented at one of the conferences organized by our Institute every year. This paper has been peer reviewed by at least two academic members of ATINER.

Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos
President
Athens Institute for Education and Research

This paper should be cited as follows:

**Montoya Marín, J.E., (2015) "Literary Therapeutics", Athens: ATINER'S
Conference Paper Series, No: EDU2015-1422.**

Athens Institute for Education and Research
8 Valaoritou Street, Kolonaki, 10671 Athens, Greece
Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209 Email:
info@atiner.gr URL: www.atiner.gr
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm
Printed in Athens, Greece by the Athens Institute for Education and Research. All
rights reserved. Reproduction is allowed for non-commercial purposes if the source
is fully acknowledged.
ISSN: **2241-2891**
20/05/2015

Literary Therapeutics

Juan Eliseo Montoya Marín
Professor
Pontifical Bolivarian University
Colombia

Abstract

Literary Therapeutics is an alternative therapy to heal psychological difficulties in children and adolescents. This demands a challenge in relation to the teaching of literature in schools and especially in the teacher training, so that it is in fact a *medical* alternative in a context of violence and social problems: Colombia and Latin America. It is not that literature turns teachers into psychologists or therapists, but to comprehend the therapeutic power of literature to make students *healthier* people who positively affect their families. The lack of literature in the classroom denies our students the opportunity to live a better and happier life. This paper presents some challenges for teacher formation and some classroom experiences to think about teaching.

Keywords:

Introduction

In the Colombian context, despite the ostensible number of rules of every kind, the daily lives of children affected by incidents or offenses that disturb their harmonious development and generate devastating consequences for the rest of their lives, are not properly considered:

- Domestic violence: rape, brutal physical and psychological punishment, lack of affection, children working in the streets, lack of communication and entertainment (TV, Internet, Radio, Telephone...), violent punishment and repression;
- Social violence: crime, (negligence of the government), feeling of insecurity and distrust of institutions or to people holding power, murder, exclusion and discrimination by skin color, body shape, socioeconomic status, gender;
- School violence: all forms of bullying reflecting the family and the social environments, violence in the streets and in the classrooms.

In addition to these situations, the effects of a dehumanized neoliberal viewpoint on economics and other associated factors generates: security and quality of life are neglected, access to unpayable loans is promoted, crimes punishment criteria are assumed to measure poverty rates, provisional employment is stimulated, peace talks are promoted with criminal or terrorist groups while they are still kidnapping, murdering, bullying and stealing. These circumstances produce a perception of insecurity and fear, and causes and atmosphere of impunity.

Naturally, this state of affairs takes place in families and affects children. In terms of this reality, usually disguised, the school has a fundamental mission: the duty to give students personal tools to overcome the effects of these situations and find ways to improve their quality of life. Literature is a convenient tool to accomplish this task if educational institutions recognize its changing power and perspectives: literature is prolific when it helps people find new ways to be better and happier by means of written words and their supremacy to construct identities and *heal the souls*.

Since everyone has diverse skills and ways of being, each literature genre offers a different aesthetic experience, a special encounter with life, a particular existential event. If it is acknowledged that the ultimate purpose of education is creating free, healthy and happy human beings, the formative effects of literature are evident in social life, as a collective and narrative construction designed to live together in spite of the political or ideological differences.

There are three literary genres traditionally recognized. Each genre gives the teacher extraordinary language tools to carry out their formative task:

- The poetic voice, with the multiplicity of rhymes and the depth of the symbols, wraps the spirit with semantic devices and gives

mystery, understanding and excitement. Rhyme constructs a concert of images that promotes a beautiful atmosphere of life. Who were never identified with a verse or a poem? Who were never moved by a song of any genre?

- The narrative, as well, leads people find worlds never seen before, builds impossible universes and extraordinary adventures; narrations light up life and engage the mind to create new pathways to find amazing people and new places to live a new life; stories give an endless desire to hate, to live, to mourn, to love. The fable, for example, is born in the forests of India with the power of the gods and the passion of men; it makes people feel the passion of life and takes us away from loneliness. Language is a metaphor of reality and fiction is a beautiful expression of that reality.
- Drama, between tears and laughter, is a polyfonic experience with different characters that produces joy, anger, pain, love and tenderness. It empowers people to conversation and, from the viewpoint of characters, makes us realize what we are; from drama we look back and question existence; we sleep and wake up to avoid mortality; we open our ears to misunderstanding or simply fall unreservedly to love. In terms of tragedy and comedy, life is represented through words and ideas that never disappear, even in the absence of an author.

Through our eyes or ears, from handwritten or orality, literature emerges in life as a possibility to create and inhabit the worlds we want and to escape from suffering and madness. A literary work, as well as its artistic beauty, holds a wonderful power to endeavor a better life; gives us the key to name the world properly and lets us *map* our existence in terms of dissimilar and inconceivable situations. Although educational institutions are critical venues to literary aesthetic therapy, the family, a place where first stories are told and first dramas are performed, is the model territory to put into practice a therapeutic educational experience. It means that literature teachers have a responsibility with children and young people in public or private schools, but also with their families and communities, because they have to form people to appreciate the holistic power of literature and they have to cultivate the literature experience at school and at home.

Take profit from literature as a therapeutic option requires from the teacher three inescapable features: an enormous human sensibility towards student's lives; deep, systematic and consistent understanding of the structure, literary works and analytical methods in literature; and an intercultural communicative competence to foster proper dialogues between student's life and the world, often distant and distinct, of the literary work. On the other hand, from the institution requires the opening of its educational project to new pedagogical practices and finally from the State requires a greater commitment to promote human development, quality of life and make the country a better place to live.

Background

In recent times there have been huge efforts to make literature a potential source of health for those who get close to it. Some of these studies are listed below.

Philosophers such as Martha Craven Nussbaum have seriously assumed the issue, and have produced works that allow understanding the power of literature and the formative commitment of schools in texts such as "Paisajes del Pensamiento" (2009), "El Conocimiento del Amor" (2005) and "Sin Fines de Lucro" (2010), among others. Nussbaum states, among other theses, the need to foster literary training in order to achieve the exercise of a responsible democracy, to promote literature and other arts as imaginative and creative possibilities in a prefabricated world, and the power of literature at forming the emotions. Likewise, other authors have stated his contributions to this matter; however, the most distinguished contributions have taken place at international academic events.

Mirta Kruk de Miranda, native from Corrientes, Argentina, presented at the 2nd International Symposium of Reading and Life, in October 2001, her lecture entitled "El Abordaje del Texto Literario. Variedad Discursiva: El Texto Teatral". The Uruguayan preschool teacher Ana Maria Bavosi wrote "Acompañar Lectores... Un Cuento de Nunca Acabar", and presented that text at the International Congress of the Society of dyslexia of Uruguay, Montevideo in 2000. Gaby Vallejo Canedo in their "Anecdotas Familiares: Un Espacio Narrativo Inacabable", involves family in the literary formative process of children and adolescents. "Clínica de la Lectura " written by Carmen Martí is a healthcare proposal to encourage children's health based on literary reading. Armando Morles, expert from the Interamerican Center of Studies and Research for Educational Planning (CINTERPLAN) wrote his text "La Alfabetización como Estrategia para el Desarrollo Nacional y Personal", in which he highlights the relevance of literate new generations and the need to stimulate them to interact with literature for a better world.

Teresa Colomer proposed "La Enseñanza de la Literatura como Construcción de Sentido" as an opportunity to create possible worlds and conceive new narratives about existing realities. Marina R. Müller, in "La Creación de Relatos en el Aula y en el Tratamiento de Problemas de Aprendizaje. Presentación de una Mariposa que Deseaba Proseguir su Vuelo" acknowledged the formative possibility that literature has and the consequences of children's everyday life problems over learning. "Cuento de Cuentos: Lectura y Escritura Creativa en la Web" is a didactic and pedagogical proposal created by "Fundación leer", which integrates new technologies, social networks, collaborative learning, and ethical responsibility on the web.

Alicia E. Savioli de González in her a proposal "Papel del Cuento en el Aprendizaje de las Emociones en la Edad Preescolar" promotes the narrative as a way to help preschool students develop their own emotional system and ethical criteria. Besides, the following three authors: Elena Luchetti in "El Texto como Pretexto: Una Propuesta de Lectura Creadora", Néstor Hugo

Quiroga in “Reflexiones para Abrir el Debate... Lectura Comprensiva y Vida” and Rosa Maria Cardamone in “Microficciones”, have the conviction that reading encourages creativity and imagination as a means to overcome social and personal difficulties. This subject has also been developed by Ana M. Borzone de Manrique, Celia Renata Rosemberg (La lectura de cuentos en el aula) y Ovide Menin (Psicología).

Literacy can be described as a way to ensure human development. Yet, human development basically takes place in two fields: social and individual. Regarding with social development, literacy is a synonym of social freedom and genre equality. Countries like India, where literacy is almost restricted to men, are an illustration of the offenses against equality and freedom, both of them required for having a decent life, for the development of critical thinking and the exercise of citizenship. Martha Nussbaum (2009) made a profound research about what represents for Indian female population to be excluded from literacy. She argues how access to basic literacy and literature (2010) warrant human development in a time when economic values are perceived as a priority. Néstor García Canclini (2004) developed some ideas taken from Pierre Bourdieu about sociosemiotics of culture and stated how sign value and symbol value are precisely components of culture, considering that they denote some identifying criteria that belong to the community where is created and reconstructed the basic criteria of worldview. In this sense, Manfred Max Neef proposed the idea of development to human scale (1998); according to that proposal, the elements that increase human wellbeing should be constituted in criteria to esteem the richness of a community, for instance, literacy and access to literature as the basis to human development.

Regarding to literacy on literature there are several perspectives. According to traditional approach, literacy has an end in itself: humanitarian performance and ethical component, yet it is exclusively reduced to reading acquisition and basic arithmetic operations. Functional approach estimate literacy as the means to develop human skills that leads to economical production trough academic processes bound to the country's economical priorities related to manpower and social necessities (Lizarzaburu, 1982). Psychosocial approach, proposed by Paulo Freire, assumes literacy as a raising awareness process, an instrument to achieve citizen's participation in national life. Literacy implies citizen's awareness about his historical background and his immersion in reality. (Freire quoted by Armando Morles, 1982). Such integration to the individual into national reality raises the meeting point between individual development and social development, oriented to rights awareness and social capacities of human beings to transform reality (Freire, 1977).

Beyond illiteracy figures (CNTE-UNESCO, 1982) it is necessary to understand the significance of literacy in the development of the identity and the overcome of individual difficulties, besides, literacy warrants the overcome of national problems. The above presupposes, according to UNESCO (1977) a greater participation in civic life and a better understanding of the world.

Carmen Marti in “Clínica de la lectura” claims that “Teaching a child to read mean giving him instruments of permanent revolution for his socialization process, considering that failure in learning leads to failure in social integration. Teaching children to read and write mean giving him tools to evolve in contact to the best ideals.” Additionally, Octavio paz states that “Literary play survives thanks to the reader’s interpretations. Those interpretations are actually resurrections: without them there would not be literary play, which goes beyond its own story to insert itself in another one”. Provide literature to children and youth, and allow them to express themselves through literary works is an alternative to help them overcome rejections, flaws, frustrations and feelings of worthlessness. Thus literary production not only implies and art but the opportunity to overcome adversity.

Psycholinguistics deals with the emergence and development of language in two phases: the study of the language in itself and the psychological processes involved in the acquisition and learning of a language. The use of the language with an aesthetic purpose is called “*Papel de espectador*” (spectator role), (Applebee, 1978 quoting Harding, 1937). Applebee carried out his research by identifying the meaning infants conferred to their stories and their capacities to recreate that experience through the message of literary text.

Despite psychoanalysis made his contributions to the relationship between psychological processes and oral literature, these new research (Holland, 1968, 1975) provide greater sense to the establishment of the narrative scheme, perception and differentiation among reality, dream, fantasy and the understanding of cultural products presented through the characters of the narratives. As stated by Heilbrun (1988: 37):

“What matters is that lives do not serve as models. Only stories serve. And it is so hard to build stories to live in. We can only live inside the stories we have read or heard. We live our own lives through texts. Those texts can be written, sung, electronically experimented, or they can come to us, as whispers of our mothers, telling us what conventions demand. Whatever their shape is or means, those stories have formed us all; this is why we should use them to create new fictions, new narratives.”

According to Cesarini and Federicis (1988) “Literature is perceived as one of the ways in which it is self-organized and self-represented the anthropological and cultural imaginary [...], it develops alternative models to the existing ones or creates models and images of the world that attempt to impose themselves to the diverse public spheres that constitute society.” (vol. IX:28) In this sense, literature constitutes models of representation of the inner life and comprehension of the individual and social history.

Literature emerges from inner language (Lledó, 1994), as well as inner language is conceived with greater beauty in the literary play, from which arises the awareness of truth, justice, freedom, beauty, generosity, affection, respect, collaborative work, and other attitudes related with human formation

to achieve personal development and social interaction. Even though family is the first scenario where are learnt those conditions, is the school where they are strengthened and consolidated through diverse literary plays specially intended for that.

“And this, in turn, fruit and culture of words, review of the immense written legacy, which is nothing but think with the thought, desire the desired, love the beloved, definitely, dreaming the dreams of words that sleep on the legacy of written tradition, of real tradition, and at the time that we dream with them, we wake them up and we wake up with them.” (Lledó, Emilio, 1994:11)

This way to assume literature for a therapeutic work was named “Cambridge group’s work”, and whose main purpose was to stimulate the experience of the symbolic capability of language. This is a sample of the therapeutic work, where were naturally developed motivation and acquisition abilities to access to written language. This kind of research has also been developed by Britton (1970), Meek (1983), Wells (1986), Lighfoot y Martin (1988), among others.

Despite the similarities between the Literary Therapeutics and other experiences, the proposal is not the same, considering that all of them have been studied and their structure and finality are different, even when there are some theories with the same foundation. Literary Therapeutics is based on Vigotsky’s proposal of zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to this theory, all people can accomplish knowledge, as long as they have all the input needed, the appropriate accompaniment and clear and precise instructions. In this case, the input is constituted by the own experiences and literary texts, accompaniment is related with teacher’s presence, giving instructions in the right moment.

Methodology

The methodology used to carry out this research in the classroom was ethnography. However, it was not easy to define the instruments and strategies to apply in the classroom. Dealing with students that are going through a formation process requires a great sense of ethics and respect for each one’s individuality and intimacy. That is why was used a double strategy: the classroom project as a methodological strategy and the interview as a technique to collect information. Through the classroom project can be identified the students willing to start a process of inner healing and restoration of personal harmony through literature. By means of the interview it is possible to know in depth their personal history. All this involves, as already said, a vast knowledge of literature and a personalized treatment with the student, even beyond classroom work.

The research was carried out with students of five different groups of tenth grade of middle education¹, who took part, each one inside their own groups, of a classroom project. It was established contact with two or three students of each group that expressed to have any kind of psychological trauma caused by familiar or affective circumstances and, at the same time, demonstrated their willingness to begin an inner healing process by means of literature.

After meeting all the particular cases by means of the interview, which was carried out between three and seven sessions of conversation, each of them of one hour approximately, were chose the texts to read² and the guiding questions for those readings. After two or three conversations that followed the reading, used to answer questions about the text or to establish a connection between the text and the reader, the students were asked to write a personal text in order to closure the process.

Findings

The Case of Miss V

Miss V., Fourteen years old, was abandoned by her father, Mister H., when she was four. Her mother, Mrs. M. Took of her and her three bothers doing her best to survive in her countryside house. After five years Mr. H. returns and claims that he is the owner of the house where Miss V, her mother and brothers have lived. According to Mr. H, they must leave the house because he was going to move there with his new partner. This situation enrages Mrs. M and her sons, who begin to feel an immeasurable hate against their father. Later, they realized that while he lived in the house with them, he was violent with their mother, which made them feel angrier. His rude attitude leads the brothers to consider commit a crime against Mr. H. but her mother hold them back, explaining them that such a thing can not be done. Miss V. can not hear the name of her father, without feeling anger and resentment.

Miss V. has suffered the absence of her father, the mocking of her classmates because she “has not father” and economical problems. All those experiences have become her into a surly and rude woman, which make difficult the interaction with her. Despite her good looking, she does not seem to be attractive to be in a relationship. She has not willingness for study, she is always in a bad mood and her interpersonal relations are quite reduced.

After some conversations with Miss V. she begins to express her feelings of rage and anger, she cries every time she talks about her father, first with anger then with sadness. She mourns the excessive burden her mother is

¹In Colombia, the educational process is structures as follows: two years of pre-school (kinder garden and transition), five years of basic primary education (1st grade to 5th grade), three years of basic secondary education (6th grade to 9th grade) and two years of middle education (10th grade to 11th grade), these last two are the preparation for working life, higher education or familiar life.

²Some of the texts used for this exercise was: Charlie and The Chocolate Factory, Letter to The Father (F. Kafka) and A Descent into de Maelström (E.A.Poe)

bearing and blames Mr. H. of that. She thinks she is ugly, that no one loves her and that she does not deserve to live. She hates men and does not want to establish any affective relationship with anyone. Her only purpose in life is to get a job and help to her mother. At times she even blame herself because her father abandoned them, which has been affecting his self-esteem, and self-concept.

It was not easy for her to express her feelings and emotions. Each time she talks about her situation she cries a little less. She is becoming more rational and starts to believe that can be a point of view different from hers. Readings like "Letter to The Father" by F. Kafka, "A Descent into de Maelström" by E.A.Poe and "The Ghost of Canterville", By O. Wilde, was recommended to her. After she read each of these texts, some of them read simultaneously, there was a conversation about her own emotions and thoughts and the about the emotions and thoughts of the characters. Occasionally her feelings of anger and hate, repulsion and disgust resurge but then she starts to understand the cognitive component hid in her own emotions. She realized that she can create her own emotion, hence, she dominate them. She even ended up putting herself in another's place to comprehend other perspectives to see the world.

After a fifteen months process, Miss V. starts to write her own "Letter to the father". There are not more expressions of hate and resentment but of understanding and compassion: "I understand that...", "I realized that...", "It seems to me that...", "Probably you...", and other expressions like that. She feels released from the guilt she felt. She is able to understand her father's responsibility and her own. There are not signs of any self-destructive feeling in her text, instead it is possible to observe feelings of hope towards future and the desire to move on and being a professional in psychology. She wants to "comprehend her own afflictions and the affliction of others". Now she defines herself as an intelligent and beautiful woman, plenty of skills and possibilities. She is also in a relationship with a seventeen years old boy and she feels no hate or resentment. Now she looks at her mother with comprehension and kindness, not with pity as she used to do. Her body expression is also different, she reflects more confidence. She smiles a lot, and she has become a leader among her classmates who enjoy her presence and now see a different woman despite they do not know the process she has been through.

Miss V. acknowledges that the literature she read had a great influence on what she is now. She has created a new way to describe herself. She does not feel anger when hearing his father's name. If someone ask her about her father she talks about him without resentments, yet she does not feel any kind of affection for him. Now she pays more attention to her physical appearance and she applied to a public university. All their illnesses have also disappeared. She plays sports on weekends and goes out with her friends.

"There are many things that I need to improve, -Miss V. says- but I know I will make it if I stay accompanied of good readings". She feels a big gratitude with the authors she read and she has as a habit to write her emotions, feelings, thoughts and perceptions. She also reads any kind of texts and has a new perception of literature that is why she constantly reads, independently from

school homework. She refers to reality in a critical and reflective way, which demonstrates a process of maturity that is not strictly the outcome of literary therapeutics but it was encouraged by it. It is relevant to acknowledge the willingness Miss V. had during this process of personal transformation. Without it, the attaining of the process would have been impossible. Their religious beliefs also took part in this process, they keep her strong. Besides, the empathy between her and her advisor made this process easier to carry out. She and her family are aware of her progress and now her familiar life is much more reassuring.

General Findings

Literature sensitizes the own existence, allows to be in touch with life experiences and build emotions. Since many teachers are not really interested on literature, the ones that attempt to carry out a research like this can find themselves a bit lonely. Likewise, this sort of project does not appear explicitly in the language curriculum, as a result, educative institutions does not completely encourage the realization of them. Yet, some institutions have integrated this sort of projects in their curriculums, aided with psychologists and adviser teachers.

Childs and adolescents found motivations to read text that feel identified with. Those texts allowed them to know themselves and have a more reassuring life. At choosing the best text to work with, it is necessary to consider all their characteristics such as: genre, kind of language, extension, and so on, taking into account that those characteristics need to fit the particular conditions of each student. The interest that students expressed towards this project is due to the connections they made between their lives and the content of the text.

Literature allows overcoming traumas as well as personal and social difficulties thanks to their capacity to represent life situations. In a country with serious problems of public order, security, distrust on institutions, power abuse, and several kinds of violence inside and out of the house, literature allows people to reflect their true self in literary plays of any genre.

Schools, mainly the areas of humanities and languages can be scenarios to provide students with options that help them to restore their inner harmony and social health. Since language teachers has the possibility to choose the texts for their students to read, they have the best opportunities to encourage reflections about the matters they estimate pertinent. This huge possibility is at the same time a great responsibility for language teachers but with the accompaniments of the educational community it is possible to develop intervention proposals where everyone benefits.

Literary therapeutics has formative advantages such as:

- It helps the individual to trust in the other and receive from him help and support.

- It generates a transformative connection with literature.
- It allows the individual to be creative and imaginative at describing himself in written texts, and in texts that are read.
- It encourages critical thinking.
- It allows identifying subjects that helps to solve personal conflicts.
- It benefits writing processes.
- It transforms individuals and their social environment.
- It develops in the individual the capacity of being resilient, that is, "assuming flexibly extreme situations and being able to overcome them" (DRAE)
- It enhances quality of life.

The classroom project and the interview are appropriate research instruments for this kind of ethnographical study that can also be performed as a participant-observation or case study. Since this project is carried out by means of enunciation, it is possible to do discourse analysis, narratological studies and literary criticism.

Some of the most remarkable difficulties at carrying out this proposal were:

- Teachers lack of time to talk with the students.
- Student's difficulties to attend to the conversations with the teacher since they had to miss to their classes.
- The student family's intervention when at critical moments they felt afflicted by observing their loved ones expressing their feelings and emotions.
- Discomfort from some teachers about the kind of project that was carried out with the students.

Proposal

Literary therapeutics can be implemented at an educational institution as a plan, a project, a program or a specific action that leads to the enhancement of quality of life, to the solution of personal conflicts, to the overcome of social and individual difficulties and to the strengthening of actions related with literature and languages which are fundamental in the individual development and in the construction of personal, familiar and social processes of identification.

These are some of the requirements that should be considered at implementing a project as the described above:

1. *An appropriate classroom strategy*: despite public schools have a considerable amount of students per grade; it is possible to do a

personalized accompaniment process considering that each literary work speaks to each individual. In this sense, the classroom project is a mechanism that helps the teacher to know better the personal reality of his students. Yet, some of them are more reticent and can not be forced to participate on the project, so it is necessary to do a different process with them, for instance, suggest them literary plays that help them to overcome their problems. This classroom project also involves an interdisciplinary work, therefore, it is also required that qualified teachers properly carry out the process.

2. *Genuine interpersonal relationships*: It is required a deeper and genuine interpersonal relationship, which means that not all the teachers would be able to carry out a process of this kind with all the students, taking into account that necessary that both teacher and student feel empathy and trust towards each other. Moreover, it has been found that for every hundred students only two agree to participate in the process. This figure may seem low, considering the number of students, however this has allowed, teachers and students, to do a more personalized and meaningful process. All this presupposes some specific characteristics that teachers must have for being able to guide this process from the beginning to the end. These characteristics are: confidentiality, care of student's privacy, knowledge of therapeutic processes and psychological guidance.
3. *Appropriate choice of the text*: the knowledge that teachers have of each student; allow them to choose the texts that better fit the student's situations. The texts can be chosen by their extension, their typology, kind of language or genre. The poetry (Rafael Pombo), the short stories (Grimm brothers, H.C. Anderson) make meaningful contributions to children's literature. The fables of Greek poets and their different reconstructions such as the versions written by J. de La Fontaine are also important resources. There are plenty of ways to use these resources in order to benefit the formative processes that schools have always had. Some novels could be helpful as well, especially if the student enjoy to read. It could be said that most of the literary production can be used for this purpose, as long as it fit the needs and expectations of the students.
4. *Institutional willingness*: the directors of the institution must know the processes that are being carried out with the students. This does not mean that teachers have to make reports of all their individual and confidential work, but they have to make reports that are recorded in the student's resume. At doing this, the teacher can do their job freely but at the same time, it implies a responsible work that does not transcend the limits of their

educative labor. Thus, it is necessary the institutional support to properly carry out this kind of project.

5. *Respect for human and children's rights*: since children's rights prevail over other rights, both, the teachers and the institution must warrant that those rights are not going to be transgressed, therefore, teachers can not use the information provided by their students against or in favor of anyone, can not break the agreements of confidentiality, and can not manipulate their students on any way. Hence, teachers have to keep an affective distance according to their formative role.

The responsibility of literature teachers does not end in the classroom; it also involves the decisions they make, for instance, the choosing of literary plays and the methodology to do their job. All this constitutes an opportunity for the students to immerse in the literary world, either in literary production, reading of texts or dramatization of literary plays.

Conclusions

The formative interest of schools needs to be encouraged by the entire educative community, considering that all their agents (teachers, students, parents, among others) are the ones who are directly affected by these attempts to carry out a meaningful formative process.

Literary education and literature for formative processes need to emerge from the student's needs, specific characteristics and expectations and not only from a political and institutional prescription commanded by the Ministry of Education.

In spite of all the attributes of literary texts, literacy and literature by themselves does not warrant human development and quality of life. It necessary a commitment from the State and from the educative institutions to incorporate literary education in primary and secondary schools, reinforced by public policies concerning with the exercise of civility and citizenship. Social development it is strictly bound to individual development.

Literary text provides plenty of possibilities to develop educative and formative processes, but it depends on the teacher how to make a meaningful use of them. The reading experience can be assumed as a hobby, as cognitive process or as an activity of personal development. Besides, the literary writing experience can be the product of different processes concerned with personal knowledge, inner healing, or a regular academic activity. The communicative act that takes place among the text, the author and the reader, constitutes an opportunity to recognize the own identity and the possibility to create new worlds to live in. Thus, literature is a fundamental element in socialization processes, considering that it comprises different perspectives and ideas of the world, relational structures, and language knowledge which in turn implies a cultural knowledge.

References

- CNTE-UNESCO (1982). *América Latina y el proyecto principal de educación*. México, D.F., UNESCO.
- Freire, P. (1977). *La educación como práctica de la libertad*. México, Siglo Veintiuno.
- García Canclini, Néstor (2004). *Diferentes, desiguales y desconectados*. Barcelona, Gedisa.
- Lizarzaburu, A. (1982). *La formación de promotores de base en programas de alfabetización*. Santiago de Chile, UNESCO.
- Max Neef, Manfred (1998). *Desarrollo a escala humana*. Barcelona, Icaria.
- Morles, A. (1982). *Habilidades a desarrollar en una educación para el futuro*. CINTERPLAN.
- Nussbaum, Martha (2005). *El conocimiento del amor*. Barcelona, Mínimo tránsito.
- Nussbaum, Martha (2009). *Paisajes del pensamiento*. Barcelona, Paidós.
- Nussbaum, Martha (2009). *India*. Barcelona, Paidós.
- Nussbaum, Martha (2010). *Sin fines de lucro*. Buenos Aires, Katz.