

## INVESTIGATING THE LITERARY COMPETENCE OF FRESHMAN UNDERGRADUATE EFL STUDENTS AT MOHAMED BEN AHMED UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

It is widely accepted that literature is not only a subject to study to obtain grades, but also a skill and a competence to acquire. In an EFL context, literature can be a rich language input resource if the skill of reading literature is mastered and the EFL learners possess a degree in literary competence. Thus, the present study is an attempt to shed some light on the literary knowledge or the literary competence that Algerian freshman undergraduate students possess at the end of their secondary studies and the beginning of their EFL tertiary studies. To do so the article will start by elucidating the key construct, i.e., Literary Competence which has gained a lot of importance in the field of education in general and in ELT, in particular. In the light of the presented definition, a literary competence questionnaire made up of 21 questions in addition to the personal information part was administered to the sample group of 60 Algerian students starting their three-year B.A. course in EFL at the University of Mohamed Ben Ahmed, Oran 2, west Algeria. The results indicate that the students possess a mixed-level of Literary Competence and though overall a limited LC, students show an awareness of the merits and benefits of literature and hold positive attitude towards it. Such results should be taken into consideration in selecting and grading the content of their literature syllabus in a way that takes them a step forward in gaining literary competence in EFL.

**Keywords:** Literary Competence (LC), Language proficiency, English Language Literature (ELL).