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The Use of Postwar American Jewish Literature in ELT

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ABSTRACT

This diploma thesis deals with the use of American Jewish literature in English Language Teaching (ELT). The theoretical part deals with the description of crucial terms, providing context to American Jewish literature as well as an overview of selected authors and the analysis of their works. The practical part deals with implementation of mentioned literature in the classroom setting and analyses it with regards to the ELT factors mentioned in the theoretical part. Based on the review of the lesson plans created, American Jewish literature would help to enhance cognitive and creative skills of ELT learners.

ABSTRAKT

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá použitím americké židovské literatury ve výuce anglického jazyka (ELT). Teoretická část se zabývá popisem klíčových pojmů, poskytnutím kontextu americké židovské literatury, stejně jako přehledem vybraných autorů a analýzou jejich děl. Praktická část se zabývá implementací zmíněné literatury ve třídním prostředí a analyzuje ji s ohledem na faktory ELT uvedené v teoretické části. Na základě přezkumu vytvořených výukových plánů by americká židovská literatura pomohla zlepšit kognitivní a kreativní dovednosti studentů ELT.

Introduction

In the world of education, the integration of literature holds an overlooked presence within the classrooms. Likewise underestimated, the American Jewish literature offers a rich linguistic resource, while introducing the reader to its affluent culture and history. Unfortunately, is not seen as usable for its rather complex language and elaborate themes of historical issues and social problems. The topic of this thesis was chosen mainly due to the mentioned variety of themes and cultural richness.

Because of the complexity, many of the educators incorporating literature into the classrooms choose to use children's literature, or literature not including sensitive topics, such as war, social issues and race. The thesis aims to bridge this gap by including such topics in the English language teaching classroom setting in a way that is palatable for young learners. The aim is to also design lesson plans that delve into the world of religious diversity without influencing their opinions on the matter, while introducing the students to the culture and history of American Jews and also foster a positive outlook towards literature in general.

The first chapter delves into the world of the use of literature in ELT, reflecting on its history, modern methodological approaches focusing on the enhancement of skills in regards of the students and familiarizes the reader with its benefits and drawbacks. The second chapter briefly establishes Judaism into the context of the cultural significance that is later dissected in the third chapter, which deals with the Jewish Americans in American history, their significance, as well as their struggles connected to their identity.

Later chapters shift its focus to the history of the American Jewish literature, as well as to the themes mainly used in the stories and the contemporary topics explored by modern American Jewish writers. The following two chapters introduce the authors Bernard Malamud and Saul Bellow, whose works are later used in the practical part. The two chapters outline their lives, as well as provide an analysis of selected works later used in the practical part.

In the practical part, the thesis introduces and analyses several lesson planes developed to integrate Postwar American Jewish Literature into English Language Teaching. Each lesson plan is evaluated by using a SWOT analysis, which reflects on its strengths, weaknesses opportunities, and strengths, followed by modifications proposed. The main focus of the practical part is to propose the lesson plans and their effectivity in the classroom, focusing mainly on reading comprehension while also improving other aspects of language learning

process. At last, the thesis summarizes the findings proposed and recapitulates the benefits and drawbacks of said lesson plans.

1. The Use of Literature in ELT

This chapter will discuss the integration of literature within English Language Teaching (ELT), the history of ELT and methodological approaches used within teaching literature. It outlines ways literature can be used and explores its benefits and drawbacks.

The Cambridge Dictionary defines *literature* as “*written artistic works, especially those with a high and lasting artistic value*”. John McRae in his book *Literature with a small ‘l’* argues that the “*word (literary) text has taken on many interpretations and can have various meanings*” (1991, p.1). Contrary to a common misconception, literature does not only include classic novels and poetry collection. Literature is present in our daily lives in many shapes, whether we are reading newspapers, maps, food recipes, and such (Carter, 1997). Acknowledgment of this duality of literature could help the learners help to stimulate their creative linguistic abilities. This is proposed by Donnerstag, who argues that many students should not only be able to understand the practical purpose of the language, but also try to use literature in a way that enhances all resourcefully, as they may contrarily struggle to use the language in a creative approach when not done so (Donnerstag, 1996, p.1).

Even though literature is most arguably an important part of the learning process, most educators often struggle with the integration of literature into language teaching. Literature is not often addressed as an integrable part of the curriculum, which sabotages the relationship of children with literature since an early age. Although literature is a crucial part of developing the four basic skills of writing, reading, speaking and listening, in the past the ELT educators regarded literature only as an inferior tool usable in language teaching (Choudhary, 2016, p. 1-2).

There is also a need to differentiate between the use of literature as a resource for successful learning process and the study of literature. The study of literature is complex, and requires an academic setting for facilitating an environment, where students can dissect literary texts and grasp various concepts they can utilize to showcase their competence in the field, including historical and cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, literature used in classroom aims to help students obtain a positive relationship towards literature, self-development as well as language improvement (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 3).

2. The History of Literature in ELT

The history of using literature with an intention in English Language teaching can be traced back to the Grammar-Translation method, which dominated the other language teaching methodologies in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In this method, it was the reading and writing that were highlighted, with less focus put on listening and speaking. The method was also known for inquiring less as regards to the teacher, however it added effort from the student. During this period, literature was mainly used to teaching grammar and vocabulary. Remnants of the Grammar-Translation method persist in contemporary pedagogy, as it is still used for the primary comprehension of literary texts with little to no need of speaking skills (Richards, Rodgers, 2001, p. 5-6).

It was the twentieth century that had witnessed the profession of teaching languages, and specifically through reading as a profession in a need of its own research and methodology. In 1923, a study published as the Coleman Report pinpointed the importance of reading as a main method for the introduction of words and teaching grammar. This was during the time when the US had been starting to move away from using the Direct Method, which had started in France and Europe. This method was based on multiple principles, such as emphasizing correct pronunciation, only teaching everyday vocabulary and the focus on the induction of the rules of the grammar. Although the method had gained its popularity, especially in private education, it was found rather flawed in the public education system, as it neglected to take into account the practical challenges of the classroom settings. Native or native-like fluency of the language was also essential for this method to be successful, and the educators were required not to use their native language in the classroom. However, the Direct Method had a pivotal role in the evolution of methodology of teaching foreign languages and allowed for the “methods era” to ensue (Richards, Rodgers, 2001, p. 11-13).

Although many experts might pinpoint the 20th century as a setback for the implementation of literature in language teaching, Paran in his book *Literature in Language: Teaching and learning* (2006) suggests that literature was never absent from classrooms, it was the interest in the topic by the academics that had lowered (Maley, 1989, as quoted by Paran). Especially in the age of evolving technologies, we could pinpoint the lack of interest towards classic literature towards the innovation of technological devices, and especially in the beginning of its evolution may had shifted its focus on it. As argued by Widdowson (quoted by Paran) (1985, p. 180), “*literature had all but been purged from the program*”. It had been only

in the late 80s' when Carter and Long sparked an interest in the study of literature, resulting in the comeback of methodology handbooks, articles and journals (Paran, p.1).

While we can assume that with the current rise of technology the use of literature as a primary goal is at an all-time low, however, many educators do not cease to pursue the quest for the reappearance of literary texts in class. As of currently, many studies have been done to provide a justification for using literature in modern classroom, one of them being a 2019 review that found that in 9 out of 13 studies, literature helped the adolescent students to gain introspective skills and improved their social skills in terms of understanding global issues, including immigration and gender issues (Schrijvers et al., 2019, p. 33).

2.1 Methodological Approaches to Teaching Literature in ELT

For any educational topic to have meaning, the educator needs to know the aims and properly apply them. *“For literature to matter in language in education it has to have an aim – only then can it be integrated successfully”* (Tasneen, 2010, pp. 176-177). Carter and Long (1991, p. 2-3) categorize three main approaches for the teaching of literature into models, which are connected to particular teaching methods. These models justify the use of literature in the classroom and propose a higher meaning to them.

The cultural model - Educators in this model highlight the impact of literature in culture. This model empowers pupil's comprehension and appreciation of various cultures, distinct from the students' own. Within this model, literature is seen as a tool that enables expression of different ideas throughout a historical era. The cultural model is connected to a more educator-centered approach, in which the educator's primarily focus is to prioritize engaging in an in-depth analysis of a specific piece of literary work.

The language model – The proponents of this approach argue that one of the main reasons for bringing literature into classroom is its potential for promoting language development. However, such belief undermines the character of language and literature, as this may result in educators focusing on particular vocabulary or language structures and can demotivate the pupil's enthusiasm for literature. Instead, the educator's main focus should be to connect students with a more nuanced and diverse creative applications of the language. The advocates of this model suggest the language being a literary medium, meaning the higher student's proficiency in reading, the better they will engage with a literary text as literature.

The personal growth model - The aim of the educator in the personal growth model of literature teaching is to make the students become involved in the process of reading literary

texts. This model also disallows the usage of exams, as the students' involvement cannot be measured. For the educator, the most important outcome of this model is a positive outlook on literature beyond the classroom throughout the student's life. By guiding the students to engage with literature more, the students flourish both as individuals and in human and institution relations. For this model to be successful, the educator needs to select texts which the students are able to interpret and in which they can engage imaginatively, resulting in further devotion to the studies of literature. This approach is anti-analytic and does not rely on heavy information-based texts.

In the world of literary analysis for language instruction, two methodologies stand out: the reader-response approach and the language-based approach.

The reader-response approach is focused on the reader's role while taking a process-oriented stance in interpreting literature. The goal is to motivate pupils to be able to use their previous intellectual and emotional encounters when engaging with text. By linking literature to individual experiences, this approach simplifies it and make it more accessible for pupils. This approach is described by Rosenblatt's theory of pupils responding uniquely according to their personality and knowledge. An example of the use of the reader-response method can be reading a poem out loud or simply just reading a literary text, while the main emphasis is put on the emotional response of the pupil.

On the other hand, the language-based approach prioritizes comprehension of the language within literature as fundamental for language learners. It serves as a starting point for all types of learners and one of the conditions of this approach is the need of various instructional activities build on improving vocabulary and understanding the literary text. The teacher needs to clarify technical terms, provide instructions and guidance to pupils, who need it. It is also crucial for the teacher not to manipulate the pupil's interpretations of the text, as this approach relays heavily on the pupil's own comprehension and analysis of literature. This approach is often favored by teachers, due to the interest in literature it deepens in pupils, while improving their English (Choudhary, 2016, p. 3-4).

2.2 Benefits and Drawbacks of Using Literature in ELT

One of the most crucial benefits can be seen when stimulating learners to think creatively, as understanding a text involves a process of inquiry. Learners need to ask questions, make predictions, form hypotheses, all analytical processes that are useful beyond the language classroom (Rogers, 1983, p. 46). The important part of this process is not for the learners to

come to a certain “correct” conclusion, but rather the processes that are behind it. Yet, they still must understand that although the perspective might change, it is crucial to reference how they came to that conclusion by referencing within the given text (McRae, 1991, p. 98).

As already mentioned, literature provides the opportunity for the learner to improve in all the four basic skills of language, which is considered one of the biggest benefits. Having the pupils discuss a literary text and share their opinions offers them development in speaking abilities. To improve listening skills, teacher can play the pupils audio versions of the text, which enables them to align their speaking style to the norms of pronunciation. When having the pupils write a short story, or for example think of an ending to an unfinished text, literature also serves as good foundation for practicing writing skills. When it comes to reading abilities, literature can help the pupils help to understanding core concepts, gain valuable information and search for particular details, as well as skimming (going quickly through text), which can be useful in other subjects as well. Other aspects mentioned, such as speaking abilities, writing abilities and speaking in groups can also be applied in other subjects (Khatib, Rezaei & Derakhshan, 2011).

Literature, as already mentioned, can serve as a multifaceted gateway to understanding the background of a specific culture. Beyond presenting a superficial depiction of a culture, it provides invaluable insight into how people in society might feel and think. Moreover, literature serves as a lens which through students can explore the nuances of a culture beyond its surface characteristics and for that, there is a need for the students to differentiate between the real world and the literary text. Pupils might mistakenly think that a given literary work gives a complete picture of society, while in reality, there are many complex layers of what a culture can encompass. It is crucial to understand that a certain text might give only the highlights of the culture, and what is more, could only pinpoint positive aspects of that society, and teachers need to understand how big of an impact it can impose when bringing dominant values and viewpoints into the classroom (Lazar, p. 16-17).

There might be some disadvantages to using literature in ELT too. Some pupils simply might not be interested in reading or storytelling, and if they are, there is still a chance the pupil might not grasp the concept of what the book is about, or its main message. That is why it is crucial for a teacher to pick an appropriate book, or to at least adjust the story to the pupil’s skill level and age. Some of the factors to consider include is the lexical difficulty, grammar and mentions of historical and political references. If the teacher does plan to include foreign concepts to the pupils, it is helpful to explain them beforehand (Van, 2009, p. 2).

Some assignments might also take more than one lesson, their completion varying upon individual student needs, which might make it challenging to estimate the amount of time required for the tasks. Some groups of students might not want to cooperate with each other, and thus the end result might be different due to such factors, such as relationships within the classroom, pupil's current mood and family background. There is also always the chance of the pupils simply not liking the task and them not willing to participate in it, which could result in a difficult position for the educator, as they might not want to force the pupil into doing the task and connecting literature to a negative experience.

To conclude, literature has a great potential to be used in classrooms, as it broadens cultural knowledge, improves language skills and creative thinking that is useful in daily life. However, it is rather time consuming and should be used sparingly and with an intention. The key factor is to select a text that can captivate learners and evoke strong, positive reactions and personal involvement. While the complexity of the language matters, it should not be taken into consideration as a sole determinant, but the main interest should be placed on relevance and appeal (Collie, Slater, 1988, p. 6-7).

3. Judaism

The following chapter will describe the religion of Judaism and its main traditions, history, and customs. The religion is rooted in historical teaching and covers a broad area of complex faith and identity. Being one of the oldest known religions, it possesses a rich historical background, and the members of the Jewish community can be found all over the world.

Judaism can be understood in 2 ways – as a culture, connecting all the people of Jewish heritage, regardless of if they do choose to believe in the Jewish God, or as a religion (Lancaster, 2000, p. 10). The religion, as well as the culture is a crucial part of the Jewish heritage and plays a major part in the literary works later dissected as some of the traditions are still projected in modern times and cultural gatherings, although not in its original state.

In Judaism, the father of the religion is considered Abraham, referred to as the patriarch of the faith and is celebrated for his devotion to God. Moses is seen as the main prophet, closing the spiritual bridge between the Jewish people and God. Moses is crucial for bringing the Israeli nation, which was at that time in the slavery of the Egyptians, to a sacred land, Jerusalem. During this 40-year long journey, called the Exodus, the main commandments and orders related to the religion were presented to Moses by God. This historical event is reflected in one of the most important holidays of the religion, in the Passover festival and is a representation of freedom and the end of slavery for the Jewish people (Keene, 2003, p. 40).

Judaism, as well as other religions, goes by scriptures, the most important being Tanach, which is consisted of three parts, the Torah (the Pentateuch), Nevi'im (Prophets) and Ketuvim (Writings). Torah is supposed to exist before the creation of the world and is made of five books attributed to Moses - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy (Keene, 2003, p. 44), each providing significance within the Jewish religion. The place of worship in Judaism is synagogue, and the history of this sacred institution is dated back to the 6th century B.C, where Jews were forced out of the Jerusalem temples, therefore were compelled to create their own place of worship, communal celebration and study without the fear of persecution. In every synagogue is a shrine facing Jerusalem, the main center of the religion (Keene, 2003, p. 45).

As already mentioned, an emphasis on the traditions, and the acts are often seen as the most important part in the Jewish religion. Judaism encompasses many holidays and days of the week revolving around the religion. For example, the day of Sabbath is a sacred day, in which all the believers should cease all physical activity and instead should be devoted to activities that

enrich the Jewish people in the area of Judaism (Lancaster, 2000, p. 26). The day represents the 6 days of creation of the world, followed by the 7th day of rest, the Sabbath. As opposed to the Christians, who recognize the day of rest on Sundays, for Jews the sacred day starts with the Friday sunset and ends on the night of Saturday, when the youngest person in the household puts out a candle lighted up before the start of the Sabbath, with wine. During Sabbath, items should not be carried out of their homes, but many Jews try to adjust this by proclaiming the whole town as their home, therefore being able to carry items. The religion followers are also expected to go to a Saturday morning worship in a synagogue on a Sabbath (Keene, 2003, p. 48-49).

Among the traditions, two of them are closely related to the becoming of a man. Those include the circumcision ceremony (brit mila) of baby boys, which was in the past done by the father of the child. As the boys reach the milestone of 13, they celebrate another milestone, the bar micva. Bar micva is a celebration of young boys becoming men and responsible for their actions before God. The celebrations include reading from Torah, praying and such. Overall, in matters of appearance and physical changes, the Jewish religion is very enriched with its traditions, one notable symbol is wearing the traditional kippah, a small circular cap, which serves as the spiritual connection to God, usually worn by men (Keene, p. 54-55).

The religion also follows food rules. Possibly the most famous, the rule of eating kosher, is the belief that food should be prepared a certain way. For example, meat and dairy products have to be handled in specific bowls without touching each other. Other rule is that eating vegetables, fruit, nuts and meat is acceptable as long as the meat is coming from animals who have split hooves. This means that pork, as well as some types of birds are prohibited to eat when following the Jewish religion (Keene, 2003, p. 50).

To conclude, Judaism is not only a religious practice, but also a cultural heritage, continuing to grow within the last centuries. With its possession of numerous festivals, holidays, customs and traditions, it is only understandable that the richness of the religion is bound to be projected throughout literary texts of Jewish authors. As Judaism is one of the oldest known religions, it has expanded beyond written customs, but is reflected in the identity of the Jewish people.

4. Jewish Americans in American history

This chapter deals with the American Jewish history and its influence on shaping literature within its unique context. The Jewish community is quite dispersed throughout the world and each country in which it has assimilated in was brought a plethora of culture enrichment, significantly influencing the trajectory of the United States history as we know it. With this journey of assimilation of various cultural backgrounds in the United States naturally comes the struggle, and among these narratives, the Jewish experience being one of the most profound and impactful in this area. The American Jewish community might have faced different struggles from the European one, and it is crucial to take the fact into consideration to fully understand the meaning behind the literary texts.

Early Jewish settlers in the United States arrived in New Amsterdam around the early 1650s, but records only emerge from the 1680s. While the ghettos and uproars were not present in colonial America, acts of vandalism on the Jewish community were a common occurrence, with violation mostly happening at Jewish cemeteries (Norwood, Pollack, 2007, p. 9-10). One of the earliest immigrant groups were Sephardim Jews from Portugal in the 1720s (Sephardic has expanded beyond its historical terms, today encompassing all non-Ashkenazi Jews), with the intention of escaping persecution during the Inquisition and held influence until the mid-1800s. The Sephardim were joined by Jewish settlers of Mizrahi and Romaniote origin. With the founding of the Israeli state, refugees from Arab and Muslim lands joined the United States (Norwood, Pollack, 2007, p. 1).

While the main idea of antisemitic thoughts is the misconception of the Jewish wealthiness, most Jewish individuals worked in retail, trade etc. The cultural assimilation happened quicker than in European countries, with Jewish Americans pioneering in the area of academic achievements, being one of the first to establish classes in university institutions such as Yale and West point in the early 1800s and founding of medical societies in many of the states (Norwood, Pollack, 2007, p. 16). Unlike their European counterparts, they also did not dress in the orthodox attire or maintain facial hair, already marking the differentiation of religious traditions across the continents (Norwood, Pollack, 2007, p. 17).

By the early 20th century, another branch of Jewish immigrants came from the area of eastern Europe, and its members differed from the other immigrants both in the area of economics and the traditional religion. Due to the economical underdevelopment, this Jewish population focused on inhabiting the area of the North of the United States, with New York

standing out as a focal point. Nearly 40 % of the Jewish immigrant men chose the path of self-employment, with the importance of passing down businesses for the younger generation, a trend prevailing to the second generation of Jewish immigrants. Jewish women were valued as homeworkers, although they would often pursue less-demanding jobs before starting a family, an important feature of the Jewish community (Norwood, Pollack, 2007, p. 62-63).

During the World War II, with arguably the biggest antisemitic tragedy happening in Europe, more than half a million of Jewish people served in the military of the United States in all departments. Thousands of European Jews immigrated during this time to escape the Holocaust, contributing to the daily life of American population with their traditions and religion. After the end of the World War II, the Jews started to move from big cities to much calmer areas of the suburbs, while also immigrating from the East area of the United States to sunnier states, such as California (Sarna, Golden, 2000).

The second half of the 20th century was the breaking point of defining the Jewish persona. Many celebrities, including Marylin Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor and Sammy Davis Jr. converted to Judaism, which shifted the public's opinion towards it. This was not the only impulse in popular culture – the dramatization of the Holocaust event through cinema shed a light on the Jewish struggle in a way that could be palatable to the general public. The story of a young Jewish girl Anne Frank, who spent a considerable amount of the war hidden in an attic, whose fate tragically ended in a concentration camp moved the American population through cinema, as well as Broadway shows and radio broadcasting. It is considered one of the first literary mentions of the fates of individuals in the holocaust. Another holocaust movies, such as Judgement at Nuremberg made their way into the movie theaters, which raised the political consciousness towards the existence of Israel as well, and the fates of believers of Judaism (Fishbane, Sarna, 2011, pp. 150-151).

Even the term “The Melting Pot”, famously used to describe the variety of racial backgrounds integrating the American population, mostly due to immigration from all the parts of the world, is a term originating from the American Jewish culture. The term was coined in the 1908 play *The Melting Pot*, its story revolving around a Jewish American love story and the duality of both cultures, ending in a speech which sings praise to the American variety of culture and nationality (Norwood, Pollack, 2007, p. 51).

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the American history is deeply intertwined with the Jewish population, creating a sense of their own identity and culture while influencing each

other. Despite facing challenges, such as the Holocaust, Jews quickly assimilated and created a new generation of American Jews. We cannot deny that through their history and their tragical fate, the Jews have left an undeniable mark on the history of the United States of America.

5. Postwar American Jewish Literature

The following chapter examines the role of Jewish American literature in shaping the landscape of the history of the United States, touching on the origins, struggles and triumphs the literary community has dealt with in the context of the evolution of the nation. It deals with its history, important figures, its development, and future prospects.

5.1.1 History of American Jewish Literature

American Jewish literature, although considered popular across academia and the Jewish environment, has faced many obstacles throughout the years. The literary field is often outshined by more popular and specific Jewish narratives, such as the Holocaust literature and Yiddish Hebrew literature. Many experts explain this due to the inability of American Jewish literature to have an impact on literature as whole, or the fact that it does not significantly differ from other minority literature fields (Schreier, 2020, p. 36-37). This could, however, be attributed to the historical background, that slowed down the development of the genre, such as the escalation of antisemitism into Holocaust.

The beginnings of American Jewish literature can be traced back to the works of Sholom Aleichem, which were published in Yiddish in the 1910s. His works depicted the lives of ordinary, poor Jews and were distinctive for its wise humour that balanced the existential issues the characters faced (Ulmanová, 2018, p. 16-17). Later literature of Jewish writers in the United States emerging in the 1930s continued the traditions of naturalism. The Although the 1930s Jewish American writers helped to evolve the American novel, their success was mostly short-lived, and only in the 1940s did the critique of antisemitism became a criteria of a distinctive Jewish writing style, with the writers being able to express their identity (p. 46).

The American Jewish literature has only seen its “breakthrough” in the 1950s, with writers such as Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Philip Roth publishing their works concerning the issues that the Jewish American population encounters. The topic being even more popular in the 1960s, Alfred Kazin’s 1966 essay depicted a significant shift, where Jewishness became fashionable in American literature, as opposed to the earlier decades, where it was associated with strangeness in a rather negative sense. The 1970s saw the increase of popularity of the World War II topic, which gave the authors a broader area of audience, shifting from the narrative of ethnicity (Ulmanová, 2018, p. 46-47).

“The period from the late 1940s to the early 1970s was one in which Jews became dominant voices in American literature. While American Jews, in general, were prospering financially and in a number of industries, so too in literature, as critics and fiction writers, Jews achieved extraordinary critical and commercial success” (Lambert, 2015). Experts propose that throughout the breakthrough, it was the United States that were catching up to the Jewish experience, rather than the writers accommodating their style towards the trends in literature (Neusner, 1964, p. 92-94).

During this later period, a notable shift emerged in literature characterized by the incorporation of Jewish characters in the novels of non-Jewish writers – a departure from the conventional narrative landscape. For example, the Pulitzer winning author John Updike creating a Jewish protagonist Henry Bech, which could be considered as an acknowledgement or an homage to the Jewish community. Moreover, Robert Lowell, an American poet remarked on the plenty conversations between New York Jews being of distinctive nature, their intellectuality being unmatched to other American groups, creating a favorable perception of the Jewish community within the broader cultural landscape (Neusner, 1964, p. 51-52).

As of the 21st century, a new wave of Jewish American authors has been impacting the writing scene, such as Jonathan Lethem, Boris Fishman, Lev Raphael, Nathan Englander and others. These writers have been exploring many themes of the Jewish-American culture, such as in Fishman’s work depicting the post-Soviet influence on the New York Jewish community, Raphael’s intersection of queer and Jewish identities, which can be considered a theme not thoroughly explored in the previous decades. Popular themes also include recent issues, such as the complexities of Israeli American citizenship, the emergence of writers from the American Hasidic tradition, as well as the continuation of the Holocaust narrative from the perspective of the family of the survivors (O’Brien, Witcombe, 2018).

To conclude, the American Jewish literature has faced its obstacles throughout the past decades, and we can argue that because of this fact, there are many topics the authors continue to recognize. The literature has arguably developed due to the environment and conditions the immigrant Jewish people were put into, while facing the challenges. As for the future, there are many American Jewish authors with contemporary topics to be explored, while keeping the legacy of the literature.

6. The Literary Works of Bernard Malamud

This chapter delves into the literary contributions of Bernard Malamud, his life events and pivotal moments that influenced his literary works. The chapter also includes an analysis of selected works, which are later used in the practical part.

6.1 Biography

Bernard Malamud, a prominent figure within the American Jewish literature movement, was born in Brooklyn, New York, USA on the 26th of April 1914 to Russian immigrant parents coming from a low-income background. Throughout his career, Malamud would often mention how his parents experience helped shaping his outlook on the world when writing (Sindhu, 2022). Malamud was inclined to reading from a tender age of 9 due to contracting pneumonia that confined him to extended periods of convalescence, leaving him with considerable time period to pursue the hobby. Even in his youthful years, Malamud started crafting short stories in young childhood and later seeking counseling from his trusted teacher concerning his writing to refine his literary skills (Roth, 1995, p. 163).

Malamud attended the City College of New York from 1932 to 1936, in 1942 finishing his studies at the Columbia University, which earned him a master's degree. The same year, Malamud moved with his Italian catholic wife into Greenwich Village (Ulmanová, 2018, p. 39). First starting to write stories while teaching night classes at Harlem High School and his alma mater, Erasmus Hall High School, he again moved and started his career at Oregon State University in 1949, where he would continue working at for the next 12 years, while writing many of his works at this position (Helterman, 1985, p. 1).

Malamud embarked on his writing journey in the 1940s, while initially writing stories to non-commercial magazines without any financial compensation (Mahboobi, 2019, p. 36). Publishing his first work *The Natural* in 1952, a witty play on a baseball romance, he later evolved into more serious topics concerning Jewish identity in his work *The Assistant* (1958), and a collection of stories called *The Magic Barrel*, which earned him a National Book Award the following year (Helterman, 1985, p. 1-2). The last one was published during his 12 years of teaching at the Oregon State University being *A New Life* (1961). In 1961, Malamud became a professor at the Bennington College in Vermont, during his 20 years of teaching there he would publish *Idiots First* (1963), another story collection, *The Fixer* (1966), which earned him another National Book Award and his only Pulitzer Prize and other critically acclaimed works (The New York Times, 1986).

Although Malamud was of a Jewish descent, he considered himself an agnostic (Abraham, 2011, p. 146). When asked about his background, Malamud said: *"Jewishness is important to me, but I don't consider myself only a Jewish writer. I have interests beyond that, and I feel I'm writing for all men,"* even mentioning that he found the label of a "Jewish writer" inadequate and limiting, especially since his themes and narratives resonated with a broader, diverse audience. Malamud passed away March 18th, 1986, Manhattan, New York (The New York Times, 1986).

6.1.1 The Analysis of Selected works

The following chapter will dissect selected works of Bernard Malamud, with consideration to American Jewish culture, immigrant culture in the United States of America and the important topics that resonated with the population of minority heritage.

The characters in Malamud's work often appear as a comedic relief. They are either lower or middle class and are on numerous occasions at the bottom of the hierarchy ladder. Malamud himself described his characters as *"someone who fears his fate, is caught up in it, yet manages to outrun it. He's the subject and object of laugh and pity"* (Helterman, 1985, p. 2). Although they might seem to only possess humorous purpose on the surface of Malamud's novels, they often go through a psychological development and as quoted by Malamud himself, the hardships are what makes the characters distinguished. *"A bad reading of my work would indicate that I'm writing about losers. That would be a very bad reading. One of my most important themes is a man's hidden strength. I am very much interested in the resources of the spirit, the strength people don't know they have until they are confronted with a crisis"* (Malamud, 1964), Malamud said for an interview with National Observer.

As already mentioned, the main protagonists in Malamud's works are predominantly men, who seem to go through substantial character evolution, a narrative contrasted by the static depiction of the female characters. In most of Malamud's novels, the female characters serve as passive objects who lack any sort of depth that would contribute to the story other than mirror the failure in the aspirations of the male characters and being a sexual object (Lyons, 1999, p. 1-3).

What many of Malamud's characters have in common is the attempt to renounce the Jewish traditions, but after doing so, finding no satisfaction in their decision and realizing the importance of the collective heritage (Xiang, 2018). Malamud himself stated that he writes for all men, however, his characters are mostly of Jewish descent, as he wanted to depict their

suffering and history. In his novel, *The Fixer*, the main character Yakov Bok, who is a Jewish handyman, is fighting for justice after being falsely accused of a crime he did not commit. Yakov ponders whether his sufferings were brought on him because he is a Jew: “*If I weren’t a Jew, there’d be no crime*” (Malamud, p. 158). While knowing there might be a racial prejudice, he does not cease his quest for vindication against the system. This character embodies an essence of a Jewish persona, as envisioned by Malamud – he is the portrayal of morality and Jewish heroism, without conforming to racial stereotypes (Mahboobi, Sajjad, 2019).

6.1.2 The Tenants

The Tenants is an introspective novel set in New York during the 1970’s. The main character, Harry Lesser, is a middle-aged Jew, who is an established writer living in a rather disparaged apartment. Lesser embodies limited understanding in his Jewish identity and his connection to his heritage remains superficial. Lesser only uses it when confronted with bigotry, for example, when with a character insults Jews from an economic viewpoint, he states his Jewishness as a fact to inform the other person who is not aware of it.

The novel starts when a new tenant moves into the building Harry occupies – an African American writer by the name of Willie Spearmint, who by coincidence is also an aspiring writer. While Harry is struggling to come with new topics to depict in his writing, Willie is confident in his writing skills, which both intrigues and intimidates Harry. Willie perceives Blacks as the new chosen people, which is a reference to the idea of Jewish people being chosen by God as special, but not in a morally superior sense to the old meaning. Instead, he sees this title as a symbol of status (Abramson, 1994, p. 152).

The two eventually become friends, and Willie introduces his white girlfriend Irene to Harry, who develops an affection for her, although it remains uncertain whether it is for her as an individual or for the idealized image he perceives. This ambiguity can be seen in Irene’s own introspection as she herself suggests this, saying “*Do you want to save me from a miserable life with a black man, an ex-criminal?*” (Malamud, p. 108) when Harry confesses to being jealous of her relationship with the African American. Willie dedicates an increasing amount of time every day to improve his literary work, and as of that his relationship with Irene deteriorates.

The novel ends with three possible endings, one of them, perhaps the only positive one, being an insight into weddings of Irene and Willie and Harry and Mary, which could be a metaphor for the hopefulness of racial harmony, as the couples married are of different races.

In the second ending, Harry and Willie engage in a violent confrontation, where Harry strikes Willie with an ax and Willie ends up castrating Willie. Both of those endings end up being imaginary. The third ending, and the most probable one, offers closure with the main protagonist's mutual inability to engage in writing, and both of the main protagonists tragically resort to the use of racial slurs in their conversation in the end of the novel. The three endings could very well symbolize something extending beyond the narrative, a possible approaches to treating religious or racial conflicts – either to forgive and move on, perpetuate hostility and hatred or ignore (Ghanbarinajjar, 2013, p.7).

In this book, Malamud touches on the sensitive and in that time, rather unusual and controversial topic of racism between two minorities. Malamud perfectly captures the passive aggressive racism intertwined into the exchanges between both protagonists, illustrating the subtle yet cutting insults. The novel perfectly depicts the dynamic cultural change and landscape of New York in the 60's, the main characters being two writers who live in the same building, a Jew and an African American. This dynamic is not far from the real life, especially in urban areas - James Pawley, an Urban League director in New Jersey observed that landlords raised rents without improving the building, leading to a transition from Jewish to African American renters. Though Pawley attributed the conflict more to class differences than racial or religious ones, he urged Kellner to address these issues (Dollinger, 2018, pp. 32-33).

Their relationship represents the gradual shifting dynamics of the city – while their friendship deteriorates, we could conclude that Harry represents the hardship of not being to adapt to the changes that Willie embodies. As in Malamud's previous novels, there is the idea of the American dream and how the chase of it can destroy an individual. Within the novel also lays the idea that both characters battle their own racial struggles and prejudices but are so engrossed in the idea of how the world perceives them, they disregard the fact share such struggles. A love interest also plays a part in their feud – the female character is a symbol of their need to outdo each other, and in the end, her fate in one of the possible endings serves a tragic closure to the writer's destructive relationship.

6.1.2.1 The Magic Barrel

The Magic Barrel and Other Stories is a collection comprising of 13 short stories, concluding the literary work with the titular piece, *The Magic Barrel*, as its final entry. The literary work is filled with references to the Jewish community and tells stories of characters both from the United States, as well as Europe, thereby offering a diverse panorama of landscapes. Amidst this narrative, the collection provides a humorous retelling of societal issues

and exploration of the human condition. The following pages will dissect two of the 13 stories, both of them used in the practical part. The stories were selected for the lesson plans because of their rather short nature and inclusion of the Jewish cultural background.

The opening story *The First Seven Years* is set in the 1940's New York. A Polish Jew called Feld, who is a shoemaker, is trying to find a potential suitor for his daughter, Miriam. When a young man called Max visits his shop, Feld sees an opportunity for arranging a date for her and the college student Max, as he believes his daughter would live an easier life with a man of higher education. However, what he is not aware of, that his assistant, a Holocaust survivor called Sobel has been courting his daughter, providing her books. However, the father does not see Sobel as a man worthy of his daughter due to the age difference and his financial situation. Sobel, out of jealousy, quits working at the shop, which leaves Feld stunned, as he considered him a valuable worker. This leaves Feld with no other choice but to hire a new one, who ends up committing a theft in the shop, which results in giving the old shoemaker a heart attack. Miriam goes on dates with Max, who she is disappointed to learn is materialistic, stating: "He has no soul. He's only interested in things" (Malamud, p. 8).

Sometime later, the father comes to terms with the idea of Sobel courting his daughter, as Sobel confesses his feelings to him. Though unvoiced to Miriam, Sobel confidently expresses his beliefs that Miriam is aware of his feeling, stating: "*How does she know?*" Sobel said, "*because she knows. She knows who I am and what is in my heart*" (Malamud, p.11). This exchange reflects that in the relationship is a connection beyond words, where unexpressed feelings are acknowledged between Sobel and Miriam. Initially, the father calls Sobel ugly and unworthy of his daughter, but upon reflection realizes that his aversion is not towards Sobel himself but rather the life his daughter would experience with him. Feld always wanted a better life for his child and recognizes his own reflection in Sobel's circumstances. Ultimately, he says to Sobel to wait 2 more years until his daughter reaches the age of 21, and the Holocaust survivor is more than willing to wait, despite the absence of prospect of achieving any relationship (p. 11-12).

This short story is quiet filled with the subtle references to Jewish cultural norms – quite obvious is the idea of arranged marriage and the societal expectation for a husband to meet certain financial standard, as well the parental imposition of aspirations onto their children. The stereotype regarding the Jewish emphasis on education surfaces, notably portrayed through the father's admiration for the student Max, just for the fact that he is an educated man and that suggests he would provide a better future for Miriam than the father ever could as a mere

shoemaker. Furthermore, an allusion to the Holocaust emerges, as Sobel, a highly capable shoemaker, would be better paid with a different employer, but stays loyal to Feld, because he is afraid to go through discrimination at a different workplace unwelcoming to immigrants, hinting at the antisemitism prevalent within the historical events.

The Magic Barrel is another short story related to the idea of arranged marriage. In this story, a man called Leo Finkel, who is a student of six years hires a professional matchmaker, as he is desperate for the idea of having a romantic partner and a potential wife, but solely for the idea of becoming closer to God and a better rabbi with more work prospects. The man working to find him a suitor, Salzman, presents Leo with many cards depicting the woman he supposes would be a good match for him. During one of their conversation, Leo becomes embarrassed of hiring Salzman, and asks him to leave (p. 160).

Salzman, however does not cease the pursuit of finding a match, and one night showcases Leo a Lily Hirschorn, a teacher, who Leo finds interesting enough to ask out on an official date. During a conversation with Lily, Leo realizes that his spiritual consciousness is not as strong as it should be, grasping the fact that his relationship with God is rather negative than positive and that earns him a refusal from Lily. Because of this, Leo recognizes his existential crisis and contemplates leaving his religious studies because of it (p. 164-165). He rejects that thought, but again, gives up on the idea of a matchmaker and eventually fires Salzman, who despite of Leo dismissing him leaves an envelope of women he thinks could be potential suitors for Leo in his apartment (p. 167).

When Leo looks into the envelope after some time, he not only finds 6 pictures of women who he deems unattractive, but a 7th picture of a woman he instantly falls in love with (p. 168). He seeks Salzman in the pursuit of finding the identity of the woman and to his shock, learns that the woman on the picture is Salzman's daughter, Stella, who we discover has been disowned as a punishment, however, we do not learn which Jewish tradition has been broken on her part (p. 171). Leo begs Salzman for a meeting with his daughter, who eventually gives in, which gives Leo the idea that it was Salzman's intention to court his daughter from the start. The short story ends with the two young people meeting, while Salzman is watching them, uttering a prayer, Kaddish, for the dead, suggesting that the sin Stella is responsible of has a great merit (p. 172).

The last story later used in the lesson plans is a short story called *The Mourners*. *The Mourners* introduces us to the character of Kessler, an old egg candler. Kessler lives in an

apartment building on the East Side, New York, and while living in such a busy city, he is a lonesome character. In his youth, he abandoned his family and to this day faces the consequences of his actions. Another factor for his loneliness is that none of the other tenants seem to be fond of Kessler, with, in the beginning, the exception of Ignace, a janitor, who sometimes comes to Kessler's apartment to play cards with him. When he repeatedly loses, he blames his losing strike on Kessler and his distracting apartment, that is, considering to him, filled with trash and unpleasable smells. This argument later results in Ignace complaining to the landlord, Gruber, about Kessler's behavior, and the landlord issues Kessler a notice of eviction (p. 13-14).

Kessler does not take the notice pleasantly and continues to pay his rent, which further angers Ignace. He again complains to the landlord, who knocks on Kessler's door, only to hear from the old man the words of desperation of not wanting to move out. This situation escalates to Kessler obtaining an official notice to appear in court, which he does not do. Unsurprisingly, not long after, the marshal appears in the apartment building, and with his two assistants, places all the furniture belonging to Kessler, on the street, later even throwing out Kessler on the street in a cold winter. The motionless of Kessler among his belongings gains a notice from Kessler's Italian neighbor, and her exasperation leads to her sons to carry Kessler back, still sitting on his chair, back to his old apartment (p. 16-17).

The landlord grows to be regretful of his decision to throw out Kessler out of the apartment when he sees him emotionally destroyed. Kessler ponders in the empty apartment about his life, his decisions and maybe for the first time, see the consequences of abandoning his family. He starts praying in Yiddish for the dead, which earns a surprising reaction from the landlord, who from the guilt of throwing out a desperate man on the streets, joins him in wailing (p. 20).

7. The Literary Works of Saul Bellow

This chapter will introduce the life and literary works of Saul Bellow in the context of the Jewish American literature, as well as dissect some of his literary works later used in the practical part.

7.1.1 Biography

Saul Bellow, born Salomon Bellow, was born on June 10th, 1915, Canada, as the youngest of four children to two Russian immigrant parents. At the age of nine, Bellow's family decided to relocate to Chicago, USA. As a young man, Bellow liked spending many hours reading in libraries and was fluent in Yiddish, as well as Hebrew and French (Chicago Public Library, 2011). Bellow studied literature for 2 years at the University of Chicago, but transferred to Northwestern University, which led him to ultimately earn his bachelor's degree in anthropology and sociology. In 1937 Bellow decided to pursue an anthropology degree but quit his studies to get married and focus on his career as a writer (Roth, 1995, p. 151).

During his pursue of becoming a writer, Bellow took teaching jobs at numerous universities, including prestige ones, such as Boston University, Princeton University or New York University. Although his first two novels, *Dangling Man* (1944), *The Victim* (1947), which he published while serving in the merchant marine during World War II (Roth, 1995, p. 151), were taken well by a small group of critics, it was *The Adventures of Auggie March* (1953), that had brought him a wider success and established Bellow as one of the household names in the realm of Jewish American literature.

Bellow, intrigued by anthropology due to his previous studies, spent some time in Mexico and in 1955 even resided for a while on a Native American reservation located in Nevada, where his next big novel *Seize the Day* was born. Nonetheless, the majority of his life was spent in big cities such as Chicago and New York, which influenced his self-identity due to the immigrant culture and experience (Ulmanová, 2018, p. 54).

The Adventures of Auggie March, which depicts the daily life of a young Chicago Jew trying to chase the "American dream", and Bellow's later novels, such as *Herzog* (1964), *Humboldt's Gift* (1975), and *The Actual* (1997), have all been critically acclaimed with either a National Book Award or a Pulitzer Prize, the same year (1976) he had also won a Nobel Prize for literature (Augustyn, 2013, p. 24-25). His last novel, *Ravelstein* (2000), was published when Bellow was 85 years old and earned him a positive criticism (Chicago Public Library, 2011).

Similarly to Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow refrained from calling himself a “Jewish-American author”, stating that such a label was too limiting, as well as refraining from the orthodoxy of the religion (Cortellessa, 2018). Bellow passed away at his home age 89 on April 5th, 2005, in Massachusetts, US due to unknown causes. Bellow left behind three sons and one daughter which he shared with his fifth wife, Janis Freedman (Cooke, 2010).

7.2 The Analysis of Selected works

In this chapter, the literary works used in worksheets will be dissected. Bellow’s characters are almost entirely consisted of antiheroes – people who somehow differ and are not accepted by society. The characters are often immigrants coming from a low income socioeconomical background and are in a pursuit of trying to find their place in the world. Bellow, as well as Malamud, touches on the topic of Jewishness in the United States and being a minority quite often. The idea of the American dream is quite prevalent in his works, although what connects the characters is that contemplation of it prevails over action (Ulmanová, 2018, p. 56-57).

Most of Bellow’s books are set in a pre-war or war state of Israel during which the budding young nation was still in a state of a non-violent conflict, as Bellow was most active in his writing throughout this era. The state of Israel was putting a great amount of fate into young Jewish people emigrating from the US, although it wouldn’t be until 1999 until the first Birthright trip, which was founded to increase the Jewish identity of the youth, would be organized (Getz, Philip, 2011).

7.2.1.1 To Jerusalem and Back

Saul Bellow’s novel *To Jerusalem and Back*, published in 1976, is his deeply personal account in which Bellow travels through Jerusalem. In it, the author tries to describe the country not by painting the environment and the superficial aspects of it, but by recounting the stories and thoughts of the people living in it. Bellow in this book references his conversation with Jewish people, ranging from writers, politicians, and common people, who were born in Israel.

The book also depicts the isolation experienced by the Jerusalem Jewish community, a stark contrast to their American counterparts. Notably, there exists a notable lack of concern regarding their unfamiliarity with how the external world works. This can be seen when Bellow talks to a Hasidic individual, who is not familiar with the name of Albert Einstein and serves as an illustration of this disconnect. Bellow ponders the possibility these individuals might reside in such an isolation that they are unaware but comes to the conclusion that “*These Hasidim*

choose not to know” (p. 5). The choice to remain detached from worldly knowledge therefore appears intentional rather than accidental to Bellow, who is aware that the Hasid is judging his modern ways, while Bellow thinks of the Hasid as “*a piece of history*” (p. 5).

This novel offers an interesting insight in the retrospective opinions of the inhabitants of the area. The Jews Bellow talks to seem to agree upon the anticipation of the territorial expansion by the Arabs. Additionally, there appears the characterization of the relationship between the Muslims and Jews as a hierarchal in nature. Even in the year of writing this novel, there had been the hope of the Jewish community that with the modernization and enrichment of the Arabs, the hostility and need for wars will subsidize, although Bellow himself seems to think otherwise, offering his opinion as a “*foreigner*” (p. 113). We could argue that his political opinions in his works represent a “common folk”, mostly focused on topics concerning him particularly.

Bellow also quotes Mikhail Agursky, who believes that the influx of Russian Jews will soon occur and might have the potential to influence and reshape the character of Israeli society, going as far as saying that the Israeli state “*serves no purpose without tradition and values of religion*” (p. 81). This further proves the point of the Israeli society being divided, for example, an orthodox Jew trying to bribe an unorthodox Jew to eat kosher for the rest of his life (p. 3). This part of the novel exhibits how cultural differences and rules create a hierarchy ladder and the feeling of superiority even between individuals of the same religion, it also depicts the alienation experienced by American Jews, caught between two worlds—neither wholly belonging to the American way of life nor completely integrated into their Jewish cultural identity.

Bellow, as we can see in many of his works, does not withhold his forthright views on matters of politics, stating that he himself is not sure whether *the “Western Europe and the United States may not be under the influence of a great evil”* (p. 84), ultimately stating that the American capitalism is on its way to be eradicated, which in later decades proves not to happen. The issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is a heavily discussed topic in the past few decades with one of the biggest escalations happening in the year 2023, is also discussed.

In the story, there are many mentions of the Jewish culture and heritage, utilizable in improving one’s knowledge of the Jewish religion, such as the terms kosher, Yiddish, trephena, and Hasid (p. 3). Many Jewish holidays are mentioned as well, such as Yom Kippur (p. 7).

7.2.2 Herzog

Herzog, Bellow's sixth novel, is a story with its main character being a middle-aged Jew called Moses. The book is interesting for its format of epistolary novel – throughout it appear letters written to certain people in Moses' life. The story begins in a remote Martha's Vineyard that Herzog resorts to after the failing of his second marriage. At this moment, his letter writing starts, and he writes to all the people he feels he needs to make amends with, as well as famous people; however, Herzog never sends these letters. Rather, writing his feelings helps him realize his wrongdoings and cope emotionally with the fact that his past actions might have negative consequences on the lives of the people in his life.

Herzog then shortly after coming back to New York continues his letter writing and in Chicago, his hometown, almost makes up his mind to shoot his ex-wife Madeleine, who was unfaithful to him during their marriage with his best friend, Gersbach. Herzog suggests that he won over Madeliene because of his inheritance and because of her quit his PhD studies (p. 5). Madeliene herself told him that she "*had never loved him*", wanting to finalize the divorce (p. 9)

In this time span of the book, Herzog also fights for the custody of his daughter, June, whom he shares with Madeleine, due to receiving a concerning letter about the alleged abuse of the child from June's babysitter. His attempts fall mostly short, and in a time span spent with his daughter, the two of them get in a car accident, which changes the course of Moses' plan, as the police finds an illegally held weapon that he intended to kill Madeleine and Gersbach with (p. 297).

This crime leads to Herzog being incarcerated for a short period of time, only to be liberated from the prison by the cash bail made by his brother, Will. Will offers Herzog the opportunity for psychiatric intervention, however, Herzog refuses it, sounding offended: "*There's nothing you can do now but treat me like a jerk – a child. And that's not right.*" (p. 321-322), and as the novel draws to close we find him content in the highlands of Berkshire, not needing to write any more letters, indication the sense of inner peace in his mind found during his writing period.

Throughout the book, we find out that Herzog himself is not a considerate person. He himself cheated on his first wife, then cheated on his mistress with his second wife. While being intellectually gifted, he also often feels stuck, pondering the meaning of life.

8. Lesson Plans and their Analysis

This chapter includes the lesson plans, descriptions of activities included in them and the aims of mentioned activities. Later, the lesson plans are analyzed and a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities, threats) analysis is made. Lasty, possible modifications of the lesson plan are included in this chapter.

8.1.1 Lesson plan 1

This lesson plan (see appendix 1) includes the main prompt of letter writing and the topic of crime from the book *Herzog* by Saul Bellow. There are excerpts, and the meaning of the book was simplified, as the lesson plan was created for 7th grade students or 8th grade lower secondary students. The lesson plan requires critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as the ability to work both individually and in a group. This lesson plan was designed to take 1 teaching lesson, or 45 minutes.

The teacher presenting the lesson plan should posses background knowledge about the Jewish American community in the United States, as that is necessary for presenting the American Jewish community. The presentation can be modified to the age of the learners and their language abilities and should also connect to the topic of history. For the letter writing part, the teacher should be familiar with the language skills of the class and be able to adjust the requirements depending on them.

This lesson plan uses the cultural and personal growth model – makes the students familiar with the background of the literary text and lets them create their own story in a form of a letter, making them engaged in the process of literary creation. On the other hand, this activity also uses the language model and the emphasis on the linguistic aspect of writing sentences might have a negative impact on the relationship of learners towards literature.

8.1.2 Activity Description

Phase	Description of activity	Time	Aims of activity
1.	Introduction The teacher greets the students, introduces the topic of the following lesson, asks the students if they are	5 m	Creating a pleasant atmosphere among the students, introduction of the topic, acquiring the prerequisites by asking about previous knowledge about the topic.

	familiar with the works of Saul Bellow.		
2.	<p>Letter writing</p> <p>The teacher gives a presentation about Jewish Americans community in big American cities (New York, Chicago) and asks the students to write 5 sentences from their hypothetical trip from either one of those cities to their person of choosing in a form of a letter.</p>	15 m	The students will practice their grammar while writing an informal letter, learning all the necessary acknowledgement when writing a letter. They will also gain knowledge about Jewish Americans and the mentioned cities within the context of the presentation as well as improving creative thinking when writing the letter.
3.	<p>Solve a murder</p> <p>The teacher divides the class into groups of 4, provides them with the worksheet about solving a murder, gives the time to read through it, eventually they discuss the possible suspects and are supposed to agree on one murderer, each group selects a speaker to say on which suspect the group agreed on and why.</p>	20 m	The aim of this exercise is for the students to improve their deductive, problem-solving skills, while presenting them an engaging story they have to participate in as well as improving reading comprehension.
4.	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>To end the lesson, the teacher provides a summary of the lesson, key concepts and the ideas discussed, as well as providing the invitation for the students to share their feedback or any additional questions, says goodbye to the students.</p>	5 m	The aim is to encourage reflection by providing a summary of the key concepts as well as addressing any misunderstood terms, providing clarification, proving closure of the lesson.

Objectives:

- The pupils are able to write a short letter addressed to a person of their own choosing.
- The pupils are able to think of a short story when given certain aspects to include in the story and are able to come up with an ending to it.
- The pupils are able to discuss the possible answers to solving a fictional crime.
- The pupils are able to work in a group and communicate with their classmates and agree on the aspects of their story.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, additional pieces of paper for students to write down their questions or comments, projecting device for a presentation

8.1.3 SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

This lesson plan includes activities that are supposed to be engaging for the age group it was created for. Students work both individually and in group, giving the options to enhance their individual and social skills, and also to compare their language level to their classmates. As already mentioned, one of the aims of the lesson plan is the enhancement of deductive skills within the mystery solving exercise, providing applicable skills for the student's future, as well as learning the basics of writing a fictional letter. The students are also introduced to the main character of the used literary work, which could spark their interest in the author and his books.

Weaknesses:

Because of the fact that both of the activities rely heavily on the creative writing and thinking of the students, there might not be sufficient time for the less skilled students to fully explore both of the activities, which in result might lead to incomplete work or work the students will not be satisfied with. Students might also not be satisfied with only being provided the presentation to be able to write the letter and might be discouraged by the educator correcting their grammar in the letter writing part.

Opportunities:

Students might become interested in similar mystery solving activities or might even be able to come up with a solving activity themselves. Also, several mentions of Jewish traditions

and customs are mentioned in the text, leaving the opportunity for the students to want to research about them in their free time, improving their knowledge of cultural diversity.

Threats:

Some students might not be able to problem solve in the group and would prefer to be able to work on their own. Adversely, when working individually on the letter writing, students might not be able to think of anything on their own and would prefer to work in a group. Some students might also misinterpret the clues on the solving a murder exercise and therefore be discouraged to further engage in similar activities. In extreme cases, some violence sensitive students might also be scared by the topic of a fictional murder, not wanting to participate in it.

8.1.3.1 Possible Modifications of the Lesson Plan

Since this lesson plan uses an electronic equipment for the part of the Jewish American history presentation, it is recommended for the teacher to ensure the workability of the electronic equipment beforehand. Additionally, the teacher should have the presentation prepared in a non-digital form – for example included in the worksheet or by preparing a narrative, serving as a backup plan. The teacher can also play the audio versions of the literary text providing the description of the suspects, this might help to enhance the pronunciation of the students, the teacher might even make the students read the text out loud.

While preparing the writing a letter component of the lesson plan, the teacher can modify the requirements depending on the proficiency of the class and the age of the students, for example, they can include specifying the demands on the length of the letter, tenses used, or vocabulary appropriate for the topic currently discussed.

As for the final part of the lesson plan, the teacher has the full flexibility to modify it by adding more clues to the solving of the murder, modifying the language to help the students' comprehension and such. Furthermore, the activity can be adjusted for the younger learners or learners sensitive to violence to not include the topic of murder, but for example a robbery or any non-violent topic.

8.2 Lesson plan 2

The lesson plan (see appendix 2) includes excerpts from the works *The Tenants* and *The Magic Barrel* and other stories by Bernard Malamud. The lesson plan was designed for 9th grade lower secondary students or higher secondary students and was designed to take 1 teaching lesson, or 45 minutes.

While this lesson plan possesses the mention of Holocaust and other Jewish related customs, it is not necessary for the students to acquire any previous knowledge of these historical events to answer correctly, as this lesson plan mostly relays on the creativity of the students. The main theme of the lesson plan is romantic relationships and therefore the texts were chosen accordingly to that. Due to the nature of the texts, this lesson plan could be utilized during the time of Valentine's Day or other human relation festivities. The lesson plan focuses on reading comprehension and creative writing, with the minor objectives of gaining cultural knowledge of the Jewish religion and improving vocabulary of the students.

The teacher providing this lesson plan should possess the historical knowledge of important event in the Jewish American history, such as Holocaust and the Second World War. They should also be able to acknowledge the fact of the students creative thinking being on different levels and being able to accommodate to various responses to the creative writing part. The teacher should also be able to provide the context of the texts within the book, therefore should be familiar with the authors writing.

This lesson plan improves reading abilities by the students using the skimming technique. By including reading comprehension questions, the lesson plan also uses the Grammar-Translation method, which emphasizes mainly on writing and grammar, but the lesson plan includes speaking activities as well (e.g. Reading and speculation), balancing out the deficiencies of this method.

8.2.1.1 Activity Description

Phase	Description of activity	Time	Aims of activity
1.	Introduction The teacher greets the class, introduces the following lesson and asks the students if they have any preexisting knowledge about	5 m	Creating a pleasant atmosphere among the students, introducing the topic of the lesson, the teacher will be able to inspect the prerequisites of the knowledge about the topic.

	the author, and if they know about any Jewish customs.		
2.	<p>Reading and speculation</p> <p>The teacher divides the class into groups of 3-4 students, gives each group a copy of the texts and exercises. The teacher tells the students to read through the text first. The students will have to decide which of the following text (a-e) fits the short excerpts the best. The teacher should consider all the answers as correct.</p>	20 m	Students will be able to think creatively while improving their communicating skills within the group. This exercise allows the students to improve their creative writing while providing them with historical events related to the Jewish American history.
3.	<p>Discussion</p> <p>Within the group, the students try to come up with the answers for the given questions – the questions are made so that the students can speculate and there are multiple answers.</p>	10 m	Students will be able to think creatively within the group, improve their imagination and logical thinking within the field of historical context.
4.	<p>Matching words with their definition</p> <p>The teacher asks the students to match the appropriate definition of the words highlighted within the excerpts.</p>	5 m	The students will be able to guess the meaning of words when provided context in the literary text.
5.	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The teacher concludes the lesson by giving a summary of the key terms given as well as asking the</p>	5 m	The aim is to establish understanding of the lesson objectives, feedback for the teacher as to whether the aims had been fulfilled,

	students for feedback on the lesson and additional questions, says goodbye to the students.		closure of the lesson and providing additional help to students if needed.
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Objectives:

- The pupils are able to remember new vocabulary while simultaneously trying to understand the meaning of it by deducing it from the short text.
- The pupils are able to use critical thinking and creative writing to improve the comprehension by dissecting a short story.
- The pupils are able understand the cultural background of some Jewish traditions.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, additional pieces of paper for students to write down their questions or comments

8.2.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

The lesson plan offers a variety of new terms and Jewish related customs and historical events for the students to recognize and get to know better. Because most of the exercises are related to creative writing and thinking, there are no wrong answers, and the students therefore will not feel defeated by answering incorrectly. The lesson plan is also not dependent on any other materials except for the worksheet. The lesson plan introduces the Jewish tradition of arranged marriage in a way, that is intriguing to the student and gives them the option to decide whether they agree with it or not.

Weaknesses:

The literary texts provided in the lesson plan are of a considerable length and therefore require more extended period of reading time. Moreover, certain sentences within the worksheet demand a higher English level, and therefore might be more suitable for older students. Students in group might not reach a consensus on the ending of the story together or might prolong the period of deciding, reflecting different levels of problem-solving and creative thinking.

Opportunities:

The students might become intrigued by the short texts, which could lead to them wanting to read more literary text by the author. This curiosity might expand beyond the classroom and students might discover their potential in creating stories, prompting them to think creatively in their own free time. Furthermore, collaborative conversations among students in group might spark their interest to expand their narratives in free time. For the first activity, in advanced groups, the teacher could ask the students to act out the conversation.

Threats:

Students might have different reading level and the teacher might feel obliged to adjust the reading time according to that. Some of the students might also not be familiar with the slangs (ex. “Like cool it, man”) and therefore the whole meaning of the excerpt might vanish for the student. Some students might also not come up with an ending to a story on time, leaving the students with additional work at home. In extreme cases, due to the recent events in the Palestine-Israeli conflict, some students might not want to participate in any Jewish related activity.

8.2.2.1 Possible Modifications of the Lesson Plan

For this lesson plan, the literary excerpt was barely altered, however, the teacher can adjust the literary text to the proficiency of the class, their age and also to their desirable length. Unknown words and phrases could also be depicted to the students by providing dictionary or electronic devices to search for advanced vocabulary or replacing certain phrases by their simplified version. If the teacher is confident enough about having a comfortable environment, the students could also participate in a role-playing activity, where he asks 2 students to act out the conversation, or simply tells the students to take turns, each reading one sentence aloud. The teacher can also play the audio versions of the literary text, this might help to enhance the pronunciation of the students.

The teacher in possession of the lesson plan can add or remove American Jewish terms in the 3rd exercise. They can also provide more cultural context before handing out the worksheets with a short presentation or add more discussion questions.

8.3 Lesson plan 3

This lesson plan (see appendix 3) will introduce an excerpt from the book *To Jerusalem and Back* by Saul Bellow and was designed for 9th grade lower secondary students or higher secondary students. This lesson plan benefits from the students possessing some background knowledge of the Jewish religion, but it is not required for them to have a historical knowledge of the Jewish population. The lesson focuses on reading comprehension and pragmatics and is made for 1 teaching lesson, or 45 minutes.

The teacher guiding the lesson should possess the knowledge of the Jewish American historical background, as they should be able to contextualize the text into a historical period, if necessary. They should also be able to explain the meaning behind the conversation in the text and what preceded this event. The teacher should inspect the prerequisite knowledge of the students and provide additional information to the text.

This lesson plan primarily uses the cultural model, as it focuses on understanding of the literary context, such as use of the Yiddish language, referencing to Jewish traditions and more. The language model, although not as prominent, is also used, for example with matching the words to their definition, also utilizing the Grammar-Translation method. The personal growth model is not reflected in the lesson plan, as it is not the primary focus for the students to personally engage with the lesson plan beyond the classroom.

8.3.1.1 Activity Description

Phase	Description of activity	Time	Aims of activity
1.	Introduction The teacher greets the class and introduces the topic. Asks the students following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Do you know anything about Judaism?</i>- <i>Can you name any Jewish holiday?</i>	5 m	Creating a pleasant atmosphere among the students, the teacher gives an overview of the lesson, introduction of the topic, prerequisites the background knowledge of the students.
2.	Teaching explanation and excerpt reading	10 m	The students will gain a closer comprehension of the Jewish cultural displacement over the world while

	<p>The teacher divides the class into smaller groups of 3 or 4 students, distributes the copies of the worksheet and asks students to read the excerpt and match the missing phrases.</p> <p>Asks the students to highlight any unfamiliar words.</p>		<p>learning about the Jewish customs and traditions.</p>
3.	<p>Reading questions</p> <p>Teacher reads through the instruction with the students, reads the questions with them, then asks the students to answer the text comprehension questions individually, the teacher then reviews the answers as a class, gives feedback to the students.</p>	10 m	<p>The aim is for the students to be able to read and comprehend a medium length text, will be able to creatively think about the meanings of certain expressions.</p>
4.	<p>Matching words with their definition</p> <p>The teacher asks the students to match the definition of the words found in the text, most of which are related to the Jewish religion and culture, then provides the correct answers for the students to be able to check their successfulness in this exercise.</p>	10 m	<p>The aim is to introduce students to Jewish culture related terms and concepts in a way that requires logical thinking and thinking within the comprehension of the previously read text.</p>
5.	<p>Reading comprehension</p> <p>Teacher asks the students to answer true or false questions based on reading the excerpt of the text. When done, the teacher provides the correct answers for the students to check the accuracy of their answers.</p>	5 m	<p>Students will be able to use comprehension by reading the text and practice critical thinking as well as reinforcing retention of the key facts.</p>
6.	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The teacher summarizes the main points of the lesson aims and asks</p>	5 m	<p>The aim is ensuring understanding of the lesson objectives, providing feedback for the teacher as to whether</p>

students whether they have any questions concerning the topic of the lesson or additional thoughts on the lesson, says goodbye to the students.	the aims had been fulfilled, provides closure and additional clarification for the students who may need it.
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Objectives:

- The pupils are able to learn new vocabulary related to the Jewish religion and traditions.
- The pupils are able to understand pragmatic expressions while completing the dialogue of the short text.
- The pupils are able to correctly answer true or false questions by successfully reading and comprehending the literary text.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, additional pieces of paper for students to write down their questions or comments

8.3.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

The students will be introduced to a literary text by a Jewish author while also being introduced to Jewish traditions and customs, which provides them an opportunity to cultural enrichment. Due to the nature of the text, they will be able to interpret the Jewish struggles in between the religion, enhancing critical thinking and social skills. They will be able to improve their reading comprehension through answering the questions and improve their pragmatic abilities by matching the missing conversation parts, improving their reading and language skills, while providing the space for discussion with their classmates.

Weaknesses:

The length of the text might pose a challenge, as there is a possibility of the teacher not being able to go through all the exercises within the given time. The given literary text also depends on the ability of the students to contextualize some of the more challenging words and some students might struggle with the new vocabulary. The students might also not understand the religious meaning behind the text, leading to potential misinterpretations.

Opportunities:

The lesson plan offers an opportunity for students to converse about a controversial topic within the religious field. Students will learn new terms about the Jewish culture which they can utilize across various subjects, enhancing their speaking and logical thinking competencies. Students might become interested about the literary text and might want to find out the ending to the excerpt in their free time.

Threats:

Some students might not find the topic interesting enough, and there is the danger of the groups deciding not to participate in the work. Also, while working in the group for a certain part of the lesson, some students might do less work than others, leaving the responsibility to the “stronger” students, which would result in disbalanced knowledge about the topic. Some of the true or false questions might also be misinterpreted by the students, leading to various answers. In light of the recent Palestine-Israeli conflict, students might not want to engage in learning about anything Jewish related and might feel uncomfortable.

8.3.3 Possible Modifications of the Lesson Plan

As already mentioned, the lesson plan is rather long, so possible modifications include the adjustments of the length to match the abilities, age and reading speed of the learners. When needed, the teacher can also give more time to read through to the text to students with various needs, this would mean removing other exercises to lengthen the reading comprehension exercise. Teacher can also provide the students with dictionary or electronic device to search for words and phrases in the text that are unfamiliar to them.

The teacher can also set a homework concerning the stories, helping students to enhance their creative writing skills. Such homework could include prompts such as creating another story about mentioned time period or creating a story of previous events leading up to the literary excerpt. In more presenting advanced classes, the students could also act out their stories in front of the class. The teacher can also play the audio versions of the text to enhance the pronunciation of the students, which could help students whose reading speed is not as fast.

8.4 Lesson Plan 4

This lesson plan (see appendix 4) was designed for 8th – 9th grade lower secondary students or higher secondary students. It introduces the story called the Mourners from the short collection stories book *The Magic Borell and other stories* by Bernard Malamud. For the purpose of better time management, the story was shortened, and some words and sentences were simplified for a better comprehension to fit the proficiency of the age of the students.

Through analysis of the literary text and discussion, the pupils will utilize this lesson plan to improve their social skills, reading comprehension, deductive skills and enhance their vocabulary. Overall, the lesson plan focuses on reading comprehension and speaking skills, and is designed to take 1 teaching lesson, or 45 minutes.

This lesson plan includes a story sequence, in which students logically organize the structure of a certain text, which helps them to identify the narrative structure. The next activity is a summary of the already correctly organized text, in which students look for key phrases that are crucial to the text and further help to comprehend the text.

In the lesson plan, the cultural model is primarily used, and this is evident mainly in the discussion part, reflecting on cultural themes depicted in the story, such as social issues, interpersonal relationships and more. The lesson plan lacks the language method, and thus might not be beneficial in engaging student in improving grammar skills, as it mainly focuses on speaking and reading comprehension with little need for linguistic improvement.

Reader-response approach is primarily used by making the students to engage with the text intellectually and emotionally, emphasizing their individual response to the story. Although the language-based approach is also used, mainly to improve vocabulary, it is not the primary focus of the lesson plan.

Objectives:

- Students are able to logically organize the structure of a given text.
- Students are able to shortly summarize the text and pinpoint its key information, using certain language structure and aspects.
- Students are able to work in a group and discuss their opinions without conflicts within the group.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, additional pieces of paper for students to write down their questions or comments

8.4.1 Activity Description

Phase	Description of activity	Time	Aims of activity
1.	<p>Introduction</p> <p>The teacher greets the class, introduces the topic and the activities.</p> <p>Asks the students the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Do you know the author Bernard Malamud?</i> - <i>What do you know about American Jewish people?</i> 	5 m	Creating a pleasant atmosphere among the students, introduction of the topic, the teacher finds out the prerequisites of the knowledge of the students about a certain topic.
2.	<p>Story Sequence</p> <p>The teacher hands out the worksheets to each student, as they are supposed to work individually. The teacher gives instructions to organize the numbered events in the shortened story based on the sequence in which they occur, the teacher supervises, then reads the correct answers together with the students.</p>	10 m	The aim is improving reading comprehension skills, enabling of retelling the story, rereading, analyzing, and locating the key phrases in a literary text.
3.	<p>Summary</p> <p>The teacher tells the students to summarize the already correctly organized story into 7 sentences and write the sentences down on either the worksheet, or any other provided paper. Gives them time, then asks few of them to share their summaries with the whole class, gives feedback to the student.</p>	10 m	The aim is to help the students to determine key facts and information concerning given text, to improve writing skills and vocabulary as well as comprehension. The students who choose to share their summary also improve their speaking abilities.

4.	<p>Discussion</p> <p>The teacher divides the class into groups of 3-4 (alternatively pairs) and tells them to answer the questions in the 2nd exercise, gives them time while supervising, then discusses their answers with the whole class.</p>	10 m	<p>The aim is to enhance the discussion skills of the students, promote better group work while improving their critical thinking and reading comprehension.</p>
5.	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The teacher summarizes the main points of the lesson and asks students whether they have any questions or additional thoughts on the lesson, says goodbye to the students.</p>	5 m	<p>The aim is ensuring understanding of the lesson objectives, providing feedback for the teacher as to whether the aims had been fulfilled as well as closure of the lesson and providing additional help to students if needed.</p>

8.4.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

This lesson plan is designed so that it promotes the critical thinking of the students, especially in the story sequence part. The story is chosen so that the story could be easily adapted and adjusted into the lesson plan and can be further altered. Except for the first exercise, the students can debate about possible correct answers, which enhances their speaking and debating skills, while putting no pressure on being correct. The lesson plan also introduces students to the literary works of an American Jewish author, therefore enhancing their literary knowledge.

Weaknesses:

The literary text is rather long and therefore time consuming, this means that this lesson plan is dependent on strict time management. The text provides little to no cultural contextualization of how American Jewish people lived during the 20th century. There is no female character representation in the text, and the literary text may lack diversity because of this fact.

Opportunities:

The teacher can ask the more advanced students additional questions, such as: what information in the story do you think is unnecessary? In the summary, the teacher can demand specific language, such as using specific tenses or vocabulary, can also adjust the length of the summary to the proficiency of the students. The story also includes psychological topics, such as dealing with loneliness, and this fact may help students to enhance their understanding of psychological problems. The students might become interested in the works of Bernard Malamud, wanting to read the story in their free time, promoting their reading comprehension.

Threats:

As the literary text in this lesson plan is rather long, it might face time constraining challenges, when taken into consideration that students all have different reading speeds and comprehension skills. As already mentioned, the story includes psychological problems, which might make some more emotionally sensitive students feel uncomfortable. The portrayal of certain characters might also lead to stereotyping and because of the reduction of the text compared to the original book, the characters could be portrayed as one dimensional. Lastly, some students might find the story not engaging enough.

8.4.3 Possible Modifications of the Lesson Plan

Possible modifications of this lesson plan could include altering the story sequence to fit the language appropriate for certain age, this could mean removing words to make the literary text less time consuming or substituting unknown words with familiar vocabulary, as well as providing the students with a dictionary to search for unfamiliar words and phrases. The teacher can also play the audio versions of the text to enhance the pronunciation of the students.

For the discussion part, the students could work individually by writing down the answers, or simply answering the questions as a part of their homework, if the time has run out. The teacher might choose to present an overview of American Jewish population at the beginning of the lesson to provide further context. This could also be done by using multimedia resources, such as documentaries, podcasts, movies, or news articles.

8.5 Lesson Plan 5

This lesson plan (see appendix 5) is focused on the cultural background of the American Jewish community. It is not designed on a specific book, but rather concludes all the mentioned Jewish American holidays in the books of the authors. This lesson plan was designed for 7th grade lower secondary students or advanced 6th grade secondary students and was designed to take 1 teaching lesson, or 45 minutes.

For the purpose of the best possible execution of the lesson plan, it is necessary for the teacher to be familiar with the Jewish holidays and traditions as to best explain the cultural and historical context behind them. This lesson plan does not rely on any electronic devices, but can be adjusted so that they are included, further improving digital competence. This lesson plan can be also utilized in a CLIL method in other subjects, such as Social Studies or History.

This lesson plan includes and is mainly focused on reading comprehension in the first exercise, aimed to expose students to cultural variety at the same time. The second part of the lesson plan is focused on creative thinking while enhancing cultural awareness and fostering tolerance towards various religions.

This lesson plan uses mainly the Cultural model, by allowing an exploration of diverse cultural perspectives through literature, but the Language model might be also used in the presentation part, though there is no necessity of the inclusion. The personal growth model is also used, though the text might be heavy information-based, but this depends on the information retention of each student.

The reader-response approach is used mainly to make students feel connected to the literary text both emotionally and intellectually, with little focus on the language-based approach, as there is not a strong focus on the improvement of linguistics, as already mentioned.

Objectives:

- The students are able to name the most significant Jewish holidays and celebrations.
- The students are able to comprehend a literary text and successfully answer true or false questions regarding said text.
- The students are able to relate to certain Jewish holidays and expand their understanding of the culture by creating additional facts regarding a chosen Jewish holiday or celebration.

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, additional pieces of paper for students to write down their questions or comments

8.5.1 Activity Description

Phase	Description of activity	Time	Aims of activity
1.	<p>Introduction</p> <p>The teacher greets the class, introduces the topic and the activities.</p> <p>Asks the students the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Can you name any Jewish holiday or celebration?</i> - <i>If so, what do you know about this holiday or celebration?</i> 	5 m	Creating a pleasant atmosphere among the students, introduction of the topic, the teacher finds out the prerequisites of the knowledge of the students about a certain topic.
2.	<p>Reading comprehension</p> <p>The teacher hands out the worksheet to each student, reads aloud the text and then gives some time for the students to read the text again, on their own, when they are done, gives them time to read the true or false questions and answer them, then checks the answers with the whole class, if needed, corrects them.</p>	10 m	The students learn the proper pronunciation due to the teacher reading the text. They also improve their reading comprehension and logical thinking by answering the true or false questions.
3.	<p>Jewish celebration planning</p> <p>The teacher organizes the class into groups of 3 or 4, depending on the size of the class. Reads through the instruction of the exercise with the students and gives them time to create additional facts about their chosen Jewish holiday. Then asks each group to present their creation in short sentences.</p>	10 m	The aim is to reinforce the knowledge about the topic, improve the ability to work in a group, as well as writing skills. The aim is also to improve speaking ability of the students presenting their group project.
4.	<p>Holiday creation</p>	10 m	The aim of this exercise is to promote creativity by giving the students free

	Still in groups, the teacher gives instructions and gives free space for the students to create their own hypothetical holiday, provides paper for the students to write can be also done in a form of the students making a collage on a paper. The teacher gives the students time to create while supervising and when students are done or the time has run out, each group presents their project in front of the whole class.		space to create their hypothetical holiday, also improve critical thinking by the students evaluating the significance of said holiday. Also to improve presentation skills and speaking skills as well as promoting cultural sensitivity by the students listening to the presentations of other groups.
5.	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The teacher summarizes the main points of the lesson, repeats the key holidays, and asks students whether they have any questions on the topic of Jewish holidays and celebrations or additional thoughts on the lesson, says goodbye to the students.</p>	5 m	The aim is ensuring understanding of the lesson objectives, providing feedback for the teacher as to whether the aims had been fulfilled, closure of the lesson and providing additional help to students if needed.

8.5.2 SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

This lesson plan introduces the students to the basic Jewish holidays and celebrations, thus aiming to improve their culture awareness, as well as contributing to a more inclusive religious environment. The Jewish religion is also discussed in other subjects, so the lesson plan provides an interdisciplinary connection between various subjects. Additionally, the lesson plan stimulates creative thinking by giving the students the opportunity to create their own hypothetical holiday and how they would celebrate it, encouraging their appreciation for diversity while watching the presentations of the other groups.

Weaknesses:

Because of the age of the students this lesson plan was designed for, this lesson plan provides an overview of Jewish holidays and celebrations that is very simplified and lacks the depth that the Jewish culture possesses and might only result in gaining a superficial knowledge

of the religion. As there are many other Jewish holidays, the religion might appear less culturally and historically enriched than it really is.

Opportunities:

For this lesson plan, the teacher has the opportunity to use additional multimedia, such as providing a presentation using electronic devices. Additionally, this lesson plan can also be expanded beyond the English subject and used during a project that takes more teaching lessons. Interactive activities can be used during those lessons, such as the students cooking specific Jewish food or imitating a certain holiday. The last exercise concerning the creation of their own holiday could also be executed in a form of creating a poster with student's art. The students might become intrigued by the topic and might want to research on their own.

Threats:

Some students might not be wanting to participate in the group activities and rather work individually. Because of the recent Palestine-Israeli conflict, students might not want to engage in learning about anything Jewish related and in extreme cases, the lesson plan might be taken as a propaganda of a certain political stance. Because of the short nature of the information text, some holidays might be misinterpreted and might lead to religious stereotyping. Some students may lack creative thinking and might take longer to think about the hypothetical holiday.

8.5.3 Possible Modifications of the Lesson Plan

In this lesson plan, possible modifications could be done by adjusting the worksheet, for example by adding or specific Jewish holidays and traditions they want to put a focus on and find them important for the study plan. The teacher can also start the lesson by giving a short presentation or playing a video concerning the topic of Jewish holidays and celebrations, therefore giving more in depth overview and providing a more comprehensive understanding. The teacher can also play the students audio versions of the text, which, as mentioned in the theoretical part, enables them to align their speaking style to the norms of pronunciation.

Depending on the size of the class and individual learning styles, the teacher can adjust the number of students working in groups. They also may choose to change the group exercises to individual ones to accommodate each student. The teacher also might choose to leave out the second or third exercise and rather focus on only one, providing students with more time to do their preferred exercise.

This lesson plan has the potential to be extended beyond single teaching lesson, offering the opportunity for further interdisciplinary connection between various subjects, such as history and social studies. This might include a project lesson – preparing traditional Jewish dishes and having the students celebrate the holiday, therefore enhancing their cultural experience and exposing them to the historical context of mentioned holidays.

9. Summary of the Practical Usage of American Jewish literature in ELT

The integration of American Jewish literature into English Language Teaching was introduced in 6 lesson plans, thoroughly analysed, and dissected. Through the analysing of the lesson plans, it was found that American Jewish literature can engage students in experiences transcending beyond the classroom. The implementation of this topic was mainly chosen through excerpts of literary texts. The literary texts proposed the questions of American Jewish identity and immigration history in the context of the United States of America, as well as the history of Jewish population worldwide.

One of the main aims was to introduce the authors to the students in a way that is palatable. This was done by shortening the text, replacing unknown words, and providing context by presentations. Further modifications were introduced to fit different teaching styles and learning styles of the students. The lesson plans were designed for age groups ranging from the 6th to 9th grade, providing a gracious range of different language skill demands.

While the main focus was put on reading comprehension, and the lesson plans included plethora of activities for students to engage in creative thinking, noticeable focus also appeared in the area of speaking and enhancing group work skills. Rather unnoticeable focus was put on grammar enhancement, mainly appearing in activities such as creative writing, where the grammar was not the main focus.

The designed lesson plans primarily included the Cultural model of literature teaching and provided an insight into the culture and history of the religion and its people. It also included the Personal Growth model in many of the lesson plans by making the students reflect on various religious backgrounds and delving into diverse religious traditions.

The main disadvantage of the practical part is that it was not used in a classroom setting due to its time management demands. However, its strengths and weaknesses were dissected rather in detail, while providing modifications for educators to fit their classroom settings. The lesson plans could also benefit by implementing more pre-reading activities, as the students might want to get more familiar with the topic before starting the proposed activities.

10. Conclusion

To conclude, the main focus of this thesis was to shed a light on the potential usage of the American Jewish literature in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. The topic was chosen due to its theme variety and richness – the literary works used in the practical part dealt mainly with complex topics such as racism, immigration, struggle with identity, crime, religious tolerance, love and many more.

Through examination of ELT methods used when incorporating literature, the definition of literature, as well as the history of using literature in ELT, the thesis also provided the reader a number of benefits and drawbacks when dealing with literature in the classroom setting.

One of the aims of this work was to also introduce the literary works of Jewish authors, while offering an insight into the Jewish culture and customs. This was implemented in the theoretical part of the thesis, which introduced the authors of Bernard Malamud and Saul Bellow, providing a biography of said authors and also a thorough dissection of their critically acclaimed works, later used in the practical part, providing a cultural background to said works and exploring the themes used in American Jewish literature.

Each lesson plan proposed was evaluated in detail through a SWOT analysis, with modifications to said plans. The analysing of said lesson plans led to the conclusion of the lesson plans and American Jewish literature possessing the ability to enhance reading comprehension and creative writing and thinking. The research also found the positive results when achieving the effectiveness in exploring the cultural themes, as well as creating an environment encouraging empathy and religious tolerance.

On the other hand, areas for improvement were also identified, as said lesson plans fell short on the ability to improve grammar. This was mainly due to the fact of the implementation of grammar enhancing activities not being adequate. The lesson plans however possessed a wide range of modifications and could further improve this area of weakness. It is also crucial for the educator to be able to modify the lesson plans dealing with sensitive topics to the environment of a specific classroom. The thesis could also benefit by the practical usage of proposed lesson plans in real classroom setting and analysing the findings to further validate their effectiveness.

In conclusion, the thesis highlights the importance of not being intimidated of using diverse and complex literary text which are rich in contextual information and historical background.

Moving forward, it is crucial for educators to continue using literature as a powerful tool for fostering and enhancing language skills of the students. By embracing diverse literary texts, educators can create engaging and inclusive reading environment, which intrigues the students to explore in the world of literature beyond the classroom.

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List of appendices:

Appendix 1: 1st lesson plan

Objective: write a letter about your adventures from New York or Chicago to a:

- A) Friend
- B) Family member
- C) Your favorite celebrity

Solve a murder:

Last night, a man called Moses was found dead in an apartment in Chicago. The police have not found who committed the crime yet, however, the murderer was careless and left behind a few clues. Because of the clues, several suspects were chosen. Discuss in group on who do you think is the murderer.

- The suspect left an empty bottle of gin at the scene of the crime.
- The crime was committed on a Saturday.
- The neighbours say that they heard Moses arguing with someone about business.
- The weapon used was a gun.
- There were found footprints at the scene of the crime.

Madeline

Moses' ex-wife, with whom he shared a daughter. Madeliene said to the police, that at the time of the murder, she was with her lover, Gersbach, at the hospital. Madeline in the past complained to the police about her abusive ex-husband. She says she owns a gun, but it is at her house.

Jonah Herzog

Moses' father, a Russian-Jewish immigrant. Jonah is a bootlegger, so he likes to drink alcohol and Moses sometimes helped him with his alcohol shop. He has a history of threatening people, and even tried to scare Moses with a gun in the past. As his wife, Jonah is very religious. Jonah says that he was at work at the time of the crime happening.

Mrs. Herzog

Mrs. Herzog, Moses' mother, is a very religious Jewish woman. She says that at the time of the murder, she was at the synagogue, because Saturday is a day of rest for Jewish people, called Sabbath. She is not registered as a gun owner.

Valentine Gersbach

Madeline's lover. Gersbach used to be Moses' best friend, until he ran away with his ex-wife, Madeliene, who Gersbach was in love with at the time. He states, that at the time of the murder, he was in the hospital to check up on his wooden leg.

Appendix 2: 2nd lesson plan

Read the following text:

The British Airways chicken with the chill of death upon it lies before me. But after three hours of security exercises at Heathrow I am hungry. The young Hasid recoils when the tray is handed to me. He addresses me again in Yiddish. He says, "I must talk to you. You won't be offended?"

"No, I don't think so."

"You may want to give me a slap in the face."

"... (1)?"

"You are a Jew. You must be a Jew, we are speaking Yiddish. How can you eat-*that!*"

"It looks awful, doesn't it?"

"You mustn't touch it. My womenfolk packed kosher beef sandwiches for me. ... (2)"

Here I'm obliged to lie. Alexandra is Rumanian. But I can't give him too many shocks at once, and I say, "She has not had a Jewish upbringing."

"... (3)."

"Not a word. But excuse me, I want my lunch."

"Will you eat some of my kosher food instead, as a favor?"

"With pleasure."

"Then I will give you a sandwich, but only on one condition. You must never-never-eat trephena food again."

"... (4)." You're asking too much. And just for one sandwich."

"I have a duty toward you," he tells me. "Will you listen to a proposition?"

"... (5)."

"So let us make a deal. I am prepared to pay you. If you will eat nothing but kosher food, for the rest of your life I will send you fifteen dollars a week."

"That's very generous," I say.

"Well, you are a Jew," he says. "I must try to save you."

Try to match the correct missing words to the numbers (1-5):

- a) "I can't promise you that."
- b) "Of course I will."
- c) "She doesn't speak Yiddish?"
- d) "Is your wife Jewish?"
- e) "Why should I?"

Reading questions:

- a) Where do you think the story takes place? Why do you think so?

- b) What do you think is the meaning of the phrase "You may want to give me a slap in the face"?

- c) What is the "deal" the man talks about?

Match the words with their definition:

- 1. Jewish
- 2. Yiddish
- 3. Trepheha
- 4. Kosher
- 5. Hasid
- 6. Condition
- 7. Upbringing
- 8. Womenfolk

- a) a particular way of bringing up a child

- b) a member of a Jewish sect devoted to the strict observance of the ritual law

- c) an arrangement that must exist before something else can happen
- d) a person of Jewish religion
- e) food that follows strict rules related to Judaism
- f) the women in a family or society
- g) non-kosher food
- h) a language related to German that is spoken by some Jewish people

Decide if the following questions are TRUE or FALSE.

- a) Alexandra, the main characters wife, is Jewish. T/F
- b) The man on the plane offers the main character 15 dollars a month if he eats only kosher food. T/F
- c) Both of the men on the plane are Jewish. T/F
- d) The main character spent several hours at the airport. T/F

Appendix 3: 3rd lesson plan

Read the following texts:

- 1) Lesser wondered how the writing would go in the morning. Probably badly. "What's your book about?" Irene asked. "Love," he said, his breath rising.
"What do you know about love?"
Lesser wouldn't say.
She fell asleep with a **sour** smile.
Willie appeared in the room.
"Like cool it, man," he said to Lesser on the sofa.

- 2) "I am a businessman," the shoemaker **abruptly** said to conceal his embarrassment, "so I will explain you right away why I talk to you. I have a girl, my daughter Miriam—she is nineteen—a very nice girl and also so pretty that everybody looks on her when she passes by in the street. She is smart, always with a book, and I thought to myself that a boy like you, an educated boy—I thought maybe you will be interested sometime to meet a girl like this."

- 3) "So good evening. I am invited?"
Leo nodded, **disturbed** to see him again, yet unwilling to ask the man to leave. **Beaming** still, Salzman laid his portfolio on the table. "Rabbi, I got for you tonight good news."
"I've asked you not to call me rabbi. I'm still a student."
"Your worries are finished. I have for you a first-class bride."
"Leave me in peace concerning this subject." Leo pretended lack of interest.
"The world will dance at your wedding."
"Please, Mr. Salzman, no more."

For each of text, select one explanation only. Three of the explanations are made up, three of them are true. When selected, try to come up with an ending to the story.

a) The scene takes place in New York in the 1970's. Two not yet accomplished writers, one Jewish American, the other African American, are fighting over the attention of a woman. They become jealous of each other's writing and end their rivalry in the worst way possible.

b) A hardworking father is looking for an ideal partner for his daughter. He finds her a college student, as he is convinced he will provide for her financially. However, the daughter finds the student boring and materialistic. What's more, she is already in love with the father's assistant, a Holocaust survivor called Sobel.

c) A young student, who realized he should take the next step in his personal life, hires a marriage booker to find himself a wife. The booker shows the student many women, whose pictures he pulls out from the "magic barrel". The student finds none of the potential suitors interesting and instead tries to romance the marriage booker's daughter, which results in an interesting reaction from the booker.

d) In the unbearable heat of Birkenau in 1943, a man, known for his writing, finds love in the camp's darkness. He secretly falls for a fellow prisoner and writes her letters, writing her his feelings to bring her comfort and hope. But as he passes these letters, a watchful guard notices, breaking camp rules. The guard's discovery threatens their fragile connection, leaving the man torn between his longing for love and the harsh reality of the camp.

e) Germany, 1937. A Jewish man tries to escape the Nazi regime in Germany by finding an American wife to escape to safety in the United States. He hopes that by marrying an American woman, he could gain the chance to leave Germany and find a new home in a place far from the reach of persecution. However, when he arrived, the woman wasn't at all what he had imagined.

Discussion:

1. What do the 3 selected texts have in common? Can you find a common theme?
2. Arranged marriage is mentioned in 2 of the texts. Do you know, what arranged marriage is? If yes, can you think of the positive and negative things about arranged marriage and why is it important in Jewish culture?
3. Select one of the texts and try to come up with an ending to the story.

Match an appropriate definition to the highlighted words:

1. sour
2. abruptly
3. disturbed
4. beaming
 - a) smiling broadly; grinning
 - b) feeling or expressing resentment, disappointment, or anger
 - c) not thinking or behaving normally because of mental or emotional problems
 - d) suddenly and unexpectedly

Appendix 4: 4th lesson plan

Organize the numbered events in the story based on the sequence in which they occur.

- a) Kessler inhabited a small cheap flat on the top floor of a tenement on the East Side. Perhaps because he lived above so many stairs, no one bothered to visit him. He was much alone, as he had been most of his life. At one time he'd had a family, but unable to stand his wife or children, always in his way, he had after some years walked out on them.
- b) In the tenement, he was more or less unknown. The tenants never said hello to him. Ignace, the janitor, knew him best, for they had several times played two-handed pinochle; but Ignace, had stopped going up after a time. He complained to his wife that he couldn't stand the stink there, that the filthy flat with its junky furniture made him sick. The janitor had spread the word about Kessler to the others on the floor, and they shunned him as a dirty old man.
- c) One day Ignace and Kessler began a quarrel, and they were soon calling each other savage names, when Kessler slammed the door in the janitor's face. Gruber, the landlord, was in the building and to him the Ignace described, holding his nose, the smell in Kessler's flat, and called him the dirtiest person he ever saw. Gruber knew his janitor was exaggerating, but settled it quickly by saying, "Give him notice."
- d) That night after supper, Ignace knocked on Kessler's door. "Mr. Gruber says to give notice. We don't want you here. Your dirt stinks the whole house." There was silence, but Ignace waited. Although after five minutes he still heard no sound. He spoke again, "You got two weeks' notice till the first, then you better move out or Mr. Gruber and myself will throw you out."
- e) But Kessler did not move out after the two weeks. After another day Kessler received a copy of his eviction notice saying to appear in court on Friday. This scared Kessler because he had never in his life been to court. He did not appear on the day he had been ordered to. That same afternoon the marshal came. Ignace opened Kessler's lock for them and removed his meager furniture and set it out on the sidewalk. Two assistants, carried Kessler, kicking and moaning, down the stairs. They sat him in the street on a chair amid his junk.
- f) Soon after that, the landlord found Kessler in a now empty apartment. "What do you think you're doing here?" Gruber said. "Don't you know it's against the law? This is trespassing and you're breaking the law." Kessler looked at him. "What did I did to

you?” he bitterly wept. “Who throws out of his house a man that lived there ten years and pays his rent? Who hurts a man without a reason? Are you Hitler or a Jew?” The landlord replied to that: “Listen, Kessler, if you don’t leave the flat, I’ll call the marshal.” “Mr. Gruber,” said Kessler, “I won’t go. Kill me if you want it, but I won’t go.”

- g) The next morning, the landlord went to the city marshal’s office. He decided to offer to get the old man into a public home. Kessler was still in the apartment, alive, sitting without shoes on the bedroom floor. The landlord explained his proposal to Kessler, but he was not listening. He had thought through his miserable life, remembering how, as a young man, he had left his wife and three innocent children. Gruber was frightened at the extent of Kessler’s suffering. Gruber was listening to the old man praying. Somebody’s dead, Gruber thought. Then it struck him that the mourner was mourning him: it was he who was dead. Gruber then felt sorry for the way he had treated the old man. He sank to the floor and became a mourner too.

Try summarizing the story using 7 sentences:

Discussion:

- 1) Do you think the landlord had the right to throw out Kessler? Who do you think was in the right?
- 2) What do you think is meant by the phrase: “Who hurts a man without a reason? Are you Hitler or a Jew?”
- 3) Think of the three characters, Ignac, Kessler, and Gruber. Try using one word to describe each character.
- 4) Why do you think Kessler was so unlikable to his neighbours? Do you think it was for his personality or his appearance?

Appendix 5: 5th lesson plan

There are many Jewish holidays. Yom Kippur is the most significant one, because Jewish people get together and say sorry for the things they did wrong. People don't eat or drink during this holiday. It usually lasts for one day. Passover is a celebration of liberation of the Israelites from slavery. Hannukah lasts for 8 days, people light candles on a Menorah, which has 9 candles, but only 8 of them are lit up. On Hannukah, people play games and eat special food, like latkes, potato pancakes. Rosh Hashanah is similar to New Year's celebration. People eat good food, pray, and blow a special horn called shofar. Bar Mitzvah is a special celebration for Jewish boys who turn 13. On Bar Mitzvah, boys become men. At 12 years old, girls celebrate Bat Mitzvah, and it is also a celebration of adulthood.

Read the text and decide if these sentences are true or false:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Passover lasts more days than Hanukkah. | T/F |
| 2. Girls have their celebration of adulthood sooner than boys. | T/F |
| 3. People usually light up 8 candles on a Menorah. | T/F |
| 4. Yom Kippur is the most important Jewish holiday. | T/F |

Pick one of the mentioned holidays or celebration. In a group, think of how you would celebrate it. Think of the following:

- Who would you invite?
- Where would you want to have this celebration?
- What traditions, food, or customs would you add to it?

Now, think of creating your own holiday. Try to come up with the following:

- What is the name of the holiday?
- When is it celebrated?
- Why is it celebrated?
- What are some foods people eat on this holiday?
- What are the symbols of this holiday?

Resumé

Diplomová práce se zaměřuje na aplikaci poválečné židovsko-americké literatury v rámci výuky anglického jazyka. Analyzuje využití literárních děl židovsko-amerických autorů ve výuce anglického jazyka. Židovsko-americká literatura byla vybrána kvůli častému opomenutí navzdory svému literárnímu a kulturnímu vlivu na vývoj dějin Spojených států amerických, s důrazem na autory jako Bernard Malamud a Saul Bellow.

Struktura práce je rozdělena na dvě hlavní části. V teoretické části se nachází historie využití literatury v hodinách výuky cizího jazyka, negativní a pozitivní stránky využití literatury ve školních hodinách. Zároveň byla v teoretické části diplomové práce provedena analýza děl autorů, rozebrána historie židovského etnika v kontextu amerických dějin, stručná charakteristika židovského náboženství a možnosti použití děl v kontextu výuky anglického jazyka.

V druhé, praktické části je zkoumána možná aplikace tématu v reálném prostředí výuky anglického jazyka (ELT). Toto bylo provedeno pomocí vytvořením plánu hodin, které se soustředí především na rozvoj čtenářské kompetence. Díla zmíněných autorů byla v některých částech upravena pro daný věk žáků. Úryvky byly vybrány tak, aby co nejvíce reprezentovaly židovsko-americkou komunitu a zároveň byly pro žáky uchopitelné. Bylo vytvořeno 5 pracovních listů obsahujících úryvky z děl autorů, které byly podrobně rozebrány pomocí SWOT analýzy. Toto znamená odhalení předností pracovních listů, zápory, příležitosti a potenciální nebezpečí. Byla vytvořena tabulka s instrukcemi k každé aktivitě a rozebráním smyslu každé aktivity pro vývoj znalostí anglického jazyka. Kompetence a možnosti rozvoje čtenářských kompetencí odkazují na teoretickou část. Následně byl vytvořen seznam modifikací pro každou vyučovací hodinu, ať už se jedná o modifikaci v rámci technického vybavení či úrovně znalostí žáků.

Diplomová práce je uzavřena shrnutím, které popisuje výsledky výzkumu provedeného především díky podrobnému zkoumání literatury a internetových zdrojů.

Anotace

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Rok obhajoby:	2024

Název práce:	Využití poválečné americké židovské literatury ve výuce anglického jazyka
Název v angličtině:	The Use of Postwar American Jewish Literature in ELT
Anotace práce:	Diplomová práce se zabývá využitím poválečné židovské literatury ve výuce anglického jazyka. Zkoumá využití literatury ve výuce anglického jazyka a díla autorů jako je Bernard Malamud a Saul Bellow. Práce se dělí na dvě části, v první teoretické se nachází analýza děl autorů a využití literatury ve výuce anglického jazyka. Druhá, praktická část se věnuje možné aplikaci tématu v ELT.
Klíčová slova:	Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, literatura ve výuce anglického jazyka (ELT), americká židovská literatura, poválečná literatura
Anotace v angličtině:	The thesis explores the utilization of postwar American Jewish literature in English language teaching (ELT). It examines the use of literature in ELT and the works of authors such as Bernard Malamud and Saul Bellow. The thesis is divided into two parts: the first theoretical part includes an analysis of the authors' works and the utilization of literature in ELT, while the second practical part focuses on the potential application of the theme in ELT.
Klíčová slova v angličtině:	Bernard Malamud, Saul Bellow, literature in ELT, American Jewish literature, postwar literature

Přílohy vázané v práci:	Pracovní listy
Rozsah práce:	74 stran
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