

**71. Thaler, Engelbert. 2008. *Teaching English literature*. Paderborn: UTB, 242 pp., EUR 18.00.**

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Reading and literature play an important part in people's lives – and should do so in the English language classroom. Simile-minded people may be right when claiming that “reading is like an infectious disease – it is caught, not taught”. But teachers can create the virus and, by providing a literature-rich environment, make it grow.

This book intends to help teachers in pursuing this task. Being an introduction, it tries to discuss the main areas of teaching English literature in a comprehensible way, but cannot delve too deeply into each field. English literature does not only mean the literature of England or the British Isles, but all literature written in the English language. The book consists of four parts, comprising 12 chapters, so that university teachers may – if they wish to – devote one weekly meeting to one chapter, covering the whole contents in one term. The first part (basis) tries to answer the questions of what literature is and why, when, and where it

should be taught in foreign language classrooms. The second part discusses the competences that our students should develop in literature classes (knowledge, skills, attitudes). The main genres, i.e. novels, plays, poems and also short narrative forms (shorties), are at the focus of the third part. The final part goes beyond literature, exploring its relationship with modern media and discussing ways of assessing students' LCC (literary communicative competence).

This new type of textbook tries to give its addressees a brief and reader-friendly introduction to a new field of study. A didactically reflected structure, several graphical elements, concentration on the essential aspects, and a – hopefully – comprehensible diction aim at giving the reader a fast and comprehensive survey of the new field. In addition, every chapter starts with an awareness-raising pre-reading question, which often makes readers reflect on their own personal experiences, since teacher development and reflective teaching need to take the (future) teacher's learning biography into account. Moreover the book contains a lot of sample texts, which illustrate the argumentation and may stimulate the readers to try them out in their classes. The lesson plans for various levels are meant to serve the same purposes.

This book is written for university students (and their teachers), practising teachers and everybody interested in making people want to read.

#### References

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