Självständigt arbete på avancerad nivå
Independent degree project – second cycle

Huvudområde: Engelska
Major Subject: English

Applying Critical Literacy in Reading Literature
Interpreting and Linking "The Most Dangerous Game" and Cast Away to Colonial and Postcolonial Ideas in a Swedish Upper Secondary Class

Nadja Beden
Mittuniversitetet
Avdelning för humaniora

Examinator: Anders Olsson
Handledare: Martin Shaw
Författare: Nadja Beden

Utbildningsprogram: Independent Degree Project in Subject Didactic/Literature, 90 hp

Huvudområde: Engelska

Termin, år: Autumn, 2015
# Table of Contents

Introduction ................................................................................................................................. 2  
Background ................................................................................................................................. 2  
Aims and Theoretical Background ............................................................................................ 4  
Previous Research ...................................................................................................................... 6  
Results and Analysis ................................................................................................................. 7  
  The First Lesson: Interpreting the Picture ............................................................................... 7  
  The Fourth Lesson: Discussion Questions ............................................................................... 10  
  The Fourth Lesson: Written Summaries .................................................................................... 16  
  The Fifth Lesson: Written Assignments .................................................................................... 18  
  Students' Evaluation .................................................................................................................. 20  
Discussion .................................................................................................................................. 21  
Conclusion ................................................................................................................................... 24  
Work Cited .................................................................................................................................. 25  
Appendix I .................................................................................................................................... 27  
Appendix II ................................................................................................................................... 30  
Appendix III ............................................................................................................................... 31  
Appendix IV .................................................................................................................................. 32  
Appendix V .................................................................................................................................... 34  
Appendix VI ................................................................................................................................... 36  
Appendix VII .............................................................................................................................. 38  
Appendix VIII ............................................................................................................................. 41  
Appendix IX .................................................................................................................................. 43
Introduction

Studying different literary courses at the English department of Mid Sweden University inspired me to work with English literary didactics. Therefore, I decided to work with literary didactics with English as a foreign language (EFL) students in an upper secondary class (English 7) during my teaching training period. Accordingly, literary didactics became the topic of my essay. For this project, I chose two different texts from the castaway sub-genre. The first text is Richard Connell's short story “The Most dangerous Game” (1924). The story is about a hunter who is stranded on an island and is hunted by the inhabitant of the island. The second text is Robert Zemeckis' film Cast Away (2000), which tells the story of a man who is stranded on an uninhabited island. I also used a picture created by Sonia Marpez (1987) as means to introduce the castaway theme.

I chose the theme of castaway for this project because the students were familiar with castaway literature; they had read Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1791) in their Swedish lessons. Therefore, the students had already some knowledge of castaway literature before I started with the theme. The theme made it possible to choose some relevant colonial and postcolonial theoretical ideas. The students had to link these ideas to the two texts in their discussions and interpretations by means of guided questions that were related to the texts. Using these ideas can meet some criteria in the Swedish English 7 course curriculum that should cover “[t]heoretical and complex subject areas”. There were twenty-five students in the class, and I completed the project within five lessons of seventy minutes each.

Background

In this section, I will explain how the castaway sub-genre developed and how it is related to colonialism and postcolonialism. I will also introduce the short story and the film.

The narratives that I will call “castaway narratives” have a long history. According to Rebecca Weaver-Hightower, one of the first recognized narratives is Homer's Odyssey, which was written around the eighth century BC. This Greek epic poem focuses on the hero Odysseus who is marooned on an island by the nymph Calypso, leaving his wife Penelope and his son Telemachus behind. His people believe that he died, and therefore, suitors start to ask for Penelope's hand. However, they are doomed by the Gods. A further recognizable text is William Shakespeare's The Tempest that was written in 1611. The play tells the story of Prospero who is usurped by his brother and marooned on a desert island with his daughter Miranda. The postcolonial interpretation is presented by Prospero's dark servant Caliban, who
is the native inhabitant on the island. Caliban believes that Prospero has stolen the island from him and has a desire to free himself from Prospero and regain the island. This text was influenced by Columbus's late fifteenth-century travels and discoveries of the “New World” (Weaver-Hightower 2007, XIII).

After the publications of Daniel Defoe's *The Life and Strange Surprizing Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, Of York, Mariner: Who lived Eight and Twenty Years, all alone in an uninhabited Island on the Coast of America, near the Mouth of the Great River of Oronoque; Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, wherein all the Men perished but himself. With An Account how he was at last as strangely deliver'd by Pyrates in 1719*, castaway narratives became known as Robinsonades. According to Weaver-Hightower, this novel and other castaway stories “enabled the expansion and maintenance of European empire” (Weaver-Hightower 2007, IX). Castaway narratives reflect the European empire that colonized most of the world and represents the desire of “imperial aggression” (2007, IX). The castaway character is usually presented as a civilized man, who is stranded on a desert island. He struggles to survive on the limited resources of the island. Weaver-Hightower argues that these narratives are a prototype of European colonization of the New World (2007, XIV). Similar works of the castaway sub-genre were later adapted into different forms of media, such as television series, films and comics.

The two texts I chose for this study belong to the castaway sub-genre. “The Most Dangerous Game” (1924) is a short story, which was also published as “The Hounds of Zaroff” in the United States. This story is about a hunter, Rainsford, who is thrown from his yacht in the Caribbean Sea and swims to an island. He is then forced to play a hunting game with Zaroff, the inhabitant of the island. The story was adapted into a film in 1932 and has been an inspiration for several television series such as the *Criminal Minds*, episode “Open Season” (2007), and the trilogy *The Hunger Games* (Project Gutenberg 2016). I used the short story in the project to illustrate colonization, such as showing the difference between hunter/prey and dominator/dominated. The second work I chose for this project is Robert Zemeckis' film *Cast Away* (2000). Unlike the short story, the film is a typical Robinsonade and can be considered to be an adaptation of *Robinson Crusoe*. According to Weaver-Hightower in *Empire Islands*, the film reflects “an American-based neo-imperial fantasy [with a focus on] how the United States, which many see as the world's neo-imperial power, draws upon traditional colonial discourse” (2007, XXVIII). *Cast Away* tells the story of a man named Chuck who works for the federal express shipping company FedEx. He is stranded on an uninhabited island because of a plane crash. The film shows how he tries to find different
ways to survive on the limited resources of the island and from the remains of the plane's cargo.

Aims and Theoretical Background
The aim with this essay is to discuss and evaluate the lessons that I taught in my internship to see how the students responded to the two texts in relation to colonial and postcolonial ideas, and to evaluate their communicative competence during their discussions. The aims with the lessons that I had in class were to introduce the castaway sub-genre by means of two different media and to relate them to colonial and postcolonial ideas. Another aim was to develop the students' oral and written English. These aims met various criteria in the Swedish curriculum for the English 7 course, as students are required to work with literature and theoretical subject areas to learn about different cultural and historical conditions and to develop knowledge of the language.

Before I started with the project, I explained to the students that this project is part of my study. I also told them that I would use examples of their work in the study to analyze them, and that they would remain anonymous. When I started my training period, I gave these students an assignment to read F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby. After reading the book, they had to discuss in groups five discussion questions related to the book. I explained to the students that their oral discussions of the novel and the castaway project would not be graded. However, they had to answer one discussion question from the novel and one from the castaway project, but they had to choose one answer to be graded by their English subject teacher.

I generally depended on the theory of critical literacy, which helped me to attain the aim of understanding a text in terms of values. Critical literacy helps students learn to reflect on reading to understand specific societal issues: “Critical literacy is the ability to read texts in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships” (Coffey 2008). Through communication and discussion, students interpret the text and relate it to society in order to be able to create a deeper understanding of their social world. These texts come in the form of novels, films, pictures, songs and even conversations. By applying colonial and postcolonial ideas, the students were able to learn more about the notions of inequality and injustice.

The project focused on two main terms colonialism and postcolonialism. Colonialism means “the conquest and control of other people's land and goods” (Loomba 2005, 8).
Colonialism created tremendous cultural, social and economic differences between the colonizer and the colonized, and created “racial differences” (2005, 145). Postcolonialism, on the other hand, deals with the effect of colonialism on cultures and societies (2005, 12). One of the issues postcolonial studies have been engaged with is hybridity that focuses on “the in-betweenness ... and cross-overs of ideas and identities generated by colonialism” (2005, 145). Through colonial interaction, the identities of the colonized and the colonizer are influenced by each other, affecting their cultures, languages, religions and beliefs. The students compared the characters of the two texts in relation to colonialism and postcolonialism to learn about the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and ideas related to inequality and injustice.

Moreover, reader-response theory is to be used in this essay to theorize how the students responded to the two texts. Reader-response theory is a literary theory that focuses on how the reader reacts when reading literature (Davis 2002, 51). By means of introducing colonialism/postcolonialism, I was able to highlight specific ideas. These ideas helped the students to understand and interpret the two texts in relation to societal perspectives. Louise Rosenblatt indicates that one of the intentions of reading is efferent reading. Efferent reading happens when the reader focuses on the knowledge and the experiences gained after the reading process to reflect on what has been learned from the text (2002, 55). Jonathan Culler describes how the reading process is an interaction between the reader and the text. What the reader understands and interprets depends on the reader's experience (2002, 60). Accordingly, through their interpretations, the students produced new texts, when they linked the texts to colonization. I referred to Roland Barthes’ poststructuralist theory to show how the students' texts were new products. This theory shows how the reader responds to reading. In his article “The Death of the Author” (1967), Barthes argues that during reading, the reader focuses on the text itself, omitting the role of the author. Through interpretation, the reader, and in this case the students, becomes the producer of the text.

I wanted the students to discuss the picture by Sonia Marpez and the two texts so that they would interact with each other, which helped them to develop their cognitive learning. Consequently, I used theories of constructivism that explain the nature of learning in the classroom. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory focuses on “the social environment as a facilitator of development and learning” (Schunk 2004, 291). Social, cultural and historical interaction enables the learner to develop skills and knowledge, which leads to cognitive development. Another constructivist theory is Jerome Bruner's cognitive theory that is based on constructivism and behaviourism, which shows that teaching is based on cognitive
development. Cognitive processes deal with the relationship between the stimulus (from the teacher) and response (from the students) (2004, 451). Castaway theme and colonial and postcolonial ideas worked as scaffolding materials to the interpretations of the picture and the two texts. Additionally, group discussions were scaffolding materials associated with the written activities. Bandura's scaffolding technique was applied, “in which a teacher initially models a skill, provides support, and gradually reduces aid as learners develop the skill” (2004, 298). The teacher becomes a supporting model during the learning process to help the learners develop their learning.

I incorporated group discussions into the lessons to develop the students' communicative competence. Communicative competence theories helped me to fulfill the aim of developing the students use of English language and to form certain strategies in speaking, discussing and analyzing. There are four elements that are integrated into communicative competence, “grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence” (Savignon 2002, 8). Grammatical competence is the ability to use the grammatical structure of the language in discussion, negotiation and interpretation. Discourse competence involves the ability to use the language in forming oral or written discourse in a meaningful form. Sociocultural competence focuses on the social context of the language, which deals with the ability to use the language considering cultural differences through sharing information and interacting in different situations. With practice, grammatical, discourse, and sociocultural competences are achieved and the strategic competence decreases, because the learner shows the ability to use strategies (10). Strategic competence happens when the students ask questions during communication to get support from the teacher or from other students. Strategic competence also happens by the teacher's interaction and support to enable the students to interpret, negotiate and express meanings during communications.

**Previous Research**

A great deal of research has been carried out in the field of literary didactics because studying literature is an important approach to language learning. In this section, I will present some relevant research regarding literary didactics that I will use later in the essay.

Ronald Carter and Christopher Brumfit are the authors of *Literature and Language Teaching* (1986). Carter wrote in an article that he and Brumfit discussed the choice of literature taught to ESL learners. They discussed how and why specific texts should be
chosen, and whether or not these texts would be read in the future. He states that “[l]iterary theory has embraced many topics, including the nature of an author’s intentions, the character and measurement of the responses of a reader, and the specific textuality of a literary text” (Carter 2007, 5). Literary theory helps the teacher to select appropriate literary texts that can be used in the classroom. These texts should help the students to develop their language and help them to learn about societal values. This article will be used in this essay to show how the students’ different interpretations were based on how they focused on the text.

In his degree project, *Reading Heart of Darkness in the ESL/EFL Classroom*, Steven Brinkley writes about literary didactic methods in an upper secondary class to examine how students responded to literature when reading Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899). The study focuses on how the students responded to literature, and how they learned from literature through suitable instructional scaffolding. The study also shows how reading literature enriches the aesthetic experience of these students. I refer to this degree project in my essay to discuss how efferent reading was essential in reflecting on reading.

**Results and Analysis**

In this section, I will write about a selection of the students’ interpretations of the picture, which was used in a warm up activity, the short story and the film. The theories I used in this essay to analyze the students’ interpretations helped me to select these examples. I will divide this section into five sub-sections. In the first four sub-sections, I will analyze examples of the students’ interpretations of the picture and the two texts. Then, in the final sub-section, I will write about the students’ evaluation of the lessons.

**The First Lesson: Interpreting the Picture**

Interpreting the picture was a warm up activity before working with the short story and the film. The aim with this activity was to introduce the theme and prepare the students to interpret a text. I started my first lesson by introducing a picture of a human figure standing in a glass. There were drops of water on the glass, and the glass was partially filled with water and positioned at an angle on a sandy beach. I divided the students into six groups with four or five students in each group. I formed heterogeneous groups, or “mixed-ability groups” (Schunk 2004, 308). Schunk argues that heterogeneous groups offer equal chances to all the students to learn, and create motivation in each group, because “[l]ow achievers especially benefit from small-group work because contributing to the group's success engenders feeling
of self-efficacy” (2004, 308). Low achievers are motivated if they feel that their contribution has added new information to the discussion. The high achievers can also motivate the low achievers, if they encourage them to contribute by asking them questions or by giving them responsibility to add new information to the discussion. Low achievers can also motivate the high achievers, if they seek help from them.

I asked the students to answer and discuss the following three questions that are related to the picture:

1. Who is the person in the picture?
2. Does the setting affect the mood of the picture?
3. What is happening to this person?

The term “mood” was familiar to these students because their English subject teacher had introduced it to them previously. When the students finished discussing the questions, I asked each group to summarize its interpretation orally to the whole class. The interpretations were not related to the castaway theme because the theme had not been introduced at this time. All the students thought that the person in the picture would be a man. Most of the students indicated that the setting of the picture creates a sad and depressing mood because the picture was in black and white. For example, group 1 stated that the person is a male poet in his thirties. The drops of water on the glass make the world turn and shift in the wrong direction, and this person is looking for inspiration. Group 6 said that the drops of water on the glass and the black and white colours of the picture give a sad mood. They also said that the picture represents loneliness. Group 4 stated that the man is trapped inside himself and he is drowning. These preliminary interpretations show the students' basic knowledge and experiences before learning about the castaway theme. According to structuralists, this picture is treated as a text, because they reject “the term work in favor of text in order to demonstrate the ways in which literary study operates as a text-centered mode of interpretation” (Davis, 2002, 58). In this sense, the students were considering the picture as a text with cultural meanings, and their interpretations were related to their cultural experiences. In the context of the students' interpretations, this would mean that the text carries “various cultural codes” (2002, 58). The setting of the picture, such as the black and white colours, the drops of water and the position of the person, carry various cultural codes that made the students interpret it accordingly.

Moreover, the different interpretations indicate that the students reflected on the text through their cultural experiences. Culler argues that “readers can produce a wide range of variant interpretations of a given literary work depending on their experiences both as readers
of literature and as members of the larger human community” (Davis 2002, 61). The reception and understanding of literature/text depends on the reader's previous knowledge and experiences, which reflects various interpretations and analyses of the text (2002, 60). The students' various interpretations of the text reflect their experiences as members of their society.

After the groups had finished interpreting the picture, I introduced to the class the castaway theme, and colonialism and postcolonialism (Appendix I). I also explained that the colonizer/colonized is a binary opposition, like two sides of a coin. Then, I gave some examples of other binary oppositions that are related to colonialism, such as white man/black man, dominator/dominated, and civilized/savage. I also explained that the dominant relationship between the colonizer and the colonized creates injustice when the colonizer forces the colonized to accept the colonizer's culture and adapt to it. I mentioned that Defoe's Robinson Crusoe was an example of this kind of literature, since the students had read this book in their Swedish lessons. This lecture took fifteen minutes and it was given by means of a Prezi presentation. Using Prezi helped me to keep the student focused and to remember the important points of my lecture. At the end of the lecture, I showed the students the picture again and asked them if the contents of the lecture had changed their interpretation. They started to discuss the picture in groups, and they were able to link the information mentioned in my lecture to the picture. After they finished discussing the picture in groups, I asked each group to summarize the discussion to the class. The final class interpretation ended up in determining that the man is colonized by the island because he is trapped in the glass and the island is uncultivated and uninhabited. The different perspective that I had added helped the students to construct new knowledge based on their previous knowledge. In other words, I applied a scaffolding technique to influence the learning process in this classroom: “Scaffolding is appropriate when a teacher wants to provide students with some information ... so that they can concentrate on the part of the task they are attempting to master” (Schunk 2004, 298). The students were able to interpret the picture, but after I applied the scaffolding technique by introducing castaway characteristics and colonial ideas, they added new perspectives to their interpretation.

The students' different interpretations of the picture were based on their knowledge, and not on the creator of the picture. However, the picture was interpreted differently after I introduced new information about castaway and colonialism/postcolonialism. The new interpretation shows that the students were creating a new text in relation to the new information. It also means that the photographer or the creator's intention is absent, just as
Barthes suggests that “the text is ... written and read so that in it, on every level, the Author absents himself” (Barthes 1967, 4). Barthes claims that reading happens through an interaction between the reader and the text that excludes the creator of the text. The reader separates the work from its creator and interprets it according to her/his experiences.

At the end of the lesson, I gave the students handouts of my lecture (Appendix I), as scaffolding material. These are “prepared handouts that contain ... content-related information, but with less detail and room for student note taking” (Northern Illinois University, n.d., 2). I also gave the students copies of the short story “The Most Dangerous Game” and five discussion questions related to the story. The questions enabled the students to compare between the two main characters of the story, Rainsford and Zaroff, in relation to the binary pairs hunter/prey and colonizer/colonized. They also helped the students to analyze the island in relation to the castaway theme. I gave the students one week to read the story and told them that they would watch the film Cast Away during the next two combined lessons and discuss it in class with the short story during the fourth lesson. The students started reading the short story first because I wanted them to use only their imagination in reading. The film came as a next step to connect their imagination with their visual senses. The original plan was to discuss the short story in class and then watch the film, but I had to change the plan, due to some changes in the school plan to celebrate the United Nations Day.

The Fourth Lesson: Discussion Questions

The students watched the film Cast Away during the second and third combined lessons, and then discussed the two sets of discussion questions (Appendices II and III) during the fourth lesson. I designed the questions according to the aims of the project to enable the students to analyze the two texts in relation to the castaway theme and colonialism/postcolonialism. The questions also helped the students to compare the film with the short story to offer more understanding to the two texts. The same groups were used as in the first lesson, in order to give a feeling of continuity in the discussions. However, only one member of group 4 attended the fourth lesson, and this student was asked to join group 3. I asked the groups to appoint one member to summarize their discussions in written form. Summarizing the discussions helps the students to learn to summarize and these summaries worked as a reference for me when writing this essay. In this sub-section, I will analyze examples from the students’ discussions.

One student in group 3 explained the colonial ideas to the group. S/he compared Chuck with Robinson Crusoe, and Wilson (Chuck made Wilson from a volleyball to talk to “him”
with Friday in relation to colonizer/colonized. S/he said that Wilson's existence is a way to connect Chuck to civilization because Chuck conversed with him in English. Therefore, Wilson kept Chuck from being alone and going insane. S/he added that Wilson is colonized because Chuck created him. S/he also said that Wilson and Friday are both colonized through language; Crusoe taught Friday English and Chuck leads the conversation in English. The colonizer's language is used in communication, which proves that Crusoe and Chuck dominate Friday and Wilson respectively. This interpretation indicates that this student gave new meanings to the text that are related to colonialism. Reader-response theory focuses on the role of the reader in interpreting a text in which the construction of the text helps the reader to produce meanings (Davis 2002, 51). Reader-response theory is based on structuralism when “things cannot be understood in isolation — they have to be seen in the context of the larger structures they are part of” (Barry 2009, 38). The language of the text contains certain meanings and messages that connect the reader with the text. These meanings and messages enable the reader to understand and interpret the text. The construction of the text may be the same, but when the students interpreted it the first time they arrived at an interpretation(s), but when the colonial/postcolonial ideas were introduced a different reader-response was produced. The student in this example took the role of teacher when explaining these ideas to her/his group.

In addition, by linking the two texts, the student produced a new text that included a comparison between the two texts. Barthes argues that “the goal of literary work (of literature as work) is to make the reader no longer a consumer, but a producer of the text” (Davis 2002, 58). The reader is in direct contact with the text and through her/his interpretations, a new text is produced. Barthes also argues that the reader makes new meanings from the text when decoding cultural, ideological and historical codes (2002, 59). When this student related the text to colonialism, s/he deciphered the cultural codes of the texts and showed their meanings.

Furthermore, this student proved that s/he learned about societal issues from the two texts. I explained earlier in my lecture that the relationship between the colonized and the colonizer creates racism and injustice. This student referred to what I said when s/he explained that the relationship between Chuck and Wilson created injustice, because Chuck controls Wilson through conversation. Critical literacy skills enable the students to “learn to acknowledge the unfair privileging of certain dominant discourses in which society engages” (Coffey 2008). Students learn about the social context of the text when linking them to social issues. The short story and the film work as scaffolding materials in explaining social issues in this case. Critical literacy helps students to develop the ability to read the codes of different
texts, such as novels, films, songs, pictures. Critical literacy theorists are also concerned with “social injustice and inequalities” (Coffey 2008), which is the topic of many literary texts. Furthermore, Paulo Freire confirms that students in class should be given the opportunity to discuss injustice and inequality in a text to construct new knowledge and to understand the social world (Coffey 2008). Critical literacy enabled this student in this example to understand certain social situations, such as racism and injustice, and to react to them by showing her/his opinion during group discussions.

One of the scaffolding techniques I used was my interaction with the students during their discussions. Sometimes I felt that I needed to add a comment or a question to support and guide the students in their interpretations: “The need to implement a scaffold will occur when you realize a student is not progressing on some aspect of a task or unable to understand a particular concept” (Northern Illinois University, n.d., 1). For example, I was listening to group 5 while they were discussing Cast Away's fifth question. This question was to discuss why Chuck did not open the FedEx box that is marked with wings and what the wings symbolized. The members of this group related the unopened FedEx box to hope and survival, but they were struggling to interpret the meaning of the wings. I had to guide them in their discussion by asking them what they thought the wings symbolize in general. They said that they symbolize freedom. This answer helped them to decide that Chuck kept the box with the wings unopened because the wings were his hope of freedom. This question was a scaffold that made the students understand the meaning of the wings to help them arrive at an answer to the question.

Furthermore, through interaction and discussion, group 2 students related “hybridity” to Chuck's transformations and explained Rainsford's transformation. When these students were discussing the second question of Cast Away (Appendix III), they asked me to explain the word “hybridity”, and when I did, one student was able to relate Chuck's transformation to hybridity and explained it to the group. S/he said that sleeping on the floor after he was rescued is a sign of hybridity. After a short discussion, they became more familiar with the term hybridity. When they tried to compare Rainsford's transformation to Chuck's, one student decided that Rainsford was not transformed because he only spent a short time on the island, while the rest of the group did not have an answer. When I asked them to relate “hunter/huntee” (Connell, 1924, 2) to Rainsford's transformation, they started to respond. They indicated that Rainsford was transformed from hunter to huntee and probably to hunter again at the end of the story because the short story has a relatively open ending. This incident shows that the learning process happened through social interaction. Vygotsky's sociocultural
theory “stresses the interaction of interpersonal (social), cultural-historical, and individual factors as the key to human development” (Schunk 2004, 294). Learning happens through social interaction within the social and cultural environment, and social interaction develops cognitive growth. Through social interaction, the group members were able to understand “hybridity” and relate it to the text. The students’ interaction helped them to answer the question and to understand the two texts deeper.

Participating actively in group discussions shows a development in communicative competence. Almost all the students participated actively in group discussions. Two students in different groups were mostly listening to the discussions of the members of their groups. However, this does not mean that these two students were not interested or were unable to participate. Sandra Savignon claims that “[t]hose who often remain silent in larger groups may participate more easily in pair work. Or they may prefer to work on an individual project” (Savignon 2002, 13). These students may know a great deal, but for some reason, they choose not to participate in discussions because they might be quiet students or shy. In her research, Savignon argues that communicative language became one of the important learning aspects in the classroom, because students develop their language through communication. She also states that competence is the ability to express, interpret and negotiate in relation to psycholinguistic and sociocultural perspectives (2002, 1). She uses the term communication competence “to characterize the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, as distinct from their ability to recite dialogues or perform on discrete-point tests of grammatical knowledge” (2002, 3). Savignon claims that the classroom model consists of four essential and interrelated components of communicative competence, which are grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence (2002, 8). The four components cannot be developed in isolation; rather they interact with each other and develop the communicative competence of the learner as a whole. I will explain each competence when I analyze examples of the students’ discussions.

During the group discussions, all the students discussed the questions in English. They were motivated to speak English because their English subject teacher is American and communicates with them in English. The film’s third question is about describing how nature influenced Chuck’s survival on the island and comparing it to Rainsford’s survival in the short story. I was listening to one of the students in group 3 discussing the answer and then s/he wrote what s/he said in the summary:
We see that both characters have counterparts to their persons that help them evolve. However, Rainsford counterpart is hostile, forcing him to adapt more quickly than Chuck. Despite this, Chuck was on his island for four years as opposed to Rainsford, Chuck had to adapt more drastically, finding food and water. (Group 3, Nov. 2)

This student showed an ability to use a number of advanced words, such as counterpart, evolve, hostile and drastically. S/he was also able to use the correct structure of the language in recognizing the “lexical, morphological, syntactical and phonological features of a language and to make use of those features to interpret and form words and sentences” (Savignon 2002, 9). In other words, the student showed grammatical competence in being able to use the language in a correct way “by using a rule in the interpretation, expression or negotiation of meaning” (2002, 9). S/he was speaking the language automatically without thinking about the grammatical rules.

Correspondingly, progressive discourse competence was evident among all the groups in the oral discussions. For example, one student in group 2 compared the two texts and told the members of her/his group that in the film you get to understand Chuck's feelings and reactions easily through his facial expressions and through his tone of voice. However, in the short story, it is hard to learn about Rainsford's feelings because we only depend on the tone of the written text. Savignon states that discourse competence is concerned with “the interconnectedness of a series of utterances or written words or phrases to form a text, a meaningful whole” (2002, 9). This student has developed discourse competence because s/he has the ability to differentiate and interpret different texts, the film and the short story. S/he also showed an ability to identify isolated sounds or words that helped her/him to interpret the overall meaning of the text. According to Savignon, this is “button-up processing” (2002, 9).

At the same time, s/he showed an understanding of the castaway theme in relation to colonialism, which Savignon identifies as “top-down processing” (2002, 9). Both kinds of processing are related to discourse competence, which is fundamental in communicative competence. It is the ability to know how to use the language in different contexts, such as in a conversation, a poem, an e-mail message, or a novel. Discourse competence also includes the ability to deeply understand and interpret different texts. This student was able to compare between the two kinds of literature, film and short story.

Another interesting example was that some students switched to Swedish during group discussions. For example, group 6 members switched to Swedish when they tried to find the meaning of the Swedish word “förhålla sig”. Then they switched back to English after they found the right word to proceed with their discussion. Their native language supported them
in finding the appropriate English word. Another example was that group 2 members switched to Swedish when they discussed something about another lesson. When they finished their conversation, they continued discussing the question in English. The students in this project are non-native English speakers, and therefore, the focus on sociocultural competence is essential in this class. Switching between two languages indicates a developed sociocultural competence. The students showed an “understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share, and the function of the interaction” (Savignon 2002, 9). They kept their discussions in English, but when they needed to talk about something that was not related to the subject, or that was related to their culture, they switched to Swedish.

What must also be mentioned is that when I introduced the castaway theme, I used special words and expressions in relation to the theme, such as castaway, colonized/colonizer, stranded, survival, transformation, hunter and so on. The students knew that these English words belong to the theme, and cannot be translated to Swedish, which made them accept to perform their discussions in English. In other words, they realized that these words carried social contexts or codes in the English language. Similarly, when they switched to Swedish, they needed to use social codes that are related to the language. Therefore, code switching, as when people speak a mixture of two languages, came automatically without thinking. In addition to code switching, bilingual speakers show differences “in the semantic meanings attributed to different encodings contribute to identification with a speech community or culture, the way a speech community views itself and the world” (Savignon 2002, 17-18). Bilingual speakers usually switch between two languages because they are aware of the social and cultural rules of both languages. The students in this example were aware of the cultural differences during their negotiation and interpretation.

As the students gained competence in grammar, discourse and sociocultural through practice and experience, the importance of strategic competence decreases (2002, 10). This does not mean that they do not need strategies in communication, rather “the effective use of coping strategies is important for communicative competence in all contexts and distinguishes highly effective communicators from those who are less so” (2002, 10). The students in this class used coping strategies during their discussions to help them communicate, such as asking questions and seeking help from each other and from the teacher, and using their native language for support. In addition, the developed way of thinking and their background knowledge of the language are also seen as coping strategies.
The Fourth Lesson: Written Summaries

Writing summaries helped the students to learn to sum up and focus on the important points they discussed. In addition, these summaries became references for me in writing this essay. The members of each group read and discussed what they should include in their summaries. In this sub-section I will analyze examples of the students' summaries.

When I explained colonialism during the first lesson, I explained the notion of “binary opposition” such as colonizer/colonized, which was not written in the “Castaway Literature” handout (Appendix I). I explained that colonizer/colonized is a binary opposition like two sides of the same coin, and that one cannot exist without the other. Then I gave other examples of binary oppositions in relation to the theme, such as white man/ black man, dominator/dominated, Self/Other and civilized/savage. The first discussion question of the short story was to discuss what Rainsford said: “The world is made up of two classes - the hunters and the huntees” (Connell 1924, 2). The students had to relate “hunter/huntee” to the binary colonizer/colonized. The members of group 5 related the two sets of binary oppositions hunter/huntee and colonizer/colonized to humans/animals, and analyzed them according to the events of the plot. They wrote:

In the beginning
hunters - humans - colonizer
huntees - animals - colonized
During
Rainsford - hunted/colonized (equal to other animals)
General Zaroff - hunter/colonizer
In the end
Rainsford - hunter/colonizer
General Zaroff - hunted/colonized (Group 5, Nov. 2)

The members of this group then referred to lines from the beginning of the story explaining how Rainsford does not have any consideration for his prey's feelings of fear; and therefore, he is seen as a colonizer. They also explained how Rainsford behaves defensively like an animal during the hunt with Zarrof. The members of this group were all active and showed a good understanding of the text in relating it to cultural issues. According to Rosenblatt, efferent reading is “a reading strategy in which the reader focuses attention upon the traces of knowledge and data that will remain after the event [of reading]” (Davis 2002, 55). This new knowledge is based on the experiences and the knowledge of the reader. The members of this group gained knowledge and experiences from reading when referring to colonizer/colonized and humans/animals respectively. Furthermore, the students used the binary opposition humans/animals as symbols in relation to the binary oppositions hunter/huntee and
colonizer/colonized. Rosenblatt argues that “[e]ifferent readers reflect upon the verbal symbols in literature” (2002, 55). They try to analyze the meaning of the symbols in the text to find out what they represent, and what they contribute to the text. Efferent reading “is essential to an understanding of how a student will engage with a text in the English language” (Brinkley 2014, 5). The reader focuses on certain elements in the text in order to help her/him reflect on reading. The members of this group used the binary opposition humans/animals in their interpretation to show a deeper understanding of the text in relation to cultural issues.

Moreover, group 1 deconstructed one of the binary oppositions in their discussion. When answering “The Most Dangerous Game’s” fifth question that asked the students to compare between Rainsford and Zaroff and relate them to colonizer/colonized, the group wrote in the summary: “They're both white privileged people and hunters. Zaroff was the colonizer in the beginning, but at the end, when Rainsford kills Zaroff, he becomes the colonizer” (Group 1, Nov. 2). The members of this group related their answer to the binary oppositions white man/black and hunter/huntee, but they developed it by partially collapsing the binary. They deconstructed the binary based on their analysis of the text. Bandura argues that “[s]caffolding is appropriate when a teacher wants to provide students with some information or to complete parts of tasks for them so that they can concentrate on the part of the task they are attempting to master” (Schunk 2004, 298). The teacher's role in the class is a supportive role to guide the students in their learning process. The binary oppositions colonizer/colonized and white man/black man that I mentioned in my lecture worked as scaffolding materials. However, these students presented developed analyses when they deconstructed the binaries, focusing on the white man, the hunter and the colonizer by explaining that the colonizer is the white man and a hunter.

Another example of scaffolding was when I asked group 2 to relate the castaway theme to a scene in the beginning of the film, where Chuck says to the FedEx employees: “Time rules over us without mercy, not caring if we're healthy or ill, hungry or drunk ... It's like a fire. It could either destroy us or keep us warm. That's why every FedEx office has a clock. Because we live or we die by the clock” (Zemeckis 2000, 00:05:00-00:05:17). The students were able to relate time to civilization, as they wrote in their summaries: “Time is important in civilization, on the island it was not important” (Group 2, Nov. 2). Furthermore, the students' answer to this question shows cognitive development. Bruner argues that cognitive processes mediate the relationship between stimulus and response (Schunk 2004, 451). Stimulus-response phenomenon is behavioural learning that collaborates with constructive learning, which contributes to the learning process. My question was considered as a stimulus,
and the students' answer was a response (answer). In addition, Bruner argues that “learners assign meaning to stimuli and events based on their cognitive capabilities and experiences with the social and physical environment” (2004, 454). When the students in this group related time to civilization, they considered time as an important element. The question was a way to relate literature to the students’ personal experiences.

**The Fifth Lesson: Written Assignments**

During the fifth lesson, I asked the students to choose one discussion question from the two sets of questions, the film and the short story, and answer it in detail in written form. Sixteen students out of twenty-five submitted their assignments. Six of them answered one question from “The Most Dangerous Game”, whereas ten students answered one question from *Cast Away*. Six out of these ten students answered the first question: “Wilson's existence is important to Chuck while he is stranded on the island. What does Wilson represent in terms of survival? Is there a colonizer/colonized relationship between them? Explain”. The written assignments reflected what the students learned from the earlier lessons. The students' written texts are evidences of what the students learned at the end of the learning process.

The students' written texts were developments of their oral discussions. Group discussions enabled the students to learn from each other and to gain more knowledge and understanding of the texts. As a result, their written answers incorporated developed analyses, because they included information from these oral discussions. Therefore, I consider all the previous lessons as scaffolds to the written assignment. For example, one student wrote: “Wilson is created from the subconscious of Chuck, and he somewhere thought that he had to test [the rope] first, just like he was obsessed with testing and being on time when he worked at FedEx” (Appendix I). He compared how Chuck tested the rope and the tree before hanging himself (unsuccessfully) from the tree, and how he sent the clock to himself at the beginning of the film when he worked for FedEx, to see how much time it would take to arrive. This student had discussed this comparison earlier in her/his, which shows that this student benefitted from the group discussions and used the information as scaffolding material when answering the question in written form. The first stage of scaffolding starts with instructions from the instructor or the teacher. The second stage is when “[t]he instructor and the students ... work together to perform the task” (Northern Illinois University n.d., 1). For example, when I asked the students to interpret the picture with the help of the information I provided about the castaway theme, they used the information to interpret the picture. The third stage is when the group work together to add information, which becomes scaffolding material in the
students' independent work (1). This student received different scaffolds to reach to the final stage of learning.

The students interpreted the texts differently because they focused on different aspects during reading. One student wrote that Chuck is colonized by Wilson, because Chuck needs Wilson's company on the isolated island. S/he added that the colonized wishes to free himself from the colonizer, and as a result “[h]e throws Wilson out of the cave that is now their home and is for a second relieved that his colonizer is gone but immediately regrets it and panics” (Appendix V). Another student did not think that this relationship is colonizer/colonized, but it is “finding a way to stay sane in complete isolation from human contact, so he makes a friend in the volleyball Wilson” (Appendix VI, 1). This student believed that Chuck created Wilson to be connected to civilization through conversation. S/he did not see their relationship as colonizer/colonized, but focused on the “survival” aspect of the castaway theme, instead of the survival and colonization aspect. S/he analyzed with a particular perspective in relation to the theme. A third student compared her/his own experience to the relationship between Chuck and Wilson: “I think it’s worth noting that it also show how easily we can bond with inanimate objects, name them and have “real” feelings for them”. I know I used to name my bikes, I had my favorite Lego characters that I talked with, and so on” (Appendix VI, 1). This student compared Chuck to himself and used her/his own experience in relation to the text. The three students used different approaches in their analyses. Carter argues that “work in literary theory has focused attention on what it means to read and what is entailed in processes of reading” (Carter 2007, 7). Readers understand and interpret a text differently, which depends on what they focus on during reading. The students in these examples focused on different aspects, and as a result, they interpreted the text differently. The first student related the text to cultural issues of colonialism. The second student interpreted the text in relation to psychological and societal issues, whereas the third student interpreted the text in relation to her/his personal experience.

Some students in this class were able to use literary analysis in their reading. They were able to use codes that helped them to analyze the two texts. For example, a student showed an ability to analyze the characters of the short story in relation to colonizer/colonized. S/he analyzed the characters according to the sequence of events to illustrate and explain their roles. Barthes defines five codes of reading in constructing meanings. The proairetic code affords the reader with information about the plot. The hermeneutic code is concerned in posing questions and enigmas to solve the suspense of the plot (Barry 2009, 49). For example, a student wrote: “Raindsford didn't colonized him but he did something Zaroff never been
through before, he hunted him” (Appendix VIII, 1). This student had a good understanding of the plot that enabled her/him to observe and analyze the conflict between Rainsford and Zaroff. It is obvious that this student was able to separate the two expressions hunter and colonizer. The cultural code is Barthes' third code that focuses on the cultural context of the text (Barry 2009, 49). The student in this example was able to link the symbols hunter/huntee to cultural issues using the contrasts colonizer/colonized. The semic or connotative code is linked to the theme of the text and offers a framework for understanding the construction of the characters in literature. The symbolic code, which is also linked to the theme, contains binary polarities, such as male and female or good and evil (2009, 49-50). For instance, this student had a good knowledge of the theme that enabled her/him to understand the role of the characters and their intentions in the story in relation the binary oppositions. According to structuralists, symbolic codes help the reader to perceive reality (2009, 50). The student in this example used Barthes' five codes in reading the short story. S/he was able to analyze the narrative structure by dividing her/his reading into sections so that s/he could understand the texts in relation to cultural issues.

**Students' Evaluation**

At the end of the practical project, I gave the students a questionnaire that I made to evaluate the lessons. The questionnaire was designed to evaluate the appropriateness of the texts, the theme, the colonial and postcolonial ideas and the discussion questions. In addition, it asked the students to evaluate my instructions, the oral discussions, and the written assignments. I received responses from twenty-one students out of twenty-five. Seventy-one percent indicated that the discussion questions for each text were appropriate for their level. Fifty-two percent indicated that the colonial and postcolonial ideas were appropriate for their level, whereas thirty-three percent indicated that these ideas were too easy, and fourteen percent indicated that they were too difficult. Those who found difficulties with colonialism/postcolonialism wrote that the ideas were new to them, and that they needed more information about them.

I needed to explain the castaway theme and colonial and postcolonial ideas in more detail and give more examples, because these ideas were new to the students. I also noticed that many of them could not work with some of the new concepts without my help, such as “hybridity”. When I planned for the project, I referred to the English 7 course in the Swedish school curriculum that should cover “[t]heoretical and complex subject areas”. I also referred
to Mid Sweden University English A course, where themes are introduced without stating that they are related to theories, such as hybridity. Therefore, I introduced simple and basic ideas that were suitable for the students' level of English. Forty percent of the students rated the lessons as good, and fifty-seven percent rated them as average. Only one student rated the lessons as poor. From my observations of the students' participation during group discussions, I could tell that the majority were active in discussing the questions, which indicates that the materials were suitable for them.

Furthermore, fifty-two percent of the students wrote that they liked the oral discussions most because they learned from each other. Thirty-eight percent wrote that the instructions were a bit confusing, stating that there were several tasks to follow and different materials and information to work with, such as the two texts and the colonial and postcolonial ideas. One student thought that *The Great Gatsby* assignment that we did in class earlier was part of this project. The procedures used in this assignment were very similar to the procedures used in the castaway project: we read the book, discussed in groups the five discussion questions and then answered one question in writing. The procedures of the project, which were similar, and therefore familiar to the students, obviously confused this student instead of helping her/him.

Although I kept telling the students who wrote the group summaries during the discussions that the summaries were to be written briefly so that they could focus on the discussions. These students indicated that it was too much work for them to write and discuss at the same time. Even though the members of each group discussed what would be in the summaries, the students who were in charge of writing the summaries indicated that writing and discussing at the same time was not easy for them. It did not occur to me that I needed to instruct the students about how to write summaries.

**Discussion**

In this section, I will discuss the results and reflect on what happened as a whole during the lessons. The students' interpretations mentioned in this essay are just a few examples of what actually happened in class. Nevertheless, these examples indicate that the students were able to reflect on what they read by linking the castaway theme and colonial and postcolonial ideas to the texts. I used the method of critical literacy when working with the picture, the short story and the film. This method helped the students to read the texts actively and reflect on their reading to understand “power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships” (Coffey
Students can understand the message of the text when using critical literacy method in their reading.

I was planning to form the groups according to gender: groups of male students, groups of female students and groups of mixed genders, but there were only five males out of twenty-five students. Therefore, it would have been difficult to form groups so that a gendered analysis could be undertaken. A further option was to form homogeneous groups, where low achievers would work together to motivate each other, but their teacher and I thought that heterogeneous groups would be more effective that would offer equal opportunities to all the students. Therefore, I decided to make “heterogeneous cooperative groups and peer interaction where possible to ensure that differences in ability do not translate into differences in motivation and learning” (Schunk 2004, 308). However, I could still see that the low achievers were not as active as the high achievers, but many of them were motivated and their written assignments proved that they did learn from the oral discussions.

In this class, there were twenty girls and only five boys. In average, the girls participated actively, unlike the boys how performed differently. One of the boys only attended when the film was shown, and refused to attend other lessons. One boy attended all the lessons, but did not participate in the discussions; he was only listening. I tried to encourage him to participate by asking him questions, but he only answered my questions without adding more. Two boys attended all the lessons and were active during group discussions. One boy did not attend the first lesson, but he was very active summarizing the discussions of his group and taking the leader role in his group. His English subject teacher said that if this student likes the subject, he tries to do his best. For example, when I asked the students to summarize the discussions as a whole class at the end of the fourth lesson, he stated that Zarrof’s servant (Ivan) and Wilson are dominated by Zarrof and Chuck respectively through their silence. In addition, he linked the castaway theme and colonialism with the two texts and compared the characters in the two texts with Robinson Crusoe’s characters.

Interpreting literary texts in relation to specific ideas was new to the students. Many of them found this task interesting, but at the same time, many of them were struggling to learn about new ideas and link them to the two texts. During group discussions, many students asked for my support or the members of their groups’ support to be able to discuss the questions. Moreover, almost all of the students were engaged in the discussions and learned different things, which was evident in their written assignments. I noticed that most of the support needed was to understand the colonial and postcolonial ideas to enable them to link them to the two texts in their interpretations. However, I also noticed that the students moved
away from the colonizer/colonized framing and found different interpretations. This does not mean that the two texts are not related to colonialism, but because the ideas were new to the students, and they might have found difficulty in using them in their interpretations. A further reason is that some of the students may have spotted other ideas and signs that added new perspectives to their interpretations, and which revealed critical thinking. For example, there are no “black” characters in the two texts, which might have confused many students when they tried to find a black colonized character in the texts. Wilson the volleyball in *Cast Away* is a white ball, but it is decorated in a way that can represent blackness, which might have added some confusion and led some interpretations in new directions.

When I introduced the castaway theme during the first lesson, I mentioned *Robinson Crusoe* as an example of this genre because the students had read the book in their Swedish lessons. Accordingly, when I asked the class to sum up the discussions at the end of the fourth lesson, one student summed up the interpretation and related what I explained in my lecture to the two texts. S/he also compared the characters of the two texts with the characters in *Robinson Crusoe*’s. However, I felt that I should have focused on explaining Friday's role in *Robinson Crusoe* to enable the students to associate him with Wilson's character in *Cast Away*. Furthermore, I should have encouraged and reminded the students to link the two texts to the novel during their oral discussions, in order to facilitate their understanding of the two texts, when constructing new knowledge from previous knowledge.

Finally, I should have explained something about how to summarize information so that the students could focus on the important points. I also noticed that the students' summaries and written assignments had some spelling and grammatical mistakes, because English is not their native language rather a foreign language, and their skills in using the language are not advanced. The students need to practice writing, and there are certain aspects of the English language that they need to practice on. If I were to teach these students again, I would summarize the mistakes that I saw and provide the students with activities to overcome such mistakes. I consider the students' analyses and the way they reflected on the texts as examples of scaffolding for me to help me develop and learn how to work and plan in the future. I should also be able to choose appropriate texts that suit the educational level of the students. For example, if the students are younger or their educational level is lower, I will choose texts that focus more obviously on colonized/colonizer.
Conclusion
In this essay I have written about my literary didactics project that took place in a Swedish upper secondary class, English 7 course during my teaching training period. I gave the students two texts to read from the castaway sub-genre, Richard Connell's short story “The Most dangerous Game” (1924), and Robert Zemeckis' film Cast Away (2000), and related colonial and postcolonial ideas to them. I also chose a picture created by Sonia Marpez (1987) to introduce the theme. The aim with this essay was to discuss and evaluate the lessons to see how the students responded to different texts in relation to colonial and postcolonial ideas and to evaluate the students' communicative competence during their discussion activities. The lessons aimed to introduce the castaway sub-genre and relate them to colonialism and postcolonialism through the chosen texts. Another aim was to develop the students' oral and written English during the lessons.

In the result section I analyzed examples of the students' oral discussions and interpretations of the picture and the two texts, their written summaries of the oral discussions, and their written assignments. I analyzed them to see how the students responded to the texts and how they reflected on their reading by using critical literacy and reader-response theories. I also discussed how scaffolding and interaction with each other helped the students to learn, and how the texts developed the students' cognitive learning. I also used Sandra Savignon's communicative competence theory to analyze the students' grammatical, discourse, sociocultural and strategic competences during their oral discussions. I wrote about the students' evaluation to the lessons, and then discussed the results and reflected on what happened as a whole during the lessons.

In conclusion, this project proves that literary didactics help the students to learn about societal issues and to understand a text differently when applying critical literacy in reading. Literary didactics can also develop the students' skills in speaking and writing English.
Work Cited

Primary Sources


Richard Connell. 1924. “The Most Dangerous Game”. PDF.


Secondary Sources


Brinkley, Steven. 2014. *Reading Heart of Darkness in the ESL/EFL Classroom: A Case Study in Student Response to Literary Didactic Methodologies Designed to Enhance Aesthetic and Efferent Reading of a Literary Text in Language Instruction.* Degree Project. Linnaeus University, Sweden.


http://www.gutenberg.us/articles/the_most_dangerous_game


Appendix I

Castaway Literature

The main idea of this kind of literature is that the protagonist/s is isolated on an island. This new environment, which is filled with mystery and fear, is completely different from the home environment. Survival becomes priority, because the new mysterious environment threatens the existence of the protagonist. Through exploration and curiosity, the castaway assimilates with the island and becomes familiar with it; and as a result, her/his sense of fear and insecurity decreases. However, this place is not like home, because danger and fear still exist.

In castaway literature, the castaway comes into direct contact with nature (the island) and develops different survival skills. The island's influential role on the castaway transforms the castaway spiritually and emotionally. This transformation is noticed when the castaway returns to his/her home society. The island symbolizes isolation and savagery, and the role of the castaway character is to transform this wild environment into a cultivated paradise. This means imposing her/his control over nature (the island).

The castaway faces inner conflicts (with the self), and external conflicts with the antagonist/s, such as nature or other characters on the island.

Some characters of the castaway literature:

- The castaway character is completely isolated from the civilized world; and therefore, s/he accommodates savagery instincts.
- The castaway subgenre deals with survival and adventure, because the castaway must find essential resources for survival and has to protect her/himself against any kind of known or unknown danger.
- The castaway character tries to transform the new environment (the island) into an environment that is similar to home so that s/he can feel secure.
- The adventure can sometimes change into frustration and oppression, and the castaway becomes alarmed and agitated.
- Most of the protagonists are masculine and the narrative always focuses on how he conquers the island to serve his needs, which can be strongly linked to colonization.
- Transformation of identity, which is the result of being forcibly displaced and alienated, can be linked with colonized people. In other words, the transformation of identity can be linked to duality, hybridity or otherness.

- How can you relate castaway literature to colonialism and postcolonialism?

According to Dictionary.com, colonialism is the control or governing influence of a nation over a dependent country, territory, or people. It is a desire to control natural resources and labour to support and grow their economy. The colonizer dominates and subordinates the colonized. The colonizer imposes his history, identity, language, and culture on the colonized and forces the colonized to adapt to the new customs, claiming that the colonized is primitive, and needs to learn about civilization. In addition, the colonizer oppresses and segregates the colonized, which causes the colonized to fight for his freedom.

Postcolonial, according to Dictionary.com, is the period that follows the period of colonialism, which focuses on the effect of colonization on societies and cultures. When the colonized gains her/his freedom, s/he is influenced by the colonizer's identity and culture. Therefore, this period shows the rebirth of a hybrid identity.

The castaway character is stranded on a mysterious island that is surrounded by the ocean. Therefore, the island represents isolation and fear. The castaway here represents the colonized, who is isolated by the island (the colonizer). The colonized is completely separated from her/his people and her/his culture, which shows the lost of identity.

The castaway character, on the other hand, represents the colonizer, as s/he establishes cultural and economic control over the new land (the island) and/or other people (the inhabitants of the island).

The castaway then returns to the civilized society. S/he is influenced by the island, which marks the transformation of identity or (hybridized identity), "hybridity can be defined as a state of transition that involves the assimilation and transferral of one set of cultural elements – such as ethnicity, language, religion, beliefs and practices – to those of another" (Smit-Marais 4). The new identity is influenced by the experience lived on the island. This is similar to the postcolonial period.
References


Appendix II

"The Most Dangerous Game" Discussion Questions

1. Rainsford says in the beginning of the story: "The world is made up of two classes - the hunters and the huntees". Discuss how Rainsford’s opinion to the hunter/huntee dichotomy changes in the short story and relate this to the notion of the colonizer/colonized.

2. Even though Rainsford is not alone on the island, he feels lonely and scared. How do these feelings affect his existence on the island?

3. Discuss the role of nature in the story and how it influences Rainsford and Zaroff.

4. Discuss the similarities and differences between Rainsford and Zaroff in relation to colonizer/colonized.

5. There are examples of both psychological and physical violence in the story. Compare and contrast them. Explain and discuss how they are essential to survival on the island.
Appendix III

**Cast Away Discussion Questions**

1. Wilson's existence is important to Chuck while he is stranded on the island. What does Wilson represent in terms of survival? Is there a colonizer/colonized relationship between them? Explain.

2. Explain and discuss Chuck's transformation on the island and after he was rescued in relation to colonial, postcolonial and hybridity perspectives. Find examples from the film. Then compare his transformation to Rainsford's transformation in "The Most Dangerous Game".

3. Describe how nature influenced Chuck's survival on the island and compare his survival to Rainsford's survival.

4. Describe how society perceived Chuck after he was rescued from the island.

5. When Chuck is stranded on the island, he opens all the FedEx boxes and uses the contents in various ways except one box. He then delivers this box himself at the end of the film. Discuss what this box means to him. What do you think the wings on the box symbolize?
Appendix IV

1. Wilson's existence is important to Chuck while he is stranded on the island. What does Wilson represent in terms of survival? Is there a colonizer/colonized relationship between them?

I really like this movie, and one of the reasons is Wilson. He might not seem to matter that much if you look at the surface of the movie, just a mere beachball that Chuck talks to.

Personally, Wilson is what makes this movie rather interesting for me, since a movie purely about how he could survive and get off the island would not be as interesting.

We had an examination in religion where we actually brought Wilson up, and one said that Wilson represented God. I don't think that Wilson really represents God in Cast Away, but a friend. He makes Wilson out of his mind, because that's what he doesn't really have when he is on that island, interaction with someone.

Imagine not being able to talk to anyone for four years, I don't think you'd be as sane as he appears to be in the end, and that Wilson is crucial for, not directly his physical survival, but his psychological survival.

(I think it's worth noting that it also show how easily we can bond with inanimate objects, name them and have “real” feelings for them”. I know I used to name my bikes, I had my favorite Lego characters that I talked with, and so on. I think this shows how powerful the human brain is. )

There is a four year leap, and we see a much more savage Chuck, and his relationship with Wilson has just gotten stronger. There is a turn in the movie that we never actually see, and that is the part when Chuck decides he's gonna keep on living, and try to get away from the island and back to Kelly.

The turn is when Chuck planned to hang himself from a tree that is on the “mountain” on the island. We get to know this because Chuck firstly don't wanna go there but he's forced to go there because of the lack of plants to make rope from, and there was 30 meteres of rope in the snare he was gonna hang himself in. When he's at the top of the mountain we see a broken tree with rope around it, and he starts to pull up the rope. At the end, there is a “doll”.

He makes a comment to Wilson that went something like “Good thing you told me to try it, because if we hadn't I'd broken all my bones and bleed to death”. (The tree
I believe this is a sign of the pre-island Chuck, that is in Wilson. Wilson is created from the subconscious of Chuck, and he somewhere thought that he had to test it first, just like he was obsessed with testing and being on time when he worked at FedEx.
Not being able to hang himself makes him feel even more powerless than before, since he can’t even kill himself. Wilson is somewhere convincing Chuck to make a raft and try to get away from the island, and finally, he does it.

When Chuck “creates” Wilson I’d say that he colonizes Wilson, and it sounds ridiculous if you’d say that Wilson “didn’t have a choice” since he’s a beachball but I think that he had “control” of Wilson, and that Wilson didn’t really “talk back” in the beginning. In the end thought, Wilson makes Chuck second doubt himself several times, and Chuck is really attached to Wilson. At that point, I think Wilson colonized Chuck.

As a conclusion, I think that Wilson represents the human need of social interaction.
Appendix V

1. Wilson's existence is important to Chuck while he is stranded on the island. What does Wilson represent in terms of survival? Is there a colonizer/colonized relationship between them? Explain.

The main reason for Chuck to create Wilson in the first place is for him to have a face he can talk to because as a human you can't survive particularly long without another human being, or in this case a creature similar to a human, in your surroundings. At least not without going completely mad. If Wilson's voice exists inside of Chuck himself or not (in this case it obviously did) isn't of such great importance because if Wilson's entire existence only had been Chucks delusion he would have been a mad man and the story wouldn't have had an element of development. I'm not saying he isn't a bit crazy when he's rescued but since he had someone he could talk to during his isolation on the island you could say his retrogression back to society isn't as hard on him as it could have been. I also believe that Wilson is a crucial part in Chucks way of still having a part of his normal life with him on the island, especially since the basketball arrived in a FedEx delivery. It is Chucks way of creating a familiar sense around the island despite it's nature not to be so.

As I try to identify the relationship between them, I would say that Wilson is the colonizer between the two of them which naturally makes Chuck the colonized, and on a side-note you can almost say he's been colonized twice in the long run, both by Wilson and the island.

According to the description: “the colonizer dominates and subordinates the colonized. The colonizer imposes his history, language, culture, identity etc on the colonized”. However, this is where it might arise some confusion since Chuck is the creator of Wilson and it's his language and culture with which they communicate but look at the way Wilson has all the power and control over Chucks state of mind and anxiety and you'll see that he remains in Wilson's grasp, leading Wilson to be the colonizer. Chuck is separated from his family, culture and the society, making him vulnerable to loss of identity and this is where Wilson comes in as well. I said in the beginning that Wilson is his way or trying to reconnect to his old life making Wilson – yet again – his vanquisher and colonizer.
There is however one part which I think deviates from the colonizer/colonized relationship and it's in Wilson’s attempt to “help” Chuck conquer the island because here Wilson is only a tool of his mind and not a colonizer. Look for example at the incident with the rope. It was “Wilson’s” idea to try out the strength of the branch before Chuck eventually would hang himself and as seen in the movie, this saves Chuck from a violent and slow death despite his intentions to get a quick and easy one and I don’t feel like this is a keynote to their otherwise quite controversial relationship.

Being the colonized will cause a wish and determination to free yourself from your colonizers power over you and this you can find in Chucks outburst after 4 years of isolation. He throws Wilson out of the cave that is now their home and is for a second relieved that his colonizer is gone but immediately regrets it and panics. He rushes out from the cave, desperately trying to find Wilson because the basketball is his only hope on the godforsaken island. He eventually does and begs for forgiveness. Wilson has been his hope from the beginning. When realizing that he wouldn't get off the island any time soon he created Wilson to gain some security and courage. When Wilson floats away during Chucks escape on the raft you can see that Chucks spirit immediately dies and he has no strength left to fight (not that I see how he could fight for his life, being all alone and unprotected on the great ocean) but I think it's Wilson’s way of saying “Hey, buddy. You don't need me anymore. You're safe now.”
Appendix VI

1. Wilson's existence is important to Chuck while he is stranded on the island. What does Wilson represent in terms of survival? Is there a colonizer/colonized relationship between them? Explain.

In the movie Cast Away Chuck becomes stranded on a deserted and ends up having to adapt for survival. One of the stages in his transformation is of course finding a way to stay sane in complete isolation from human contact, so he makes a friend in the volleyball Wilson. While struggling to ignite a fire he cuts himself, in his tantrum he grabs the volleyball he found in one of the FedEx boxes and throws it against the rocks. Later on he scrapes away the blood, creating a face for the ball, naming him Wilson due to the signature on the back. Using Wilson as sort of a wall to bounce ideas and thoughts off he talks to the volleyball, asking questions then answering them himself after a short pause where Wilson's reply would have been. By doing this, having imaginary conversations with his improvised friend would let him keep his sanity, because instead of another person's opinions being channeled as they would in a scenario where Wilson is human, Wilsons thoughts are the counterpart to Chucks. Wilson makes him question his statements and conclusions just like he would do himself if he had a conversational partner that could think on their own. Wilson becomes Chucks voice of reason but is in fact just a conduit for Chucks subconcious. We can clearly see this in the scene where Chuck is braiding the rope for his raft and he says, "Yes I know where there's 30ft of good rope, but I'm not going back up there." as if Wilson told him to go get the noose from his failed suicide. Chuck wants to forget and leave it in the past but his rational subconcious being channeled through Wilson helps him face the hardships and he goes to get the rope. Basically what I'm trying to say is that Wilson helps Chuck be realistic and guides him to choose the logical choices because he can speak to himself through the volleyball, Wilson isn't it's own entity but just an extension of Chuck necessary for Chuck's survival on the island. I think it's a very good way to have a character develop in the way chuck did using Wilson since having actual character development in a one man movie isn't the easiest thing to do and using Wilson makes it a whole lot easier. In The Most Dangerous Game and Robinson Crusoe the survivor's counterpart is their own person, a human who helps shape them to their new enviroment and such. Rainsford has Zaroff and Crusoe has Friday. Both their actions affect their
counterpart to evolve and adapt to fit the new terms of survival where as Chuck has to shape himself, using the inanimate object to channel his subconcious into what he sees for awhile as a seperate being that he quickly becomes dependent on. We saw how he reacted after throwing Wilson out of the cave, he instantly became remorseful, running after the ball to apologize, probably knowing he wouldn't have gotten that far without the the little thing. Then when they are seperated at sea you see Chuck having that the subconcious that kept him alive being torn away from him as he is about to enter civilization again as he doesn't need that conduit for his inner thoughts within society. In the end Wilson was necessary for Chuck to see reason without a human counterpart but Wilson can not exists outside of Chucks isolation, that would ultimately drive the man insane with having his own thoughts, the thoughts of all the people around him and on top of that Wilson.
Appendix VII

3. Describe how nature influenced Chuck's survival on the island and compare his survival to Rainsford's survival

I feel like the time Chuck spent on the island before the time lapse was very influenced by nature as he still hadn't found a way to be survive and be efficient without the tools of modern society which he'd had access to all of his adult life. He suddenly found himself completely dependent on the coconuts around the beach since those were just about all he had to eat for at least the first few days. If he made a fire on the beach, a thunder storm could have been quick to put it out, leaving him wounded from the process of creating the fire and without proper medication to treat it, which forced him to light it in the confines of a cave. He was always at the mercy of his environment and one of those aforementioned injuries, easily treated in a modern hospital, might as well have ended him if he'd gotten the wrong bacteria in it.

After the time lapse, when we're reunited with Chuck in his primal state, he clearly seems to have a better grasp of his surroundings and how to work them to his advantage. Despite not witnessing his adaptation to his new reality on camera, the time spent on the island obviously made him more in tune with nature which made it less of a threat and as such, less of an influence.

Since Chuck was stranded on his island for a little more than four years and Rainsford's adventure ends around four days in, their scenarios are nearly incomparable in my opinion but because their experiences are so differently paced and set up, it somehow works. Chuck washes up on an island with nothing but the weather, loneliness and potential starvation against him which allows him to take his time and adapt naturally; a process which spans four years. Meanwhile, Rainsford swims ashore, falls asleep and upon waking up is almost immediately thrown into a game of sorts with predetermined rules over which he has no power. Even though Chuck is far from the master of his island at any point during his story, there's no constant and immediate threat hanging over him from the moment he wakes up on the beach and this means his only initial concern is to look after himself, not avoid another human being with the intent to kill him upon contact.
Equally important is the difference in their level of experience with similar situations. Rainsford is apparently an acknowledged hunter who've probably studied the “prey-mentality” in animals for years and is therefore, as general Zaroff seemed to also have thought, the most well-prepared a person can be for such a task, given the circumstances. This is another way to speed his story along as he doesn't require the same amount of time to process everything to still manage to come off as an authentic character. Chuck on the other hand doesn't seem to have been very in touch with his primitive side when he first came to the island which is another reason for why his time there needed to be so much longer. To me, almost the only thing these stories have in common is the nature aspect. Rainsford hadn't spent more than a night on the island before he ran into a fellow person who then told him what he had to do in order to leave while Chuck lived alone for years with absolutely no end in sight.

Because their objectives on their respective islands are so drastically different, their utilization of nature are equally drastically different. Chuck, as has previously been mentioned, had no one to worry about but himself and from what we were shown, there don't even seem to have been any hostile animals nearby. In return he's forced to endure a little more than four grueling years of uncertainty before finally making his escape and coming home. Rainsford traded this in for three days of ultimate danger and the promise of a safe return to society if he succeeded in his mission to evade his challenger for three days and nights. This sets them up with different needs and as a result, different optimal usages of close to the only thing at their disposal; nature. Chuck just needed to eat and sleep, ideally keep from getting sick and hopefully escape. In Rainsford's case, he had to actively try to erase his tracks and use the forest to hide from Zaroff and his dogs but given the relatively short amount of time before either his untimely death or homecoming, he didn't actually have to think about neither food nor permanent shelter. At one point he even fired his weapon from some grass (if I interpreted that correctly) which was probably the last of Chuck's worries.

In the end, Chuck figured out what I think was the tides' schedule which enabled him to finally leave the island and return home. By that point he had almost become a
part of the island itself, being able to circumvent most obstacles previously posed by
the island's nature, reaching the highest possible level of integration a human raised
in western society can hope to achieve in untouched nature. When Rainsford story
ended, I as a reader just imagined him either leaving the island and going back to his
old life or staying in the recently vacated castle, leading a continuously sophisticated
life either way whereas Chuck probably won't leave the island mindset for the rest of
his life.
Appendix VIII

1. Rainsford says in the beginning of the story: “The world is made up of two classes – the hunters and the huntees”. Discuss how Rainsford's opinion to the hunter/huntee dichotomy changes in the short story related this to the notion of the colonizer/colonized.

First of all I want to point out how I don't really think Rainsford stopped thinking there was two classes, hunters and huntees, but that his feelings towards them changed. I believe that because Rainsford was used to be the hunter, the one who colonized, he couldn't really sympathies with the prays. He didn't know how they felt just like Zaroff didn't know either how it was to be the hunted one. Zaroff was and had always been the one colonizing; he colonized his surroundings, the island, the forests where he used to hunt and he colonized the people around him. He had slaves, like Ivan, and everyone who came to the island he colonized and ruled over. So both of them hadn't felt colonized before, but now the both got the experience. For Raindsford had also colonized his surroundings, only in a smaller scale. Rainsford was the hunter who when he was in the woods ruled that place and everyone who was there was beneath him. But when he first came to Zaroff’s island everything changed. Suddenly he wasn’t safe anymore. He who was used to rule over every place he sat his foot on and everyone he met. I think you notice this in the way he talks to Whitney in the beginning, like he knows better then him and are better then him. But now Rainsford was on the island, and he didn't know what to do. So he was already in a position where he needed to depend on other people. But I'm quite sure if Zaroff hadn't been on the island and it been deserted Rainsford would colonize it very quickly. Even faster then he already did. Because I would almost say that was what happened in the end. In the end Rainsford uses the nature to outsmart Zaroff. First I was about to write “use with the help of nature”, but that isn't what he is doing. He is only using the nature not taking help from it, thereof he is starting to colonize the island.

So Rainsford came to the island and become colonized, used to be the colonizer. He came there and met a man who never felt anything but how it was being a colonizer. Sure he been taking by surprise before when he was hunting, but he had always won and kept the position of the colonizer. So when Zaroff meets Rainsford he think it will be the same, he will maybe have a fight but he will keep his position. Something I
believe does actually change. Because when Rainsford jumps of the cliffs Zaroff believes he won. He believes that it's over and goes back to his everyday life. And then when he finds out Rainsford only tricked him, he did survive and not only that he outsmarted him by getting in his room unnoticed. Sure Raindsford didn't colonized him but he did something Zaroff never been through before, he hunted him. And that sure made Zaroff need to step down from the pedestal of the colonizer of everything he see and touch.

So like I've said in the beginning of the text, Raindsfords theory of hunter and huntees was still intact. But in the beginning of the short story he expressed liking to the theory. He was pleased of how the world, in his view, was divided because he had never been in the position of the huntees. But now, after the meeting with Zaroff, he didn't like the way the theory was reinforced. He didn't knew that humans also could be hunted in that way so his world view changed and he stopped liking the theory. But at the same time, sure, he doesn't like it but he doesn't do anything to change it. Because if he kills Zaroff he will be the one hunting him, the hunter of people. And this is what he says he doesn't like. But he would do it to keep him safe, Zaroff hunts because he is bored. Just like Rainsford hunts animals, not for the meat but because he is bored. Something that maybe changes inside Raindsford. But I have a hard time believe that would actually happen. I still thinks that if he gets of the island alive he will, after some time, start hunting again. Maybe not exactly the same way he did before but he will still hunt. Because the world is made up of two classes – the hunters and the huntees and to change that something ever bigger need to happen. If he really would want to change it. Because I don't believe that, I just think he don't want to be the huntees. He don't want to be the colonized but the colonizer who is in charge and can be the one deciding who lives and who dies, not being ruled over. He still likes the idea of hunter and huntees but not being one.
Appendix IX

Evaluation

Thank you for taking time to respond to this questionnaire. Please answer the questions below and remember that the information you write here is confidential.

1. The number of hours I spent working with the Castaway theme (class work and homework)
   - 7 - 9 hours
   - 11 - 13 hours
   - 13 - 15 hours

2. How effectively did your group work?
   - Ineffectively
   - Good
   - Very effectively

3. Did you learn new words or phrases in English?
   - None
   - Some
   - A great deal

4. Your general evaluation of the lesson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
   - I understood what I needed to do and the instructions were clear
   - The lessons procedures and assignments were right for me
   - The amount of reading I was asked to do was sufficient
   - The amount of writing I was asked to do was sufficient

5. How did you find the ideas of colonialism/postcolonialism presented?
   - Too difficult
   - Appropriate for my level
   - Too easy

6. Explain why you thought that ideas were difficult?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
7. How do you rate the difficulty of the discussion questions?

☐ Too difficult
☐ Appropriate for my level
☐ Too easy

8. Explain why you thought that the discussion questions were difficult?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

9. What overall rating would you give the lessons?

☐ Good
☐ Average
☐ Poor

10. What was positive about the lessons? You can think about the instructions, ideas, groups, discussion questions, etc.
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

11. What could be improved? You can think about the instructions, ideas, groups, discussion questions, etc.
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________