

How do book clubs work in Secondary Education? Cómo funcionan los Clubes de lectura en Educación Secundaria?

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Abstract

Although it has been shown that book clubs are a great tool to enhance reading with both, children and adults, it is surprising that there is hardly enough research in this field in Secondary Education. The main objective of the present study is to analyse how book clubs work in Secondary Education in order to solve any possible doubts about the advisability to implement them in a secondary school. Therefore, a national research has been carried out in cooperation with some educational centres which run a book club. The study has taken into account not only the origin of each book club but how it works and its implications. Considering the results of the study, it is possible to conclude that running a book club has multiple benefits for both centres and its participants, both, in academic and social development and therefore, it is worth a greater diffusion and implementation of book clubs in Secondary Education.

Resumen

Dado el potencial que los clubes de lectura han demostrado tener para fomentar la lectura en niños y adultos sorprende que apenas haya investigación específica en la etapa de Educación Secundaria. El presente trabajo tiene como principal objetivo analizar cómo funcionan los clubes de lectura en esta etapa para contribuir a despejar dudas sobre cómo implementarlos en los centros que aún no disponen de uno. Para ello, se ha realizado un estudio a nivel nacional en colaboración con centros que tienen uno activo y se ha analizado su creación, funcionamiento e implicaciones. A partir de los datos recabados es posible concluir que un club lector aporta numerosos beneficios para los centros y sus participantes, tanto a nivel académico como social y, por tanto, es muy conveniente una mayor difusión e implementación de clubes de lectura en los centros educativos que ofrecen enseñanzas secundarias.

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Introduction

The linguistic competence is one of the key competences “in the field of formal and non-formal education at all the levels and throughout Primary Education, Secondary Education (for 12-to16-year-olds), Baccalaureate and lifelong learning” (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2019). It must, therefore, be tackled as a basic part in the design, development and curricular and extracurricular innovation processes since it is the central element of the oral and written interaction among individuals. Besides, the Royal Decree 1631/2006 points out that “reading is a fundamental issue for the development of basic competences. The educational centres must guarantee a time to read in the teaching practice of every subject and at every grade of the school year” (article 7.4). Reading is essential for the development of all the competences since it is required to acquire any type of learning (García & Fernández, 2008; Reed & Vaughn 2012; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017; Schreuder & Savitz, 2020). Therefore, encouraging the reading habit must be an important challenge to overcome by the educational centres, as it is emphasized by the Constitutional Law 8/2013.

The study carried out by the Federation of Spanish Book Publishers (2018) has revealed that: (1) reading is a usual habit in most children but it starts to decrease at the age of 14. Also, there is a less use of the library as a reading place and (2) the participants state that their fondness for reading started at the age of 15. Both results show how important the stage of Secondary Education is to promote the reading habit. Therefore, it is necessary to take care of the educational centres school libraries not only to attract students but also, to carry out successful activities to encourage it (Colwell et al., 2018; Schreuder & Savitz, 2020).

To develop the reading habit among the Secondary Education students is a matter of concern for many teaching professionals as well as for the public school libraries coordinators (Pozo & Gómez, 2010; Ayci & Yuksel, 2011; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017; Choi & Tinker, 2017; Serna et al., 2017). Even though there are different plans to promote reading such

as the Reading National Plan (2017-2020), the particular Reading Plan of any educational centre, the existence of specific programmes sponsored by the Ministry of Education or school activities like, Book’s Day or the compulsory readings demanded by the Language Department, the reading competence of Secondary students can be improved.

A practice that can be included within each educational centre Reading Plan and which contributes to encourage the reading habit is the creation of a school book club. Several studies have shown how beneficial book clubs are not only to their members, but also to the image of the institutions that promote them (Ayci & Yuksel, 2011; Beach & Steven 2011; Álvarez & Gutierréz, 2013; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013; Choi & Tinker, 2017; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017). In short, book clubs are meetings organized by groups of people to read the same book at the same time. Then, the participants discuss about the work, its literary style, the plot, characters, the action, possible relationships with other works, places, landscapes, the author etc. In these meetings, readers share different points of view about the book, their personal experiences or they pose doubts or questions which contribute to enrich individual reading (Broughton, 2002; Ayci & Yuksel, 2011; Lyons & Ray, 2014; Álvarez, 2016). Book clubs have had a great acceptance on diverse contexts due to two factors: the personal inner reading and the possibility to share it with other people (Beach & Steven, 2011; Choi & Tinker, 2017).

The first book clubs began in Spain in the mid-1980s and were linked to public libraries. They were aimed at adult people, however, due to its success, they proliferated and diversified, which contributed to the development of the reading habit among people from different ages and contexts, especially educational ones (Carreño, 2012; Lyons & Ray, 2014; Álvarez, 2016; Álvarez & Pascual, 2016). In the field of education there are university book clubs as well as school book clubs (researched in Primary Education), which from the schools but especially, from the library, intend to encourage the taste for reading literature in children and their families (Álvarez, 2016). Spanish school book clubs are characterized by their great diversity, taking

into account the ages they are addressed to, the participation or not of the families, selection of the books, time of the sessions, etc. There are many possibilities depending on the kind of project, the training of the coordinators, the teachers' involvement, the interest of the school, etc. (Polleck, 2010; Beach & Steven, 2011; Álvarez & Gutiérrez, 2013; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013; Álvarez & Vejo 2017). However, it is essential a continuity in these reading habits in the Secondary Education stage to guarantee the advances already achieved in children.

Previous studies have pointed out that to take part in a book club fosters the reading habit and the pleasure for reading, which at the same time, helps to develop critical thinking so necessary, especially, in the training of young readers (Gambrel, 2011; Hill, 2012; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013). Besides, numerous studies have shown that the participation in a school book club contributes to improve literary comprehension through the dialogue (Gritter, 2011; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013; Álvarez, 2016; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017) and it also helps to encourage an education in values (Broughton, 2002; Álvarez & Gutiérrez, 2013). Furthermore, book clubs can be a very effective strategy to innovate since they can be used as a mechanism for career development to make the educational practices more democratic and deliberative by getting the involvement of the students and contributing to secure a better reading comprehension (Polleck,

2010; Beach & Steven, 2011; Lyons & Ray, 2014; Álvarez, 2016).

This paper tries to focus on school book clubs in Secondary Education since this stage is considered a critical period to strengthen reading habits, socialize with peers, improve linguistic and communicative competence and find out about literary works (Polleck, 2010; Beach & Steven, 2011; Colwell et al., 2018; Schreuder & Savitz, 2020). Moreover, the research in this field is almost non-existent if compared to other educational stages or within the context of libraries.

Method

The main aim of this study is to analyse how Spanish book clubs work in Secondary Education in order to solve any possible doubts about the advisability to implement them in a secondary school. Besides, this will contribute to their visibility and future development.

A case study was carried out to learn about the state of different book clubs. To do so, there was a website search of secondary schools which ran a book club. As a result, 9 educational centres, which belong to 6 different autonomous regions and which have some kind of peculiarity, were selected (table 1).

Table 1
 Participating centres (questionnaire), autonomous region and characteristics

Pseudonym	Region	Characteristics of the book club
Centre 1	Aragón	It belongs to the programme <i>Leer Juntos</i> . There are young and adult readers.
Centre 2	Asturias	Aimed at students.
Centre 3	La Rioja	Run by the families of the students.
Centre 4	Cantabria	Run by the students. It combines reading and writing.
Centre 5	Cantabria	Run by teachers and former students
Centre 6	Aragón	To encourage family participation in the centre.
Centre 7	Galicia	There are several groups. More than 100 members
Centre 8	Castilla la Mancha	Born in this academic year.
Centre 9	Cantabria	Run by teachers for training

Table 2
Participants (interviews) and characteristics

Pseudonym	Characteristics
Fernanda	Excoordinator of a Secondary club (Cantabria) and participant of an online book club (COVID-19).
Martina	Coordinator of a Municipal library book club (Cantabria) and coordinator of another one (Madrid).
Lara	Excoordinator of several book clubs (Santander) and current participant of one (Ávila).
Begoña	Excoordinator of a Secondary book club (Asturias) and participant of several Municipal library book clubs.

In addition to this, the already contacted educational centres helped us to get in touch with four teachers from secondary schools, who are or have been involved in the active coordination of a book club in different regions (table 2).

All data were collected by means of an online questionnaire. There were 31 questions divided into three sections of 11, 10 and 9 questions, which were grouped according to topics: (1) Reasons to create a book club; (2) How book clubs work and (3) Implications of the participation in a book club. Also, an open section about (4) Personal opinion has been added to collect any other relevant remarks that participants would like to point out. Besides, there are another 14 open-ended questions divided into all the different sections. All the other questions are closed-ended but the option “other” is left open just in case the given replies are not suitable or any other relevant information needs to be added. In addition, four secondary school teachers, who are or have been involved in the coordination of a book club, have been interviewed.

On the other hand, the participants of the questionnaires and interviews have signed an informed consent which explains the nature of the study that has been approved by our university ethical committee. Pseudonyms have been used to guarantee the anonymity of the participants in the present study.

Results

The results of this research are organized into three categories: (1) creation of a book club, (2) how it works and (3) its implications.

Creation

In order to begin a book club, three features will be taken into account: (1) origin, need and targets of the book club, (2) coordinators and (3) types of book clubs according to their members’ profile.

Origin, need and targets of the book club

The origin of a book club in an educational centre can be diverse. While the book club of Centre 5 was born in the high school library as they were looking for promotion, the book club of Centre 1 emerged from an educational programme to encourage reading (“Leer Juntos”) ran by the Consejería de Educación of Aragón. On the other hand, reading can even be linked to writing, as it happens in the case of Centre 4. This book club was demanded by a group of reader and writer students. However, there is a common issue: several of the educational centres agree that book clubs appear because there is a need to enhance reading. In addition, this participation that centres seek to promote, it is not only oriented to students, but also to the whole educational community (students, former students, families, teachers and whoever (from the educational community) wishes to join

the club. Thus, Centre 6 is trying to bring families closer to the school.

On the other hand, the reasons for the emergence of a secondary book club are quite related to the objectives that are intended to be achieved. For instance, book clubs whose origin is the need to attract readers or participation aim to encourage reading. Those who arise to bring families closer to the school centre try to find more participation by promoting interpersonal relationships with the entire educational community. Also, book clubs which are required by teachers (Centre 9) or students (Centre 4) have aims related to their origin. In the case of Centre 9, the goal is to receive training whereas Centre 4 provides students with a personal space to share their works.

Finally, during her interview, Fernanda assured that the origin of a book club depends on the needs of the moment. She has created one for teachers during the COVID19 confinement in order to find new topics of conversation as an escape from the present reality.

Coordinators

To run a book club the coordinator is an essential figure, since he or she does not only provide the members with books, but he is usually responsible for the book club itself. Three out of the 9 collaborating centres which participate in this study are coordinated by the school library team. However, the management team (2 centres out of 9) and the Department of Spanish Language and Literature (2 centres) are also important in the coordination work. To a lesser extent, students and families are in charge as only one of the book clubs is coordinated by the students and another one by the families.

Types of clubs and members' profiles

In both questionnaires and interviews, four types of book clubs have been differentiated depending on the target audience at which they are aimed: Municipal Library Book Club with participation of the educational community, Students' Book Club,

Book Club for Families and finally, Book Club for Teachers. Sometimes, the book club for families mixes with the students' book club creating a new one which encourages interaction amongst parents, students, and teachers. Moreover, any member of the educational community who is interested in the book club can join it. Thus, Centre 3 says that "the variety of people in terms of age, education, ideas... can contribute to enrich the book club."

In those book clubs oriented to students, the educational centres aim to "encourage the reading habits to a great extent" (Centre 7). To do this, Centre 2 states that "it is necessary to start working with children as soon as possible to get them into the habit of reading". On the other hand, what happens with older pupils is that "high school students drop out of the club due to lack of time," as Centre 4 explains. This lack of time affects not only students, but also the different members of the educational community.

Family-oriented book clubs try to bring the members closer to the educational centre. It has positive effects on students, since "they try to promote the participation of families in those environments which encourage the school success of the students" (Centre 2).

On the other hand, the purpose of the teachers' book clubs is very different. Teachers are interested in receiving training to deal with relevant social issues through a variety of readings, as Fernanda says. Besides, teachers are much more motivated which explains the success of the book club and how it lasts in time, as in the case of Centre 5: "there were two sections: Compulsory Secondary Education students and Baccalaureate Teachers, but we've lost the first group. We continue with the senior club (mostly teachers), although we also have some students coming from high school."

In addition to this, the type of target members of the club can have an influence on its success and acceptance. While the whole of the book clubs oriented to teachers have been successful, the results in the case of those clubs aimed at families

or students have not been so homogeneous. Book clubs which are directed to students have a quite positive reception. In fact, 7 out of the 9 educational centres participating in this study count with student-oriented book clubs and 4 of them have had an absolutely positive reception. Whereas the remaining 3 educational centres admit that they have not always received the acceptance they expected. On the other hand, book clubs among families have not always had the expected participation and only 1 of the clubs obtained a positive response. According to Centre 1, there is a greater participation of families and students in the first years of the Compulsory Secondary Education. However, family participation is still scarce, for instance, Centre 7 points out that they have not got a family group this academic year. As Centre 3 explains “there is acceptance among the families in theory, but less at the level of attendance.”

To sum up, according to Centre 4, which has started the book club in this academic year 2019-2020, at the beginning it is difficult to get a broad positive response. This specific book club is a mixed one, that is, it is aimed at high school and vocational training students, families and teachers. As for the participating students, at the moment they only count with 5 students, but it is expected that after the first experiences the number of members will increase in the following year. As Begoña explains, the most difficult thing at the beginning of the club she coordinated was “to motivate the public, create expectations and encourage participation” since “students have many activities in mind”. It is essential the involvement of trained and concerned teachers or managers to move forward with book clubs year after year.

How the book club works

To know how a book club works four features will be taken into account: (1) the way in which readings and books are selected and (2) obtained, (3) the structure of the sessions and the activities and (4) the promotion of the book club to encourage participation.

Selection of readings and books

In general, the educational centres agree on three key criteria: quality, variety, and interest of the participants. The majority of the participating centres put great emphasis on the quality, as this criterion is linked to the author’s prestige or the possibilities that readings have to raise a quality debate. Thus, Centre 3 states that “we read short stories from classical or current authors of recognized prestige”. For Centre 8 “the criteria are not related so much to the plot or the anecdote but to the contribution of the book to the reader or the group”.

Besides, variety is also very positive assessed. So, Centre 1 assures that their selection “is based on the quality and variety criteria. We don’t pay attention to commercial products. We offer different readings.” This kind of reading may attract more readers and increase students’ motivation. The same happens in Centre 6, where books “are selected, by all the members together, according to a variety of epoch and genre”. Some centres (1 and 5) helped themselves by using specialized journals, blogs, reviews, etc., so in Centre 1: “readings are selected by coordinators through opinion leaders such as blogs, specialised magazines, booksellers and other reading groups”.

To a small extent, the interest of the participants is taken into account. As it can be seen, only Centre 4 presented this criterion as the main one, since it is a book club run by the students themselves. Other educational centres use this criterion as well, but in an indirect way: they have to take into account the opinion and interests of the members of the book clubs because on some occasions they are the ones who participate in the selection.

Therefore, the selection of readings, according to the results, depends mainly on the members of the book club, whereas the selection carried out by the coordinators is not as important. However, there are some book clubs where both, members and coordinators, participate in the selection of

the readings. This can be equitable or not, that is, whereas in Centre 5 this decision is taken together, Centre 3 states that “I choose most of them as coordinator, but any of the participants can do it or propose specific authors or stories.” Martina also explained “it is not easy to choose readings everyone loves. Sometimes you are surprised by the unexpected success of a book and at the same time, it is disappointing to find that one I thought really good didn’t hold much interest for most of the readers.”

How books are obtained

Each educational centre has its own rules to obtain the books. Centre 5 says that “there are three ways: the high school library always buys a copy (or two) on paper, members sort it out for themselves in digital, and others are borrowed from the Central Library, which owns lots for clubs.” The most common means used by the educational centres is the purchase of copies by the high school library. Besides, it is interesting to highlight the importance of communication between the different educational centres. This interaction allows an exchange of books among libraries and book clubs. Thus, Centre 7 states: “we have a fund from other years, we exchange with other centres or we buy.”

Sessions

Six out of the 9 centres meet once a month, while 2 do it weekly and a single one meets fortnightly. Each session begins with a short presentation made by the coordinator. Then, the historical background of the author, the general features of his or her work and other relevant information or facts are introduced. Afterwards, the discussion starts, and the participants give their opinion, comment on the work globally or highlight a specific passage of interest. Centre 5 explains that “the members take turns to speak, but we have certain rules: the coordinator is the first person to introduce the author, biography and work. After that, each member usually brings significant sentences, and they comment on them. In the end, we score the book from 1 to 10, the coordinator takes notes and transfers them to a blog.” In addition, two of the

participating centres say that, previously to the sessions, some of the members usually do some research on the book. As Centre 1 states: “the coordinators prepare the session by providing varied materials, the rest only need to have read the book, although, sometimes, the members research and also make their own contributions”.

During the sessions, other activities can be carried out, such as meeting the authors (Centres 1 and 6), creative writing and analysis of films or recordings (Centre 1), reading of their own texts (Centre 4), visiting bookshops (Centre 6) and dramatized reading (Centre 7).

Promotion

There are different methods of promotion: word of mouth, through the library of the educational centre, digital promotion, brochures, posters, briefings, through the parents’ association, etc. The most common means of promotion is the digital one. Thus, Centre 6 advertises its book club through “the high school website” or Centre 7 uses “our blog and Instagram”.

A blog is an interesting tool of information and promotion (6 out of the 9 centres have one) and coordinators are usually in charge. Thus, in Centre 1 “only the school library working group participates in the blog, which contains information related to youth readings and cultural information as well”. In some cases, the members themselves can take over the blog, so Centre 6 says that “anyone can participate. There is information on books according to topics, authors, news, contact, articles...”.

Begoña also explains that “just through participation and collaboration, the club could promote itself”. As we are talking about educational centres, the promotion is often performed by teachers. Nevertheless, according to Begoña, “I often think the club is at risk. Leadership is needed. Teachers need to change their vision of our profession. When a teacher does not want to get involved in a book club it is because he thinks it has nothing to do with the teaching profession or else, he isn’t aware of the added value that this activity implies.”

Implications

Some relevant implications to take into account are: (1) relationship between educational centres, (2) benefits for students, (3) dealing with relevant social issues and (4) future perspective.

Relationship between centres

Five of the participating centres in the studio keep in touch with other educational centre book clubs since they consider that the exchange of ideas and resources is beneficial to both of them. Not only views and opinions can be interchanged, but different students, families and teachers can get in touch through a common interest: reading. Relationships and social groups enjoy friendly relations that last over time. Fernanda says that “these ties of friendship also contribute to the teaching cooperation”. As a result of this interaction, clubs enrich each other. According to Martina, “I’m in touch with another book club. The coordinator and I exchange readings, ideas and we participate, from time to time, in each other’s sessions since our way of working and reading selection is very similar.”

It is especially relevant the relationship between the Primary and Secondary educational centres and the continuity in reading proposals. Begoña states that: “habits are very difficult to change. Hence, 15-year-olds who have never taken part in a book club, find it difficult to join. When we start with them as kids and they get to high school, they sign up on their own.” Therefore, the relationship with the different educational centres to give support and advice to students, especially in their early academic years, can be a very important issue to interest them in reading.

Benefits for students

According to the results, the participation in a book club provides “integral training” (Centre 2). Two great benefits are highlighted: the improvement of the reading competence as they read more, and the possibility of new socialization meetings.

“Students’ interest in literature is often aroused” (Centre 4). Furthermore, communicative and social skills are acquired by students. These skills will be of great value in their future. Thus, Centre 5 explains: “those who were in the club admit that it has helped them in their studies, in fact, they asked to come back to the club”. In addition, Centre 7 states that the book club clearly “improves their understanding, expression and interactions” and so does Centre 8 which emphasizes that “in addition to promoting their communicative competence, readings also help them to develop their critical thinking”. Moreover, motivation is another factor to consider: 6 out of the 7 student-oriented book clubs assure that participation motivates the students in a positive way to work on the subject of Language and Literature, although Centre 8 points out that, in their case, they are “already motivated students, who would like to go something further”. Besides, Centre 1 also says that it is very beneficial “to support young readers in this difficult period of adolescence and to participate, on equal terms, with a group of adults in an activity that implies careful thought and abilities to discuss the subjects.”

On the other hand, book clubs for teachers have a positive impact on students as well, although indirectly. Teachers are the ones who use their experiences in the book club to improve their teaching practice. As Centre 9 highlights “the readings affect the understanding of today’s world which reflects on the teaching practice.”

Dealing with relevant social issues

Relevant social issues can be sometimes discussed through readings, as well as ethical values. As it can be seen, 3 centres use readings to address this kind of topics, 2 centres do not work on them at all, and the remaining 4 centres say that, although it is not their main objective, since these subjects always appear, they are finally discussed. So, Centre 1 explains that “we don’t use reading as a recipe book or for moral purposes, but these topics usually come out.” On the other hand, Centre 4 decides to deal with these topics “depending on the interest they have at that moment”. Therefore, readings

can be a didactic tool in a school book club, not only for students but for teachers.

In Centre 9, teachers use readings as a way to train themselves on certain questions of interest. The most highlighted issues are “knowledge of other cultures, “good and evil”, social problems or the role of women in society”. In fact, this last subject together with feminism are the most repeated topics. However, there are other interesting matters through which the educational centres can contribute to the integral education of students. So, Centre 7 focuses on “bullying, harassment, women’s situation or sex education”, among others. Moreover, topics such as friendship and tolerance have already been discussed by Centre 5. Also, Centre 1 explains that different issues have been addressed through different readings such as “slavery with “Qué blanca tan bonita soy”, education with “Victoria sueña”, integration with “Súper-sorda” and racism with “Sweet Sixteen”, among others”. Therefore, the book club readings can help to understand our society and the problems and concerns of today’s world.

Future perspective

Taking into account how a book club works and its benefits, a successful perspective in the future can be expected. 7 out of the 9 participating centres think that the book club has been successful, whereas 2 of them point out to the mistakes and their balance is negative.

Generally speaking, every coordinator has drawn attention to the difficulties which will arise when starting a Secondary school book club. Some of these problems, such as the little interest most teachers show to take over the book club or the need to encourage the participation of students, have been particularly remarked in several cases. This is shown in Centre 6 where the book club is under the charge of retired teachers while active teachers do not participate. In addition, the coordinator of Centre 5, despite being retired, continues coordinating the book club since there is no one to substitute her. Moreover, it is difficult to find

someone to take over the book club when the coordinators are the students themselves.

As opposed to the problem detected in these educational centres, we find Centre 8. This centre is a perfect example of a recently born book club. It demands support from “the management department or inspection” and, it can be seen how teachers are highly motivated since “everything depends on their goodwill”.

As a suggestion of improvement, Centre 2 proposes to offer different activities related to reading in order to create new expectations among students. This, however, is already carried out in two of the participating centres. On the one hand, through innovation in the type of readings (Centre 1) and on the other hand, innovation in activities (Centre 6) which organize visits to bookstores, literary routes or getting in touch with the authors of the books.

Conclusion

To sum up, a wide range of different options and possibilities about how a book club in Secondary Education works have been drawn by the participants of this study. Features such as the origin of the book club, objectives, coordinators and participants have been considered. As it can be seen, there is a great variety of book clubs in the Secondary schools of Spain, if we take into account the target subjects, family participation, the criteria to select books and readings and the implication and training of coordinators and teachers, among others; as it was already shown in other book clubs (Polleck, 2010; Beach & Steven 2011; Hill, 2012; Álvarez & Gutiérrez, 2013; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013; Lions & Ray, 2014; Álvarez, 2016; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017). The diversity of answers provided by the questionnaires and interviews offer a broad horizon of organizational possibilities for those educational centres that want to start up a book club.

Moreover, the participating centres have insisted on the fact that a book club helps to develop the reading competence and the communicative and linguistics skills as well as to revitalize school

libraries (Gritter, 2011; Reed & Vaughn 2012; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017; Schreuder & Savitz, 2020). A book club is a place open to socialization and interaction which encourages the exchange of enlightened opinions and can enrich the participants' points of view. Besides, a book club helps to interpret, integrate and assess a text, developing critical thinking since these skills are worked on during the different turns of the members in the sessions (Gambrel, 2011; Hill, 2012; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013). Furthermore, relevant social issues and ethical values can be dealt with (Broughton, 2002; Álvarez & Gutiérrez, 2013). So, participation in a book club can improve school results, as students are trained to ponder over texts in order to make personal contributions.

It is, therefore, necessary a coordination between de Primary and Secondary school centres in order to obtain a continuity in the Reading Plan proposals on the one hand and also, to avoid the decrease of the reading habit from the age of 14 (Federación de Gremios de Editores en España, 2018). Interviews have insisted that those students who have belonged to book clubs since they were kids, will most likely continue with their reading habits as they become adults. Besides, it is advisable to choose carefully the readings based on the quality, variety and interest of the participants criteria. This selection should be made by the whole team. In this way, everyone will contribute their proposals and the coordinator will not be the only one responsible. Also, it is very important to take into account the members' opinions for their initial motivation. Moreover, the coordinator is a key figure to moderate the sessions and propose activities to enrich them (authors' visits, literary routes, etc.).

In conclusion, this study clearly shows that participating in a book club contributes to the integral training of high school students since they are going through the difficult period of adolescence when they need to feel as part of a group and support for their positive development (Broughton, 2002; Polleck, 2010; Choi & Tinker, 2017). Besides, links among the participants are established and open communicative areas which help to improve self-esteem and peer-to-peer social interaction are fostered, as

it has previously been seen at other educational levels (Avci & Yuksel, 2011; Álvarez & Gutiérrez, 2013; Álvarez & Pascual, 2013, 2016; Álvarez & Vejo, 2017). In addition to this, a book club can be a tool for teacher training since it allows a better knowledge of the students' reading tastes and their daily experiences expressed in their assessment book. Although difficulties may arise in the start-up or development of a book club, everything seems to indicate that high school book clubs bring relevant benefits to the people involved, the centres and their libraries, making the effort worthwhile.

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Appendix 1: Book club interview. Model A

- 1.- How long have you been participating in the book club?
- 2.- According to your experience, which was the most difficult issue to start up the book club?
- 3.- Did you find any other difficulties such as a lack of leadership to carry it out, a lack of enthusiastic students, problems to obtain the readings, lack of students' motivation to prepare the activities or during the sessions etc...
- 4.- How is the atmosphere or the general feeling in a book club meeting? (interest, lack of interest, active participation...)
- 5.- What exactly do you do in the sessions? How do they start, develop and finish?
- 6.- In your opinion, how should a book club be promoted?
- 7.- What kind of activities were encouraged and how did you carry them out? (to comment on passages or excerpts from the text, to watch films based on the book, debates concerning specific subjects, dramatisations etc...).
- 8.- Were these activities motivating enough or do you think that changes were required?
- 9.- Is the students' age a factor to influence motivation and participation in the book club?
- 10.- While doing this study, I have realized that teachers do not usually wish to participate as coordinators when a substitute is needed, do you agree? Any experience about it?
- 11.- In your opinion, is the reading skill being properly studied in the different high schools?
- 12.- A reading you especially remember and why.
- 13.- What aspect did you enjoy the most from participating in a book club? And the least?
- 14.- A happy memory of your participation in the book club.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix 2: Book clubs and literary gatherings interview. Model B

- 1.- What is the name of the book club in which you take part and where is it located?
- 2.- How long have you been participating in the book club?
- 3.- How many members are there in the book club? What is the average age? Are there more women than men? (main features of the reader profile)
- 4.- How do you obtain the readings? Who is in charge of selecting the books and how is this done?
- 5.- Do you keep any relationship with other book clubs?
- 6.- How is the atmosphere or the general feeling in a book club meeting? (interest, lack of interest, active participation, social interaction...)
- 7.- How often do you meet and what is it exactly that these meetings consist on?
- 8.- No doubt a great preparation is needed to carry out all the sessions in the book club, what does this previous organization consist in? What kind of activities do you do and how are they performed? (to comment on passages from the text, to share information, to watch films based on the book, debates concerning specific subjects, dramatisations, literary routes...)
- 9.- Could you please tell us about any readings you have recently read and have found especially interesting or have been a success among the readers?
- 10.- Have you used these readings to deal with sociocultural subjects?
- 11.- In your opinion, how should a book club be promoted?
- 12.- A reading you especially remember and why.
- 13.- What is it that you like the most about coordinating a book club? And the least?
- 14.- I know you coordinate literary gatherings as well, which are the main characteristics of this type of reader?
- 15.- What kind of readings do you use in the literary gatherings?
- 16.- I found quite interesting that some young writers used these literary circles as a means to become known by the public, what can you tell me about it?
- 17.- In case you need to express your opinion about any other issue which has not come out in the previous questions, you may write it down here:

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix 3: Online questionnaire

This questionnaire is about analysing how book clubs work and the possible implications book clubs can have for the teaching and learning processes as well as for the encouragement of the reading habit.

It consists of 3 sections of 9, 10 and 11 questions respectively. 13 of them are questions in which you have to select an option and if you need or want to add more information you may also write it down in the “otro” option. You will also find some open questions where you can express your opinion or experiences as a member or coordinator of a book club.

It would take 15 minutes to do this questionnaire.

The answers will only be known by the researchers. The information provided will be strictly confidential. The more answers I obtain, the more valuable the study will be.

If you could be so kind as to answer as soon as possible.

Thank you so much for your participation.

Why to create a book club?

- Name of the educational centre*
- When did the book club start in the school? (year)
- Why was this book club born?
- Which are the main aims of the book club?
- Who is in charge of managing the book club?
 - Literature and Language department
 - Families
 - Students
 - Otro:
- To whom is it oriented?
 - Students with less than 11 years old
 - 11 year old students
 - 12 year old students
 - 13 year old students
 - 14 year old students
 - 15 year old students
 - 16 year old students
 - 17 year old students
 - 18 year old students
 - Students with more than 18 years old
 - Vocational training students
 - Teachers
 - Families
 - Otro:

- Why these grades and not others?

- Was it successful among students when it started for the first time? (Only answer if it is oriented to students)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Otro:

- Was it successful among families when it started for the first time? (Only answer if it is oriented to families)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Otro:

- Was it successful among teachers when it started for the first time? (Only answer if it is oriented to teachers)
 - Yes
 - No
 - Otro:

- Does the participation in the book club increase through the years?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Otro:

- How has the book club developed through the years?

How does a book club work?

- How do you select the readings? What criteria do you use to select the readings?

- Who was in charge of the reading selection process?

- Which readings have you selected for this academic year?

- How do you obtain the books?

- How often does the book club meet?

- Which activities are carried out in the book club?

- Do you need any beforehand preparation for these meeting sessions?

- How do you promote the book club?

- Does the book club have got a blog?
 - Yes
 - No

- If the book club has got a blog, who is in charge of it?
 - Teachers, coordinators or other responsible members of the book club

- The librarian
- Students who participate in the book club
- Otro:

- If the book club has got a blog, how does it work? Which information is written on it?

Implications of participating in a book club for students.

- Are you in contact with other high school book clubs?

- Yes
- No

- Which are the benefits or advantages to be gained from participating in a book club for students?

- Do you think that students who take part in this club are more motivated by Language and Literature subjects?

- Yes
- No
- Otro:

- How do students that participate in the book club manage towards reading? Is there any difference between them and those students who do not take part in the book club?

- Yes
- No
- Otro:

- Are the book club readings used to deal with specific topics such as to prevent bullying, to encourage peer to peer respect, to talk about current subjects related to social issues or the news, to learn about other cultures etc...?

- Yes
- No
- Otro:

- If the previous answer is YES, could you put any examples of issues you have dealt with and related to these readings?

- Do you think that the book club has been successful?

- Yes
- No

- If the previous answer is NO, why do you think it could be?

- If the previous answer is YES, do you have any improvement suggestions in order to continue with this success?

• Personal opinions

- In case you want or need to add any kind of opinion or experience about your participation in a book club, which has not been reflected on the previous questions you may write it down here:

You have finished the questionnaire. Thank you so much for your participation!