

From Reader Response to Text Comprehension: A Study on the Novel-related Activities in EFL Reading Instruction

Hui-uen Chia Hui-Kuei Hsieh

Department of Applied English , WuFeng University

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to employ simplified novels into EFL college reading instruction and to explore students' perceptions of the novel-related activities. The reading instruction designed for this novel-related program focused on both text comprehension and reader response approaches. The findings suggested that the participants enjoyed reading novels in the EFL reading classroom. They also affirmed the value of the novel-related activities to facilitate their leaning motivations, vocabulary growth, and reading speed, comprehension and strategies. Besides, they considered reading comprehension check and text decoding to be the most helpful activities followed by vocabulary list and assignment and word and text reading. Response writing and sharing were ranked behind the above activities. The results reveal that for EFL language learners, both decoding and comprehension instruction and reader response discussion should be included when novels are employed into EFL reading programs.

Keywords: Novels, Reader response, Text comprehension, English reading instruction

1 INTRODUCTION

The text of novels is a wonderful means to transmit culture, pleasure, information and language. It also provides a dynamic learning process in which readers actively and enjoyably involve themselves in the rich, authentic, valuable and powerful language environment [4]. The teaching of children literature or simplified classic novels for EFL adult learners, though not prevalent, was reported to not only solve the problems of reading texts such as the length of the material and the difficulty of vocabulary but also help develop language acquisition, reading interest, literary competence and an appreciation of English literature [12,13]. The employment of novels into EFL curriculum appears not only to be appealing but also helpful in effect for language learners.

However, the application of novels to English instruction reported in research is also quite limited in its scope. Almost every English education implementing literature or novels both in L1 [2,7,8] and in EFL [1,3,12,14] classrooms mainly focused on reader



response approach. The reader response approach, inspired by Rosenblatt's aesthetic transactional theory [15], emphasizes that students are active participants in constructing the meaning of texts. Therefore, they should be provided with opportunities to express their feelings, thoughts, perspectives, and interpretations. The view appears to criticize the nonaesthetic reading approach, in which the readers focus primarily on comprehending text information. Nevertheless, for EFL learners, particularly for beginners or intermediate students, comprehension strategies and decoding skills are very critical. Without the prerequisite of factual understanding of the novel, they cannot go further to engage themselves in any interpretive, applicative or transactive reader responses.

The purposes of this study were to employ simplified novels into EFL college reading instruction and to explore students' perceptions of the novel-based activities. The reading instruction designed for this novel-based program focused on both aesthetic and nonaesthetic approaches. That is, sharing reader responses and comprehending text information. Some bottom-up methods such as direct instruction in vocabulary and grammar structure were included as well. Detailed activities will be explained later. The following are the research questions.

1. How do the participants perceive the employment of novels into the EFL reading classroom?
2. What novel-based activities are perceived particularly helpful for the students' English learning?
3. How do the participants perceive the teacher's role in novel-based reading instruction?

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The reading instruction designed for this study included both reader responses and reading comprehension strategies. Therefore, the following section of this literature review mainly focuses on reader response and a more comprehensive approach to reading instruction, to provide an empirical basis for the present study.

2.1 Reader Response Approach

The reader response approach has been widely adopted in teaching L1 English literature for a long time [2,7]. After several years of incorporating reader response activities into literature classes, Boyle [2] argued that students learn to make significant and critical interpretations about texts. They become adept at textual analysis and deeper thinking. In addition, their reading pleasure increases. As for teachers, they also accumulate their own knowledge of literature by listening to students' voices. Galda and Beach [7] emphasize the value of discussion activities in the reader response approach. Discussion can engage students' learning and promote their curiosity about the world of



literature. Besides this, they contend that students' responses and interpretations are grounded in their cultural and historical world. Thus, the reader response method is virtually a form of socio-culturally based literacy instruction where students use their responses to construct and critique the text systems and their own worlds.

The importance of discussion and sharing in the reader response approach has triggered a variety of instructional activities including Book Clubs, Literature Circles and Instructional Conversations in literacy learning and relevant studies [20]. A typical Book Club project in literacy classrooms consists of reading, writing, instruction, whole-class discussion, and student-led discussion groups. Three to five students are grouped to discuss a common reading, including specific chapters from longer books. During the discussion, they share personal responses, clarify confusion, create interpretations and so on [9]. Similar to Book Clubs, Literature Circles are also small and peer-led discussion groups. However, students choose their own reading texts from teacher-provided trade books, and small temporary groups are formed based on book choice [21].

Instructional Conversations are also small-group discussions about reading texts and include five elements: thematic focus, activation and use of background and relevant schema, direct teaching, promotion of more complex language and expression, and elicitation of bases for statements or positions. However, different from Book Clubs and Literature Circles, teachers in Instructional Conversations can participate in students' discussion and hear them articulate their understanding of the text. In addition, teachers are facilitators to help students share and deepen their understanding and interpretations of the text [19]. Therefore, compared to Book Clubs and Literature Circles, Instructional Conversations have more intervention and guidance from teachers. Saunders and Goldenberg [18] investigated the effect of literature logs and instructional conversations on students' reading comprehension achievement. One hundred and sixteen fourth- and fifth-graders were randomly assigned to one of four classes: (1) literature logs only, (2) instructional conversations only, (3) literature logs and instructional conversations, and (4) control group. The results showed that students in the groups of instructional conversations and literature logs and instructional conversations achieved significantly higher scores on reading comprehension than those in the control group. In addition, all three experimental groups performed better on the story themes than the control group. The findings indicated that instructional conversations could improve students' reading comprehension abilities.

In terms of the application of the reader response approach to EFL classrooms, several studies have been conducted to illustrate its significant value in English learning [1,3,12,14]. Ali [1] described the use of the reader response approach in the teaching of short stories to second-year engineering students in an advanced English reading class in Malaysia. She proposed a developmental model of a reader response approach to teaching literature: (1) literal understanding, (2) empathy, (3) analogy, (4) interpretation, (5)



evaluation of fiction, and (6) recognition. She also constructed a framework for using the reader response approach, which consisted of five elements: (1) invoking the schema, (2) sharing of initial response, (3) repeated reflections in a reading diary, (4) teacher intervention through group tasks, and (5) enlightening projects. Through the above teaching process, she discovered that students were enthusiastic in providing ideas as to how they could carry out the group task of describing the main character's life. Besides this, students' responses changed as a result of their own rereading and reflections and discussions with peers. The teacher's role was a facilitator of responses rather than a response corrector. She argued that the flow of creative and critical responses took place naturally as a result of the non-threatening learning atmosphere.

Carlisle [3] described how reading logs could be successfully used in a reader-response-based literature class at a junior college in Taiwan. The participants were 50 19-20 year-old undergraduates. Carlisle found that reading logs did stimulate students to go beyond the literal understanding and move towards critical interpretation and appreciation. The reading logs showed that students demonstrated their abilities in anticipating the story, picturing the event, interacting with the character's emotions, and evaluating the character's actions. Besides this, students reported that their reading and writing skills had also improved. They also enjoyed expressing their ideas in a relaxed discussion atmosphere.

Ho's study [12] aimed to discover the value of using young adult literature and the reader response approach to facilitate students' acquisition of confidence and independence in reading. The participants were 15 English-major juniors in a two-year university program in Taiwan. Data mainly consisted of students' response journals and reflective journals for four young adult books. The results showed that students could freely display their thoughts and critically respond to the texts based on the seven reading response categories. The reflective journals also indicated that students considered reading young adult stories and writing response journals rewarding and helpful for developing their critical thinking, motivating them to read, and improving their reading strategies and writing skills. However, they also reported that writing was less enjoyable than reading although they considered writing was helpful in developing their thinking.

Similarly, Liaw [14] investigated the reactions of a group of Taiwanese university students in their study of five American short stories. Participants were 31 students from various departments of a college of management. Data mainly came from students' response journals and interviews with a group of five or six students. The response journals included a summary of the stories and students own responses to the texts. The students' journals showed that they went beyond simple understanding of the texts and actively produced meanings through deep involvement with the stories and critical interpretation of the texts. Interview data also confirmed the unique nature of students'



responses to the texts and revealed positive attitudes to the reader response approach. In addition, students reported that their reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning and predicting, improved. When they employed these reading strategies and finished the reading materials, they felt a strong sense of confidence.

The above studies of the reader response approach all argued for its value in English language learning and affirmed the transactional process of meaning construction between the reader and the text. In addition, the researchers all emphasized the importance of sharing or discussion of responses and reading and writing together. These instructional activities seem to be the main features of the reader response approach and enable it to be more successfully applied to reading classes. However, class activities in most research mainly focused on sharing or discussion of students' reader responses. It was hardly found and discussed with regard to instruction planned to facilitate reading comprehension or decoding skills. The strong foci of reader response approach employed in novel-based EFL classes might generate a learning dilemma, where students, especially those low achievers, may have difficulties in sharing due to inadequate understanding of the content. Therefore, to help students gain the maximum benefits from reading novels, such as growth in vocabulary and text comprehension, a comprehensive approach involving reading comprehension strategies and bottom-up skills is called for.

2.2 A Comprehensive Approach to Reading Instruction

To improve L1 English learners' reading proficiency, the teaching of multiple comprehension strategies in school is now more common than the teaching of one individual reading strategy, which was the prevailing approach in the 1970s and early 1980s [11]. Pressley and his colleagues named the teaching of multiple comprehension strategies as "transactional strategies instruction." They observed several schools practicing transactional strategies instruction and identified several similar characteristics of the instruction [10]. First, both decoding and comprehension strategies were taught. Second, strategies were instructed through small-group activities and were used throughout the day. Third, strategies were taught as interpretive vehicles to promote personal, meaningful and interpretive understanding rather than literal comprehension. Finally, students were taught to coordinate strategies and use those strategies flexibly to become strategic readers. According to Pressley [11], reading research on transactional strategies instruction, including ethnographic studies, interviews, case studies and analyses of classroom discourse, has suggested that the instruction is effective.

Another comprehensive reading instruction model, CIRC (Cooperative Integrative Reading and Composition), is also designed specifically for literacy education and combines the use of cooperative learning with other practices that directly address issues of teaching methods and content, as well as classroom organization [22]. CIRC has three



principal elements: story-related activities, direct instruction in reading comprehension, and integrated reading and writing. Feature activities include reading a list of new or difficult words, writing meaningful sentences for vocabulary, reading the story aloud, identifying the characters, the setting, and the problem and making predictions, summarizing, sharing reader responses or compositions [22,24]. Up to 1999, CIRC had been practiced in about 1,000 schools from K-8 across the United States [6]. This model was also used in grades two through six in a comprehensive school change program called Success for All [23], and was reported to have a positive impact on students' academic achievement. These studies were analyzed and documented by Slavin [22].

The reading approaches and research reviewed above provides a number of important implications for EFL reading instruction in Taiwan. First of all, reading instruction should include both decoding and comprehension strategies. Second, strategies should be taught to be used as meaningful vehicles to promote personal, meaningful and interpretive understanding rather than literal comprehension. Finally, responding freely to the text and sharing thoughts and reflections with peers should be encouraged in class. In sum, based on the argumentations of Courts [5], Rosenblatt [15, 16] and Ruddell [17], a successful reader should be not only a skillful and aesthetic reader but also a problem solver and critical thinker. Therefore, in this study, the researcher adopted both bottom-up and top-down approaches, reading strategy instruction and the reader response approach followed by group discussion in order to create a comprehensive reading program.

3 METHOD

3.1 Participants and Setting

Thirty-five students from two classes participated in this study. They were second graders enrolled in a two-year extensive college program offered by the Department of Applied English at a large suburban college in the southern Taiwan. Most of them were high beginning adult EFL learners and had few experiences in novel instruction. To help students develop their English vocabulary and reading proficiencies through this novel-based reading class, a number of activities were designed and were explicated in details as follows.

3.2 Instructional Activities and Procedures

In this study, *Les Miserables* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (simplified version) were used for story-related activities in one semester. The activities were structured into three steps, and the class basically followed the activities as class procedures. However, not every activity could be carried out within the two-hour class. In most of these activities, students worked in groups of four people. Before coming to the class, students were asked



to read the assigned chapters at home and had finished vocabulary assignment (explained later). In addition, groups took turn to write a summary of the chapters. Before writing their summary, they had been instructed concerning how to organize and write the assignments.

1) Activities before reading:

A) Warm-up Activities: This was a teacher-led whole class discussion. Story discussions were structured to build background information, preview vocabulary and make predictions.

B) Word Mastery List and Words Out Loud: To familiarize students with new or difficult words in the story, they were given a list of vocabulary words with definitions before the class. Moreover, students were asked to write vocabulary assignment, which contained meaningful sentences for at least ten words of their choice. Then in the class, the items were introduced, pronounced and practiced in teacher-led activities. They were also asked to read them correctly and smoothly to each other.

2) Activities during reading: These were structured to help students understand the story and engage them in a variety of mental processes as they discussed and organized the story.

A) Story Grammar and Treasure Hunts: Students were given “Treasure Hunt” sheets and were asked to work in groups to identify the following: the theme, the characters, the setting, the problem, how the problem was resolved, and the main events in the chapter of the novel.

B) Numbered Heads Together Activity: To check comprehension of the story elements by all students, the teacher asked a question, and then each team consulted to ensure everyone knew the answer. Then, the teacher picked a number, and the student with that number answers the question for their team.

C) Text Decoding: After the teacher was certain that students understood the major ideas of the story, they were encouraged to ask difficult sentences to clarify reading ambiguity and increase comprehension.

3) Activities after reading:

A) Teacher Modeling and Partner Reading: The teacher read the story aloud (or a couple of selected paragraphs in the chapter). Later, students took turns with their partner to mimic and practice the pronunciation of the words and the rhythm and structure of the text. At first, partners read alternate sentences. After a few weeks, they were ready to read alternate paragraphs.

B) Summary Sharing: Groups presented their summaries to the whole class. The teacher and the class provided them with feedback.



- C) Response Sharing: Students were free to share their responses and thoughts on the characters and the events. Questioning, predicting, reflecting, comparing, interpreting, connecting, and commenting were encouraged.
- D) Grammar and Writing Instruction: The teacher provided direct instruction in writing skills, such as how to construct a summary and correct common errors, e.g., fragments. Then the students revised their written homework and submitted it to the teacher later.
- E) Vocabulary and Comprehension tests: The teacher gave students a written test to evaluate their vocabulary and text comprehension.
- F) Written Homework: They were asked to write an individual vocabulary assignment and a group summary of the assigned chapters before coming to the class next week. If one novel was finished, they wrote individual response reports. To stimulate students' reading responses, the teacher provided them with five questions: (1) What feelings and emotions does this work evoke in you? (2) What characters do you particularly like or dislike? Why? (3) Does anyone in this work remind you of anyone that you know? Explain., (4) What do you think is the major point of the novel?, and (5) What parts or sentences touch/impress you most? Why?

3.3 Data Sources and Analysis

To answer the research questions, data were mainly collected from questionnaires and students' writing reports. The questionnaire (see Appendix) consisted of both closed questions with a five-point Likert Scale and open-ended ones was conducted to elicit their perceptions of 1) their interests and difficulties in reading the novels, 2) benefits of the activities to their vocabulary growth, reading speed, reading comprehension and strategies, thinking development and writing skills, 3) the ranking of the help of each activity to their learning, and 4) the role of the teacher in novel-based reading instruction. The summary reports and reader response were collected as evidence to record their learning outcomes and support the research results. The data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. To present students' perceptions of learning interests, difficulties and benefits, means analyses was conducted along with their responses to the open-ended items in the questionnaire.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To gain a comprehensive insight regarding the value of the employment of novels into EFL reading instruction, students' perceptions of using the novels and the role of the teacher were identified and discussed as follows:



4.1 Students' Perceptions of the Employment of Novels into EFL Reading Classroom

The participants' perceptions of learning interests, difficulties, and advantages of reading novels were investigated here. Students were asked to answer questions one to seven by a five-point Likert scale. As Figure 1 indicated, students in general showed a strong interest in reading novels in the class (mean=4.54 in Q1) although they found it sometimes difficult to understand the text (mean=3.21 in Q2). With regard to how reading novels benefit their English learning, their responses to questions three to seven demonstrated a fairly positive result. They perceived that novels were quite helpful for their vocabulary growth (mean=4.4 in Q3), reading comprehension and strategies (mean=4.43 in Q4), reading speed (mean=4.11 in Q5), thinking development and reflection (mean=4.29 in Q6) and writing skills and content (mean=3.8 in Q7).

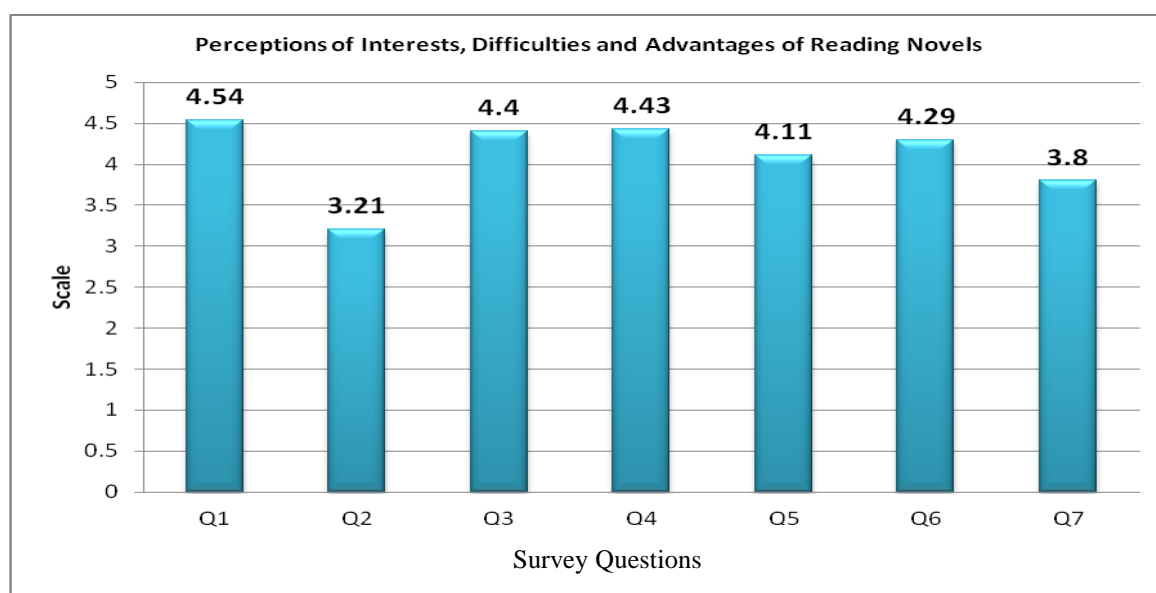


Figure 1.

Scale: 5= very interesting (Q1), or extremely difficult (Q2), or very helpful (Q3-Q7)

Q1: interest in reading novels, Q2: difficulty in reading novels, Q3: vocabulary growth, Q4: reading comprehension and strategies, Q5: reading speed, Q6: thinking development and reflection, Q7: writing skills and content

The findings indicated that students perceived the use of novels into reading class rather interesting and helpful for their English learning. Further information from their responses to the open-ended question 9 suggested that although sometimes they found too much vocabulary and reading made novel reading difficult, constant contact with new words and extensive reading helped them overcome the fear of encountering vocabulary and text length in reading. Furthermore, since the above major and seemly overwhelming

obstacles had been removed, reading novels could concurrently increase their vocabulary growth and boost their reading speed and comprehension abilities. Consequently, their reading strategies such as skimming for main ideas, scanning for important details and summarizing were facilitated as well.

4.2 Students’ Perceptions of the Value of Novel-related Activities to Their English Learning

To explore students’ perceptions of which novel-related activities were more useful than the others for their English learning, they were asked to select at least three out of 11 classroom activities and assignments and rank them in accordance with the benefits of each task to their learning. The results showed that among the 35 participants, almost every participant chose more than four activities, which they perceived to be useful for their English learning. Figure 2 further demonstrated which activity was perceived more useful than others.

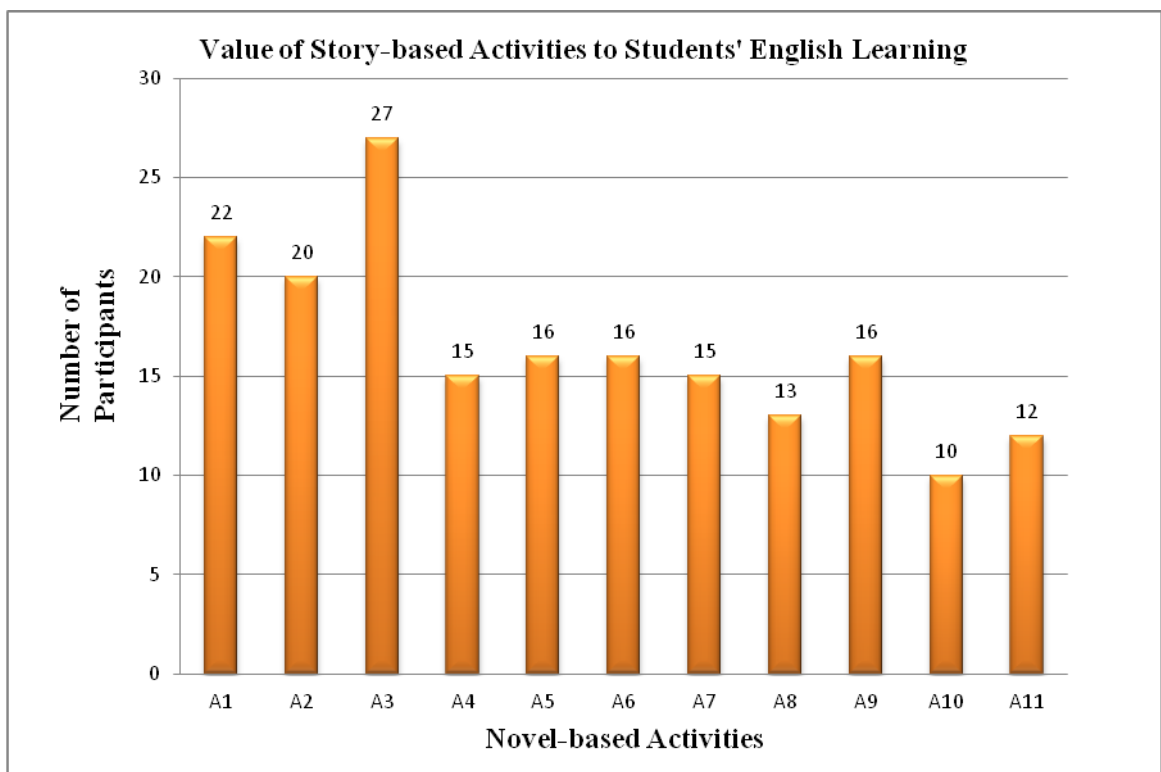


Figure 2.

A1: vocabulary list and assignment, A2: word and text reading, A3: reading comprehension check and text decoding, A4: summary sharing, A5: response sharing, A6: grammar and writing instruction, A7: vocabulary and comprehension test, A8: summary report, A9: response writing, A10: revision, A11: group discussion



Among the 11 story-related activities, reading comprehension check and text decoding, vocabulary list and assignment, and word and text reading were perceived the most useful tasks. The majority of the participants (over 20 out of 35) selected the above tasks. Activities related to response approach, such as response writing, response sharing and grammar and writing instruction, although not perceived so useful as tasks of text decoding, were chosen by many students (16 out of 35) as well. The above findings indicated that students still liked to write and share their reflections, thoughts and personal responses to the novels with the class. However, they considered tasks dealing with helping their word, sentence and text levels of comprehension to be more useful than other activities. This might be particularly true and practical for EFL students because without sound factual understanding of the text, they cannot go further to make any meaningful or critical personal responses. It may also be relevant to their low English proficiencies because they need more bottom-up skills to increase their comprehension of the text before they can do anything further.

Finally, revision task was perceived the least useful activity because only 10 out of 35 students chose it. The negative result may have come from the fact that since this was a reading class, students were not given enough instruction on writing process. Accounts in the open-ended question, furthermore, provided other explanations. They stated that because their writing skills were not so good, writing tasks, for example, revision and summary reports, were difficult for them. Besides, since it was a novel class, they preferred to read and share rather than to write.

4.3 The Role of the Teacher in Novel-based Reading Instruction

Concerning the role of the teacher in a novel class, the participants suggested that the teacher should be a guider and facilitator to help them comprehend the text and be engaged in reader response and discussion. They particularly emphasized the active role of students in sharing of their reader responses. They stated that they liked to share their thoughts with the class and listen to others' opinions and feedbacks as well. Therefore, the teacher should be a facilitator to monitor their reading comprehension before they could share, then guide their discussion direction and manage the discussion pace. They further acknowledged that in the current class, the teacher's instruction, such as story grammar, text decoding, comprehension tests, and the five questions as prompts to stimulate their thoughts, facilitated their learning motivations and outcomes. In addition, it was a right fit in terms of their learning needs. However, some low achievers complained about overloaded homework. They indicated that they could not complete the reading or writing assignments on time and suggested that the teacher should reduce the reading assignment so that they could finish it and become more involved in class discussion.



5. CONCLUSIONS

The above findings and discussion suggested that the participants enjoyed reading novels in the EFL reading classroom. Students also affirmed the value of the novel-related activities to facilitate their leaning motivations, vocabulary growth, and reading speed, comprehension and strategies. As to what kinds of activities were perceived useful for their learning, they considered reading comprehension check and text decoding to be the most helpful one followed by vocabulary list and assignment and word and text reading. Response writing and sharing were ranked behind the above mentioned activities. This may indicate that they perceived activities designed to enhance their word, sentence, or text level of comprehension to be more important than the one concerning reader response approach. However, this is not to conclude that reader response activity should be excluded from the EFL reading instruction. Actually, most students claimed that they liked to share their thoughts and reflections to the class. Apparently, reader response approach also helped to increase their learning motivation.

The above results reveal some important pedagogical implications for EFL teachers. First, reader response approach alone in a novel-based reading class is not enough for EFL students. For this particular group of language learners, they need more comprehension instruction consisting of both decoding and comprehension strategies. These strategies should be taught and used to clarify confusion, deepen their understanding, create interpretations, and further rich personal responses. In that case, these decoding and comprehension strategies can be defined and developed as interpretive vehicles to promote personal, meaningful and interpretive understanding rather than literal comprehension. Second, in addition to comprehension instruction and response discussion, other activities can be used to cultivate their learning interests and language competence. For example, students perceived that vocabulary list and assignment and word and text reading were useful for them. They seemed to enjoy reading aloud and mastering word meanings. Thus, word and sentence level of learning is necessary and should not be excluded.

In sum, this study suggested that to language learners, novels are dynamic vehicles to provide rich and authentic texts. To help develop learning motivations, reading interests and language competence, a variety of activities can be integrated to maximize the value of novels when they are employed in EFL reading instruction.

References

- [1] Ali, S. (Dec93/Jan94). The reader-response approach: An alternative for teaching literature in a second language. *Journal of Reading*. 37(4), 288-297.
- [2] Boyle, P. K. (2000). In praise of reader-response: Validating student voices in the literature class. *Teaching English in the Two Year College*, 27(3), 315-319.



- [3] Carlisle, A. (2000). Reading logs: An application of reader-response theory in ELT. *ELT Journal*, 54(1), p. 12-20.
- [4] Chun, C. (2009). Critical Literacies and Graphic novels for English-language Learners: Teaching "Maus". *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 53(2), 144-153.
- [5] Courts, P. L. (1991). *Literacy and empowerment: The meaning makers*. New York: Bergin and Garvey.
- [6] Education Commission of the States. (1999). *Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC)*. Denver, CO. (ED447423).
- [7] Galda, L. & Beach, R. (2004). Response to literature as a cultural activity. In R. B. Ruddell, & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed., pp. 852-869). International Reading Association.
- [8] Henly, C. P. (1993). Reader-response theory as antidote to controversy: Teaching "The Bluest Eye". *English Journal*, 82(3), 14-20.
- [9] McMahon, S. I., & Raphael, K. H. (1997). *The book club connection: Literacy learning and classroom talk*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- [10] Pressely, M., El-Dinary, P. B., Gaskins, I., Schuder, T., Bergman, J., Almasi, J. (1992). Beyond direct explanation: Transactional instruction of reading comprehension strategies. *The Elementary School Journal*, 92, 511-555.
- [11] Pressley, M. (2002). Metacognition and self-regulated comprehension. In Farstrup, A. E., & Samuels, S. J. (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (3rd ed., 291-309). International Reading Association.
- [12] Ho, I. P. (2005). Using young adult literature and applying reader-response theory to teach EFL reading. *The Proceedings of the 22nd conference on English teaching and learning in the Republic of China* (pp.107-115). Taipei: Crane.
- [13] Liaw, M. L. (1998). American children's literature: An alternative choice for EFL instruction. *The Proceedings of the Seventh International Symposium on English Teaching*, 683-694. Taipei: Crane.
- [14] Liaw, M. L. (2001). Exploring literacy responses in an EFL classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, 34(1), 35-45.
- [15] Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- [16] Rosenblatt, L. M. (2004). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. B. Ruddell, & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed., pp. 1363-1398). International Reading Association.
- [17] Ruddell, R. B. (1999). *Teaching children to read and write: Becoming an influential teacher*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- [18] Saunders, W. M., & Goldenberg, C. (1999). Effects of instructional conversations and literature logs on limited-and fluent-English-proficiency students' story comprehension



- and thematic understanding. *The Elementary School Journal*, 99(4), 277-301.
- [19]Saunders, W. M., Patthey-Chavez, G., & Goldenberg, C. (1997). Reflections on the relationship between language, curriculum content, and instruction. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 10(1), 30-51.
- [20]Shen, F. Y. (2005). Enabling higher-level thinking process in ESL reading: An examination of three instructional approaches. *The Proceedings of the 22nd conference on English teaching and learning in the Republic of China* (pp.249-264). Taipei: Crane.
- [21]Short, K. (1995). Foreword. In B. C. Hill, N. J. Johnson, & K. L. S. Noe (Eds.), *Literature circles and response* (pp. ix-xii). Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.
- [22]Slavin, R. E. (1995). *Cooperative learning: Theory, research and practice*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- [23]Slavin, R. E., Madden, N. A., Karweit, N. L., Dolan, L., & Wasik, B. A. (1992). *Success for All: A relentless approach to prevention and early intervention in elementary school*. Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service.
- [24]Slavin, R., Madden, N. A., Farnish, A. M., & Stevens, R. J. (1995). *Cooperative integrated reading and composition (CIRC): A brief review*. Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD: Center for Social Organization of Schools.

Appendix

1. How interesting did you find to read novels in the class?
 - a. Very interesting.
 - b. Fairly interesting
 - c. Somewhat interesting
 - d. Not very interesting
 - e. I was not interested at all
2. How difficult did you find to read novels in the class?
 - a. Extremely difficult
 - b. Fairly difficult
 - c. Sometimes difficult
 - d. Not too difficult-just about right
 - e. Very easy
3. How helpful did you think novels for your vocabulary growth?
 - a. Very helpful.
 - b. Fairly helpful
 - c. Somewhat helpful
 - d. Not very helpful
 - e. Not helpful at all



4. How helpful did you think novels for your reading comprehension and strategies?
 - a. Very helpful.
 - b. Fairly helpful
 - c. Somewhat helpful
 - d. Not very helpful
 - e. Not helpful at all
5. How helpful did you think novels for your reading speed?
 - a. Very helpful.
 - b. Fairly helpful
 - c. Somewhat helpful
 - d. Not very helpful
 - e. Not helpful at all
6. How helpful did you think novels for your thinking development and reflection?
 - a. Very helpful.
 - b. Fairly helpful
 - c. Somewhat helpful
 - d. Not very helpful
 - e. Not helpful at all
7. How helpful did you think novels for your writing skills and content?
 - a. Very helpful.
 - b. Fairly helpful
 - c. Somewhat helpful
 - d. Not very helpful
 - e. Not helpful at all
8. Please rank the following activities and assignments according its benefits to your learning: 1) vocabulary list and assignment, 2) word and text reading , 3) reading comprehension check and text decoding, 4) summary sharing, 5) response sharing, 6) grammar and writing instruction, 7) vocabulary and comprehension test, 8) summary report, 9) response writing, 10) revision and 11) group discussion
9. Please explain and describe how these novel-based activities and assignments influence your learning motivation.
10. What do you think is the role of the teacher in the novel-based instruction? Do you have any suggestions or advice for the current instruction?

