

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH  
UNIVERSITY OF DJILLALI LIABES – SIDI-BEL-ABBES  
FACULTY OF LETTERS, LANGUAGES AND ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



## **Approaching the Reader-response Criticism through the Teaching of Fictional Prose**

The Case Study of Master-one Literature and Civilisation Students at the Department of English at the University of Djillali Liabes – Sidi-Bel-Abbès.

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English as a Partial Fulfilment for the Requirement for the Master Degree in Literature and Civilisation.

### **Presented by**

Ms. Nour El Djihene KERMAD  
Ms. Chaimaa SELLA KH

### **Supervised by**

Prof. Mohammed Yamin BOULENOUAR

### **Board of Examiners**

Dr. Belkacem BENSEDDIK	Chairperson (MCA)	University of Sidi-Bel-Abbès
Prof. Mohammed Yamin BOULENOUAR	Supervisor (Prof.)	University of Sidi-Bel-Abbès
Dr. Hadjla ZOULIM	Examiner (MCB)	University of Sidi-Bel-Abbès

**Academic Year: 2020-2021**

## **Dedications**

To the woman who brought me to where I am now, my mother.

To my dear grandmother for praying for me and believing in me, May Allah bless her!

To my dear father and sister

To my dear uncle Djillali for his special constant support

To all my loved ones.

At last, to myself that Allah knows how much efforts I put in to bring this work into  
view.

Thank you all for supporting and being there for me.

**Kermad Nour El Djihene**

To my source of strength and inspiration, my mother

**Sellakh Chaimaa**

## Acknowledgements

We firmly believe that nothing can be achieved without the will of Allah, Alhamdulillah! We also believe that without serious work and strong will, nothing can be done.

First of all, we would like to extensively thank our supervisor Pr. Mohammed Yamin BOULENOUAR for his endless patience, continuous support and care, encouraging and suggesting us with motivational pieces of advice, and to thank him especially for sharing with us his time, experience and research skills all along this journey of research.

We also express our sincere gratitude to the honourable members of the jury for giving us some of their precious time to read our modest work:

Dr. Belkacem BENSEDDIK and Dr. Hadjla ZOULIM

We would like to thank all our teachers during our academic journey entirely.

We shall thank and acknowledge both the administration and the librarians for supporting our research by providing us with the primary materials.

We would like to offer many thanks to all master one, master two students of literature and civilisation and teachers of literature for collaborating and accepting to participate in our research.

## Abstract

Literature plays a great role in the EFL curriculum, for it is a proper material subject for language learning process. The teaching of literature demands the proficiency and control of language skills in addition to the reading of literary texts that is a fundamental in its process. Nonetheless, students may encounter difficulties in this process, mostly due to lack of using methods and strategies in teaching literature in order to develop students' thinking capacities, as to selecting inadequate literary materials. Therefore, they accomplish negative outcomes in their learning. On account of, this research aims to introduce the reader-response theory as an effective critical method in teaching literature for Algerian EFL context and to show how this theory influence students' ability to experience relevance in their learning process, and to acknowledge them as critical readers. The current research employed a questionnaire addressed to both master one and two literature and civilisation students at the English department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes, a classroom observation and an interview for teachers from the same department, for gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. The results obtained from all the data methods analysis accorded on the basis that using the target theory in teaching literature, more particularly fictional prose is essential and valuable for the future of the Algerian EFL literature classroom, as it serves positively both the teaching and learning process. Adopting the reader-reaction activates EFL students to be conscious in their communication as readers with texts; they would be utterly culturally competent. for this reason, it is suggested to proceed the target theory with other different literary genres or EFL Algerian pedagogical settings in order to create positive outcomes of literary awareness.

**Key words:** Teaching literature, Reader-response theory, reading strategies, fictional prose

## مستخلص

يلعب الأدب دورًا كبيرًا في منهج اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، لأنه مادة مناسبة لعملية تعلم اللغة. يتطلب تدريس الأدب الكفاءة والتحكم في المهارات اللغوية بالإضافة إلى قراءة النصوص الأدبية التي تعتبر أساسية في العملية المستهدفة. ومع ذلك، قد يواجه الطلاب صعوبات في هذه العملية، ويرجع ذلك في الغالب إلى عدم استخدام الأساليب والاستراتيجيات في تدريس الأدب من أجل تنمية قدرات تفكير الطلاب، مثل اختيار المواد الأدبية غير المناسبة. وعليه، فإنهم يحققون نتائج سلبية في تعلمهم. بناءً على ذلك، يهدف هذا البحث إلى تقديم نظرية استجابة القارئ كأسلوب نقدي فعال في تدريس الأدب لفصل الأدب الجزائري للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية وإظهار كيف تؤثر هذه النظرية على قدرة الطلاب على تجربة الصلة في عملية التعلم الخاصة بهم، والاعتراف بهم على أنهم قراء ناقدين. استخدم البحث الحالي استنباطًا موجهًا إلى كل من ماستر سنة أولى وثانية من طلاب الأدب والحضارة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة جيلالي ليايس بسيدي بلعباس، بالإضافة إلى ملاحظة فصل ومقابلة للأساتذة من نفس القسم، من أجل جمع أسس كمية ونوعية البيانات. النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من جميع أساليب تحليل البيانات الممنوحة على أساس أن استخدام النظرية الهدف في تدريس الأدب، وعلى وجه الخصوص النثر الخيالي، هو أمر ضروري وقيم لمستقبل فصل أدب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجزائر، لأنه يخدم بشكل إيجابي كلاً من عمليتي التدريس والتعلم. يؤدي تبني رد فعل القارئ إلى تنشيط طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ليكونوا واعين في تواصلهم كقراء مع النصوص؛ سيكونون مؤهلين تمامًا ثقافيًا. لهذا السبب، يُقترح المضي قدمًا في النظرية الهدف مع الأنواع الأدبية المختلفة الأخرى أو المؤسسات التربوية الجزائرية للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من أجل خلق نتائج إيجابية للوعي الأدبي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** تدريس الأدب، نظرية استجابة القارئ، استراتيجيات القراءة، نثر خيالي

# Table of Contents

Dedications .....	ii
Acknowledgments .....	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	vi
List of Figures .....	viii
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Abbreviations .....	x
General Introduction .....	1

## **Chapter One: Reader-response Theory Toward the Reading of**

### **Fictional Prose Texts**

1.1 Introduction .....	7
1.2 Definition of Teaching Literature .....	7
1.3 Reader-response criticism .....	9
1.3.1 Individualists .....	10
1.3.2 Experimenters .....	11
1.3.3 Uniformists.....	11
1.4 Thinking-Out-Loud Method as a Reading Strategy .....	12
1.5 Transactional Theory.....	12
1.5.1 Efferent Transaction.....	14
1.5.2 Aesthetic Transaction.....	14
1.6 Application of the Reader-response Theory.....	15
1.6.1 Reading Logs.....	16
1.6.2 Rewriting Narratives from Another Character’s Point of View.....	16
1.7 Reader-response Theory to Teaching Fictional Prose Texts at EFL Context.....	17
1.8 Fictional Prose.....	18
1.9 Criteria for Adopting Appropriate Fictional Prose Texts .....	18
1.9.1 Teacher’s Role .....	20
1.9.2 Student’s Role .....	20
1.10 Benefits of Applying the Reader-response Theory in Teaching Fictional Prose at EFL Context.....	21
1.11 Conclusion.....	22

## **Chapter Two: Research Methodology**

2.1 introduction.....	25
2.2 Importance of Using Methods in Teaching Literature at an EFL Context.....	25
2.2.1 Language-based Approach.....	26
2.2.2 Information-based Approach.....	26
2.2.3 Paraphrastic Approach.....	27
2.2.4 Moral-philosophical Approach.....	27
2.2.5 Stylistic Approach.....	27
2.3 Objectives of the Work.....	28
2.4 Research Design.....	28
2.5 Case Study.....	29
2.5.1 Students' Profile.....	29
2.5.2 Teachers' Profile.....	29
2.6 Data Collection Instruments.....	29
2.6.1 Students' Questionnaire.....	30
2.6.2 Classroom Observation.....	30
2.6.3 Teachers' Interview.....	31
2.7 Limitations of The Study.....	31
2.8 Conclusion.....	32

## **Chapter Three: Interpretations and Recommendations**

3.1 Introduction.....	35
3.2 Results and Interpretations.....	35
3.2.1 Students' Questionnaire Results.....	35
3.2.2 Classroom Observation Results.....	48
3.2.3 Teachers' Interview Results.....	49
3.3 Interpretations and Discussions of the Major Results.....	51
3.4 Suggestions and Recommendations.....	53
3.5 Conclusion.....	55
<b>General Conclusion.....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Webliography.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Glossary.....</b>	<b>72</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Major Critics Schools of the Reader-response Theory.....	10
Figure 1.2 Types of Reading Transactions.....	13
Figure 1.3 The Efferent and Aesthetic Continuum.....	67
Figure 1.4 The Reading Log Sample.....	16
Figure 1.5 Teacher and Student's Role at an EFL Literature Classroom.....	19
Figure 2.1 Approaches Introduced to Teach Literature at an EFL Context.....	26
Graph 3.1 The Age Average of the Participants.....	36
Graph 3.2 The Gender Attribution of the Participants.....	37
Graph 3.3 Students' Attitude Toward Reading Fictional Prose.....	38
Graph 3.4 Students' Amount of Reading Fictional Prose.....	38
Graph 3.5 Students' Perception of Fictional Prose Reading Levels.....	39
Graph 3.6 Students' Reasons Behind Reading Fictional Prose.....	40
Graph 3.7 The Obstacles Encountered While Reading Fictional Prose.....	40
Graph 3.8 The Ways Students Cope with the Difficulty of Understanding Meaning....	41
Graph 3.9 Students' Response in Terms of Reflecting Personal Experience.....	43
Graph 3.10 Students' Aesthetic Response.....	44
Graph 3.11 Students' Preference of Reading Purposes.....	45
Graph 3.12 Students' Attention to the Author's Style.....	45
Graph 3.13 Students' Act of Referring Back to the Author's Personal Background....	47
Graph 3.14 Students' Opinion Toward the Importance of Reading Fictional Prose....	48

## List of Tables

Table1.1 Reasons for Teaching Literature.....	8
Table1.2 Criteria for Selecting Appropriate Fictional Prose Texts in an EFL Classroom.....	19

## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

EFL English as a Foreign Language

RRA Reader-response Approach

RRJ Reader-response Journal

RRT Reader-response Theory

LCs Literature Circles

TOL Thinking-out-loud

T<sub>A</sub> Teacher A

T<sub>B</sub> Teacher B

T<sub>C</sub> Teacher C

T<sub>D</sub> Teacher D

T<sub>E</sub> Teacher E

# **General Introduction**

## **General Introduction**

Literature, in its widest sense holds a great importance in many aspects of both life and academic values. In this regard, it covers plenty of social issues and missing moralities in a society. It also proposes a substantial ground of a linguistic input. Teaching literature or literary texts aids students to develop positive outlooks through thinking and adopting the ideas and meanings entailed in a literary work.

This process can be better taught by relying on certain literary and critical approaches in order to define a body of literature. Among these approaches, a notable critical reader-response transactional theory that serves a crucial role in providing particular tasks that influence and inspire readers to construct their interpretations of a given text through reflecting their own life experiences, beliefs, and viewpoints.

The impact of this case may lead to highlight the prospective practices of the reader-response transactional theory in the classroom setting in which teachers' interference plays a role in creating a convenient atmosphere to encourage students' response, in addition to lead them to be contained in the text.

This study emphasises on the implementation of the reader-response approach in teaching literary texts for Algerian EFL students, for the thought of a response points out the interpretation of a text-based on the reactions of students both emotionally and intellectually. In this sense, it is a student-centredness approach that represents one of the needed actions in raising awareness toward autonomous learning as an objective in literature teaching pedagogy. Thus, this study attempts to investigate the pedagogical application of the reader-response approach in teaching fictional prose, as to determine the way students respond critically and aesthetically to them at an Algerian EFL context.

From the problematic reached on, the researchers have come to raise the following questions:

- 1- Why is it important to use the reader-response theory in teaching fictional prose texts for EFL students?

- 2- How does a reader's response play a role in detecting the meaning of a given text?
- 3- why students have to be aware of reading comprehension strategies in order to understand a text?

Based on the previous research questions, to be more precise, on the teaching of fictional prose texts through the reader-response theory in an EFL classroom; the following hypotheses can be formulated as:

- a- The reader-response theory would lead the teaching of fictional prose texts to provide EFL students with many aesthetic, emotional, and intellectual pleasures.
- b- A reader may reflect his or her own experience and appropriate schemata in interpreting a given text.
- c- Readers to certain extent are capable to extract meaning of a text relying on their own ways of reading.

The present research entails both a quantitative and qualitative research with a variety of data collection and analysis methods. Among these methods, a questionnaire handed to students, a classroom observation, and an interview for teacher for the purpose of reinforcing the research originality and validity in both the learning and teaching process and determining students' attention toward a given text. The population addressed will be a group of teachers at the English department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes and both a pilot study sample that consists on master two (2020-2021) literature and civilisation, and a central one of master one (2020-2021) literature and civilisation from the same department.

This study encompasses three chapters that each one of them covers certain objectives. The first chapter represents the key literature of this research that stresses the theoretical background of the reader-response criticism and its major theorists' substantial concepts and notions. Moreover, it brings to light this theory's great role in fostering EFL students' thinking capacities through the basics of particular reading strategies beneath the teaching of fictional prose.

The second chapter displays at a first stance, significance to this investigation by stating a particular idea about the importance of using methods and techniques for teaching literature in an EFL classroom. Then, it provides a description of the methodology followed in order to collect and analyse data that fill the researchers' needs from their inquiry.

In the final chapter, the investigation of the data collected from the research tools practically, in addition to their interpretations for the purpose of affirming or rejecting the research hypotheses. Then, this chapter aims as well to propose and recommend further practical applications to the target theory at an Algerian EFL context.

To sum up, this dissertation is conducted on the aim of filling the gap between the target approach and its usage beneath the teaching of fictional prose for EFL students; endeavouring to foster their individual thinking.

# **Chapter One**

## **Reader-response Theory Toward the Reading of Fictional Prose Texts**

# Chapter One

## Reader-response Theory Toward the Reading of Fictional Prose Texts

1.1 Introduction .....	7
1.2 Definition of Teaching Literature .....	7
1.3 Reader-response criticism .....	9
1.3.1 Individualists .....	10
1.3.2 Experimenters .....	11
1.3.3 Uniformists .....	11
1.4 Thinking-Out-Loud Method as a Reading Strategy .....	12
1.5 Transactional Theory .....	12
1.5.1 Efferent Transaction .....	14
1.5.2 Aesthetic Transaction .....	14
1.6 Application of the Reader-response Theory .....	15
1.6.1 Reading Logs .....	16
1.6.2 Rewriting Narratives from Another Character's Point of View .....	16
1.7 Reader-response Theory to Teaching Fictional Prose Texts at EFL Context .....	17
1.8 Fictional Prose .....	18
1.9 Criteria for Adopting Appropriate Fictional Prose Texts .....	18
1.9.1 Teacher's Role .....	20
1.9.2 Student's Role .....	20
1.10 Benefits of Applying the Reader-response Theory in Teaching Fictional Prose at EFL Context .....	21
1.11 Conclusion .....	22

## **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter's primary focus is to develop and extend the research problematic through introducing the reader-response criticism and critics of this school; examining it both theoretically and practically in teaching literature. Moreover, shifting the attention to the effective use of the reader-response theory in teaching fictional prose. Then, the researchers attempt to discuss in the second stand of this chapter, the thematic relationship between both teacher and students' roles in the use of the target approach in the teaching of fictional prose in EFL classroom. Hence, this critical approach may have an effective impact on students in which it enhances their skill of being critical readers and forming their own equipped response to examine a given literary work.

## **1.2 Teaching Literature**

Teaching literature represents an important integrated part of language teaching process. It contributes to develop learners' abilities to understand and react with a literary text. "teaching literature is teaching how to read, how to notice things in a text..." Johnson<sup>1</sup> (2014, chapter 23). Additionally, it plays an effective role in improving students' language capacity to read and write. Literature can be taught for several reasons that are presented from variable perspectives of scholars. However, these scholars may share ground on the following major reasons: cultural, personal and language enrichments.

---

<sup>1</sup> B. Johnson: an American literary critic and Professor of English and Comparative Literature and the Fredric Wertham Professor of Law and Psychiatry in Society at Harvard University.

Reasons	Scholars	Characteristics
Cultural Enrichment	Collie and Slater (1987)	Promotion of students' awareness and appreciation toward the cultural aspects of a literary text. As to develop their critical reading skills.
Personal Enrichment	Carter and Long (1991)	The involvement of students in the reading of literary texts by highlighting their needs of personal experience and comfort while the reading process.
Language Enrichment	Carter and Long (1991)	To develop students' linguistic competence at various levels as well as to help them to read extensively in order to increase their receptive vocabulary.

**Table 1.1 Reasons for Teaching Literature (retrieved from Collie and Slater, 1987; Carter and Long, 1991)**

Hence, the use of literature is highly recommended in language teaching, where students would perceive an actual sense of achievement through dealing with literary texts in the classroom (Lazar,1993, p. 17).

Nevertheless, the teaching of literature can be considered often a hard task for teachers to achieve; not to mention the wide gaps in overcoming linguistic competence and having an appropriate background knowledge. As Showalter (2003, chapter 1) proposes "Anxiety in Teaching Literature" concept, she explains the way teachers may face failure in their teaching. For example, the ambiguity between teaching and research in which she believes that "we would reconceive our pedagogy to make it as intellectually challenging as our research...to find an infrastructure that enables university teachers to be as professional in their teaching as they aspire to be in their research". For this reason, she acknowledges that the focus on the relationship between what and how to teach is of primary importance for teachers. In addition to the of teachers' training as she states that

"teaching is a demanding occupation, but few of us actually have studied how to do it".

### 1.3 Reader-response Criticism

Reader response criticism is a literary critical theory that emerges during the 1960s and 70s, particularly in the United States and Germany, under the light of a group of theorists and critics such as Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, Norman Holland, Louise Rosenblatt, and many others whom focuses on the reader and her/his important role in building meaning from a literary work; where it is seen that reader' s role is a fundamental element that cannot be neglected in analysing and interpreting literature. Besides, the relationship between the reader and the text is what makes the reader-response theory (henceforth, RRT) achievable, relying on the reader' s personal experience and viewpoint. In this respect, Rosenblatt stresses that

*A novel or poem or play remains merely inkpots on a paper until a reader transform them into a set of meaningful symbols. The literary work exists in the live circuit setup between reader and text: the reader infuses intellectual and emotional meanings into the pattern of verbal symbols, and those symbols channel her/his thoughts and feelings. Out of this complex process emerges a more or less organised imaginative experience. (Rosenblatt 1938, p. 25)*

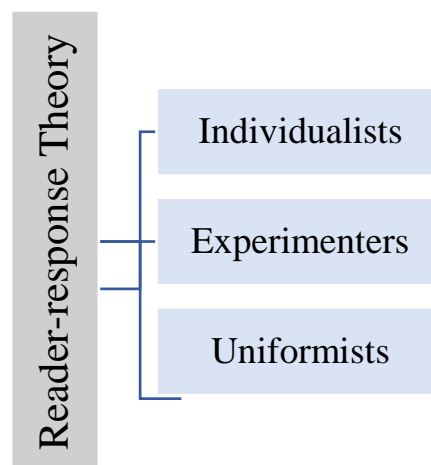
This quotation explains how the reader's own emotions, interpretations and life experience brings life to a text, creates its meaning and makes it meaningful. Holland (1998, para. 3) reviews the reader-response criticism as a school which gradually extends all literary studies; all are embraced by some of response' s notions. This school represents a reaction to new criticism<sup>2</sup>, whose theorists saw a piece of writing as the presence of both the text and the author in symbolizing meaning, where the role of the reader was highly neglected. As a consequence, the new criticism theory relies mainly on text and author-centredness while the reader response theory is utterly relied on reader-centredness. Nonetheless, the reader-response criticism may include a set of various critical sub-approaches, where critics rely on their investigations on a psychoanalytical, feminist, and structuralist perspectives ("Schools of Criticism", n.d). Tyson (as cited in "Schools of Criticism", n.d) adds that both these different perspectives and the use of RRT refer to the fact that "...what a text is cannot be separated from what it does". Additionally, he explains also that the theorists of this approach believe that a reader's role plays a big part in understanding the meaning of literary texts which might not be considered as a real target objective. This meaning

---

<sup>2</sup> New criticism as another label to formalistic critic, an approach intends to examine various elements in a literary work.

refers to different types of readers, each has her/his own feelings and experiences. Rosenblatt (1938, p.33) believes that the reader brings to the painting's persona traits, recollections of the beyond events, present wishes and preoccupations and a specific temper of the motion and a specific physical condition.

Accordingly, the reader is exposed to tackle any literary text she/he read each time as differently as newly since she/he intervenes her/his past experiences and values. As a result, teachers have to be competent enough to select suitable texts for these readers or students in order to fulfil their interests; simultaneously taking consideration to all types and levels of students.



**Figure 1.1 Major Critics Schools of the Reader-response Theory (retrieved from Culler 1982)**

### **1.3.1 Individualists**

Individualists refer to a group of literary critics who emphasised on individual reader's response toward a literary text. They accept as a true fact that the reader's interpretation is what creates meaning. Bleich (as cited in Tompkins, 1980, p. 134) supports this theory by investigating and analysing his student's responses to texts and recording their experiences; showing how individual's relation with a text is affected by their needs and emotions. In addition, to other theorists who are involved in this subjective criticism such as Holland (1998, para. 2) brings attention to the individual's psychology of psychoanalytic<sup>3</sup> and identity as a basic feature during the reading process. Pointing "the reading of any work of literature is of a necessity, an individual

---

<sup>3</sup> Psychoanalysis: a set of theories and therapeutic techniques used in the study of subconscious mind.

and unique occurrence involving the mind and emotions of some particular reader” (Rosenblatt 1985, p. 100). In accordance to Rosenblatt’s statement, the necessity of having a personal response from each individual reader is for the purpose of promoting critical and analytical thinking during both the teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

### **1.3.2 Experimenters**

Experimenters refer to a category of theorists who shift their ultimate focus to readers ‘mind state and its influence on their vision toward a literary text. Gerrig (1993, p. 5) investigates how readers are engaged with the text to a certain extent they neglect their values as they tolerate with it. Moreover, he tackles this study by explaining how readers’ emotional or affective responses toward literary texts can be drawn from natural criticism as defamiliarization<sup>4</sup> or foregrounding<sup>5</sup>. In other words, experimenters draw their conclusion on the way reader’s own experiences, behaviours, and values are affected by reading literature.

### **1.3.3 Uniformists**

Uniformists refer to a group of literary scholars who fall in this category by believing that readers are influenced differently by any text they read. They would view a text in the same way. In this respect, Iser (as cited in Davis, 1989, pp. 421-422) tends to consider the reader and her/his deducted unified response towards literary texts as effects that must be interpreted, yet he emphasises on the idea that the text controls response. He also proposes what is called “an implied reader”<sup>6</sup> in his entitled book “The Implied Reader” in which she/he is responsible in making meaning from textual and hidden statements of elements of a story through an active point of view.

---

<sup>4</sup> The artistic technique of presenting to audience common things in an unfamiliar way in order to gain new perspectives.

<sup>5</sup> A concept in literary studies concerning making a linguistic context from a given literary traditions.

<sup>6</sup> A model of a reader who is considered by the author to fill meaning gaps in a text creatively.

## 1.4 Thinking-out-loud Method as a Reading Strategy

An approach employed for collecting specific information. It examines the higher standards of reading comprehension processes. In this respect, Schnell<sup>7</sup> (1990, p. 5) suggests that students read the literary text in divisions; each division studied apart in order to discuss and think-out-loud by reflecting on what's hovering in their minds meanwhile. Olsen et al. (as cited in Schnell, 1990, p. 5) claim in spite the fact that this thinking-out-loud (henceforth, TOL) approach provides a sample of theoretical notions of the subject's mind meanwhile the reading process that are presented in strategies or knowledge sources; from which readers are not asked to extract these theoretical notions but to conclude them from the TOL data.

Likewise, Haas and Flower (1988, p. 168) list other reasons why TOL method is crucial in the study of reading comprehension process. These are the idea that TOL can be used in discussing and analysing the higher standard of cognitive process in reading comprehension successfully, as well as "Thinking-out-loud" data may be influenced by student's ability to verbalize her/his thoughts, by the distortion of thoughts caused by stopping during reading" (Olsen et al., as cited in Schnell, 1990, p. 6) or "even by the rapid, unexamined, and inexpressible aspects of the cognitive processes themselves" (Haas & Flower, 1988, p. 168). To put in other way, a reader's construction may be shaped into plenty of sides in which she/he includes representations of structure, function, and content of a given text.

## 1.5 Transactional Theory

This theory represents an effective application to literary criticism and the teaching of literature as whole. i.e. reading as transaction suggests that there is a literary integration between the reader and the text; each plays a task that affect the other. Rosenblatt (1988, p. 10) argues with providing other definitions of terms, proposing that it is quite vague to refer to the text as a literary work unless a reader approaches and gives it a meaning. She believes that

*The response of a reader is a result of the transaction taking place between the reader and the text; a transaction in which meaning is established as the reader*

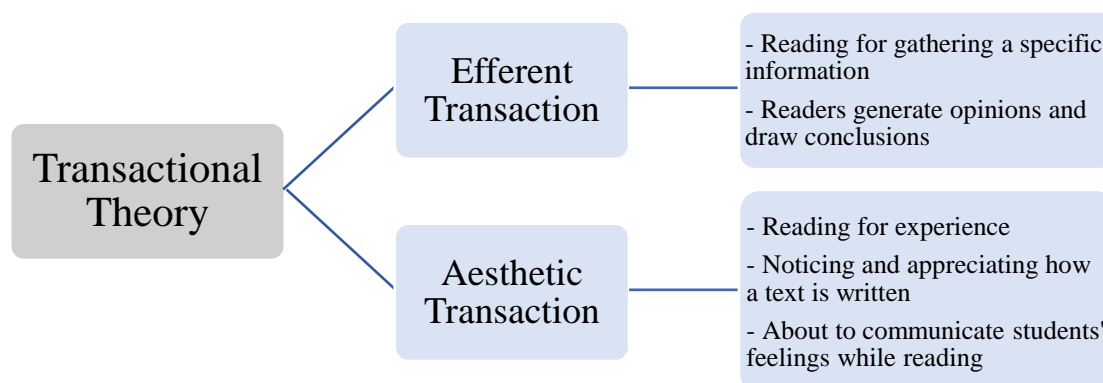
---

<sup>7</sup> A master dissertation's author at the Department of Education and Human Development State University of New York College at Brockport.

*brings his or her own experiences, perspectives, and insights to bear upon a text that is proposing views and ideas of its own. (Rosenblatt, 1976, p.101)*

By way of explanation to this utterance, the researchers assume that the meaning can be an integration of an active understanding and emotional reaction, yet a reader grasps these notions similarly in creating meaning. Apart from that, Iser (as cited in Probst, 1987, p. 2) describes it as “literary texts initiate performances of meaning rather than actually formulating meanings themselves”. In this sense, it is shown that the reader’s act of reading is responsible for referring to a given written text as a literary work. Hence, transactional theory emphasises on the creative role of the reader; The meaning is not established in the written text but rather in the reader’s reading act (Probst, 1987, p. 2). As clarification, this may behold the importance of the reader’s creativity where the reading process is not subjected only to the text identification, but to insert the reader’s individuality involving her/his own schemata in which she/he gives respond to a literary work and fill the gap which sometimes exist in it. In other terms, the transactional theory encourages the reader’s reflection toward any reading through her/his own personal data.

In transactional theory, Rosenblatt (1985, p. 38) drops attention to the types of readers as well. She focuses on their nature of their interferences, anticipations, and interpretations of texts while reading. Thereupon, she characterises other aspect of RRT that lies in the distinction between reading for seeking information and reading for joy. Specifically, when the reader’s is drawn to information gathering task, this is called an efferent transaction. Whereas, the reader’s interest is centred on the pleasure of reading, this is called an aesthetic transaction.



**Figure 1.2 Types of Reading Transactions (retrieved from Rosenblatt 1985)**

### 1.5.1 Efferent Transaction

In efferent reading, the reader namely focuses on the act of extracting out meanings, thoughts and conclusions for applying them at the end of the reading process (Schnell, 1990, p. 10). “the reader’s attention is primarily focused on what will remain as a residue after the reading — the information to be acquired, the logical solution to a problem, the actions to be carried out” (Rosenblatt, 1978, p 23). As an interpretation to Rosenblatt’s statement, efferent transaction is based on reading for the purpose of collecting particular data to acquire a target need from a given literary text. Then, nowadays, the amount of reading provided in classroom can be classified within efferent reading where students are required to read and analyse ideas and facts throughout a literary text in order to gain a certain knowledge in which it can be recited during an exam’s questions. For this reason, plenty of efferent reading students have focused on metacognition<sup>8</sup> as their potentials in becoming autonomous learners are promoted (“Teaching the Reading of Literature”, 2010). As can be emphasised by

*unless readers actively and mentally manipulate the words and phrases, unless they make mental connections and inferences, they may never develop the control over their own learning process needed to understand the meaning of the text as presented by the author. (Kauffman & Randlett, 1983, p. 10)*

From the above statement, the assumed conclusion that comprehension cannot be depended on the knowledgeable use of reading strategies.

### 1.5.2 Aesthetic Transaction

In aesthetic reading, the primary focus is shifted toward the reader’s own experience. Readers gradually increase their awareness to both the connotative and denotative meanings of the words and feelings that are devoted to the text. Rosenblatt (as cited in Pantaleo, 1995, p. 77) says that in aesthetic reading “a reader adopts an attitude of readiness to attend to what is being lived through during the reading event”. Furthermore, Carlisle (2000, p. 13) adds “the teaching of literature should be an aesthetic experience rather than an information gathering exercise from the moment the reader opens a book”. To comment to both Rosenblatt and Carlisle’s statements,

---

<sup>8</sup> The awareness and understanding of one’s own thought process.

aesthetic transaction makes a reader approach a text in terms of emotional experience rather than being instructively submissive to it.

Holland (1975, pp. 201-231) serves that readers recreate a story in their own style. He also explains that a novel read by two different readers may be interpreted the same way for these readers share common experiences. Aesthetic reading in literature highly forms an important transaction toward understanding and responding to a literary work. It is the personal response from which it stimulates and raises the reader's comprehension of it. In this respect, this kind of readers' interpretation promotes their motivation to read more as well as their critical thinking skills. In conjunction with Haas and Flower (1988, p. 169) presume that "the teacher as a co-reader can...helps students draw out the rich possibilities of texts and readers". i.e., teachers will gradually be able to develop independent learning among their students.

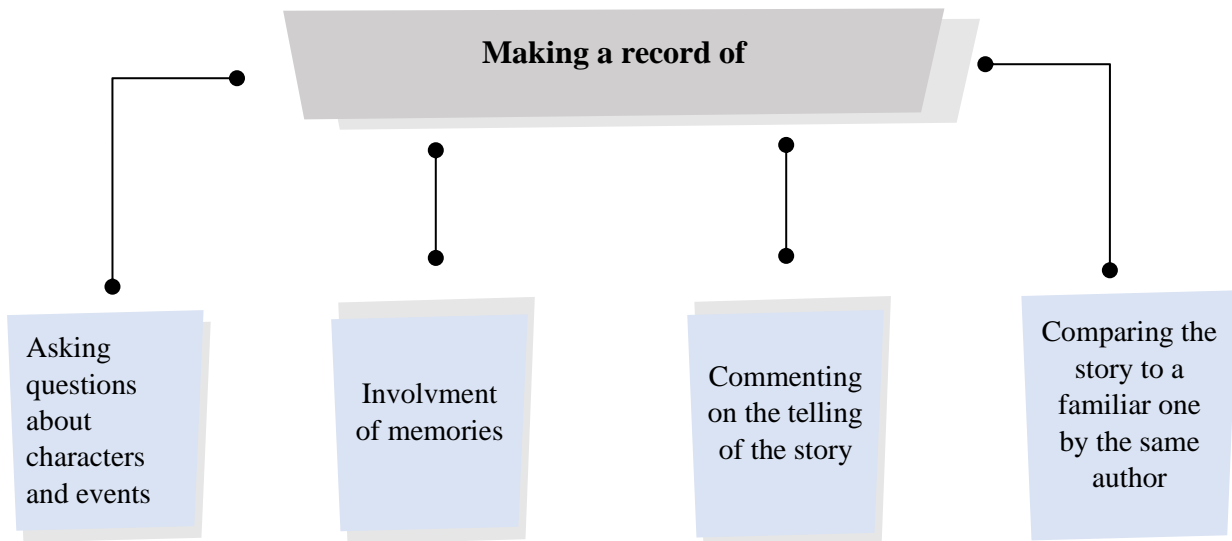
Rosenblatt (1995, pp. 350-351) admits that both concepts of efferent and aesthetic transactions are ways in which a reader can view in her/his reading of a given text. She suggests that all linguistic tasks fall for general elements such as lexical, analytical, and abstracted that stand for the efferent stance, as to specific ones, effective and experimental which are included within the aesthetic stance. In this respect, reading events "A" and "B" are perceived efferently, whereas reading events "C" and "D" are viewed aesthetically; simultaneously, "B" is shifted to the specific elements and "C" to aspects of the general ones. (see Figure 1.3 in Appendix A)

## **1.6 Application of the Reader-response Theory**

The implementation of RRT aims to draw out students' thoughts, attitudes, and personal response to literary texts. Amer (2003, p. 68) recommends that teachers need to introduce the reader-response approach (henceforth, RRA) before attempting to include it in their teaching. They ought to explain to students the way in which this approach should be tackled. As he states "teachers should discuss with their students the difference between reading literature and reading for information. Students should be consciously aware of their contribution to the text". Amer suggests two techniques that can be used by students in implementing the RRA which are: Reading logs and Rewriting narratives from another character's point of view.

### 1.6.1 Reading Logs

Reading logs are considered as a practical efficient application of RRT in dealing and responding to literary texts. Where readers make a record of which they express and document their feelings, thoughts, associations, and judgments during their reading process (Spirovska<sup>9</sup>, 2019, p. 24). Carlisle (2000, p. 14) views the reading log as “the simplest and most direct tool for encouraging students to enter and explore their secondary worlds”. Accordingly, students write down all the things that go in their minds while reading. In other terms, the use of stream of consciousness<sup>10</sup> style.



**Figure 1.4 The Reading Log Sample (retrieved from Carlisle, 2000)**

### 1.6.2 Rewriting Narratives from Another Character’s Point of View

Point of view in narrative literature can be presented as an opinion in terms of judgements by readers. As it can entails the position in which the narrator describes the setting, characters, and events (Al-Alami, 2019, p. 911). He also justifies that “point of view is important because it filters everything in a narrative. It determines the amount of information the narrator shares with the reader. It can also influence the degree to which the reader can identify with the protagonist”. This means, the focus on point of view in narrative literature gradually increase students’ visions and promote critical thinking

<sup>9</sup> Elena Spirovska, PhD student at South East European University, Tetovo, North Macedonia.

<sup>10</sup> A narration method that describes happenings of thoughts and actions in a character’s mind.

through the adaptation and visualisation of the story. In other words, the teaching of short stories or novels through a point of view would allow the students to see through the eyes of characters clearly. This explains how students' interpretations are filtered through a point of view.

### **1.7 RRT to Teaching Fictional Prose Texts at EFL Contexts**

The teaching of fictional prose texts at an EFL context through the RRT tends to be theoretically and experimentally valid. In this regard, teaching should revolve around the accomplishment of meaningful tasks and strategies that are pedagogically accepted, as to take into accounts needs, interests, cultural background, and language level of students. “the classroom practices of response-based teaching can be designed under the consideration of critical pedagogy and literacy that cater for students' nonthreatening atmosphere and secure feeling” (Iskhak et al., 2020, p121). i.e., students have the ability to reflect their responses collaboratively. They suggest two major modes that are effective in teaching fictional prose texts through the RRT at an EFL classroom for both teachers and students mainly the reader-response journal (RRJ) and literature circles (LCs).

These modes are applied within the use of web-based communication<sup>11</sup> in which RRJ serves a crucial part in encouraging EFL students to adopt their both linguistic skills and personal aptitudes to better understanding while reading aesthetically. Larson (2009, p. 642) experiences the online reader journal in order to examine the way technology is combined in electronic reading process favours the birth of new literacies. To put in other words, social networks' massive impact in directing online response journal in teaching literature. He also explains how this method raises EFL students' interactions where they can produce creative responses based on images, posters, or digital arts.

Apart from that, literature circles represent another response task that enhances students' motivation toward reading. In this sense, active EFL students are more likely invited to be independent readers. Teachers may apply LCs lectures practically through a set of six steps (“National Council of Teachers of English”, 2006).

---

<sup>11</sup> Information and thoughts shared via a network.

- a- Allowing students to select their favourite text.
- b- Classroom managements in literature circle groups.
- c- Providing students with the literary material to read, give them the chance to prepare it for the LCs meeting, and then assign them to write about it.
- d- Asking students to write their own stories.
- e- Students' reflection and discussion of their own interpretations among each other.
- f- Teacher' effort in serving EFL students' interests in terms of their thinking capacities and responses.

## **1.8 Fictional Prose**

Fictional prose texts are types of speech or any piece of writing that are characterized by a clear, fluent, and straightforward language. These literary texts have an ordinary form that is not restricted to any particular structure or rhythm. Prose fiction texts constantly include the narration of a story in which it covers both real social issues and moralities as well as a creation of an author's imagination that is far from reality. Camus (as cited in "Definition of Prose Fiction", n.d) says "Fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth".

## **1.9 Criteria for Adopting Appropriate Fictional Prose Texts**

Fictional prose texts are presumably as the preferable ways to make students to improve their lexical knowledge as to develop a better understanding, appreciate and respect others' cultures as stated by Carter (as cited in Bobkina, 2014, p. 251). Bobkina adds literary texts as novels and short stories "favour the understanding of the communication processes in the target language. Though representing an imaginary world, these texts often describe vivid and detailed settings and lead readers to discover the characters' personalities and worlds".

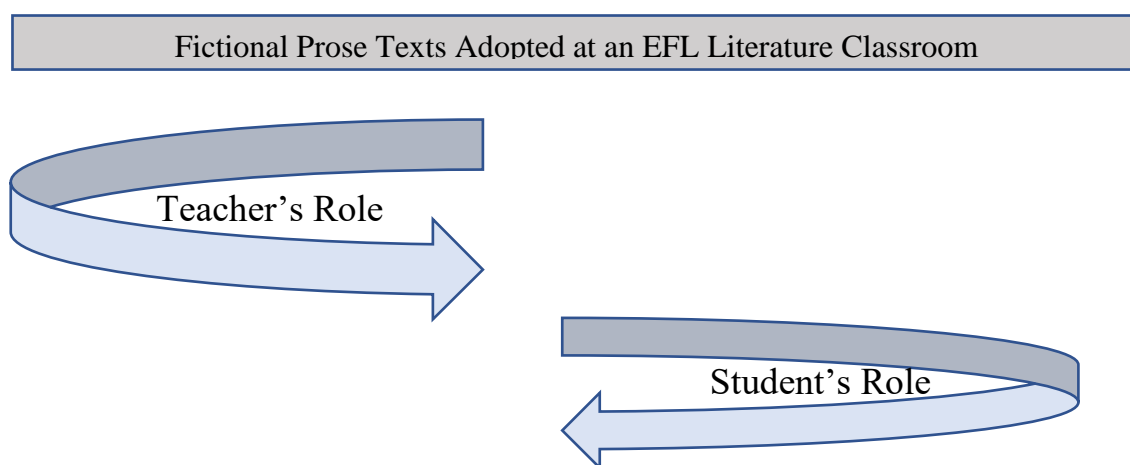
In other words, students would be capable to explore the world from different perspectives, for instance others' lifestyles. Horner (1983, p. 26) lists three major categories as factors of selecting appropriate novels or short stories in which they are based on aesthetic area that emphasises on students' reaction meanwhile reading,

psycholinguistic<sup>12</sup> in which students are asked to identify psychological patterns, and socio-moral that is examined in terms of themes and content.

Criteria	Characteristics
Linguistic Criterion	Providing authenticity in texts in terms of styles and types (the use of language differently from slang to formal). Extend deep range of vocabulary. Familiarity with linguistic forms and communicative functions.
Methodological Criterion	Enrichment of different viewpoints and interpretations within the literary text. Integration of ideas and themes from various subjects. Promotion of autonomous learning.
Motivational Criterion	Consideration of students' needs, interests, cultural, and language level. Meaningful and enjoyable contexts.

**Table 1.2 Criteria for Selecting Appropriate Fictional Prose Texts in an EFL Classroom (retrieved from Duff and Maley, 1990)**

These three categories take part in students' development as individuals through promoting a personal area. Furthermore, Duff and Maley (1990, p. 6) recommend other criteria that are considered as crucial in the selection of fictional prose texts in an EFL literature.



<sup>12</sup> A term refers to the relationship between psychological functions and linguistic behaviour.

## Figure 1.5 Teacher and Student's Role at an EFL Literature Classroom

### 1.9.1 Teacher's Role

Teacher's role takes part in teaching literature pedagogy by planning an appropriate classroom management. Teachers' attention to engage in teaching strategies at classroom, by experience affects students' attitudes toward the promotion of their own writing and reading events (Iskhak et al., 2020, p. 118). In this sense, teachers need to set reasonable activities and techniques in their teaching in order to define a suitable response from students which lie in interacting with their proper expressions, adjusting to their different responses in teaching, and developing autonomous learning. In doing so, teachers would assure the fulfilment of the objectives and tasks required in applying the RRT in their teaching of fictional prose texts which involve students' enjoyment and interaction with texts (Erdem<sup>13</sup>, 2015, pp. 49-51). Accordingly, teachers are invited to motivate students to better understanding the reason behind their own response. Norling (as cited in Erdem, 2015, p. 51) debates that teachers must

*train the minds of the learners to dive into the world of the writer and place themselves in her/his shoes. In other words, in order to better understand a text, students must be encouraged to read with a different lens—the lens of a either a specific character or the writer. This will allow the students to better comprehend what they are reading. After this, teachers must have the ability to move past the —non-native issue and make the texts as relatable as possible to students who live in worlds completely different than the ones they are forced to read about. In doing so, teachers can raise literary awareness.*

To comment on this statement, teachers' position is crucial in directing students' interaction of particular readings dealt with in the classroom.

### 1.9.2 Student's Role

The student as a reader is one of the first basics of constructing and deducing the meaning of a literary Text. It has an effective and vital states in extracting sense from the author's words and expressions in which a reader's view to the literary text is often dependable on her/his own view of people, society and nature. The reaction toward a text and the manner of understanding is strongly related to her/his previous experiences

---

<sup>13</sup> Mustafa Erdem, PhD student, university of Tirana.

and determination of life. Rosenblatt (1960, p. 305) argues that the reader often works on reorganizing and reconfiguring the keys and symbols found in a literary text based on his/her own emotions and feelings; connecting it with her/his personal beliefs. In other terms, the reader's relationship with a literary text that relies on past experiences or even present interests is what straightforwardly creates a meaning. In this respect, it is concluded that literary texts without the role of the reader in interpreting it are nothing but a static word on paper.

### **1.10 Benefits of Applying the RRT in Teaching Fictional Prose at EFL Context**

Readers' personal responses enable them to approach a text through reflecting on their own reading styles and making sense of their lives and values. Apart from this, an effective response is elaborated and supported with different evidence from a given text. It emphasises on the reader's multiple interpretations to the text, yet it encourages them to think for themselves i.e., to use their own reading strategies in order to understand and interpret the text. In particular, to encourage discussions, create diversity, and explore different views of a given text (Probst, 1994, as cited in Spirovska, 2019). Correspondingly, readers' adaptation to the relationship between the text and its actual meaning.

Tacker (2000, p. 199) draws a conclusion that the implementation of the RRT in a literature classroom may be beneficial in many notions. Among them students' ability to experience relevance in their learning process, involvement in an effective confrontation toward literature, and acknowledging them as critical readers in which they can define meanings in literary texts.

Buckler (as cited in Tucker, 2000, p. 200) states that "...the most valuable pedagogical application in of reader-response criticism creates a link between real-life experience and work –helping the student to connect-and then builds on that connection". As an interpretation to Buckler's statement, due to the numerous benefits of RRT which is used in a literature classroom, increasing students' awareness toward literary texts that are relevant to their own lives and beliefs.

## **1.11 Conclusion**

The researchers have come to form their conclusion about the idea that teaching strategies develop broad discussion and foster students to seek and trust their own responses while reading. As for the RRT, it helps them to become better critical readers. Moreover, this study's analysis brings to light also the efferent and aesthetic reading transactions that result in considering reading comprehension's process as dynamic and transactive, wherein a reader is responsible for identifying all of the meaning and aspects of a given text that will be shifted to his/her awareness. The researchers conduct a second chapter in order to see the methodology used to practically examine the theoretical notions presented in the current one of how the reader-response approach influences EFL students in the literature classroom while reading fictional prose texts through the use of certain research procedures and a target population.

# **Chapter Two**

## **Research Methodology**

# Chapter Two

## Research Methodology

### Chapter Two: Research Methodology

2.1 introduction.....	25
2.2 Importance of Using Methods in Teaching Literature at an EFL Context.....	25
2.2.1 Language-based Approach .....	26
2.2.2 Information-based Approach .....	26
2.2.3 Paraphrastic Approach .....	27
2.2.4 Moral-philosophical Approach .....	27
2.2.5 Stylistic Approach .....	27
2.3 Objectives of the Work .....	28
2.4 Research Design.....	28
2.5 Case Study .....	29
2.5.1 Students' Profile .....	29
2.5.2 Teachers' Profile.....	29
2.6 Data Collection Instruments.....	29
2.6.1 Students' Questionnaire.....	30
2.6.2 Classroom Observation.....	30
2.6.3 Teachers' Interview .....	31
2.7 Limitations of The Study .....	31
2.8 Conclusion .....	32

## **2.1 Introduction**

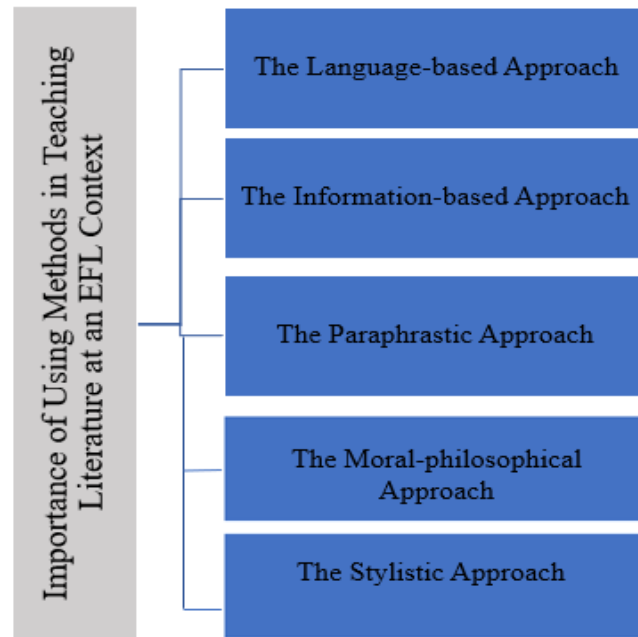
The use of the reader-response theory is seen as a crucial approach in not teaching literary texts only but to teach language as whole in compare to other critical approaches. It is subjective due to its regard of both a reader and text's personality in which reading detects many personality traits of the reader than of a text. This chapter seeks to view this study empirically by defining the methodology used that includes the data collection methods and objectives of the work owing to get adequate results and draw a resolution to the research questions.

## **2.2 Importance of Using Methods in Teaching Literature at an EFL Context**

Teaching literature enhances EFL students' abilities to better understand, critically think, and appreciate the ideas and concepts conveyed in a literary work by an author. This process can be better achieved through teachers' knowledge of an appropriate techniques and approaches that play a great role in directing the accomplishment of teaching's objective (Fauziah, 2016, p. 156). In this sense, these methods are significant to teaching literature to promote students' both language and literary competences, therefore they serve a crucial part in the learning process. Brandes and Ginnis (1986, p. 12) claims that "Learning what is meaningful and relevant depends partly on what is taught and partly on how it is taught" i.e., the development of approaches and strategies to teaching literature is highly recommended to be effectively proceeded by teachers. In addition, adopting approaches to combine active skills of reading in an EFL literature classroom has a fundamental role in fostering students' potentials in dealing with literature broadly. These approaches can be narrowed to the following ones that are employed by literary theorists to teach language throughout literature and linguistic theorists to promote better use of literature in language classroom (Soomro<sup>14</sup>, 2017, p. 66).

---

<sup>14</sup>Abdul Fattah Soomro, a PhD associate professor at Institute of English Language & Literature University of Sindh, Jamshoro



**Figure 2.1 Approaches Introduced to Teach Literature at an EFL Context**  
**2.2.1 Language-based Approach**

One of the most beneficial approaches in teaching literature is the language-based approach. This approach emphasises on the appropriate application of language, in which it attempts to work on improving students' language skills through literary texts in order to achieve proficiency. It contains a variety of exercises and instructions that aims to develop the learners' vocabulary. Van (2009, p. 7) asserts that the techniques provided by this approach simplify the learners' transaction with literary texts and help them develop their sensitivity to various genres. Thus, this approach is mainly centred on the student in a way that matches with his or her needs in learning language.

### **2.2.2 Information-based Approach**

In teaching literature, among the very important approaches used the Information-based approach. Where the teacher in this approach aims to provide learners with information related to literature which enables them to know about the literary text dealing with in terms of historical, political, and social backgrounds, and as Divsar (2014, p. 75) states that these backgrounds include also the characteristics of a literary text in addition to rhetorical devices. As well to all what is related to the writer and

her/his writing style, in which these features are considered essential for students' understanding and adoption of the text presented to them.

### **2.2.3 Paraphrastic Approach**

Paraphrastic approach is a common one in which it is used by teachers in order to facilitate the learners' understanding by rewriting the language of a literary texts in a simple structure using light words and expressions. Besides, paraphrasing the original text by avoiding complicated forms that hinders students 'assimilation, also following the method of modifying and translating words and sentences into other languages (Divsar, 2014, p.76).

### **2.2.4 Moral-philosophical Approach**

It is suggested that behind every literary text there is a message that carries an ethical meaning. In the teaching of literature, teachers guide their students to find and look up for these meanings. Hence, an effective way to achieve this is to adopt the moral-philosophical approach, as it urges students to sort out the ideas and the values behind the writer's expressions which leads them to a better understanding of literature. It is also asserted that this approach specifically helps learners to develop their awareness of moral and philosophical importance of texts while the process of reading. (Vethamani & Rahman, 20010, p.90). In addition to obtaining self-realization while interpreting literary works.

### **2.2.5 Stylistic Approach**

The stylistic approach is among the most appropriate approaches to understand literature. It enables students to adopt linguistic features, vocabularies, and interacting with the words of a literary text. Thunnithet (2011, p. 49) adds that this method mainly spots the light on the effective role of language in literature, and focuses on the learner's appreciation to the structure of a literary text, and the uniqueness of its own peculiarities. Moreover, it helps them also to interpret the meaning of the text, beside to enriching the language knowledge and awareness.

### **2.3 Objectives of the Work**

This study is structured through research tools, around the aim of demonstrating by evidence that the use of the reader-response approach in teaching fictional prose texts at an Algerian EFL classroom serves both advantages for teachers and students. In this sense, this approach would provide a personal interaction between teachers and their students as well as to raise their tolerance to the different reactions from students which they take account of them in planning their lectures. In addition, students are able to interpret texts in different ways by attaching memories, personal attitudes, and previous experiences while reading; to seek for profound meanings.

Due to the restriction of the curriculum and time factor, the researcher selects novels and short stories as literary materials to teach through the target approach for being valuable and more convenient to plenty of readers varieties.

### **2.4 Research Design**

This research employs a mixed method of both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for the purpose of answering the research questions. The quantitative data include a type of questionnaire for students, in addition to both a classroom observation and an interview of teachers as qualitative data. The researchers apply the mixed method research to examine diverse viewpoints and to strengthen the aim behind the study in addition to the fact that these two types of research support each other in terms of achieving valid and credible results.

Quantitative research involves the use of tools that aim to collect and analyse statistical data. In this respect, the researchers make predictions, test research hypotheses, or develop results from a large population. Quantitative research tends to ask particular narrowed questions as proceeded by the researchers in this study; it aids them to achieve their target goals constructively. Where a questionnaire has been addressed to students and the data obtained from them will be analysed accordingly.

Qualitative research embraces the collection and analysis of non-statistical data. It can be drawn to bring new extensive perceptions to the research. It is used to observe the target sample's behaviours and experiences toward a given topic. The researchers

follow this type of research by illustrating a classroom observation and a form of an interview to better understand and interpret the data.

## **2.5 Case Study**

The entire population of this research consists on students and teachers at the department of English at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbas. The students are divided into two samples, the first one includes 12 students from master two literature and civilisation were targeted for a pilot study to test a questionnaire. Whereas, the second main sample are 36 students of master one literature and civilisation. Then, there are accurately 5 teachers of both literature and teaching literature.

### **2.5.1 Students' Profile**

The selected participants for the conducted research that are from master one literature and civilisation of both genders and age average from 20 to more than 35 years old as checked in the department's administration, in addition to their different language levels. They were chosen for the purpose of having a solid background about literature and more engaged with different literary texts. Hence, they will be a very helpful case study in facilitating the objectives to be achieved by the researchers.

### **2.5.2 Teachers' Profile**

The five elite of professors and PhD teachers of both literature and teaching literature were chosen for their perceptions that cover one of the objectives of the current established research. As to take for granted their experiences in the field in which provide much help by presenting their methods of teaching literature or expressing further diverse viewpoints about it, for example.

## **2.6 Data Collection Instruments**

Research instruments refer to the particular procedures that are used to collect and analyse data relevant to a given research. The researchers choose and employ these procedures appropriately in their investigation in order to achieve the aim behind it. In this study, they take part of both qualitative and quantitative research methods; mainly a

questionnaire for students, classroom observation and an interview for teachers to ensure validity and credibility of the research.

### **2.6.1 Students' Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a data collection tool used in research. It is composed of a set of questions in which a researcher structures them for the purpose of extracting information or examining their attitudes and perspectives on a particular subject. It is also considered as the written form of an interview that may be answered directly or indirectly. Questionnaires are preferable for researchers to use, for their rapid, inexpensive and effective application of gathering plenty of data. However, questionnaires sometimes might not fulfil a researcher's goal when it comes respondents' dishonesty while answering the questions and the difficulty of interpreting different responses in terms of open-ended questions.

The constructed questionnaire is addressed to both master two literature and civilisation students for a pilot study and the central respondents, master one literature and civilisation students at the department of English at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. It permits them to express and share their perspectives. It aims to explore the interaction between the text and reader; examining this latter's creative role through involving his or her own experiences (See Appendix B). In this questionnaire, all the 12 formed questions are close-ended ones. This kind of questions facilitates the process of both providing and collecting data for the respondents and the researchers. Additionally, 5 out of 12 questions involve an extra free choice to be added by the participants in order to not narrow their personal opinions.

### **2.6.2 Classroom Observation**

Classroom observation represents a qualitative research method in which researchers tend to observe the happenings and attitudes in a pedagogical setting. The data collected within this research tool is primarily centred on the interaction between teachers and students as Boulenouar (2013, p. 355) states "as the teaching of American; British literature has been resurrected, it is essentially important to observe the teacher and the learners' behaviours within a classroom". He adds that classroom observation process involves professional action observation schedule to be guided by during the

teaching of literature; mainly identifying both teacher and student's profiles, determining the pedagogical material, and exposing the type of teaching.

The researchers' purpose behind using this tool in this study is to investigate the way of how teachers teach and what kind of activities they provide for students at an Algerian EFL literature classroom in order to get an appropriate equipped response from them, besides to explore these students' interaction simultaneously.

### **2.6.3 Teachers' Interview**

An interview is a tool of qualitative research that encompasses asking particular questions as open-ended ones to debate with a category of respondents in order to collect data about a given topic. The importance of an interviews lies in providing an insight into the personal notions and opinions of participants. Interviews may differ in terms of a structured interview in which questions are planned by the researcher in advance, an unstructured one where no questions are prepared previously, and a semi-structured interview that questions are prepared, yet the researcher may ask additional questions during the interview.

In this research, a structured interview is conducted (See Appendix C) where a group of five teachers at the department of English at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes are interviewed and asked two open-ended questions and other two close-ended ones by the researchers (See Appendix C). The aim of this structured interview is to discover teachers' perception towards literary criticism theories in general and the reader-response theory in particular. As to discuss their proper methods regarding the teaching of fictional prose through the use of the RRT at an Algerian EFL context, and the possible benefits of it.

## **2.7 Limitations of The Study**

In any research investigation, there are a sort of limitations that may encounter researchers and influence their interpretations of findings. The researchers in this study have faced some of the difficulties. For the most limitation, the lack of sources that are relevant to teaching fictional prose through the RRT in an EFL classroom at the library of the researchers' university; this led them to seek other research grounds such as

online sources which are sometimes expensive. Then, the permanent pandemic of (covid 19) that resulted in relieving the researchers' studies to a very late extent. Hence, the approval of the topic, arranging a supervisor, and managing administrative matters were delayed, so the researchers could not work actively.

Additionally, the new followed divisions system of teaching due to the pandemic has limited the researchers with time factor since the period given for them to on their inquiry was synchronized with the official exams.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The methodology chapter has attempted to cover the important use of various methods in teaching literature in an EFL context. It presented and described the different research tools used in this inquiry. Accordingly, the researchers reviewed the objectives of the research as well as all the addressed respondents. Lastly, this chapter tackled the difficulties that encountered the researchers, and the data collected from this research's tools will be analysed and interpreted in the next chapter.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Results and Interpretations**

# Chapter Three

## Interpretations and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction.....	35
3.2 Results and Interpretations .....	35
3.2.1 Students' Questionnaire Results .....	35
3.2.2 Classroom Observation Results .....	48
3.2.3 Teachers' Interview Results .....	49
3.3 Interpretations and Discussions of the Major Results .....	51
3.4 Suggestions and Recommendations .....	53
3.5 Conclusion .....	55

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this final chapter, the researchers aimed to describe and analyse the data obtained from the research tools; some of the obtained results were from students' questionnaire, classroom observation, and others from teachers' interview. Then, they interpreted the main findings in order to either affirm or decline the research hypotheses. At last, the researchers tried to recommend further possible ways to ameliorate students' response as a part of this study's purpose.

### **3.2 Results and Interpretations**

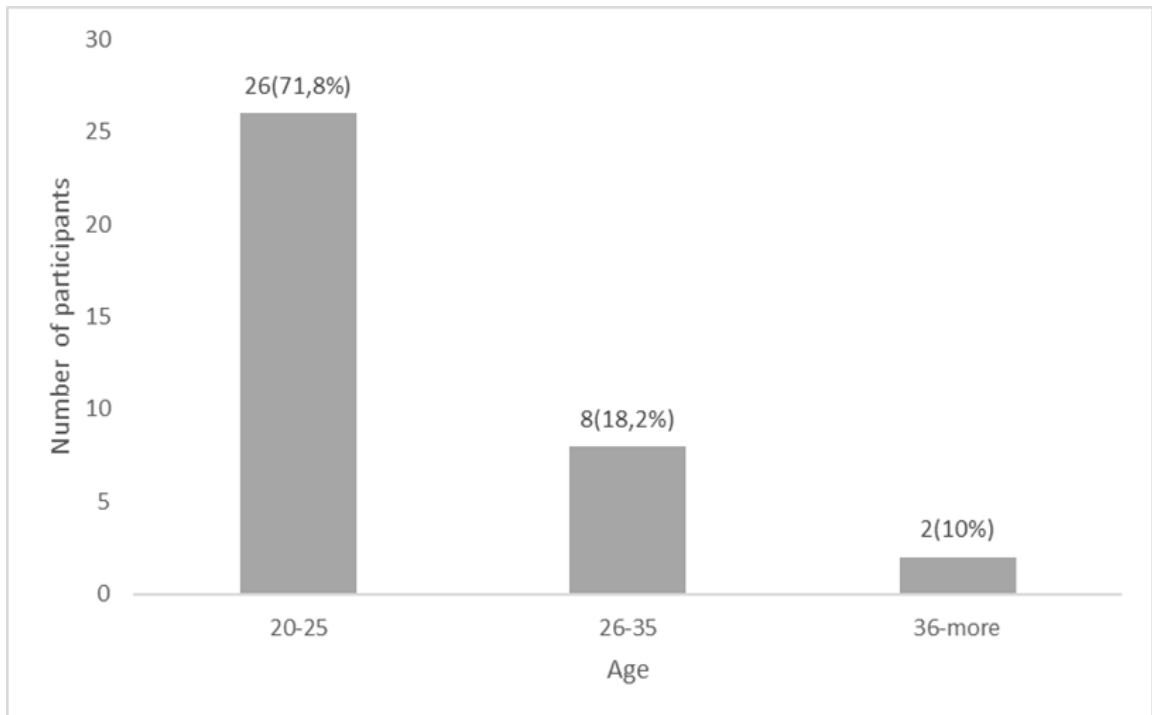
This current part introduces the researchers' analysis and evaluation of the results obtained from the data collected. Questionnaire's analysis described students' behaviours and personal opinions. Classroom observation and teachers' interview were analysed in terms of examining the prospect and effect of including the reader-response approach in teaching fictional prose in the classroom.

#### **3.2.1 Students' Questionnaire Results**

In this tool, the researchers discussed the results obtained from students' questionnaire. This instant questionnaire was at first piloted with a sample of 12 students from master two literature and civilisation at the English department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes in order to ensure that the target population of this research would adjust to the questions asked. Hence, the students who were addressed for the pilot study answered appropriately and expressed no ambiguity. The target population of this study consists of 36 students of master one literature and civilisation from the same previous department. They answered the questionnaire both directly and indirectly with the use of an online form of questionnaire (See Appendix B).

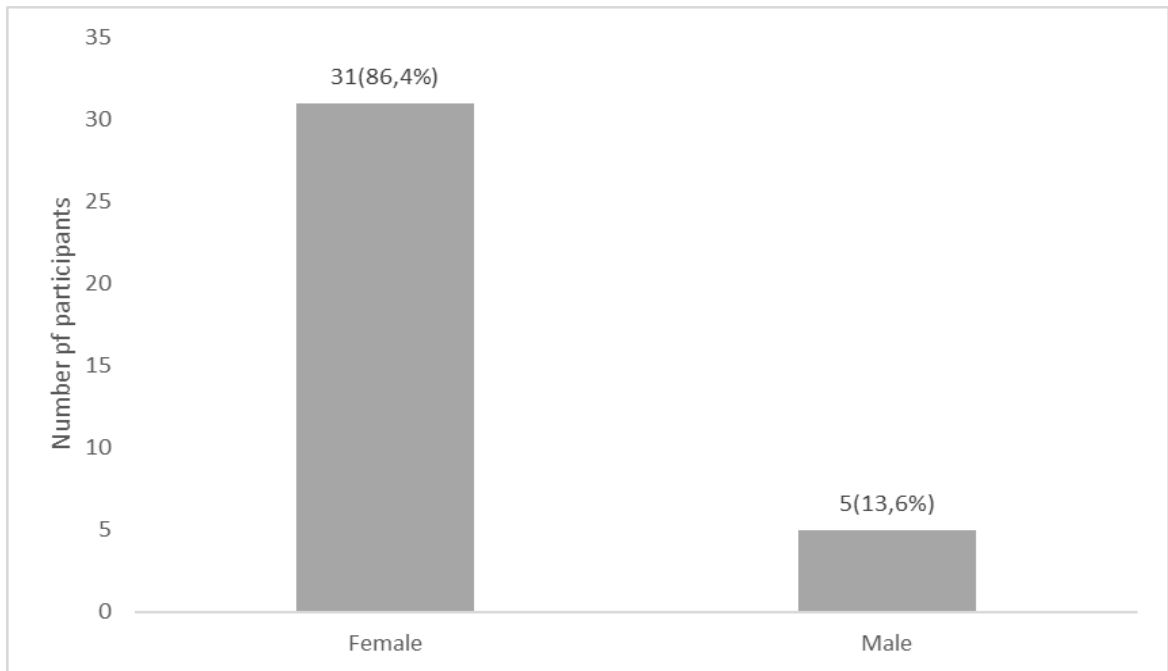
The researchers conducted this tool to acquire their need from which they could explore both the interaction between the reader and text, as well as to whether these Algerian EFL students do involve their own experiences in their interpretations of a given text while reading. The results are adopted in the following graphs.

The researchers proposed section one that consists of two questions of the participants' both gender and age for the purpose of fostering their assumption that reader's biography plays a role in influencing her/his own response, specially at an EFL context. Thus, the results express that the majority of the participants (71.8%) fall for the average of 20 to 25 years old and others around (18.2%) in an age of 25 to 35, and for some others (10%) who are between 35 years old and more (See Graph 3.1)



**Graph 3.1 The Age Average of the Participants**

The second part of section one is the gender of the participants. Its results show that females represent the major gender in this study about 27 females (86.4%), whereas there are about (13.6%) of 9 males (See Graph 3.2).

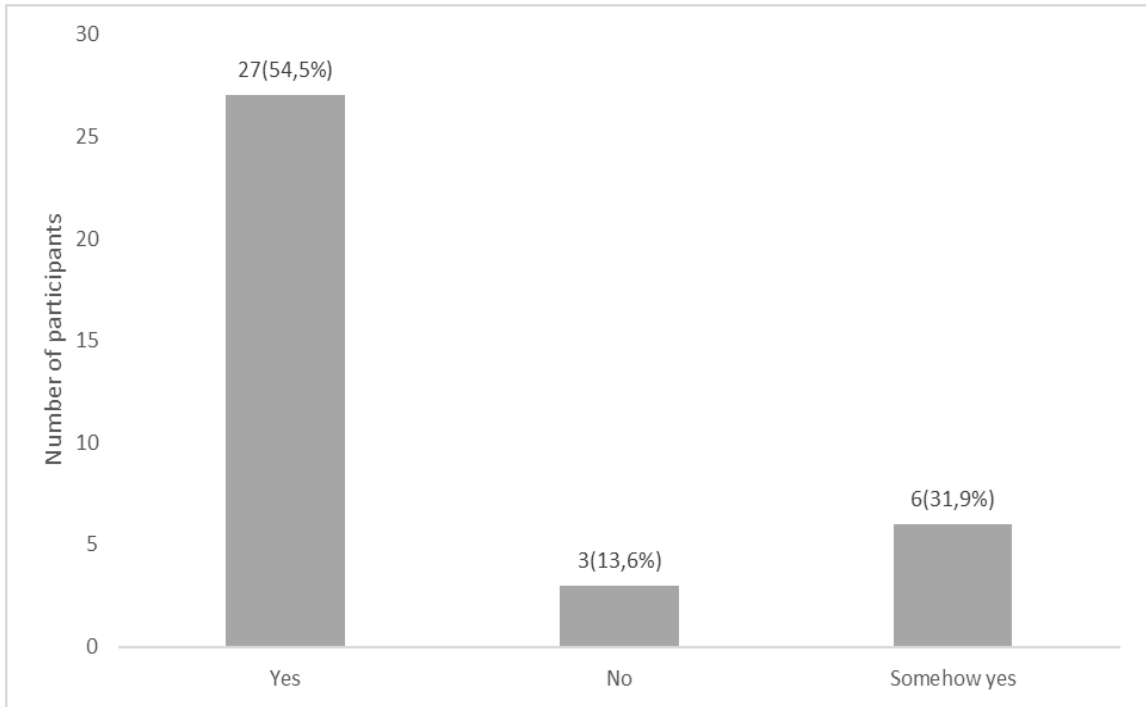


**Graph 3.2 The Gender Attribution of the Participants**

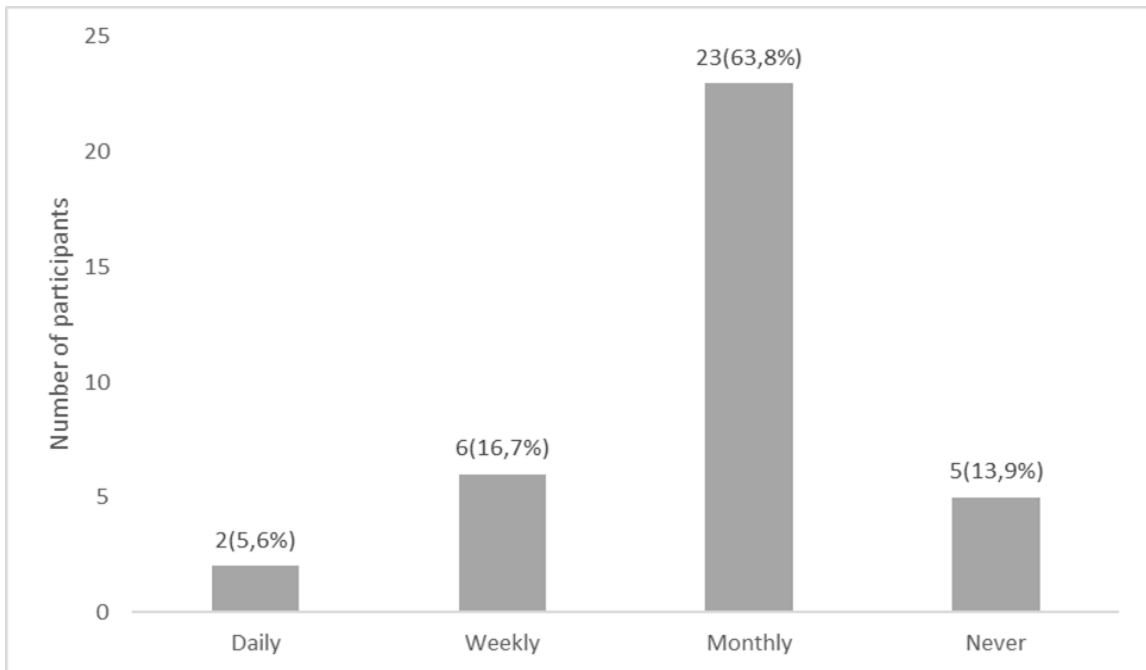
All of the first three multiple choices questions in section two are asked to see whether the students enjoy reading fictional prose, how often they read them, and to what extent they are familiar with their reading of. The outcomes are as followed:

some students about 27 (54.5%) did like to read fictional prose, in contrast to 3 other students (13.6%) who did not, and some 6 others (31.9%) said they somehow liked reading it in the first question. Then, results in the second question display that the monthly criterion was highly chosen by 23 students (63.8%), in addition to 5 others (13.9%) who their answers were never, besides to 6 more students about (16.7%), said weekly, and two other left students answered that they read fictional prose daily (5.6%).

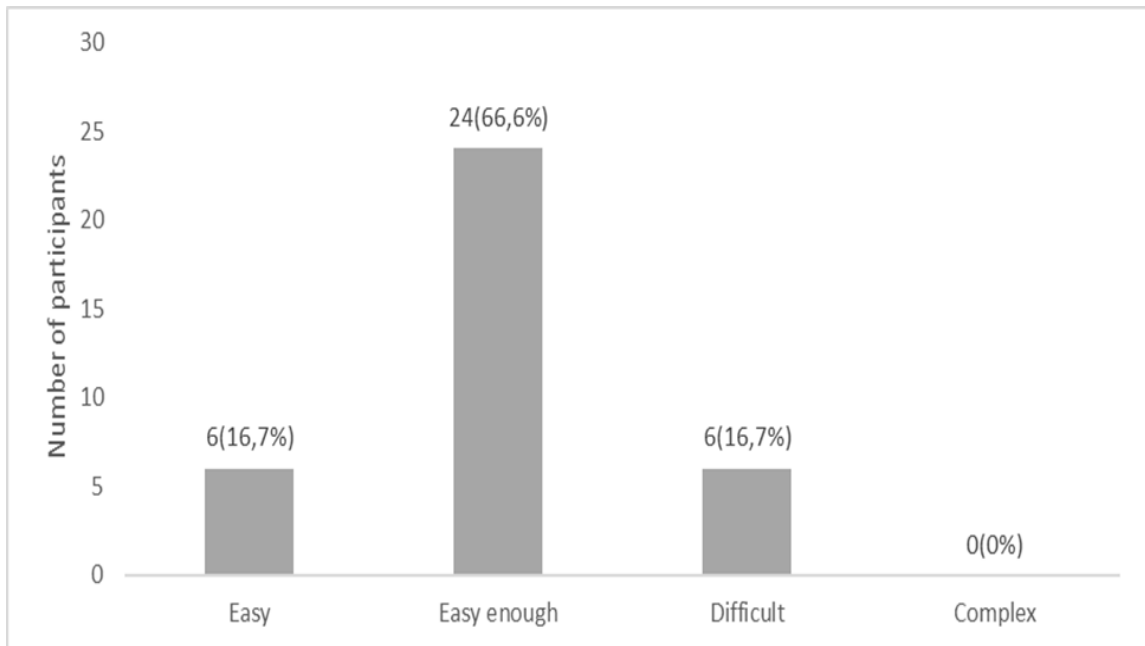
For question number three, 24 students found that reading fictional prose is easy enough for them (66.6%). As for the left 12 out of 36 divided to two groups of 6 students chose reading fictional prose as easy and difficult about the same average (16.7%) (See Graph 3.3, 3.4, 3.5).



**Graph 3.3 Students' Attitude Toward Reading Fictional Prose**

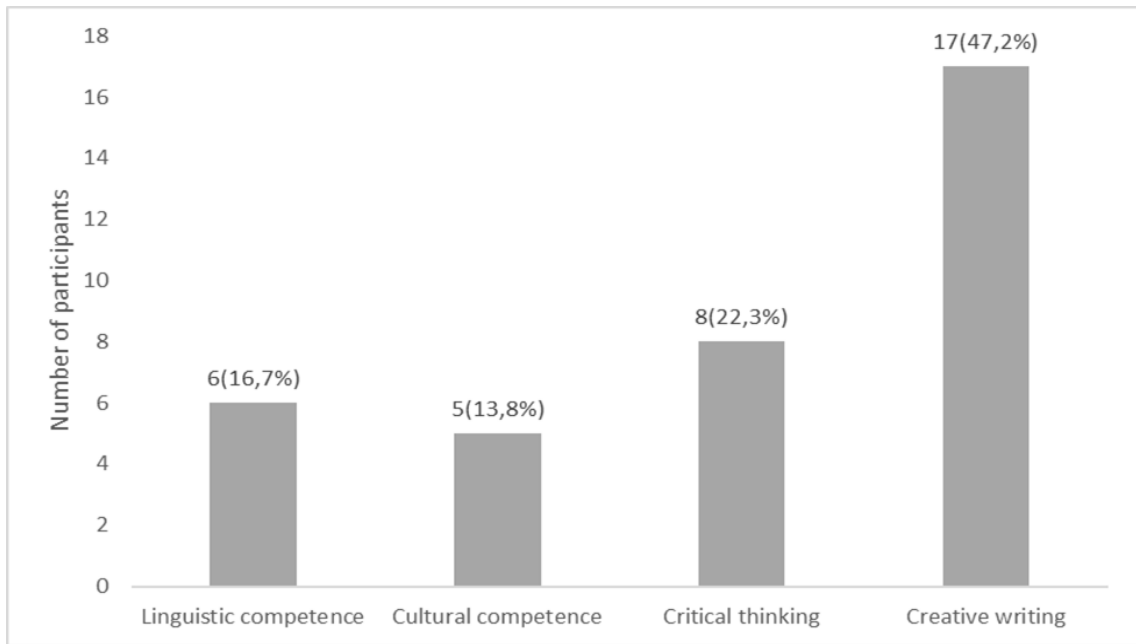


**Graph 3.4 Students' Amount of Reading Fictional Prose**



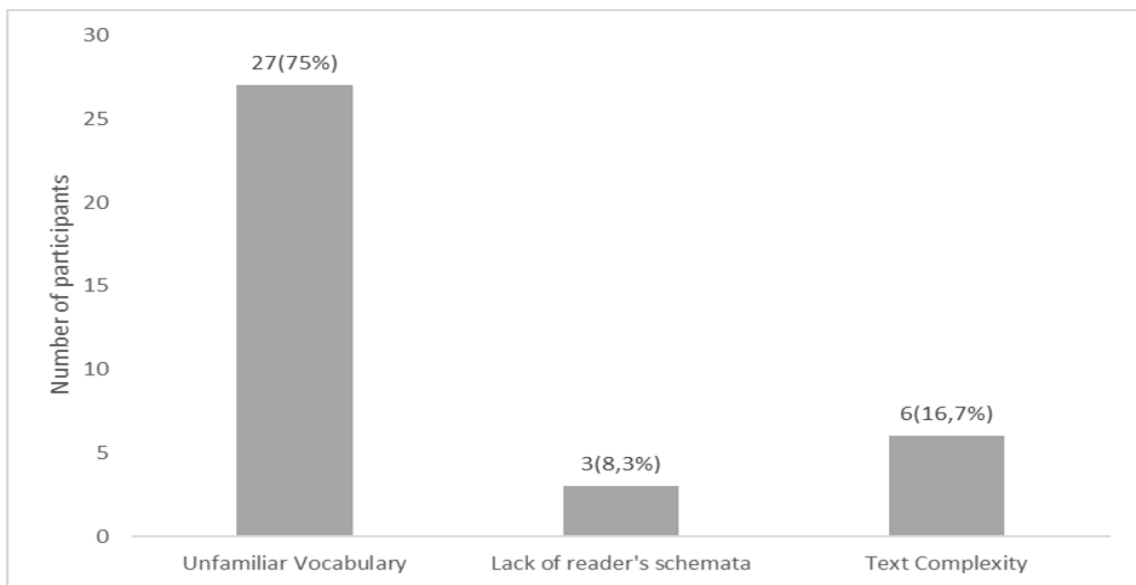
**Graph 3.5 Students' Perception of Fictional Prose Reading Levels**

Another fourth multiple choices question in section two was asked to highlight the researchers' notion that reading fictional prose results in developing students' abilities to use and understand language effectively, to acquire a cultural competence, to raise their critical thinking, and to express themselves creatively. Where 17 students chose creative writing (47.2%) while 8 went for critical thinking (22.3%) and 6 to linguistic competence about (16.7%) and a left 5 students (13.8%) cultural competence (See Graph 3.6).



**Graph 3.6 Students' Reasons Behind Reading Fictional Prose**

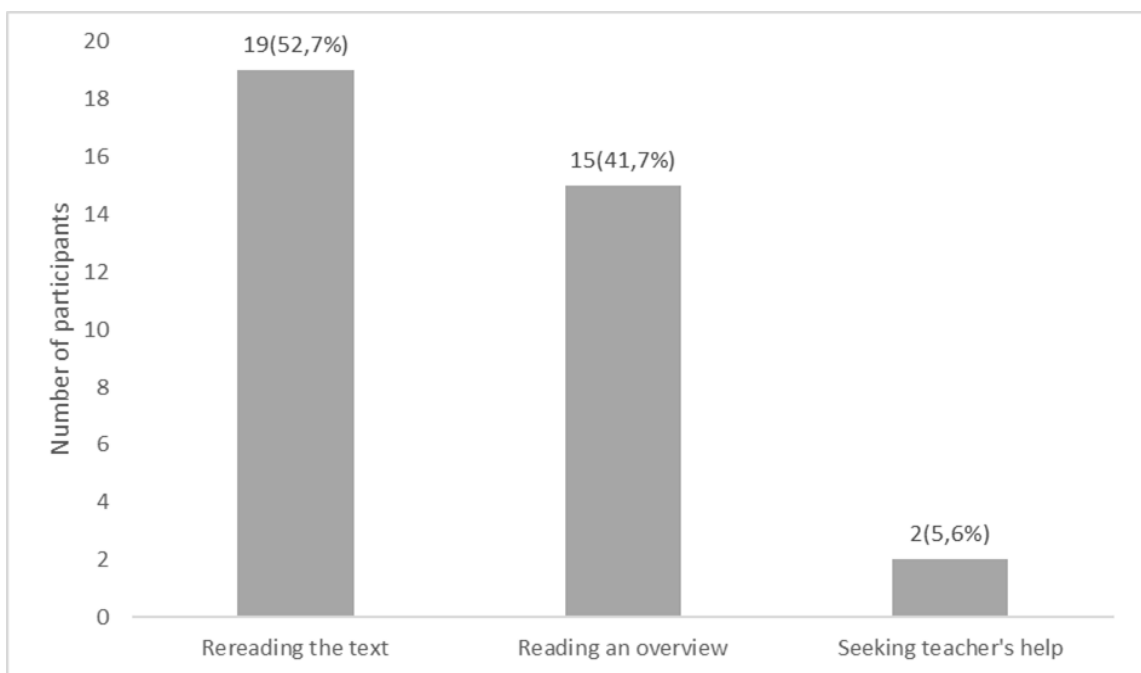
Question number 5 of the same type aimed to know what kind of obstacles fictional prose texts entail for students while reading. Consequently, 27 out of 36 students found the difficulty in facing unfamiliar vocabulary around (75%), whereas 6 students (16.7%) said text complexity and 3 others (8.3%) claimed that it is due to the lack of reader's own background knowledge (See Graph 3.7).



**Graph 3.7 The Obstacles Encountered While Reading Fictional Prose**

The last question in section two is accordingly to the fifth one in which the researchers needed to have an idea about the way these students can overcome the previous obstacles if found, yet this question involves an additional option for students to add their proper solutions in addition to the mentioned choices. The results are like: 19 students (52.7 %) selected rereading the text several times, 15 students (41.7%) would attempt to read an overview about the text, and a pair (5.6%) went for seeking teacher’s help (See Graph 3.8). These respondents added their own suggestions also that are stated as follow:

- Making a research about that particular text.
- Checking the dictionary
- Searching for a book’s analysis and its background in case the book is a reflection of a specific culture or era.
- Reading what other critics said about the book.

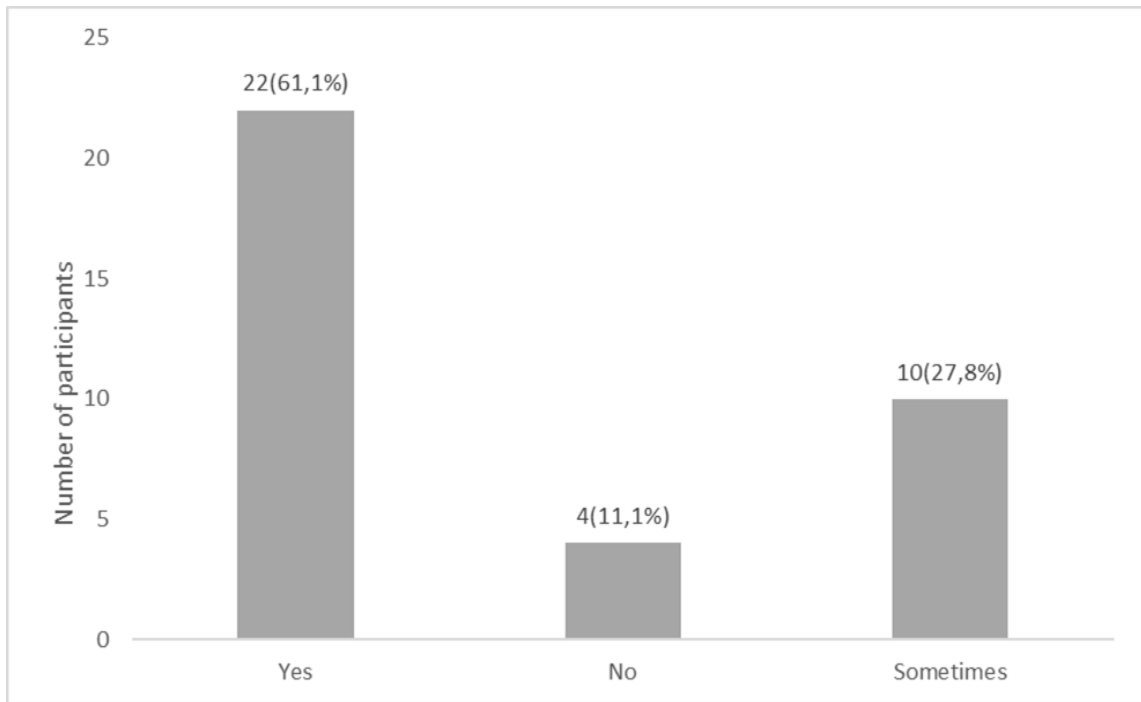


**Graph 3.8 The Ways Students Cope with the Difficulty of Understanding Meaning**

The researchers administrated a third section that covers a set of yes/no questions with additional free options in some of them to inspect the application of the reader-response theory in terms of this Algerian EFL students’ own reflections. The first question is for finding out if students do involve their own experiences while their

reading of a fictional prose texts. The answers were between an absolute yes for 22 students (61.1%) and a somehow yes for 10 others (27.8%), besides to a small minority of 4 students (11.1%) said no (See Graph 3.9). Their explanations were alike:

- Sometimes I relate my own experiences to the experiences of a character I read about or the way he thinks, interpret things.
- I always feel that one character matches my personal life like relationships or the way the character thinks.
- When the story is quite interesting for me, I sometimes put myself in the shoes of a character to try to understand the story better.
- Sometimes in the everyday experiences or when it comes to friendship and relationships.
- There are several fictional characters that I can relate to while reading. I see sometimes similarities in the personality traits and the decisions made by the characters and me.
- sometimes a certain character's thoughts, psychology, or behaviour feels as if it is your own so you automatically gain more interests in the story and events.
- I usually read books written by women, and from the point a view of a woman, so of course I relate to them, every time the protagonist is hurt, abused, happy, sad, angry, or just exciting I feel everything she's feeling.
- I somehow relate to a character because we share common experiences or certain viewpoints.
- I like when I find out that a character has same mindset or lifestyle, motivates me to finish the book.

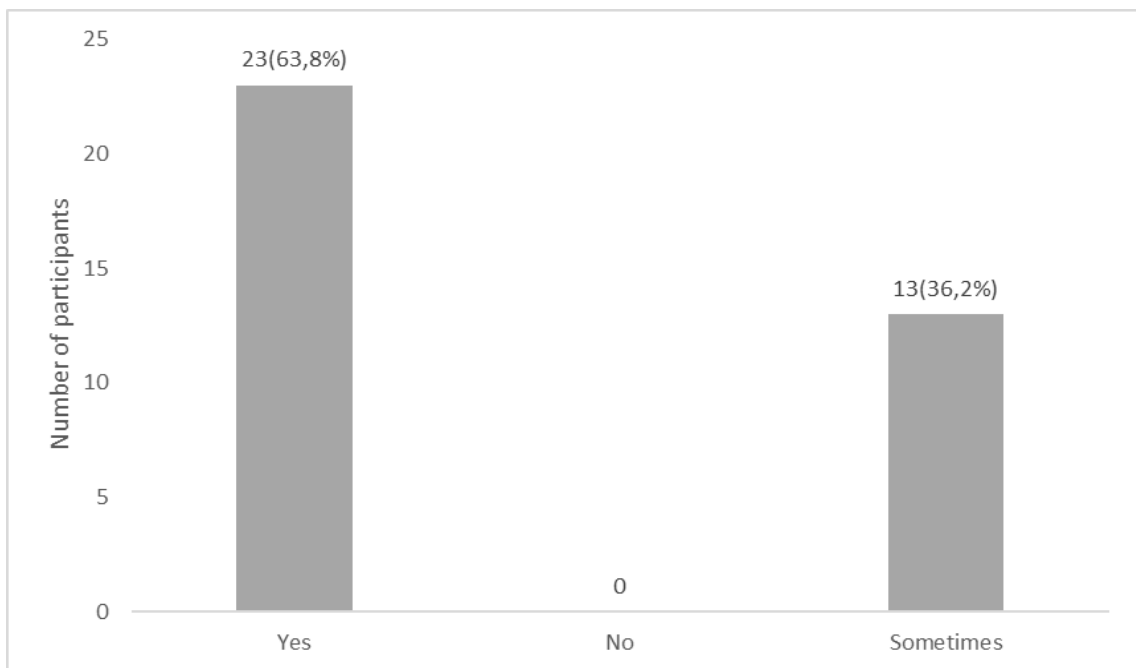


**Graph 3.9 Students' Response in Terms of Reflecting Personal Experience**

Question number two is associated with the previous one for the purpose of emphasising on students' involvement with text interpretation. The results were only between a definite yes by 23 students (63.8%) and an approximate yes of 13 others 36.2%) (See Graph 3.10). The respondents clarified their answers as:

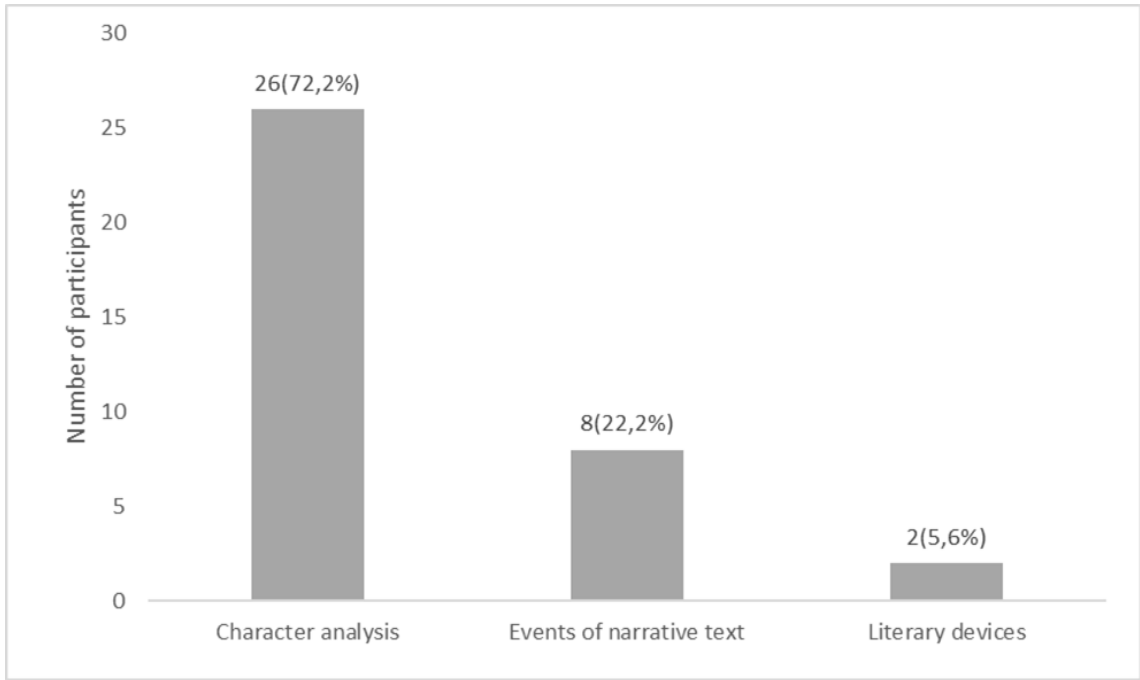
- Every story has its own reality, so when reading I imagine the setting of it.
- Some characters are vivid enough to make you feel them and they touch your heart and your feelings like a real person not an imaginary character.
- Characters can be so well described that it is so hard not to believe that is they're fictional. They're too vivid.
- When you really like a prose and you get deep into it you could imagine the scenes.
- While reading a fictional prose you cannot help but to imagine the characters as true people this is the way you can grasp the whole plot of the story.

- Not after reading but when reading, I think it makes it more enjoyable and fun but it depends on the content if it's close to reality then why not.
- Because I would be so involved within the story.
- When an author vividly describes a character, it almost feels as if they were real.
- It is the only way you can imagine the story and live it.
- Because fiction in special way moves the mind's creativity, so when you are reading an aesthetic text, it captures your imagination.



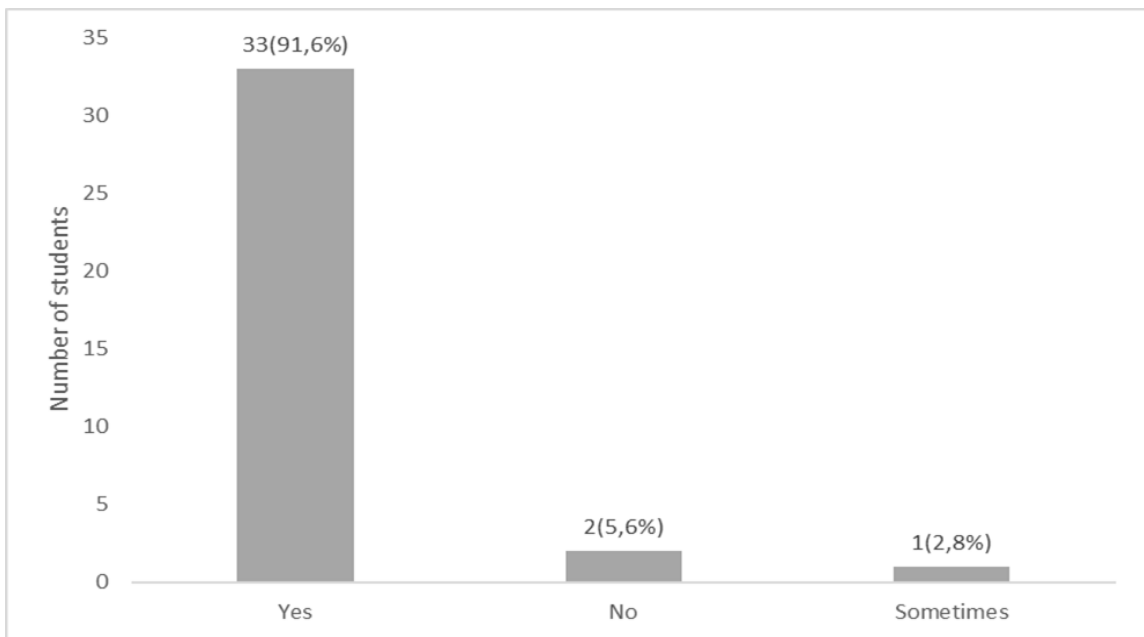
**Graph 3.10 Students' Aesthetic Response**

Question number three in section three is another single multiple-choice question added by the researchers in order to deepen the importance of this study's aim toward teaching fictional prose through the reader-response theory. Thus, 26 (72.2%) of the participants chose the analysis of characters, 8 participants (22.2%) focused on the examination of events of the narrative text, and a pair of them (5.6%) preferred to examine the literary devices in a given text (See Graph 3.11).



**Graph 3.11 Students' Preference of Reading Purposes**

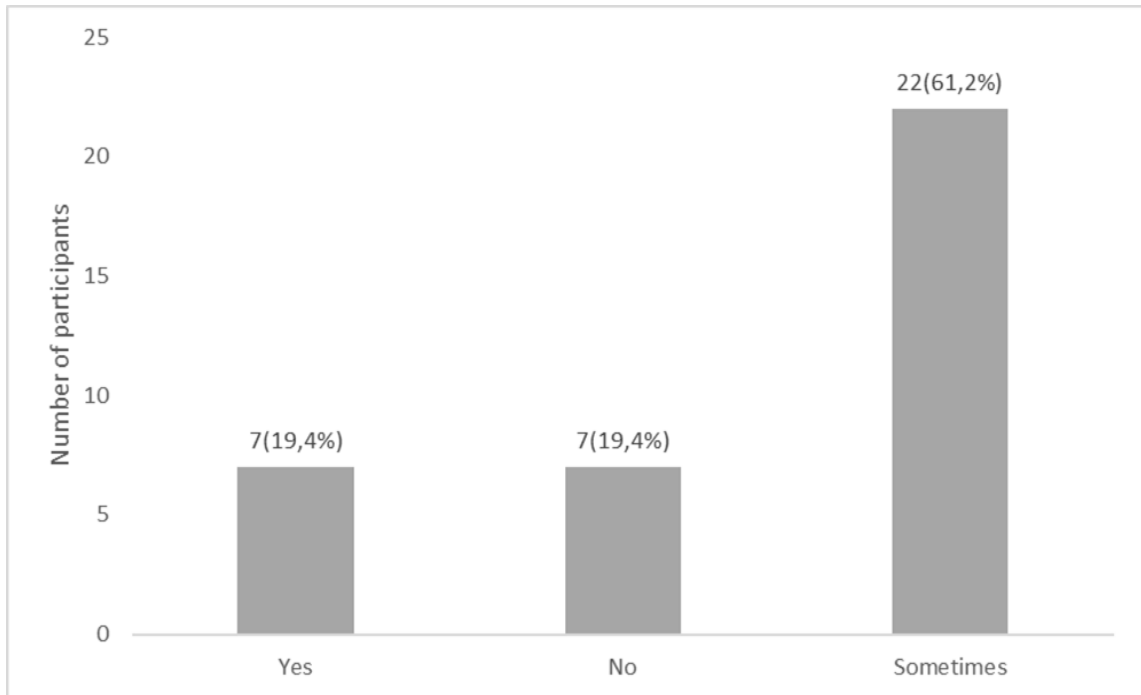
The fourth question was asked to have an idea about whether students take into consideration the author's style while reading fictional prose. 33 students (91.6%) said yes, 2 more who do not (5.6%), and one single student said he sometimes do (2.8%) (See Graph 3.12).



**Graph 3.12 Students' Attention to the Author's Style**

Question number five in section three proposed by the researchers to justify their notion of checking the author's personal background may be crucial to better understand the fictional prose text. The results show that 22 of the respondents (61.2%) said sometimes yes, and another 14 respondents divided to two groups equally said yes and no about (38.8%) (See Graph 3.13). They were asked to justify their answers which are:

- Reading about the writer, helps me understand his work better, since all writers put a piece of themselves in every work they write.
- Having a background knowledge on the author facilitates the understanding of the story.
- Sometimes and depending on the period in which the novel was written. I find it more informative to learn about the writer's background to better understand the circumstances which lead to the Creation of this piece.
- I would like to know about the author's background and her/his style of writing so I can understand its psychology perspective behind his work, or does it reflect his real life or not.
- I always like to know whether the personal life of the author is reflected in the lines of my fictional prose.
- Sometimes learning a few information about the author helps in a better understanding of his work (example knowing how Kafka has an existentialism crisis makes it easier to analyse his stories and digging deeper in his mined).
- Sometimes in some works you really want to understand why did the writer write this story, why did he choose this style, what is the secret behind his sadness in his works, for example Kafka, we all know that he suffered a lot, and his dad was so cruel with him and if his life was not that miserable, he would not be a great writer and philosopher.
- There are some stories that you cannot completely grasp without knowing the author, how his life was, so you can understand the characters he created.
- Knowing about the author's origin, era, and general background helps the reader have some insight about their literary work.
- I do not think that it is obligatory for all the types of books, sometimes writers do not rely on their own background to write a story.

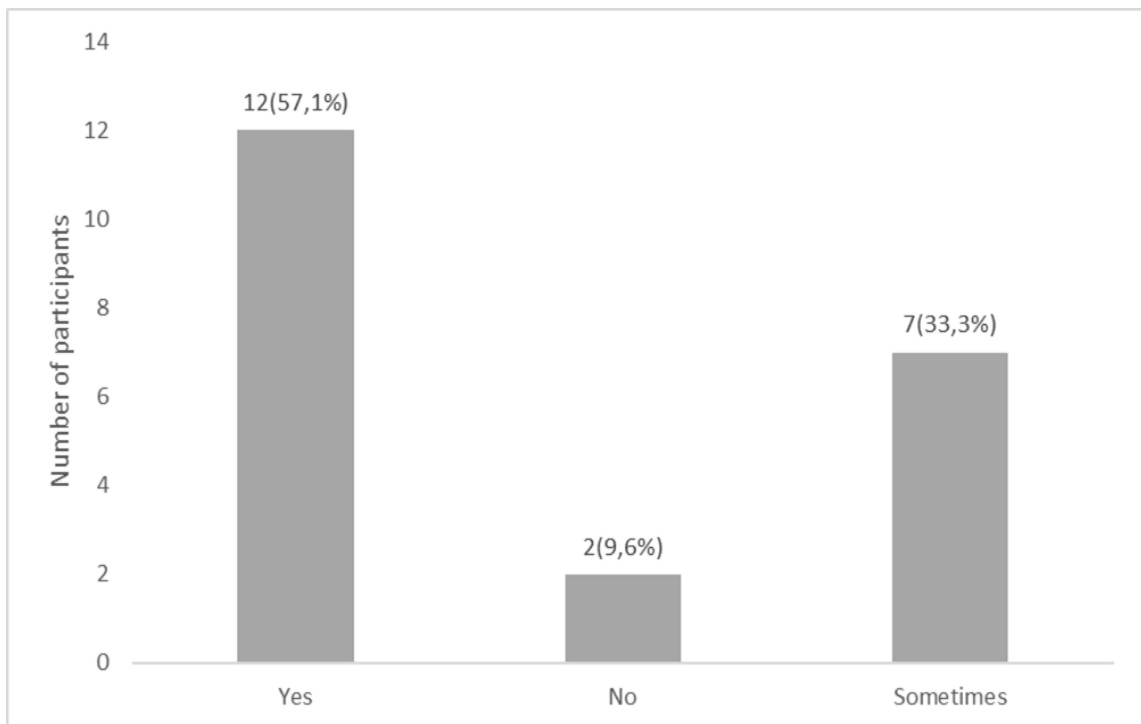


**Graph 3.13 Students' Act of Referring Back to the Author's Personal Background**

The last question in the third section was asked to refer to the significance of fictional prose texts, where only 21 out of 36 respondents answered this question divided as 12 who said yes (57.1%) and other 7 who mentioned approximately yes (33.3%), and two more said no (9.6%) (See Graph 3.14). Their captions were like:

- My best example is Charles Dickens, his works covers a lot of social issues and missing moralities in his society.
- We can learn a lot from stories and that stories can inspire us to do great things in our own life
- Sometimes yes, depends on the aim of the author
- I believe that fiction is either a reflection of real-life events or a tool to share a message. I also believe that we learn at least one thing form everything we read, it is much easier to full in the story and the morals shared in it
- Depending on the issue that the writer sees in real life, he wants to give a solution through his texts
- The reader should see books as an experience presented to him. This way she/ he will draw some life lessons which he can apply in his daily life while facing similar circumstances as the characters.

- One of its aims is to cover certain moral points because in fiction the writer gets the chance to deal with a lot of issues such as taboos or crimes. This enables her/him to be more expressive than in real life which is beneficial to the reader.
- why would anyone read a story that doesn't speak to them, a story that has no meaning? of course we have to learn a few moral things from the books we read.
- Some writers aim to vehicle a message through fictional prose. Others just want to tell a story.
- Well, it depends in the culture used on the story, sometimes writer from different culture do attentional cover some moral points.
- Sometimes we need to escape reality when reaching hard moments or situations, fiction and imagination could take you to another world, the one that you desire, and saves you from madness.



**Graph 3.14 Students' Opinion Toward the Importance of Reading Fictional Prose**

### **3.2.2 Classroom Observation Results**

The conducted observation during a literature classroom (See the attached CD with this dissertation) at the English department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel

Abbes represents this study's second research instrument; this process had been done without the intervention of the researchers' participation during the process, yet they relied on the previous professional action observation schedule.

The major remarks were mostly identical with the proposed action observation schedule previously in the description of the target tool in which the teacher started the session with a classroom management of a "U" shape by asking students whether they read the short story he gave them already, where few of them only answered they did. So, the teacher re-told and explained the story for all the students moving around the classroom and interacting with them. He focused on a particular question that how can they be involved in the story. Then, some students interfered and asked about the main character and the way he behaved in the story; therefore, the teacher introduced the main theme of the story through the use of a data show and asked them to think according to their own perception of it.

Few students reacted positively in interpreting the main character's behaviour and theme in general in compare to their own beliefs, one student illustrated his real-life situation as an example for experiencing some social emotions as the protagonist had in the story. For this reason, the teacher proposed to develop this example with the rest of the students in which he asked them to think about these emotions that stimulate the main character to act in such particular manner, as to reflect themselves within. Students started to express their viewpoints one after one.

### **3.2.3 Teachers' Interview Results**

The researchers asked four various structured questions to the elite two professors and three PhD teachers at the English department at Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes that are relevant to this study's aims. The researchers come to analyse these teachers' interventions (See both the attached CD with this dissertation and Appendix D) as:

The first question was to find out whether these teachers apply the reader-response approach in their teaching of fictional prose or other critical approaches such as formalistic, psychological, or biographical-historical approach. As a result, four of them affirmed that they adopt an eclectic approach in which they use all these

approaches in addition to the reader-response approach, to not neglect neither students as readers nor the text and its psychology; for the purpose of filling students' needs and text analysis requirement. Besides, to one single teacher who claimed that it depends on the literary work itself.

In the second question, the researchers emphasised on the reader-response approach and its possible application by these teachers in teaching fictional prose text analysis, besides to asking them for what purpose they assign students to read and analyse a given text in case they use it. The researchers provided two reasons that are acquiring a specific knowledge in which only one teacher agreed on it in terms of a review of a particular literary work, and to both biography of the author and setting of the story. Whereas, the other four teachers shared common ground on the second reason that is reflecting a personal response, in a way reader consider their life experiences and schemata in compare to the story's characters, yet to not neglect the text completely.

The open-ended question number three aimed to know these teachers' viewpoints about the possible benefits of applying the target approach in teaching literary texts for EFL students and the way these benefits could influence the process. All of the five teachers asserted that it is beneficial since this approach is purely student-centredness in which students include and develop their personal interpretations toward any given text. In addition, they would raise their autonomous learning, and to be both critical thinkers and active researchers.

The last open-ended question asked to the five elite teachers to find out the different prospective methods they could employ while teaching literary texts to EFL students through the reader-response approach. Each teacher suggested his or her own proper methods and strategies, mainly the suggestion of using a reading log that reading and recording would help students to interpret the text in a purely analytical way rather than reading for answering questions only. As another suggestion, using the adaptation of a particular literary work and ask students to compare it with the original book. Furthermore, reading literary reviews, and providing the literary work to students to read at home and then discuss it in the classroom.

### **3.3 Interpretations and Discussions of the Major Results**

During the target study, the researchers employed three different research tools which are students' questionnaire, classroom observation, and a teachers' interview as means to get answers to the research problem and better test the hypotheses. Evaluating the findings obtained from students' questionnaire, the analysis of them demonstrated that EFL students' enjoyment in reading fictional prose may be explained by this genre of literature is effective and helpful in promoting their both literary and linguistic competence as well as to their thinking capacities, yet they might come across some of obstacles in which they reacted positively towards them by finding solutions to overcome them.

Then, the answers of students in the third section leads the researchers to assume a possible explanation for these results might be because of these students are capable enough to react or adjust according to the objectives of implementing the RRT while teaching fictional prose where they read and interpret the meaning of a text referring to their own life experiences. It follows that the first hypothesis which consists on the RRT makes the teaching of fictional prose texts enriches students with much aesthetic, emotional, and intellectual pleasures is confirmed.

Besides, the analysis of students' answers in the third section can be interpreted as their engagement with the meaning of a text and story as whole since they chose to examine and comment on character analysis and events of the narrative text as they visualize the scenes. Questions four and five in the third section results analysis may determine that students would follow and look for certain strategies in order to understand the meaning of a story behind a text while reading. For instance, checking the author's personal background, in addition to some others who do not rely on the same strategies, yet they can manage to view and capture a text based on their own thinking techniques; affirming the last hypothesis.

The researchers will move on to look at the interpretation of other findings obtained from the classroom observation. Where they extract from this process that the reader-response theory exists in the teaching of fictional prose at an Algerian EFL context. Besides, students' interpretations refer to the idea that they are also influenced by this theory as seen in the analysis of the observations. Thus, the researchers come to

conclude that both the aim and findings of students' questionnaire and teacher's interview match the actual atmosphere in the classroom during the teaching of fictional prose texts under the reader-response approach as observed.

Moreover, based on the last interpretations of teachers' interview, the results obtained in the first question that the use of an eclectic approach by four of the major teachers may be for the purpose of filling students' needs and interests as to text analysis requirement i.e., to not neglect the text as a whole. It could be for the reason that to depend on only a single approach for the above approaches would not cover the appropriate needed knowledge in the analysis of literature. In addition, to the factor of time, students are limited with time. In order to tackle each of the mentioned approaches separately in details, where they only have approximately about one hour and a half per week in normal teaching conditions, not to mention teaching this amount to one hour per week due to the current pandemic (covid 19) at department of English at Djillali Liabes University. Moreover, a fifth one consists on the teaching fictional proses through the reader-response theory could be for the reason that literary works may differ in terms of content analysis. For example, literary works or stories may be purposed for reflecting on historical events, psychological features, or to convey political messages. Therefore, teachers might not be able to identify or specify on a particular approach.

Reflecting a personal response as a target of teaching RRA was chosen by three of teachers from the same previous department probably refers to the fact that some of these teachers teach EFL master students, so teaching for acquiring a specific knowledge as chosen by the two left teachers could be unnecessary because normally this would be taught for students from other previous grades which are engaged with the teaching of literature analysis broadly such as genre and literary movements i.e. to have a solid ground about it. As another reason to the first objective of teaching, students may develop the skill of critical thinking and enrich their imagination.

In the third question, all the teachers agreed on the idea that implying RRA in teaching literature is beneficial in a way of developing students' personal interpretations, expressing themselves freely, and reading initially for the purpose of making them autonomous learners.

At last, the results varied from one teacher to another where the findings of all teachers' answers suggest respectively that to manage the lecture base on time factor and prepare the students previously. Then, using the reading log for helping students to be analytical readers, as it represents an easily accessible review. Watching movies adaptations of books to ease the understanding of meaning. The last variation that depending on the type of students can be explained by each learner need certain methods that serve his or her need.

### **3.4 Suggestions and Recommendations**

Over the past decades, the reader-response theory has been founded in most both of native and EFL literature classrooms around the world. Teachers accept this theory's components and include it within their teaching, for its productive and active learning process in which students' interpretations of texts are based on their act of experiencing and hypothesising them. Likewise, applying reader-response prompts students' awareness of their communication as readers with texts; it aids them to develop a cultural competence skill in which they learn to compare various cultures with their own to better understand the variations.

The reader-response theory is also included withing the Algerian EFL literature classrooms, yet its teaching is limited to a university setting only. In view of expanding this limitation, the researchers suggest the regard of teaching literature through the reader-response approach into other pedagogical setting such as the Algerian EFL secondary schools. It follows that the use of the reader-response techniques to teach Algerian EFL secondary school students at early stages may implicit a deep impact on the way they view their role as foreign readers of literature, instead of depending on interpretations of a literary work provided by the teacher. These students gain un understanding to build a meaning of a given literary material by describing and communicating what they felt during their reading; as they develop a basic sense of autonomous learning which is absent in the teaching syllabus of such pedagogical setting.

The researchers suggest as a first stand, teachers to specify the choice of the same literary genre dealt with in his or her inquiry that is fictional prose, more particularly short stories in order to motivate the target students of this further recommendations to

read extensively. Due to the fact that these students are not often familiar with reading English literature, therefore, short stories for being easy to understand cover this gap.

The researchers before their attempt to go profoundly into the propositions and recommendations, they choose to stress out a crucial factor that is often not debated which is classroom organization in terms of seating arrangements. The latter are genuinely important in which the Algerian lecture room arrangement is the standard rows with desks. These Rows help teachers to make their path among the students because it provides the organization of pairs and groups. As though, teachers predominately need to change the previous seating arrangements to a “U” shape, for example to permit students to face the teacher, to have better interaction with their each other in particular activities, as to the teacher can engage all students in the discussion.

In regard to students’ engagements, a teacher has to include his or her students in the lecture. The reader-response approach is beneficial in view of the fact that it forces students to see beyond the words and phrases of a text and look for deeper meanings. Besides, it improves them as readers, taking into account their personal response in a way they both experience and synthesise meaning during their reading. Hence, this approach would attract students’ attention and involve them more in the classroom.

Teachers may establish a fruitful discussion in their classroom by considering at first their students’ language capacities in the choice of texts, then setting certain appropriate tasks to motivate and shift their respond toward these texts. Thus, teachers may provide the activity of “Role-play” in a way of choosing a scene from a given short story where all major and minor characters are involved. To work in groups by asking students to perform that scene, yet emphasising on the minor characters to decide their own actions leading the plot to another direction in order to explore and discuss the way their improvised intervene could have been prospective in the setting of this literary work. This activity’s aim is to have active learners in the classroom, their personal responses are taken into consideration, as they would feel acknowledgeable to the extent of criticising what they read. Additionally, the students will be exposed to an open interaction with their peers, as they flow past their preliminary personal response to take into account a multiplicity of thoughts and interpretations, hence expanding their viewpoints.

The researchers will move on to suggest another activity to be tackled by teachers to teach literature through the reader-response approach in the target pedagogical setting. Where teachers provide their students with a particular literary text in the classroom, asking them to sustain reading silently for a while, then assigning them to point out compelling lines from that text and write a description about their perception of them. In this task, teachers would stimulate their students' both textual and personal interpretations on a wide range.

Moreover, teachers can conduct other activities such as the cinematic adaptation of a literary work as a visual reading. Later on, they ask students to present the literary material they read or watched. The objective of this task is to achieve independent learning.

In a nutshell, the suggested activities by the researchers to teach literature through the reader-response theory for Algerian EFL secondary school students are essentially on the basis of driving them to be effective both indoors and outdoors their literature classroom; to develop a proper personal response.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The current chapter presented both the analysis and interpretation of the data collected results through the research tools; to discuss, answer, and affirm all of the research questions and hypotheses. The results obtained highly supported the researchers' objectives in this study which they led them to recommend further studies on the research topic as an academic assistant for teachers or other researchers.

# **General Conclusion**

## **General Conclusion**

The reader-response theory has been conducted in the process of teaching literature for decades and still is. It was adopted by several scholars and literature teachers to ensure the great importance of readers' interpretations of literary texts through reflecting their own experiences. Besides, to monitor the way it may affect students' role in grasping the meaning of texts, and ensuring the effectiveness of using this method in the teaching of fictional prose and the possibility of its contribution in improving their level and developing their thinking abilities. This study was examined empirically in an Algerian EFL context.

The preface of the reader-response criticism is presented in the first chapter by defining its ultimate critics' concepts. Emphasising on the prominent reading strategies that are proceeded within this theory. Moreover, introducing the reader-response to the teaching of fictional prose in the target Algerian EFL context, and its possible implementations. Additionally, the suggestion of a variety of criteria to adopt appropriate literary materials. The researchers draw their conclusion by highlighting the great role in developing and facilitating readers' understanding of a text through the use of the reader-response approach.

The first chapter was followed by a second chapter, in which it included a relevant part added to entail some additional various approaches and techniques to teaching literature. Then, transferring the research from the theoretical side to a practical one by giving a description to the methodology adopted during this research investigation which encompassed multiple means of data collection and analysis to valid this research, even the target population addressed.

The third chapter contains both the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the research tools. The main findings of these data of all the research instruments demonstrated that the researchers were right about their assumptions and hypotheses where teachers' interview and the classroom observation affirmed that teachers do adopt the reader-response theory in their teaching at an EFL classroom., and students'

questionnaire which showed that students interpret a given text both efferently and aesthetically by referring their proper experiences while reading.

Eventually, the researchers suggest and recommend further applications to the target approach in teaching literature for secondary Algerian EFL students by setting a variety of activities that fill both the teaching needs and the Algerian classroom setting. For future studies to be conducted by other researchers about the reader-response theory, it is offered to leave the door open for them of how it can be applied and taught with different genre or type of literary texts?

# **Bibliography**

## Bibliography

**Al-Alami, S.** (2019). Point of view in narrative. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 9(8), 911-916. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0908.03>

**Amer, A.** (2003). Teaching EFL/ESL literature. *The Teaching Matrix*, 3(2), 63-73.

**Bobkina, J.** (2014). The use of literature and literary texts in the EFL classroom; between consensus and controversy. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, 3(2), 248-260. DOI: 10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.3n.2p.248

**Boulenouar, M.Y.** (2013). Theoretical and applied aspects of innovations in higher professional education. *International Collective Monograph*. 355-372

**Brandes, D., & Ginnis, P.** (1986). *A guide to students centred learning*. Oxford Blackwell.

**Carlisle, A.** (2000). Reading logs: an application of reader-response theory in ELT. *ELT Journal*, 54(1), 12-19. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/54.1.12/>

**Carter, R., & Long, M.** (1991). *Teaching literature*. Longman Pub.

**Collie, G., & Slater, S.** (1987). *Literature in the Language Classroom: a resource book of ideas and activities*. Cambridge University Press.

**Davis, J.M.** (1989). The act of reading in the foreign language pedagogical implications of Iser's reader-response theory. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73(4), 420-428.

**Divsar, H.** (2014). A survey of the approaches employed in teaching literature in an EFL context. *Modern Journal of Language Teaching Methods*, 4(1).

**Duff, A., & Maley, A.** (1990). *Literature*. Oxford University Press.

**Erdem, M.** (2015). The role of teachers in teaching literature. *Tirana University*.

**Fauziah, F.** (2016). The approaches to teaching literature for EFL young learners. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Linguistics*, 1(2), 145-158. DOI: 10.21462/jeltl.v1i2.26

**Gerrig, R.J.** (1993). *Experiencing narrative worlds*. On the Psychological Activities of Reading Yale University Press.

- Haas, C., & Flower, M.** (1988). Rhetorical reading strategies *College Composition and Communication*, 39(2), 167-183. <https://doi.org/10.2307/358026>
- Holland, N.N.** (1975). Five readers reading. *ERIC*.
- Holland, N.N.** (1998). Reader-response criticism. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, (79).
- Horner, S.** (1983). Best laid plans. *English Teachers at Work for School Council*. York Longman.
- Iskhak, Mujiyanto, J., & Hartono, R.** (2020). A review on reader-response approach to teaching literature at EFL contexts. *English Language Teaching*, 13(7). <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n7p118>
- Johnson, B.** (2014). *Teaching deconstructively*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780822399070-027>
- Kauffman, N.J., & Randlett, A.L.** (1983). The use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies of good and poor readers at the college level. *ERIC*.
- Larson, L.C.** (2009). Reader-response meets new literacies: empowering readers in online learning communities. *The Reading Teacher*, 62(8), 638-648. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.62.8.2>
- lazar, G.** (1993). *Literature and language teaching: a guide for teacher and trainer*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pantaleo, S.** (1995). What do response journals reveal about children's understanding of the workings of literary texts? *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 36(1).
- Probst, R.E.** (1987). Transactional theory in the teaching of literature. *ERIC*.
- Rashid, R. A., Vethamani, M. E., & Rahman, S. B. A.** (2010). Approaches employed by teachers in teaching literature to less proficient students in form 1 and form 2. *English Language Teaching*, 3(4).
- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1995). Continuing the conversation: a clarification. *Research in The Teaching of English*, 29(3), 349-364. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40171432>
- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1938). *Literature as exploration*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company.

- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1976). *Literature as exploration* (5<sup>th</sup> ed). New York: Modern Language Association of America.
- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1960). Literature: the reader's role. *The English Journal*, 43(5), 304-310 + 315-316. <https://doi.org/10.2307/810700>
- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: the transactional theory of literary work*. Carbondale Southern Illinois University Press.
- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1985). Viewpoints: transaction versus interaction. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 19(1), 96-107. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40171006>
- Rosenblatt, L.M.** (1988). Writing and reading: the transactional theory. *Technical Report*. (416).
- Schnell, J.** (1990). A comparison of aesthetic and efferent reading strategies of college students. *Department of Education and Human Development State University of New York College at Brockport*.
- Showalter, E.** (2003). *Teaching literature*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Soomro, A.F.** (2017). Significance of teaching literature in the EFL classroom. *International Journal of English and Education*, 6(3), 65-70.
- Spirovska, E.** (2019). Reader-response theory approach: applications, values, significance for students in literature courses. *Sciendo*, 14(1). DOI: 10.2478/seeur-2019-0003
- Thunnithet, P.** (2011). Approaches to criticality development in English literature education: a second language case study. *University of Southampton*.
- Tompkins, J.P.** (1980). *Reader-response criticism: from formalism to post-structuralism*. The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Tucker, L.P.** (2000). Liberating students through reader-response pedagogy in the introductory literature course. *TETYC*, 28(2), 199-206.
- Van, T.T.M.** (2009). The relevance of literary analysis to teaching literature in the EFL classroom. *English Teaching Forum*, 47(3), 7.

# **Webliography**

## Webliography

Definition of Fictional Prose. (n.d). *Recruitment portal.*  
<https://recruitmentportalngr.com/meaning-and-definition-of-prose-fiction/#>

Literary Theory and Schools of Criticism. (n.d). *Ministry of education.*  
[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject\\_specific\\_writing/writing\\_in\\_literature/literary\\_theory\\_and\\_schools\\_of\\_criticism/reader\\_response\\_criticism.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/subject_specific_writing/writing_in_literature/literary_theory_and_schools_of_criticism/reader_response_criticism.html)

National Council of Teachers of English. (2006). *Literary circles.*  
<http://www.readwritethink.org/resources/resource-print.html?id=19>

Teaching the Reading of Literature. (2010).  
<http://samplereality.com/gmu/engl610-2010/>

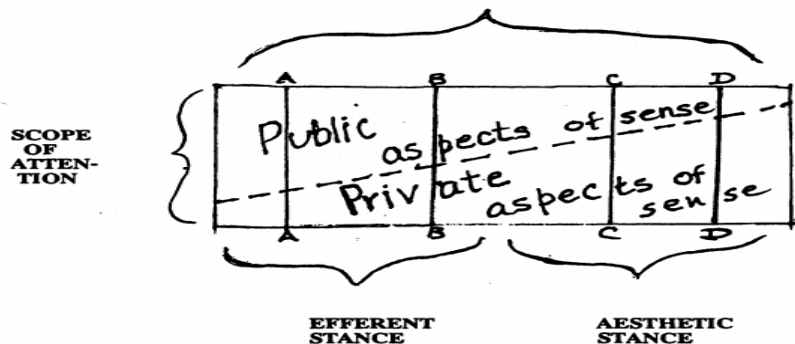
# **Appendices**

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: The Efferent and Aesthetic Continuum Figure.....	67
Appendix B: Students' Questionnaire.....	67
Appendix C: Teachers' Interview Questions.....	69
Appendix D: Teachers' Interview Answers.....	69

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Figure 1.3 The Efferent and Aesthetic Continuum



This figure displays how different readings of the same textual content eventually reach various points on both the efferent and aesthetic continuum. From *Writing and Reading: The Transactional Theory* (p. 18), by L.M. Rosenblatt, 1988, A reading research and education center report ([https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/18044/ctrstreadtechrepv01988i00416\\_opt.pdf](https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/18044/ctrstreadtechrepv01988i00416_opt.pdf))

### Appendix B: Students' Questionnaire

Dear students, you are kindly requested to answer the following questionnaire which is conducted as a part of an academic research of master dissertation that aims to explore the interaction between the text and reader; examining this latter's creative role through involving his/her own experiences. Thank you for your cooperation.

- Whenever you have  at each question, just put a click on it according to your own answer

#### Section One: Students' Profile

**Gender:** Female  Male

**Age:** 20-26  26-35  36-more

#### Section Two: About the Reader

**1- Do you like reading fictional prose?**

a-Yes  b- No  c- Somehow yes

**2- How often you read fictional prose in your spare time?**

a-Daily  b- Weekly  c- Monthly  d-Never

**3- How does reading fictional prose appeal to you?**

a-Easy  b-Easy enough  c- Difficult  d- Complex

**4- Reading fictional prose stimulate you to develop:**

a- The ability to use and understand language effectively

b- To understand and tolerate the culture of others

c- The ability to think in an analytical and critical way

d- Creative writing in which you express yourself

**5- What obstacles you face while reading a fictional text?**

a-Unfamiliar vocabulary  b-Lack of reader's own background knowledge

c-Text complexity

**6- How do you overcome the difficulty of not understanding the meaning of the text?**

a-Re-reading the text several times  b-Reading an overview or summary about that literary work  c-Seeking the teacher's explanation  d-Others if possible:

.....

**Section Three: Applying Reader-response Theory Within EFL Readers' Own**

**Reflections:**

**1-Have you ever felt that your own personal life or experiences resembles to a character you have read in a given fictional prose work?**

a-Yes  b-No  c-Sometimes

Explain how? (no optional)

.....

**2-Sometimes after reading fictional prose, you imagine the characters as if they were living people?**

a-Yes  b-No  c- Sometimes

Explain how (no optional)

.....

**3-While reading fictional prose, you are quite attracted to examine and comments on:**

a-Character analysis  b- Events of the narrative text  c- Literary devices

**4-Through your reading of fictional text, does the writer's style catch your attention?**

a-Yes  b-No  c- Sometimes

**5-In case you are interested in reading a given fictional work, do you check the writer's personal background?**

a-Yes  b-No  c- Sometimes

Explain why? (no optional)

.....

**6-Do you believe that fiction's aim is to cover certain moral points in life?**

- a- Yes       b- No       c- Sometimes

Explain why? (no optional)

.....

### Appendix C: Teachers' Interview Questions

The study of different literary texts has been approached through several theories and judgements. Among them, the literary criticism theories. As a teacher in the field of literature and teaching literature:

- 1- Which among the following literary critical approaches you often use while teaching fictional prose?
  - a- Reader-response approach    b- Formalistic approach
  - c- Biographical/historical approach    d- Psychological approach
- 2- Do you often use the reader-response theory in fictional prose text analysis? If so, is it for the purpose of:
  - a- Acquiring a specific knowledge      b- Reflecting a personal response
- 3- Do you think implying this approach in the teaching of literary texts is beneficial for EFL students? how?
- 4- What method or strategy you suggest while teaching literary texts to EFL students through the reader-response approach?

### Appendix D: Teachers' Answers of the Interview

#### Question 1

**TA:** "So, in teaching literature actually I like according to my own experience, I do not believe that we can follow one specific approach. Actually, in the approaches that you have mentioned I think honestly that you can use generally with your students you focus on the reader response theory and the psychological approach also is very important, we have to rely sometimes on the biographical aspect of the writer, though it goes paradoxical with the reader response theory, since the RRT is actually the death of the author and focuses only on the reader's perception of the text".

**TB:** "Well, I want to give you my own experience, I take from all of them for example, I can never neglect my student which is the reader response, you know I have been dealing with existentialism. In other words, I am more eclectic, I use all of them, depending on the needs of my students and the requirement of the text analysis".

**TC:** "Actually, your perception of the text as a reader then the past of the writer because actually any literary work is somehow the reflection of the writer, the soul of the writer, okey ... And the psychology of his/her characters, I mean when a writer creates a character what we call characterization in literature, actually we have also the psychological description of the character which is involved".

**TD:** "Well, thank you first for giving me this occasion to talk about approaches, critical approaches to the study of a literary text. Well, I personally well it all depends on the book you

are teaching, teaching for example Anne Bradstreet poetry, I personally I help my learners to read the poem and try to think about the poem or to relate this poem to the author's life will help the reader understand the text in a better way. Teaching for example the Great Gatsby or the Glass menagerie can help me to teach the biographical historical approach, but when it comes to a story that I personally know its content I rather help my students read the story and have their own interpretations of the text".

**TE:** "Since I am teaching literature from basically 7 to 8 years, I used to teach literature for second year student and master student too, okay for master student there is no problem to use these critical theories in their classes, but for licence student it is difficult for both teacher and student, why, for student because they are still beginners in this field, if you want to teach a specific literary text it is little bit hard to deal separately to give them a solid background about all the literary theories and then move to the application. I use an eclectic approach in an indirect way taking some aspects from them all".

## Question 2

**TA:** "I encourage personal response how do I do generally, because sometimes since we are learners, we have difficulties to understand everything since we don't understand all words, all statements or dialogs, you got the point! sometimes I ask and invite my students to help themselves with literary review of the target text. Read what has been said about the text by other reviewers, but by the end to give me your perception, your understanding, I mean when you analyse you can see that someone said this and another said that but by the end, I want your point of view".

**TB:** "Personal response of course, I invite them to think by asking my students how do you reflect yourself in that story? is it close to you or you do not care about it? you did not have any reaction? because sometimes I mean I see a movie and I am cold, but there are sometimes stories you live with the character, society, personal life, personal believes, and personal experiences (taking D H Lawrence as an example)".

**TC:** "You know reflecting the personal response is very much important because you know, me whenever am dealing with not recover the language specially when we speak about student of master one, master two, in other words it means to have a critical mind not to know the language. For this reason, I focus on the reader response, you know".

**TD:** "Of course, reflecting on their own personal response, the way each reader has his own response to the text been read and considering the reader's life experience and the reader background knowledge, of course I have to consider this first, of course this does not mean getting information from the text is highly neglected, absolutely not, but I have to consider the learners' way of interpreting texts by considering his life experience".

**TE:** "Whenever we finish with the general analysis of the novel or the literary work, if it is a novel we deal with a part of the novel because it is hard to deal with the whole novel because of the limited time, but when it comes to short stories or to like for example, I used to teach Latina literature, you can find one story in one page so it is very easy to read it, so we read it and analyse it together".

## Question 3

**TA:** "Very beneficial, because they are obliged to analyse their inner and to use their own language. I mean when am going to give a task to my students I emphasise on this, personalize the use of your words and not someone's. You can get inspired from some one's talk, but you are not supposed to copy paste, you have to personalise it according to your own personal

experience. This is the magic of literature; you are a teacher and you are teaching forty students in front of you and we have actually forty-one ideas and interpretations, and this what makes a debate during the lecture”.

**T<sub>B</sub>:** “Yes indeed, you know because without the students we cannot do anything, it is the reader-response theory, it is not based on the teacher, it is based on the teacher has to listen to the student, the way he is going to conceive things, so there would be a good exchange between the ideas”.

**T<sub>C</sub>:** “For sure, that is beneficial for the learners in the sense, first they read in a very critical way, using their minds when they are reading, using their way of interpreting things, okey. helping the learners to think in a purely critical way, and developing the critical thinking, that is why I have suggested to my students to read the story, they were given a story by applying the reading log, the reading log can help the students read and write as well, that is reading and summarizing to record what have been read in a purely analytical way”.

**T<sub>D</sub>:** “It is quite beneficial, in which learners are not asked only to read but rather they will be reading, thinking, hypothesising and answering questions etc... well sometimes even answering the questions can help them, but it is up to the teacher to choose the right, appropriate questions on how to help learners think”.

**T<sub>E</sub>:** “Yes I do agree on that, and I often use it because our students are always in need to give their voice to hear, and the duty of the teacher here is to plant the seeds in his/ her classroom for the students to help them just to read, to be a self-autonomy, to be independent students, so whenever you give them a specific question or for a debate or to submit a written assignment in an indirect way you are pushing them to think and to criticise”.

#### **Question 4**

**T<sub>A</sub>:** “Nowadays, with the so many cinematic adaptations, in order to help my EFL students especially when it comes to deal with classic literature, I invite my students to watch the movie and to read the book at the same time to help themselves, and to read literary reviews, I mean literary analysis on that text”

**T<sub>B</sub>:** “There are many approaches, many techniques that we can use with our students, you know, the most complicated thing that I have to deal with as a teacher is the lack of time, I do not have enough time to give my student everything specially that one hour in a week is not enough, for that reason I am somehow disappointed, yet as a suggestion, I may follow the strategy of letting my students to analyse a given text stylistically by extracting both the authors and characters’ point of view to better understand”.

**T<sub>C</sub>:** “Yes, I often you know give the story to the students or the novel or short story to read at home, we do not want to waste time reading it in class, when we meet, we agree upon or disagree upon some of the concepts. This is the way I often do with my student, read at home we come here, we meet and discuss and analyse the ideas”.

**T<sub>D</sub>:** “The reading log or the portfolio, reading and recording okey. that the reading log is quiet. You see how the application of the reader-response theory to the student, okey that is keeping reading log helping students in interpreting a text, of course via asking questions on how to tackle the text from various angels, in order to have their final product. Of course, there are other strategies to not help student to read for the purpose of comprehending the text only okey”.

**T<sub>E</sub>:** “Okey, it depends, you know that we are teachers with multi and various mentalities of students, for some students it does work very good, but with other lazy ones who does not like to write and submit written assignments, it is a little bit hard for us to use always this way of teaching, so as I said before, I use an eclectic method just to suite all students”.

# **Glossary**

## Glossary

**New criticism** (nju: 'krɪt·r·sɪz·əm): a literary formalist movement shaped the American literary criticism during the mid-decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**Reading comprehension**: ('ri: dɪŋ kəm·prɪ 'hen·fən): the ability to approach and understand a text's meaning and combine it with the reader's background knowledge.

**Cognitive process**: ('kɒg.nə.tɪv 'prəʊ.ses ): the psychological process of knowing that involves a sense of consciousness, reasoning and judgement.

**Transaction**: (træn 'zæk.fən ): The act of negotiating a contract between two people.

**Aesthetic**: (es 'θet.ɪk ): the sense of appreciating beauty.

**Critical pedagogy**: ('krɪt.ɪ.kəl 'ped.ə.ɡɒdʒ.i): a teaching method designed to help students gain critical awareness, apparently designed to help them free themselves.

**Digital art**: ('dɪdʒ.ɪ.təl ɑ:t): the use of digital technology to present an artistic work creatively.

**Rhetorical device**: (rɪ 'tɒr.ɪ.kəl dɪ 'vaɪs): a usage of language designed to have an impact on the audience.

**Moral-philosophy**: ('mɒr.əl fɪ 'ləs.ə.fi ): the branch of philosophy that deals with the discussion of the moral notions, and the meta-ethical discussion of moral judgment and value.

**Stylistics**: (stai 'lɪs.tɪks): something that is related particularly to an artistic or literary style.

