

## **Adapting a Multigenre-response Model for College Readers of American Literature**

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### **Abstract**

As an English teacher who has been teaching nearly 10 years in a college of southern Taiwan, the presenter reports his successful experience on a course, titled "Selected Readings from American Literature." In this try-out study, the presenter adapts a multigenre-response model via which he encourages Taiwan college students to bravely write down their opinions for classic works of American literature. In an 18-week semester, the class reads 6 literary works, and writes responses based on their selected genres (i.e., at least 3 different types of genres for each literary work). Weekly, the presenter collects student responses, gives written feedback, and shares the multigenre literary responses with the class.

Based on the results collected from the same course offered in the past 3 spring semesters, the presenter intends to answer three questions: (1) How will the multigenre-response model affect Taiwanese college students' attitudes toward literature? (2) What is the students' evaluation toward the multigenre-response-model literature class? (3) How can this pilot study relate to later literature as well as reading classes in colleges and universities of Taiwan?

The preliminary findings of the study can be summarized as below: (1) all the three groups of students have begun to see literature from a positive way; (2) the students mark an average of 6.04 (on a 7-point Likert scale) on their satisfaction of this course and are willing to attend a class based on multigenre-response model; and (3) the students list "alternated ending," "letter to characters," and "skits" as three must-have genres, and all indicate they would love to see a better organized and principled multigenre-response model particularly for the need of college learners in Taiwan.

Keywords: multigenre-response, reading-writing connection, English as foreign language, syllabus/curriculum design, intensive writing

## 1. Introduction

In a traditional reading program, most teachers often confine the training of students' reading proficiency to the increase of reading speed (Chen, 1994). Teachers usually place the emphasis on the memorization of reading content and the evaluation of reading proficiency through thousands of meaningless repeated practices and drills (Chen, 1994; Hsu & Liu, 2005). Frankly speaking, students often feel bored in the traditional reading classroom so a more meaningful and attractive way for teaching reading is essential. Multigenre-response model, as an alternative way for teaching reading, can often energize the reading classroom. A number of studies have advocated the use of multigenre-response models in a reading program since multigenre-response models provide students with a stress-free, joyful, and creative learning environment (Grambrell, 1996; Pitman, 1997; Burns, 1998).

Previous literature has shown that a lot of L1 reading teachers have used multigenre-response models in their reading classroom, and most of them love multigenre-response models with positive comments. After Weiner (2002), a middle school teacher, introduced multigenre-response models to her seventh-grade class, she found that her students really loved the multigenre-response model (cited in Daniels, 2002). They felt comfortable in multigenre-response model reading classroom and liked the flexibility and variety of the different approaches toward literary works students could have taken. They also learned that they understood what they read from different perspectives; namely, how they constructed the meaning of what they read depended on how they thought about the texts. What matter most was that they learned to trust themselves and to respect others while they were discussing and analyzing the reading materials. This is the typical response and comment toward the implementation of multigenre-response models.

Unfortunately, ESL/EFL (English as a second/foreign language) teachers hardly pay attention to the success of multigenre-response models, so few have implemented multigenre-response models in the L2 reading classroom. To fill the gap, this study aimed to investigate how multigenre-response models work in a L2 reading setting and to gain a better understanding of students' attitudes and reactions toward the implementation of multigenre-response models. It focused on L2 reading since students in L2 reading classroom felt frustrated and tired due to the heavy load of language learning during reading. Their reading motivation can be low. By identifying how multigenre-response models worked in Taiwanese reading classroom, the study has established the basis for designing exercises and activities that will help students read better and enjoy more of literature.

## **2. Review of Recent Literature**

### **2.1 Defining Multigenre-response Models**

Romano (2000) and Gillespie (2005), both experienced classroom teachers as well as pedagogists, indicate that in multigenre-response models students form groups according to their chosen texts and discuss what they have read and written. The discussion is based on students' genre responses. They may talk about the plots or characters in the book and relate the story to their personal experiences. Students in such a classroom take the responsibility from the teacher and self-guide their discussion, reading, and particularly their own writing. They do not merely play the passive roles as students like what they do in traditional reading classroom. They are more active in their learning. What is more is that the teacher in this reading program does not serve as a controller and an information giver; instead, he/she has become a facilitator or an active participant. The teacher's job is to assist students to read better and to guide students to discuss and analyze what they read and write.

Comparing with the traditional way of teaching reading, the implementation of multigenre-response models may better arouse the love of the learners in reading (Burns, 1998; Gillespie, 2005). The enthusiasm of reading is really important for students to keep on reading, reflecting, and re-reading. Multigenre-response models provide the kind of reading classroom with plenty of advantages such as students' choice on ways of analyzing literary works and adapting different genres in responding to readings to sustain students' continuous attention to reading and deeper understanding (Robert & Langer, 1991; Daniels, 2002; Knoeller, 2003)

### **2.2 Recent Literacy Trends Related to Multigenre-response Model**

In this section, three important features that support the use of multigenre-response models in teaching reading are discussed. They include "collaborative learning," "reader-response theory," and "independent reading."

First of all, implementing multigenre-response models through small group discussions is concerned with the so-called "collaborative learning." Collaborative learning is defined as a situation where students are divided and work as groups during their learning (Gokhale, 1995). It is observable that collaborative learning happens in multigenre-response models because in multigenre-response models students discuss, exchange, and share their opinion about what they read and write during small group discussions; namely,

they work together in talking about literature. Thus, learning is not merely individual work but collaborative and interdependent work. Students help each other so that they will gradually become keen on reading and learn with their group members. A number of studies concerning reading in collaborative small-group settings have shown that social collaboration promotes achievement and the intrinsic desire to read (Slavin, 1990; Wood, 1990). Learners acquire knowledge through social interactions among peers (Vygotsky, 1978; Reid, 1986; Battle, 1993). Herber (1985) created strategies of collaborative learning in the teaching of content area reading for older students. In other words, the teacher's modeling, demonstrating, and facilitating functions were emphasized in her classroom, while students were divided into groups to work together. Teachers who applied Herber's strategies found them useful. Students did benefit from collaborative work. The collaboration-based learning and teaching provide students an opportunity to know how to work in groups and get more information from peers. Similarly, in multigenre-response class, teachers set up models for learning, leading groups of students to read and write as they are learning as a group in harmony.

In addition, reader-response theory is one of the most important theoretical ideas underlying multigenre-response models. According to Rosenblatt (1978), readers constructed meaning for what they read while they related the reading texts to their past experiences. The transactions between readers and texts occur while readers engage in the texts with their personal feedbacks and responses. Ali (1993) adopted the reader-response approach in the teaching of literature in the L2 reading class. He eventually developed a framework of methodology consisting of five important features: revealing the schema, sharing responses, reflecting in journals, teacher's intervention, and follow-up projects. The results were satisfying because students were eager to share ideas, and the activities engaged enhanced not only students' understanding toward literature but also their experiences in reading in the target language. For Ali's ESL/EFL readers, reading literature would not be looking up vocabulary any more. Instead, meaning constructed among students would motivate them to keep on reading because reading then became fruitful and rewarding. This is what discussions on students' writings mean among peers in multigenre-response models. The importance of sharing responses and the exchanging of different opinions in the reading classroom need not to be overemphasized.

The other main feature involved in multigenre-response models is "independent reading." What independent reading concerns is that students read, synthesize, and reflect on their own. Comparing to most traditional

literature reading classrooms, teachers do not just merely assign books to students to read in the multigenre-response models. Teachers, additionally, encourage students to self-select ways on analyzing books, and write imaginatively and creatively on the books. Creativity and reading independently are two of the key elements in multigenre-response models. It is important that learners need more time to read, to choose what and how they want to read and respond, and to talk with peers to become lifelong readers and to gain in reading achievement (Daniels, 2002). Furthermore, students involved in multigenre-response models not only have the power to choose reading materials but also take the responsibilities for their discussions about the books. Topics to be discussed are also generated by readers themselves. It is exactly what Cohen (1983) notes that reading comprehension can be promoted by students' self-created discussion.

### **2.3 The Effects of Multigenre-response Model Shown in Previous Studies**

Numerous studies based on multigenre-response models have been reported with resounding success. Pitman's study (1997), among others, was undertaken for examining whether the use of multigenre-response models could improve students' attitudes toward reading and comprehension of literature. His results indicated that the implementation of multigenre-response models in reading classroom could help students enhance reading skills, learn from peers, gain self-confidence, improve speaking and writing fluency, and find joy in the community formed by students. In addition, multigenre-response models can serve as a tool for engaging and motivating students to read (Reissman, 1994; Gambrell, 1996). Burns (1998) also put multigenre-response models into practice. Multigenre-response models were constructed in a middle school where students were given choices for writing in responding to American literature for the adolescent readers. The conclusion drawn on this study was that the choices of the students, social interaction among learners, the amount of time of reading in school involved in multigenre-response models provided a powerful tool to promote students' participation. Through the implementation of multigenre-response models, students were fully involved in the program and their motivation was higher because they really felt they were respected and given individual attention. Students not only developed and improved their linguistic skills but also found realistic purposes for what they read.

### 3. Research Method

#### 3.1 Participants

The participants in this current study were 81 English majors (18 from Spring 2003, 43 from Spring 2004, and 20 from Spring, 2005) in a university of science and technology in southern Taiwan, and only a total of 9 (2 from 2003; 5 from 2004, and 2 from 2005, accordingly) male students were involved. The rest of the participants were females. All of these participants were freshmen in the four-year program of English Department. Their English proficiency levels were at lower intermediate to intermediate. The 81 students enrolled the course voluntarily. The researcher worked as the teacher-researcher, teaching the entire course and collecting data himself.

#### 3.2 Instructional Approaches

Each of the multigenre-response model implemented course lasted for one semester in every spring, between 2003 and 2005 academic years. In a regular week, students came once and attended a two-session class. Each session lasted 50 minutes. The teacher in this course first introduced multigenre-response models to the class and then asked students to form groups by themselves. Students formed groups and discussed the reading texts given. The texts used in this course included Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery," Kate Chopin's "The Dream of an Hour," "A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner, and three additional self-chosen texts from American literature. In-class activities included students' group discussions about their responses to their reading, role-plays, and practices for writing responses of various genres toward these literary works. For instance, in an 18-week semester, the class did the following 18 types of genre writings (adapted from Gillespie, 2005):

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) Alternate ending | (10) Lesson plan            |
| (2) Theme song       | (11) Poster                 |
| (3) Mini skit        | (12) Quiz                   |
| (4) Advertisement    | (13) Summary                |
| (5) Death notice     | (14) Script for puppet show |
| (6) Death threat     | (15) Play                   |
| (7) Interview        | (16) Dialogue               |
| (8) Letter           | (17) Character analysis     |
| (9) Map with legend  | (18) Game                   |

The reading responses written by students were handed in once a week, and the teacher reviewed the responses and gave comments. Furthermore,

the teacher in multigenre-response models also functioned as a role model as well as a facilitator. That is, he did not intervene the proceeding of the multigenre-response models; instead, he demonstrated by writing responses to the first two literary works. Then he set the class to be led by his students by giving students power to control and take the responsibilities for their learning. For example, students decided the genre topics for take-home writing and content for in-class discussions by themselves.

### **3.3 Instruments**

Two types of instruments, interview and questionnaire, were used to reveal students' opinions about the implementation of multigenre-response models. First of all, a verbal group interview was conducted in the middle of the semester. Students were asked to answer 5 open-ended questions (see Appendix A). These interview questions aimed to find out not only the differences between this reading course and other courses but also students' responses and attitudes toward this course.

The other instrument was a questionnaire which consisted of seven open-ended questions and one set of questions with a 7-point Likert scale (see Appendix B). The seven open-ended questions focused on students' attitudes and reactions toward the implementation of the multigenre-response models in the reading classroom. Meanwhile, the 7-point Likert scale was used for students to rate the teaching and learning activities and reading techniques involved in this reading course. There were 9 items under the scale including 5 items on the teaching and learning activities such as group discussion and role-play and 4 items on the reading techniques such as reading for summary and looking for main ideas. And students rated each item by giving a score on 1-7 scale (1: least effective; 7: most effective).

### **3.4 Data Collection**

In three spring semesters of the same course (i.e., 2003~5), student interviews were conducted in the regular classroom during the week of the mid-term exam. Students were asked to sit with their group members. Often time small groups were formed by 3 to 4 people. The researcher interviewed the groups in turns. During the interview, the researcher asked students questions, invited students to share their ideas, and took notes on students' responses. The researcher recorded all responses concerning students' feelings related to the reading course of multigenre-response models. The time for the interview was about 2 hours, and the time for each group was

about 20 to 30 minutes. At the end of each spring semester, every student was asked to fill out the questionnaire to evaluate the implementation of multigenre-response models in this reading course. The researcher administered the questionnaire in the same classroom. The time for this data collection was about 30-40 minutes. When students finished answering the questionnaire, the questionnaire was collected by the researcher.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Responses to open-ended questions of interview and questionnaire were collected and interpreted to answer the following two questions: (1) How will the multigenre-response model affect Taiwanese college students' attitudes toward literature? (2) What is the students' evaluation toward the multigenre-response-model literature class?

In addition, students' evaluation about the teaching and learning activities and reading techniques used in this course were analyzed according to the ratings in the 7-point Likert scale for each item. The scores were determined according to the scores students gave to each item. The scores in this 7-point scale were added up and divided by the number of the students (from all three academic years) respectively. The average score for each item was compared to find out what activities and techniques students valued, enjoyed most, and regarded the most effective. These data were used to answer the third research question: (3) How can this pilot study relate to later literature as well as reading classes in colleges and universities of Taiwan?



## 4. Research Results

### 4.1 Interview Results

Table 1 summarizes students' general responses to the interview questions. The responses would be further elaborated in the later section.

Table 1

#### Responses from Student Interviews

Q1. Differences between this course and other courses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The teaching and curriculum are more flexible.</b></li> <li>2. There are more interactions in the classroom.</li> <li>3. We are less stressed.</li> <li>4. The teaching method can be helpful for eliciting students' ideas.</li> </ol>
Q2. Changes students experienced
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>I talk and think more.</b></li> <li>2. Our acting skills seem to be better.</li> <li>3. I think my motivation has been promoted.</li> </ol>
Q3. Teacher's role
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>He is a facilitator.</b></li> <li>2. He is a guide.</li> <li>3. The teacher participates less often.</li> <li>4. He reminds students of handing in homework.</li> <li>5. He listens to students.</li> </ol>
Q4. Learning achievement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>I can express what I want to share.</b></li> <li>2. I am so enthusiastic to do the activities.</li> <li>3. My creativity is good.</li> <li>4. The attendance in this class is satisfactory.</li> <li>5. I know a lot of vocabulary.</li> <li>6. I draw beautiful pictures.</li> </ol>
Q5. Learning difficulties
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Some articles are incomprehensible.</b></li> <li>2. We have difficulties comprehending articles because teacher did not explain articles clearly.</li> <li>3. I am not good at writing responses.</li> <li>4. We have too little time to discuss; it will be nice if we get longer session to discuss.</li> </ol>

Note. Bolded statements indicate responses most students provided.

After examining students' responses to the interview questions, the results were sorted out. First of all, comparing to other courses, it was obvious that the teaching methods and content in this course were more flexible. Most of the students felt freer and took more control of their learning in the course. Secondly, students experienced some changes when participating in the course. The most dramatic change was that they wrote and conducted a lot of critical thinking based on readings of literary works. They were more willing to contribute their ideas in the classroom. Besides, in terms of the teacher's role, most of the students indicated that the teacher played a role as a non-dominating role because they found the teacher did not take the control of their learning. What the teacher tried to do was to help and to guide students to read and write better. Fourthly, when evaluating their achievement in this course, students pointed out that they outperformed themselves especially in expressing their ideas. They were able to discuss and answer questions if talking from their own writings prepared prior to the class. During the discussion, they also associated the stories they read with their daily lives. Furthermore, concerning students' learning difficulties, students found that some of the articles were incomprehensible because the articles were too long and the vocabulary was too difficult to understand. Nevertheless, the minor difficulty did not stop them from writing imaginatively toward the chosen texts.

#### 4.2 Questionnaire Results

There were 81 students participating in this course, but there were only 80 students filling in the questionnaire. Students' responses were listed in Table 2. Each student may provide no or more than one answer to each question, so the total numbers of responses would vary across question items.

Table 2  
Response from Questionnaire

Question	Students' responses	Number of students
Q1. How students benefited from the course	It has helped me improve my reading and writing skills.	61
	I can discuss and share ideas with others.	52
	I benefit from the activities we do in this course.	48
	I can read some good articles.	35
	The way of teaching makes me relax.	51

Table 2  
Response from Questionnaire (Continued)

Q2. Differences between this course and other reading courses	We can talk, think, and express ourselves more freely.	53
	We have more teaching and learning activities.	35
	It is not a teacher-centered course but a student-centered one.	56
	We take more responsibilities for our learning.	40
Q3. What students liked in this course	I like role-plays because we have a lot of fun.	60
	I enjoy group discussions because I can share ideas with others.	63
	I enjoy sharing our journals because we can find out many interesting things from others' journals.	55
	We decide when to submit and what to write by ourselves.	66
	I love summarizing and looking for main ideas because they help me improve my reading skill.	50
Q4. What students disliked in this course	I don't like group discussions because some of my group members just don't participate or don't preview the article.	12
	I dislike journal writing because it takes me a lot of time to do it.	2
	I hate looking up some difficult words in the articles.	3
	I don't like self-selected articles because we don't actually know what the articles are about.	5
	I do not like teacher-selected articles because they are too boring.	3
	I hate drawing poster because I am not good at it.	2
	I dislike that the teacher didn't guide us to read.	1

Table 2  
Response from Questionnaire (Continued)

Q5. & 6. Suggestions for future teaching of a reading course and for the teacher	It will be better for us to read easier articles.	8
	Teacher should let students read more articles.	12
	More discussions are needed.	20
Q7. Three Genres you favored most	Alternated ending	78
	Letter to characters	68
	Skits	66

Table 2 indicates that students benefited from the course in many ways. The most impressive feedback came from the participants' self-evaluation on their literacy skill. Sixty-one students said that their reading and writing skills were improved. Students learned to express themselves by writing journals of diverse genres and they were really involved in reading the articles. Second, students also identified some differences between this course and other reading courses. In this course, they talked, reflected, and expressed themselves more naturally, approaching American literature from individually unique perspectives. Besides, role-play activity, a component which should be strictly categorized into "skit" category was very appealing to the students. Thirty-eight said they enjoyed doing it. Furthermore, when it came to students' likes and dislikes about the course, students provided a wide variety of responses. Sixty-three participants reported that they loved group discussions because they really had a lot of fun while fifty-five students said that they enjoyed sharing their responses with others. On the contrary, 12 students were frustrated when some of their group members did not participate in the discussion or preview the articles, thus discouraging them from in-class discussions. Lastly, it was also very rewarding that a few students suggested that easier articles with less difficult vocabulary could be provided and, at the same time, the total number of articles should be increased if a future multigenre-response reading course will be offered again.

Table 3

Evaluating on Teaching and Learning Activities and Reading Techniques

<b>Teaching and Learning Activities</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Journals of Multigenre	<b>6.55</b>
Group discussion	6.12
Whole class discussion	5.86
Role-play	6.15
Teacher-led discussion	5.42
Presentation	6.22
<b>Reading techniques</b>	
Reading for summary	5.84
Looking for main idea	5.92
Real reading in class	<b>6.25</b>
Independent reading	6.07
<b>Average</b>	<b>6.04</b>

At the end of the course, all three groups of students were invited to evaluate teaching and learning activities and reading techniques in a 7-point scale, and the results were listed in Table 3. In general, the evaluation for the effectiveness of every learning and teaching activity and reading technique yielded a satisfying result. Among all teaching and learning activities, student valued “writing journals of multigenre” most. “Presentation” and “role-play” were also considered very effective. In terms of the effectiveness of reading techniques, students gave the highest score to “looking for main ideas” whereas “reading for summary” was regarded as the least effective.

### **5. Discussion on Research Results**

The purpose of the present study was to explore how multigenre-response models worked in Taiwanese reading classroom of American literature. To answer the research questions, results were discussed in this section.

Students provided three categories of responses including differences between this course and other reading courses, likes and dislikes about this course, and learning difficulties and suggestions for the future teaching of a course based on multigenre-response model. Each of them would be discussed respectively.

### **5.1 Differences between This Course and Other Reading Courses**

According to students' responses to the interview and the questionnaire, differences between the current course and other reading courses were easily revealed. First of all, students really felt that they had freedom in this multigenre-response model course. Because of the flexibility of the teaching method and course design, students were encouraged to express their thoughts. As Daniels (2002) reported that a Chinese teacher talked about the learning attitude of Chinese students, the teacher described his students as hardly speaking up and accepting everything in the textbooks. Obviously, this was typical Chinese students' attitude toward their learning. However, it was observable in this study that Taiwanese college students (as a part of Chinese learners) in multigenre-response models were actually active and very confident to speak up in public. Once they accomplished their writing on the texts, the class invited student writers to present their ideas through various teaching and learning activities, so for students, reading is not just to read the texts. Instead, plenty of activities such as writing their own genres, presentations, role-plays and in-class real time group discussions were all possible tools for helping students to deepen their comprehension as well as understanding.

Second, comparing to teachers in the traditional classroom, the teacher in this course played a different role. The teacher served as an on-site facilitator. Since it was a student-centered course, students took the responsibilities for their learning. The teacher's job was to assist and to guide students to discuss and do the activities. Therefore, the teacher was actually fading out in his authoritarian role in students' learning. It was the idea of multigenre-response model that teachers act as a supporter to help students to become independent learners and critics who carry out "real" thinking.

All of the students were aware of the differences between this course and other reading courses. Most importantly, they become less dependent on the teacher. They realized that they were learning and reading as a group of highly respected and confident individuals.

### **5.2 Likes and Dislikes about This Course**

According to the questionnaire results, students favored multigenre journal, presentation, and role-play most. They really had lots of fun preparing for these activities because they used their creativity and imagination to make their reading more interesting. All these creativity later became materials for group discussions which also brought them endless enthusiasm to read and

write on. Students were so involved in sharing and exchanging ideas with each other, and they did learn a lot from others. That was what collaborative learning really meant: students cooperated and helped one another while they were conducting learning tasks. The collaboration among peers not only enhanced their learning but also helped students communicate with each other better.

The down side existed as well. A few students (i.e., 12) reported that they disliked group discussions. It was contradictory to most students' opinion discussed in the last paragraph, but now the results showed that twelve students disliked group discussions. Is it possible for students to like and dislike group discussions at the same time? The answer is a probably "yes." Students disliked group discussions because some of their members did not participate or preview the articles before coming to class. They enjoyed group discussions because they were wholeheartedly interacting with each other if everyone in the group cooperated in talking about their reading and literary notes. However, when group members failed to fulfill their duty, learning would automatically break down. This problem occurred in other multigenre-response models based reading classroom (Christensen, 2000). To solve this problem, small-group book talk expert, Daniels (2002), suggested that teachers can emphasize the importance of participation for students' grades. And the peer pressure can also be of help. Every student within a group can "police" each other (p. 229).

In addition, the results of the Likert scale for evaluating the teaching and learning activities and reading techniques revealed that students in general regarded most of the activities as helpful and enjoyable. However, they found some activities and techniques more effective than the others. To be exact, real time in-class reading and independent reading were ranked the most effective. It seems that students learned to take a leading role both within and outside the classroom and began to conduct reading for their own purposes, used later in group discussions. Literacy experts, McMahon & Raphael (1997), have long indicated that individuals' mental processes are guided by external, social acts and that internationalization of the social contexts occur as a natural result. Classroom small groups are powerful settings where learners internalize the read texts. Their claims give the small-group multigenre response model additional support.

### **5.3 Learning Difficulties and Suggestions for the Future Teaching of a Multigenre-response Based Literature Course for EFL/ESL Learners**

When examining students' learning difficulties, they reported encountering problems in understanding the articles the teacher chose for them. They complained about the length of the articles and the comprehensibility of the vocabulary. For students of intermediate English proficiency, if they seldom read literature, it is possible that they have problems comprehending the articles carrying abstract and difficult vocabulary in literature writing. Students suggested that the teacher should provide them some easier articles with less difficult vocabulary but at the same time demand more articles. In other words, this class, if to run again, could increase the total number of articles with easier vocabulary. In addition, students also suggested the teacher explain the articles more clearly. It seemed that students still hoped to rely on the teacher for comprehending the articles. Actually, this suggestion did not contradict with the multigenre-response models. Gillespie (2005) strongly encouraged teachers to provide help through mini lessons. Often these mini lessons can cover issues like comprehension, grammar, punctuation, and many others generated by students. The key for holding mini lessons is to keep them short but offer them whenever needed.

Still, as independent reading is the core of multigenre-response models. By providing mini lessons, teachers do provide assistance to students and will not deprive students' right for reading on their own. Therefore, for the future teaching of a similar reading course particularly in an EFL setting, the teacher may make some adjustments in order to help students learn more effectively. For example, teachers can briefly introduce the articles to give students background information so that students can understand the articles with fewer difficulties. Or making mini lessons a part of weekly routines is another option.

During the interviews, students reported that they experienced some changes and were benefited from the implementation of multigenre-response models. Students were more willing to talk and participate because they were granted a lot more of opportunities to think about the meanings of the text, to deliver their ideas, and to communicate with others. A few studies have shown that collaboration among peers promotes achievement and the desire to read (Slavin, 1990; Wood, 1990). Within this course, students read, wrote, discussed, and worked together. They enjoyed sharing ideas with each other and working on different activities with their partners. What seemed more important was the excitement of exchanging different interpretations on the



same literary text did motivate these students to read, to think, and to talk more.

In addition, students also felt that their reading and writing fluency have improved. They participated in various learning activities and learned different reading techniques so they felt they understood better through these activities. Furthermore, with the required multigenre journal writing, they started to express their thoughts and interpretations of the texts in a written form. At this stage, it was realized that reading was not merely reading but can be combined with writing. Students sensed that not only reading and writing skills but also their understanding toward the articles were improved. Just as Day, Spiegel, Mclellan, and Brown (2002) pointed out, writing benefits multigenre-response models in some ways by allowing students to “reflect” on their reading and to “analyze” and “synthesize” what they read (p. 88).

### **6. Pedagogical Implications and Conclusion**

In this study, multigenre-response models were adopted by the teacher for teaching American literature in Taiwanese reading classroom. Students' responses to the oral interview and questionnaire showed positive responses toward the multigenre-response models based reading course. It was found valuable to implement multigenre-response models in an EFL college reading classroom and several pedagogical implications can be reported based on this study.

First, the selection of reading materials was important for the teaching of a reading course. If most of the students have difficulties comprehending articles, they would also have problems talking about the articles. Therefore, for the future teaching of a reading course, teachers should carefully choose appropriate reading materials according to students' proficiency level.

Second, classroom activities served as a tool to enhance students' learning. Students enjoyed engaging in a variety of activities, and they learned and had better understanding of what they read through different activities. So teachers can create and involve more teaching and learning activities in the future teaching of reading.

Third, making some appropriate adjustments and modifications was necessary. Multigenre-response model was not a fixed model for every reading teacher to follow but rather a flexible model for reading teachers to take it as a reference to improve their teaching of reading. Therefore, teachers can make some changes according to their objectives and needs. For example, if the teacher finds that students have difficulties choosing books or articles by

themselves, he/she might be able to make choices for students. Also, the very first response based on genres can be challenging or unfamiliar to student writers, teachers can always take the model role and write for demonstration at the beginning of the course.

In conclusion, the students participating in this course played an active role in their learning, and the results of this study echoed the claims of previous multigenre-response models advocates. The experience of using multigenre-response models in an L2 reading class was quite positive and fruitful. It allowed for creative thinking and extensive sharing of different ideas to take place in a classroom where students (even using a second language) felt free to think and talk. For them, this class should mean more than reading and appreciation of American literature; it had become a place where they constructed their own meaning, spoke out their voice, and found confidence for their life-long language learning journey.

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**Appendix A: Midterm Student Interview Questions**

1. What are the differences between this course and other courses?
2. Did you or your classmates experience any changes? If you did, what were the changes?
3. What is the role played by the teacher in this class?
4. In which aspect(s) did you have a good performance while attending this class?
5. What kind of questions do you have regarding this class?

### Appendix B: Follow-up Interview Questionnaire

1. Do you think this reading course has helped you improve your language skills? If so, can you name at least two ways you were benefited? If not, can you think of any reason why?
2. Can you name three ways this course has been different from other reading courses you have had?
3. What part(s) of the course did you like most? And why?
4. What part(s) of the course did you dislike most? And why?
5. What changes might seem necessary to improve a future reading course of this type?
6. Is there any other suggestion(s) you like to tell the teacher that might help the course or him as a teacher?
7. Among all the genres we have used this semester, name three you like most?

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| (1) Alternate ending | (10) Lesson plan            |
| (2) Theme song       | (11) Poster                 |
| (3) Mini skit        | (12) Quiz                   |
| (4) Advertisement    | (13) Summary                |
| (5) Death notice     | (14) Script for puppet show |
| (6) Death threat     | (15) Play                   |
| (7) Interview        | (16) Dialogue               |
| (8) Letter           | (17) Character analysis     |
| (9) Map with legend  | (18) Game                   |

8. Based on you experience in this class, would you rate the following activities in the course by giving a score on 1-7 scale (1: not effective; 7: most effective)

#### Teaching and Learning Activities

- A. Group discussion \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Whole class discussion \_\_\_\_\_
- C. Role-play \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Teacher-led discussion \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Presentation \_\_\_\_\_

#### Reading Techniques

- F. Reading for summary \_\_\_\_\_
- G. Looking for main idea \_\_\_\_\_
- H. Real reading in class \_\_\_\_\_
- I. Independent reading \_\_\_\_\_