Motivating and Justifiable: Teaching Western Literature to EFL Students at a University of Science and Technology

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Abstract

While literature-based instruction has been highly praised for its pedagogical benefits, it confronts entrenched learning hindrances, both linguistic and cultural in EFL settings. Whether the literature instruction in practice is motivating or demotivating is an issue worthy of concern. In response to the issue, this paper examines a literature course design and instruction (*Introduction to Western Literature*) of 43 Chinese-speaking English majors at a university of science and technology in Taiwan, using statistical evidence. Questionnaires, achievement tests, quasi-GEPT tests, and informal classroom observation were the research instruments used in this enquiry. The results of the study indicate that the students were motivated; the course was conducive to students' language awareness and acquisition and contributed to students' growth in literature learning and literary esthetic appreciation. The team spirit of cooperating and sharing among the students prevailed in this literature-language classroom.

Introduction

The widespread practice of integrating literature into the language curriculum may offer pedagogical benefits and educational rationale, given its intrinsic bonds with culture. As an umbrella term, culture is the totality of beliefs, attitudes, customs, behaviors, and social habits that characterize the members of a particular society to which a language is inextricably tied (Shiue & Yen, 2005; Chiu, 1997). Literature functions as a mirror that reflects the abounding and amazing diversities (Lazar, 1993) of life, belief systems, values, behaviors (Joseph, et al., 2000), history, and culture presented in language (Bruner, 1996). Reading literary texts encourages learners to grow with sharp, discerning sensibility to the events, whether social, political, or historical, which

construct the background to a particular literary text (Lazar, 1993). It is absolutely not only the new lexicon and grammatical rules that make a learner alien to a language, but also the divergent culture rules embedded in the language. Language is also a reflection of culture so that understanding the cultural content of what one learns is a crucial factor in reading comprehension (Lono, 1987; Nelson, 1987). To become at ease with the culture of the new language and in face-to-face communication, one requires not only communicative competency but also intercultural competence (Cortazzi & Jin, 1995) and literacy. The intertwined relationship between language and culture is also put forth by Gholson and Stumpf (2005) as follows:

> However, learning to survive linguistically is not enough. Just as new language acquisition is important, so too is the development of cultural awareness imperative…. With the development of cultural awareness the understanding of the spoken language deepens. Only when one understands a country's culture is only fully able to participate in that culture. (p. 76)

It would, therefore, be a difficult and intriguing question if, like two sides of a coin (Lazar, 1993), literature and culture become inseparable from and necessary for language teaching and learning. In short, these two essential elements in language teaching (LT) are functionally and mutually complementary (Chen, 2007). More and more English educators are aware that language not only reflects culture but also constitutes culture (Chiu, 1997). In the U.S. context, curricular reforms are moving toward stressing literary instruction with states' adoptions of "literature-based" language curricula, in changes in commercial reading programs, and at the federal level, in the funding of a national Center for the Study of the Teaching and Learning of Literature (Johnston, Guice, Baker, Malone, & Michelson, 1995). Educators (e.g., Applebee, Langer, & Mullis, 1989; Willinsky, 1991) explicate that these moves are intended to improve students' performance in the "higher literacies" (quoted in Johnston, Guice, Baker, Malone, & Michelson, 1995, p. 360). One might decidedly link the intention of such moves with their rationale on the grounds that cultural knowledge and skills presented in teaching materials provide an understanding of mainstream foreign cultures and to raise awareness of cultural diversity or to explain specific foreign patterns of communication that might lead to misunderstandings (Levine & Adelman, 1993). In ESL/EFL settings, acquiring foreign language and culture for ESL/EFL students is to learn what people do and think in the target culture; this enables the students to communicate and react properly (Chiu, 1997). Literary works provide authentic components of language and literacy instruction, based on the second language learning theory and instruction. As emphasized by Krashen (1997), classroom activities should be directed more toward the unconscious acquisition of language than the conscious learning of rules. Sharing a similar insight is Lazar's postulation of literature stimulating language acquisition; that is "literature provides a particularly appropriate way of stimulating this acquisition, as it provides meaningful and memorable contexts for processing and interpreting new language" (p. 17).

While the fact that teaching language goes hand in hand with teaching culture that the language represents, whether implicitly or explicitly, seems undeniable, using literature

in a second language classroom results in numerous advantages. Literary texts are authentic language in context that provides opportunities for language resources to be used more broadly, and, therefore, the readers are placed in an active role in working with and making sense of the language (Liaw, 2001). The use of literature can enlarge learners' vocabulary (Povey, 1972; Spack, 1985) and inspire them to take risks in experimenting with the target language (McConochie, 1985). Literature cannot only be used to enrich their vision, fostering critical thinking (Oster, 1989), and stimulating their creativity (McKay, 1982; Preston, 1982), but also to promote their greater cultural tolerance (McKay, 1982) and sensitivity (Liaw, 1995). In addition, through reading literature, learners are more likely to extend their language into the more abstract domains associated with increasingly advanced language competence (Brumfit & Cater, 1991). Intensive reading and reading for pleasure can even provide an avenue for efficient second language acquisition and reading proficiency (Constantino, 1994; Krashen, 1989; McKay, 1982).

Literary study features as many advantages for second language teaching and learning as for foreign language teaching (Adelson, 1988; Krashen, 1985; Ruiz-Funes, 1999). However, foreign language instruction bears a more complicated and, so, controversial relationship to literature than that of second language instruction (Liaw, 2001), where a lot of immediate instructional obstacles get in the way. Arguments against the use of literature in EFL classrooms hold that literature can contribute little to language learning due to the special nature of literary texts (McKay, 1982). It follows that intrinsic hindrances lie ahead for ESL students, let alone EFL students, to read literary works, such as linguistic intricacies of the target language, especially lexical and semantic barriers, unfamiliarity with or remoteness of the cultural background (Lazar, 1993; Taglieber, Johnson, & Yarbrough, 1988), lack of an overview of Western literature, failure to comprehend overall meaning and an insensitivity to literary works (Hsieh, 2003). Similarly, there are rhetorical and literary devices in texts, such as complex metaphors, which students might find difficult to unravel. An additional issue is that more often than not literary language might be so markedly "deviant" that it breaks the usual norms of language use, as observed by Leech (1973) (quoted in Lazar, 1994, p. 115). Besides, given that there is a distinction between literary and linguistic activities, the learning of literature cannot facilitate the learning of communicative skills, which are the main goals of language learning (Littlewood, 1986). Complaints about the inclusion of literature in language instruction are often heard, based on the grounds that the language of literature, is "ungradeable and linguistically unsuitable," thus, irrelevant to learners' needs (Hill, 1986, p. 10).

Another objection to using literature associates learners' under-preparedness in their English/Western literary competence[1] with learners' low level of English competence where they might fail to generate valid interpretations of a text. There may be a case where the learners, who do not read literature in their own language, or whose language has a literature very distinct from literature in English, remain mystified or intimidated by the formal properties of the literary texts. Without any interpretations of the texts' meanings, the learners become demotivated and frustrated in learning the language through working with such texts (Lazar, 1994; Kuo, 1997). A study conducted by Akyel

and Yalcin (1990) reveals that many EFL teachers chose to expose their students to literature to achieve linguistic and cultural goals and to develop their students' literary competence while other teachers failed to perceive that the literature syllabus could meet the aim of enabling their students to reach the proficiency level at which they could cope with further university studies in English with ease. Akyel and Yalcin (1990) also found that the students' attitudes toward literature were connected with their foreign language proficiency. Students who felt that they had a very good command of English appreciated the literature whereas a majority of the students found many literary works not only too boring and too long, but also very difficult to comprehend. Likewise, Martin and Ian (1993) reported that some foreign language students did not necessarily find literature study conducive to achieving their primary goal of improving skills in the target language. Given all the claimed hurdles/setbacks, one could easily assume that to study Western literature or to read literary works in English might be a source of anxiety and frustration to a majority of EFL students. For example the English majors at the general universities in Taiwan, not to mention their counterparts at science and technology universities, whose English competency is relatively low (Ou, 1997; Su, 2005) and English learning attitude/involvement is, as a result, passive (Hung, 1996), and, who are in dire need of a boost to their learning confidence. It has been of great concern that, except for a fairly select group of "literary-minded" (Lazar, 1993, p. 25) students, literature teaching and learning is demotivating.

While these above-mentioned controversies over Western/English literary instruction seem to be apparent and explicit, the pinnacle of opposition would be in its silence on the complexities of cultural and linguistic imperialism. This is combined with resistance to threats, whether potential or imminent, of Western/English colonization/invasion and cultural misidentification in light of the post-colonialism, the high-level of multicultural awareness and post-global compromises has concerned some linguists or educators (e.g., Lu, 2004; Pablo, 2006; Phillipson, 1992).

The arduous task of literary instruction is aggravated by the ambivalent propaganda of utilitarianism. As Abbott (1987) observes, language instruction is highly instrumental, and this trend has led to the creation of oral communication-oriented syllabi. The justification for the arguments against the adoption of literature-related materials, especially in science and technology focused universities in Taiwan, is the immediate practicality and corporate needs [2] that increasingly dismiss literary instruction from the institutional curriculum. It is often heard that literature fails to meet the academic or occupational needs of the students (Kuo, 1997; Yao & Lin, 2008) in the Taiwanese context. Literature courses are treated more as "art" (quoted in Liaw, 2001, p. 36), humanities, or esthetic, rather than as tools in the development of communicative skills ready to be used in the workforce. Therefore, it is not unexpected that culture is often neglected in EFL teaching and learning or "introduced as no more than a supplementary diversion to language instruction" (Tseng, 2002, p. 11) in Taiwan. While the provision of literature-related courses for English majors is common practice in non-technical universities in Taiwan, only a few are designed into the curricula of the science and technology universities.

Fortunately, *Introduction to Western Literature* has been designated as the most important and fundamental required literature-related course among the few such courses offered to the students who study in the departments of applied English language or applied foreign languages. Nevertheless, in recent years, *Introduction to Western Literature*, through departmental curriculum revisions, has gradually been degraded to be one of a select number of courses offered in some, if not all, science and technology universities or colleges [3].

With the justification for the value of literature instruction in place, studies (e.g., Chang, 1997; Hsieh, 1999 & 2003; Kuo, 1997; Lee, 2006; Liaw, 2001; Lin, 2002; Wu, 1998) have documented the integration of literature instruction into language teaching in the EFL field in Taiwanese contexts as much as in the ESL field elsewhere. Kuo (1997) confirms that teaching literature to EFL science students in Taiwan is conducive to cultivation of their creative and critical thinking skills and aspirations. Conniff, Bortle, and Joseph (1993) introduced poetry in an adult literary class where they demonstrated that teaching poetry enhances the reading and writing skills of lower level readers and motivates those learners to improve their writing due to the connections between reading and creative writing. In a similar account, Spack (1985) asserts that literature may be the appropriate vehicle to achieve students' understanding in the reading and writing process. Likewise, Chang (1997) and Hsieh (1999) hold that literature-based syllabi result in positive effects on students' reading ability and encourage personal growth, which is echoed in Vacca's postulation (1981) that readers can grow in and through reading. In the process where readers get responses from and to the literature, their thoughts and feelings progress extensively in terms of their sensibility and sensitivity, which consequently encourages the readers to engage in more extensive or intensive reading. However, little research has been conducted to verify the success of literature instruction in EFL settings with statistical evidence.

This study first examines the nature of teaching literature and the related theory of syllabus design before describing the course design for *Introduction to Western Literature*. Subsequently, a quantitative inquiry into the effectiveness and appropriateness of this course from the students' point of view is delineated The hope is that the information drawn from the students' input not only embodies pro-active perspectives to help improve the literature-related course and retroactive views to help judge its worth, but also takes account of the value of literature instruction in the EFL context. Three major tasks are set for this research:

1. To document a course design for literature instruction within a theoretical framework relevant to the integration of a language-based approach into a literature-based approach, complemented by a cultural model, in an EFL college setting

2. To evaluate the course implementation in terms of its appropriateness, students' motivational and attitudinal change (if there is any), and, above all, students' learning outcomes/achievements

3. To probe into justification for the place of literature teaching in the EFL context

Literature Review

Teaching activities in literature classrooms

Various kinds of multiple intelligences activities such as storytelling, writing, questions and answers, singing, film-viewing, group discussion, and dramatization are recommended for use in the EFL literature classroom (Armstrong, 2000; Campbell, Campbell, & Dickinson, 1996; Elliot, 1990). Film viewing has been hailed an effective activity on the grounds that literature-based movies can make corresponding literary works easier to be read (Rushing, 1996), offering insights into the literary texts that might be denied to the readers (Hill, 1986) and, in turn, improving students' motivation (Carter & Long, 1991). As Tillyer (1996) maintains, resembling a mirror of culture and real life, good films accompanying literary works function as great tools to teach language and culture. One could read novels or dramas and enjoy a quite different experience of viewing the corresponding films (Carter & Long, 1991).

Approaching literature in a response-based manner is considered an effective and coherent pedagogical method of foreign language instruction and the development of cultural understanding that enhances the experience of reading in a foreign language (Liaw, 2001; Long, 1991; Iser, 1978). Davis (1989, 1992) suggests the use of audience-oriented criticism owing to its comprehensive and heuristic characteristics in the reading process that takes into account both text and reader's attitudes and prior background knowledge. As Rosenblatt (1978) depicts, reading is a process of transacting, instead of simply interacting with texts, where readers, taking an active role to construct meaning from the texts (Beach, 1993), are provided with an experience that they can live through. Readers can find meanings in the texts based on their own ideas, interests, and needs. Advocators (e.g., Ali, 1994; Davis, 1989, 1992; Elliot, 1990; Long, 1991) of the reader-response approach claim that literature in a foreign language classroom can make the learning experience much more enjoyable and stimulating for learners than classroom instruction that requires mere acquisition of the linguistic components of the text. Most importantly, integrated with such an approach, literature reading is not necessarily intimidating for non-native language learners (Liaw, 2001).

Due to individual traits, students could derive diverse messages from reading a particular novel, play or poem (Brumfit & Carter, 1986). Gajdusek and Van Dommelen (1993) assert that guiding students to do the necessary critical thinking is essential since it is at the heart of the writing process and critical thinking contributes to triggering students' formation of judgments (Beyer, 1995). Whole language and cooperative learning techniques are deemed satisfying vehicles to cultivate students' automaticity in processing written language and fostering critical thinking skills (Sage, 1993).

To resolve the cultural problems that students might encounter in relation to reading literary works, several approaches can be taken. Prompting or questioning enables students to make connections between their personal world and the literary text that seems remote to them (Carter & Long, 1991). Introducing students to authors' biographies and their relevance to the authors' writings in order to assist them in gaining necessary background knowledge is a promising approach, as is encouraging

class discussions about cultural differences before reading literary works (Gajdusek, 1988). To make predictions about what will happen next at key points is likely to provide an unintimidating way of bridging the gap between language study and the development of literary-based skills (Lazar, 1993).

As computer technology takes a gradually more significant place in language instruction, Craven (1994) experimented with the integration of computer with literature teaching. Lin (2002) integrated multimedia technology with poetry instruction.

Given the variety of activities, the selection of appropriate teaching activities is dependent on various factors that include class time available, class size, the genre of the literary texts chosen, as well as students' English competency level, intellectual development, students' characteristics, and their interests in the literary texts. In this context, it is argued that a needs analysis is needed to understand students' needs before the outset of a course design and implementation.

Syllabus design for teaching literature

There has been argument for a continuum of approaches to using literature in language classrooms. Applying a language-based approach to syllabus design, which integrates literature into language in the classroom, is on one end of the continuum. Literature is used for the purpose of language practice. This echoes what Carter and Long (1991) maintain of *the language model* and, similarly, what Hill (1986) claims of *a linguistic model,* with a justification for the teaching of literature lying in its value in promoting language development. In this sense, literature is used as a rich resource of meaningful language input and as a tool from which a variety of motivating classroom activities can be generated, as opposed to being studied in its own right (Carter & Long, 1991). In other words, literary texts are adopted as a resource to provide stimulating language activities and to help students improve their knowledge of, and proficiency in the language. Another advantage of using literary texts for language activities is that they offer a wide range of styles and registers. Specifically, such literature texts, which can function as communicative situations for teachers to introduce real life into the classroom, may exemplify:

1. Degrees of formality, ranging from slang to an extremely formal mode of speech

2. Dialects, as contrasted with standard English

3. Different topics/types of experience

4. Different levels of diction (e.g., the literary language of poetry or the colloquial speech of a play) (Hill, 1986, p. 11)

Nantz (2002) urges the development of a literature-language ELT curriculum for elementary school students in Taiwan. The reason for this is that by reading a substantial and extensive contextualized body of literary texts, students gain familiarity with many features of the written language—sentence structures, vocabulary, usage of words, and different modes of connecting ideas—which in turn extend their language skills. As Carter and Long (1991) postulate, language-centered literature teaching is to "demonstrate what 'oft was thought but ne'er so well express,' that is, to put students in

touch with some of the more subtle and varied creative uses of the languages" (p. 2). While the literary texts are open to multiple interpretations and hence provide excellent opportunities for classroom discussion, the students get to focus on genuinely interesting and motivating topics to explore in the classroom (Duff & Maley, 1990). In some cases, synthesis of language and literature also features a detailed analysis of the language of the literary text, which helps students to make meaningful interpretations or informed examinations of it. The students are encouraged to draw on their knowledge of familiar grammatical, lexical or discourse categories to respond to the texts with ideas or make aesthetic judgments of the texts. The use of literature as a resource, however, suggests a less academic, though no less serious, approach to the reading of literature. In this context, literature can be a "resource for personal development and growth, an aim being to encourage greater sensitivity and self-awareness and greater understanding of the world around us" (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 2).

A literature-based syllabus to study the literary text itself is on the other end of the continuum. Literature itself is the content of the course, which concentrates on areas such as:

1. The history and characteristics of literary movements

2. The social, political and historical background to a text

3. Literary genres and rhetorical devices

4. The biography of the author and its relevance to the author's writings

The aim of the syllabus is to provide students with techniques and procedures they need to interpret a text and to make competent critical analyses and judgments of it. Thus, such syllabi focus on the study of literature with the academic purposes of obtaining qualifications in literary studies (Carter & Long, 1991). This frequently adopts stylistics analysis that involves the close study of the linguistic features of a text in order to arrive at an understanding of how the meanings of the text are transmitted. As Lazar (1993) states, stylistics analysis involving the close study of the literary text itself embraces two main objectives:

1. To enable students to make meaningful interpretations of the text itself; in other words, to help students read and study literature more competently

2. To expand students' knowledge and awareness of the language in general (p. 31)

In this context, students are encouraged to draw on their own personal experiences, feelings, and opinions so that they become more actively involved both intellectually and emotionally in learning English, and hence this aids acquisition (Lazar, 1993).

Somewhere along the continuum is *the cultural model* with a rationale that stresses the value of literature as part of the accumulated wisdom within a culture. Literature describes "the most significant ideas and sentiments of human beings and teaching literature represents a means" by which students can be exposed to and put in touch with a whole range of expressions—"often of universal value and validity—over a historical period or periods" (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 2). Thus, teaching literature within a cultural model enables students to understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies

distinct from their own in time and space, and to come to perceive tradition of thought, feeling, behaviors, belief systems, values, as well as artistic form and expression within the heritage that the literature of such cultures endow (Carter & Long, 1991; Joseph, et al., 2000). Most importantly, literature instruction in such a model empowers the learners to acknowledge cultural diversity that helps reflect their own ethnicity and cultural identity, especially in the EFL/ESL contexts.

Sharing similar rationale with *the cultural model* is *the personal growth model* in that teaching literature results from learning how to appreciate and evaluate complex cultural productions. Teaching literature within this model is also stimulating because students are inspired to understand their society and culture as well as themselves as they function within the society and culture. As Carter and Long (1991) dictate, *the personal growth model* focuses on assisting students in reading literature more effectively so as to help them develop and grow "as individuals as well as in their relationships with the people and institutions around them" (Carter & Long, 1991, p. 3). The learners, therefore, benefit from learning literature in which embedded culture educates them about the community norms that influence their judgment about what is right or wrong and/or what is appropriate or inappropriate (Joseph, et al., 2000). In other words, teaching literature lends credence to great intellectual and emotional rewards that contribute to the development of sound character/disposition of the learners (Kuo, 1997). Above all, there is a high likelihood that the learners can reach their full potential through discourse with the culture that they embrace in the literary texts and, in turn, shape their thoughts and language used to express them (Bruner, 1990).

The language model and the personal growth model encourage students to develop their responses to literary works by learner-centered and process-based activities. In a language-based approach to literature teaching, EFL procedures such as cloze, prediction, creative writing, re-writing (e.g., preparing the story as a newspaper report with appropriate headlines), role play, and even games or competitions, are deployed for purposes of opening up the literary text and releasing its meanings (Carter & Long, 1991; Hill, 1986). Such language-based, student-centered activities aim to involve students with a text, to develop their perceptions of it and to help them explore and express those perceptions. Particularly, the personal growth model motivates students to read and to improve their reading abilities by connecting to readers' experiences (Asselin, 2000; Carter & Long, 1991; Lazar, 1993). This denotes that more and more studies emphasize the importance of reader-response and learner-centered activity in literature classroom (Ali, 1994; Bushman & Bushman, 1997; Davis, 1989, 1992; Elliot, 1990; Liaw, 2001; Long, 1991; Iser, 1978). The cultural model reflects traditional approaches to teaching literature, which is associated with teacher-centered methodologies and product-based teaching (Carter & Long, 1991). Students' exposure to reading literature has been dominated by lectures in which teachers interpret plot, theme, characters, and semantic meaning (Norris, 1994). Traditional approaches to literature education regard meaning as residing in the text. Text-based reading emphasizes students' knowledge of literary conventions and expects them to derive designated meanings from the literature (Asselin, 2000). Given that every approach or

model has its strengths and weaknesses and that it can hardly match the learning styles of all different learners, the issue is not which one precedes another; rather, it is how to integrate different approaches to syllabus design into a sensible and effective teaching program (Hutchinson & Waters, 1993) for the benefit of the learners. Taking this line of argument, the experimental course design in this enquiry is orientated toward an eclectic combination of the literature-based and the language-based approaches with a touch of the cultural model. In this context, the study of literature and the study about literature are embodied in the experimental course design herein. A hypothesis is, therefore, developed to test whether the course design and its implementation are suitable, effective, and motivational. When the hypothesis is found positive, the question of what students achieve or how they benefit from the course is further investigated and what implications can be drawn from the language-literature instruction in the EFL context.

Methodology

The subjects

The subjects of the study were 42 juniors and one senior from the department of Applied Foreign Languages, who took a required literary course, *Introduction to Western Literature* (WL) at a university of science and technology in the 2005 academic year. Table 1 and Table 2 show a profile of the subjects. The consideration that only the student group is selected for the research is due to the fact that students are the main stakeholders while their counterparts, teachers, take the responsibility as curriculum implementers, planners or designers. The feedback from the students is examined as opposed to the teacher-designed curriculum. There are slightly more students who did not have any prior experience of taking Western literature related courses than those who did (51.2% vs. 48.8%). Among those who did, a majority (nearly 40%) obtained the experience at tertiary institutions while about 12% gained it in their previous education at senior high or vocational high schools (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Subjects
(n=43)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Missing (%)
Gender (Male/Female)	9/34	20.9/79.1	0
Grade (3rd/4th)	42/1	97.7/2.3	0
Taken WL related course before (Yes/No)	21/22	48.8/51.2	0
Where taken (Campus/Cram School/Senior or Vocational High School)	17/0/5	39.5/0/11.6	21/48.8

Table 2. Spearman Correlations for Demographic Variables

	Grade (3rd/4th)	WL Learning experience (Yes/No)	Where the experience occurred (on campus/cram school/high school)	Like literature course or not
Gender (Male/Female)	0.079	0.184	0.124	-0.119
Grade (3rd/4th)		-0.158	-0.132	0.207
WL Learning experience (Yes/No)			-0.132	-0.153
Where the experience occurred (on campus/cram school/ high school)				-0.100

Instrument

A quantitative research method was applied to the study along with informal classroom fieldnotes and observation [4]. Two sets of attitude questionnaires were included. One was administered before the course began; this one elicited students' pre-learning attitude toward the WL course and also functioned as a needs analysis for the course design. The other requested opinions from the students in order to get their feedback on the course. The pre-course questionnaires [5] had a reliability coefficient of .81, while the reliability coefficient of the post-course questionnaires [6] reached a high level (*alpha*=.96). The quantitative information collected through the questionnaires was used for statistical analyses. The questionnaire was designed, therefore, for both the course design and the course evaluation in light of the needs analyses [7].

Course Design

Course description

The course was provided for two semesters in the 2005 academic year. The class met three hours per week for a total of 18 weeks in each semester, which included two weeks for mid-term and final exams respectively. A needs analysis through the pre-course questionnaire was conducted during the first period of the first semester in order to understand students' interest in and motivation for studying WL as well as their preferred instructional methodology. A quasi GEPT [8] intermediate module, including reading and listening tests, was also administered as a pre-test in the following period. A post-test was held in the 18th week of the second semester to evaluate students'

language growth as a result of the literature-language teaching, to contrast with the pre-test.

Teaching rationale and objectives

Based on the prior literature review, the course design is built upon a combination of different syllabus models and approaches. It features a language-based approach with a rationale of integrating literature into language instruction with a less academic purpose. Complementary to the language-based approach is the literature-centered approach where areas such as:

1. The history and characteristics of literary movements

2. The social, political, and historical background of a text

3. Literary genres and rhetorical devices

4. The biography of the author (Carter & Long, 1991) are concentrated

A touch of *the cultural model*, with the rationale that values the important role of literature in accumulating wisdom of a culture, found its way into the course design in order to cultivate cultural awareness within students. In this attempt, the elevation of motivation in learning literature and language ensues as a result. Therefore, this design underpins both the study of literature and the study about literature. In other words, the foci of teaching and learning literature and language as well as of elevating attitudes and motivation are the main thrust of the course. Within this framework, the teaching objectives of this course concentrate on introducing Western literature in order to expose the students to Western civilization, wisdom, and beauty in the forms of prose, drama, epics, and poems.

The purpose aims to cultivate in the students a literature temperament and character along with an understanding of and appreciation for selected few of the world's great pieces. In addition, students' reading skills, such as scanning, guessing, predicting, and finding the main ideas, are also targeted so as to cultivate the students to become better readers. What is more, the students are encouraged to share their own opinions about the literary works in their own words in order to generate their independently critical and esthetic ideas. Therefore, the students are required to answer questions in speech and, where necessary, writing. Students are also encouraged to be independent readers, to be able to search for and organize extra information related to the literary works discussed in class from the libraries and/or on the Internet. They were assigned to undertake group work that would lead to the cooperative learning process of negotiation, organization and sharing. The students demonstrated their ability to communicate in English as well as performance in literary literacy.

Learning outcomes

Based on the rationale and objectives of the course, key learning outcomes are formulated, where a total of nine key outcomes/competencies are in line with teaching and learning literature and language along with achieving students' cooperative, affective, and motivational enhancement, as illustrated below. These are the standards against which the course accomplishment is thereby evaluated.

1. Building up literary competence—the capacity to learn, understand and remember the registers, terminology, and discourse in various literary genres, which occur in epics, poems, prose and drama in English as well as the movement of Western literature (the literature-based approach).

2. Cultivating literary temperament—the capacity to appreciate Western literature and civilization as well as to increase the sensitivity toward life (the cultural model).

3. Sharing independent, critical, and esthetic ideas—the ability to make use of registers, styles and stylistic analysis to interpret a text and make competent critical judgments of it (the literature-based approach).

4. Improving English communicating abilities—the capacity to communicate with others using spoken and non-verbal expressions in the target language (the language-based approach).

5. Becoming an independent reader—the capacity to read the assigned literary works and information by applying reading skills (e.g., scanning, guessing, predicting, and finding main ideas) (the language-based approach).

6. Cooperating with others and in groups—the capacity to work as a member of a group to achieve shared goals and complete tasks (the language-based approach).

7. Using technology—the capacity to operate equipment and materials and to explore and adapt them. That is, to locate information on the Internet and use tools or instruments relevant to the study of literature (the language-based approach).

8. Collecting, analyzing and organizing information—the capacity to find, sift, and sort information and to present it in a useful way (the language-based approach).

9. Elevating learning motivation—the capacity to increase the learning motivation and lower the affective filter in the cooperative learning process (the language-based approach).

Teaching content

The teaching content chosen for the course includes several literary genres (e.g., stories, drama, poetry) as well as major literary movements of Western civilization as shown in Table 3. The list of the content might appear ambitious and be criticized by students for being solemn, heavy, and difficult, while still being worthwhile as literature in correspondence with the course rationale. The teaching content was extracted mainly from *Literature Made Simple*, *Francis Bacon* and related information on the websites [9]. The literary movements, terminology, and history were gathered from reference books [10] to assist in the buildup of literary competence. Considering that the students had little WL knowledge (see Table 6) though having had previous exposure to English literature (see Table 1), texts were selected to demonstrate fundamental aspects of literature. It is argued that texts in simplified versions (see Table 3) were chosen, which still expose the students to works of quality, without de-motivating or frightening the

students off English literature as stated by Hirvela and Boyle (1988). A similar argument holds for the adoption of simplified materials, as opposed to original works, as they help prevent linguistic difficulty for the students. As a result, students would not make a huge leap from painful word-by-word decoding to the comprehension of relatively lengthy literary texts containing highly abstract vocabulary, complex syntactical patterns, and sophisticated style and contents (Schulz, 1981).

Table 3. Teaching Content of the WL Course

Genre of Teaching Content	First Semester	Second Semester
Epic	Iliad (5 hrs.), Odyssey (4 hrs.), The Aeneid (2 hrs.), The Divine Comedy (5 hrs.)	
Novel		Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (simplified, 7 hrs.)
Poetry	"To Lesbia" by Catullus (1 hr.)	Spenser's "Amoretti" (1 hr.), Shakespearean Sonnet 18 (2 hrs.), Thomas Campion's "Cherry-ripe" (3 hrs.), Lord Byron's "She Walks in Beauty" (3 hrs.)
Essay & Story	The New Testament (3 hrs.), The Old Testament (3 hrs.), Don Quixote (simplified, 4 hrs.), Canterbury Tales (simplified, 5 hrs.), Utopia (3 hrs.)	The Essays of Francis Bacon (Essay VIII, 2 hrs.)
Drama	Oedipus the King (5 hrs.), Medea (3 hrs.)	A Midsummer Night's Dream (6 hrs.), Romeo and Juliet (7 hrs.)

Note: The course comprises a total of 48 class hours (16 weeks x 3 hrs.) per semester, if excluding another two weeks of mid-term and final exams respectively.

Teaching Methods

In order to cater to students' need and maximize teaching effectiveness, a need analysis was conducted to understand students' preferred teaching methods and activities. The results (see Table 4) indicated that the students relied heavily on teacher's lecturing, preferred watching films, and felt at ease with peer cooperation. "film-aided instruction" (M=5.77) received a unanimous endorsement by 100% of the students, followed by "lecture" with as high as 97.6% agreement. The cooperative teaching and learning activities of "group discussion to answer questions posed by the teacher" (M=5.12) and "written reports" in groups (M=4.91) were also endorsed by 100% and 86.1% respectively. The teaching and learning activities of "question-posing and answering"

and "oral reports" were a little threatening to the students and, therefore, received relatively less agreements with respective means of 4.77 and 4.74, ranked the last two preferred activities, respectively.

Table 4. Descriptive Distribution of Preferred Teaching Methodology

	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)	Mean	Ranked Order	SD
1. Lecture	0	0	2.3	20.9	37.2	39.5	5.14	2	.83
2. Film-aided instruction	0	0	0	4.7	14.0	81.4	5.77	1	.53
3. Teaching related information on the Internet	0	2.3	0	34.9	30.2	32.6	4.91	4	.95
4. Question-posing and answering	0	0	4.7	32.6	44.2	18.6	4.77	6	.81
5. Group discussion to answer questions posed by the teacher	0	0	0	25.6	37.2	37.2	5.12	3	.79
6. Written reports (cooperative group works)	0	0	14.0	16.3	34.9	34.9	4.91	4	1.04
7. Oral reports	2.3	0	2.3	32.6	41.9	20.9	4.74	7	.98
8. Encouraging student to search for WL related information on websites and in libraries	0	2.3	0	30.2	41.9	25.6	4.88	5	.88

Note: Greatly Disagree =1, Disagree=2, Slightly Disagree=3, Slightly Agree=4, Agree=5, Greatly Agree=6.

Based on the result of the need analysis, lectures, film-aided instruction, Internet-based activities, and cooperative group work in the form of written and oral reports were adopted for this EFL literature classroom. The movies *The Trojan War*, *Odysseus*, *Ten Commandments*, *Elizabeth I,* and *Pride and Prejudice,* as well as the dramas of A *Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Romeo and Juliet* were adopted. This video-viewing activity was followed by a discussion on the video content. In order to smooth in-class group discussion activities and maximize the teaching and learning effectiveness, the students were required to do pre-reading activities at home. What is of note is that the students were formed into groups while assigned pre-reading content and required to do oral reports in turn in class, through which the students would be assessed according to the scoring system.

Student assessment

The evaluation of students' performance took the forms of written tests, oral presentations, and written reports. Two written tests were administered during and after the course, serving as a criterion-referenced formative evaluation of students'

learning accomplishment. The test format consisted of three parts, true or false (30%), multiple choice (30%), and short essay (40%). The first two parts purported to test students' understanding of literary movements and authors while the last aimed to test their esthetic, critical thinking skills. The reliability coefficiencies of the examinations reached reasonable alpha levels fluctuating between .71 and .76 (see Table 5).

Table 5. Reliability of the Examinations

First Semester	Alpha	Second Semester	Alpha
Mid-term Exam	.76	Mid-term Exam	.76
Final Exam	.71	Final Exam	.71

As for the scoring system [11], oral and written reports accounted for 30% of a total of 100 points. Class involvement and class attendance took up another 10% while two achievement tests constituted 60% of the total scores.

The Implementation

Students' attitude

As shown in Table 6, before the WL course began, students' lack of interest in or knowledge of/about Western literature was evident. A majority of the students (61.5%) demonstrated their predisposition to low motivation in learning Western literature, while only a minority (32.6%) indicated their interest in literature. About 6% tended to give neutral opinions about this motivation issue. The same majority of the students (61.5%) also reported their absence of knowledge of Western literature while 38.5% had very little knowledge of it. Students' low motivation and lack of literary backgrounds resulted in their widely passive reaction in class as noted in the classroom observation. To the surprise of the course instructor, the students even expressed their concerns about the "hard" course to the head of the department around the fifth week of the first semester.

Nevertheless, as the course was approaching its completion, students' attitudes distinctly altered. As indicated in Table 6, a general endorsement of the WL course was tracked. A little less than two-thirds (65.2%) demonstrated their progress in developing interest in and knowledge about WL (Post-Items 2 and 3), compared with the 61.5% absence of interest in or of WL knowledge in their pre-attitude survey (Pre-Item 3); they transformed themselves from being uninterested learners to interested ones. Approximately one-third (28%) even maintained that they became more sensitive toward the esthetics of literature as well as to happenings around them (Post-Item 3). A minority of 4.7% expressed a neutral attitude (Post-Item 4) while only 2.3% disapproved of the WL course (Post-Item 5). This result echoes an incident where one of the students approached the researcher/practitioner after class, enthusiastically expressing how she gained from the literature class:

I love watching the *Romeo and Juliet* film; it is so moving that it touches my heart. I was crying during viewing then. I find that I become more sensitive and esthetic to

happenings around me. I become more knowledgeable about what the story tries to express and have more empathy toward how the protagonists feel.

Table 6. Frequency Distribution of the Subject's Attitudes (n=43)

At the Start of the Course*	n (%)
1. I am interested in literature. But I have little knowledge or conception of WL.	14(32.6)
2. I feel ok about literature and I barely have knowledge or conception of WL.	3(5.9)
3. I don't like WL nor have I any knowledge or conception of it.	26(61.5)
After the Completion of the Course**	**n (%)**
1. At the beginning of the course I did not like WL nor had any conception about it; gradually, I developed interest in and knowledge about it.	2(4.7)
2. At the beginning of the course I did not like WL nor had any conception about it; later I gained a great interest in it.	12(27.9)
3. I am always interested in literature; the WL course boosted my interest. I became more sensitive to literature and happenings around me.	2(4.7)
4. I am always interested in literature; the WL course has not increased nor decreased my interest.	26(60.5)
5. I was never interested in literature; and I am still not. The WL course did not motivate my interest.	1(2.3)

Note: *The items for pre-testing students' attitude toward the literature instruction are herein indicated as pre-items.

**The items for post-testing students' attitude toward the literature instruction are herein indicated as post-items.

As for the investigation into students' post attitude toward proper hour provision issue (see Table 7), 27.9% reported an attitude of "not enough," up from only 2.3% in the pre-course questionnaires. It is interesting to note that while around one third of the students (30.2%) perceived that the hour provision was too much at the beginning of the course, no one felt the same at the end of it. A non-parametic test, the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test, detected the pre- and post- students' attitudes being significantly different at a level of .013 (Z=-2.479), reflecting students' post-course attitude toward the hour provision issue being more positive than the pre-course attitude. Based on this result, students' post-course attitude toward the WL course tending to be positive can also be generalized.

Table 7. Pre-and-Post Attitude toward Proper Hour Provision for WL Course and the Result of Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (n=43)

Ranks	Post n (%)	Pre n (%)	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)
1 =Not Enough Hours Provided	12 (27.9)	1 (2.3)	-2.479	0.013*
2 =Enough	29 (67.4)	26 (60.5)		
3 =Too Much	0	13 (30.2)		
4 =Elective Course (not Compulsory)	2 (4.7)	2 (4.7)		
5 =No Need	0	1 (2.3)		

P<0.05

Learning achievement

A total of 15 items related to students' WL learning achievements, which develop from and reflect the pre-designed learning outcomes, found their way into the questionnaire. Table 8 shows the connection between the pre-designed learning outcomes and the learning achievements.

The statistical results illustrated students' high levels of favorable attitude toward the 15 areas of learning outcomes (see Table 9), among which "the team spirit of cooperating and sharing among students" (Item 15) received the most agreements (100%). The outcome areas in association with literary knowledge increase, that is, enhancing "the understanding of Western culture, history and politics" (Item 3), "the understanding of major WL movements" (Item 4), and boosting "literary esthetic capability of appreciation" (Item 7) all gained around 98% of students' agreement, ranking the first, third, and sixth in priority respectively. The outcome relative to general English reading ability was ranked second in priority. As for literary lexical acquisition, literary lexical improvement (Item 2), and WL terminology knowledge increase (Item 1) were endorsed by 90.7% and 83.8% of the students, respectively. Whereas the motivational and affective increments (Item 9) received 93% agreement, the cultivation of students' abilities of logical reasoning (Item 5), and independent thinking (Item 6) were both agreed to by 95.4% of the students. Two outcome areas (Items 13 and 14) related to research skills both received 90.7% positive counts. Two areas pertaining to the enhancement of English oral skills (Items 11 and 12), "questioning and answering skills in English" and "the ability of preparing and making reports in English" gained relatively low agreements of 86% and 81% respectively.

Table 8. The Connection between Pre-designed Learning Outcomes and Learning Achievements

Key Learning Outcomes/ Competencies	Students' Learning Achievements
1. Building up literary competence-the capacity to learn, understand and remember the registers, terminology, and discourse in various literary genres, such as epic, poem, prose and drama in English as well as the movement of Western literature.	Item 1: enhance the knowledge of WL terminology in English Item 2: increase literary vocabulary, phrases, and usage in English. Item 4: enhance the understanding of major WL movements.
2. Cultivating literary temperament-the capacity to appreciate Western literature and civilization as well as to increase the sensitivity toward life.	Item 3: enhance the understanding of Western culture, history and politics. Item 8: apply to what has learned to daily life and increase the sensitivity toward life.
3. Sharing independent, critical and esthetic ideas-the ability to make use of registers, styles and stylistic analysis to interpret a text and make competent critical judgments of it.	Item 5: enhance the capability of logical reasoning. Item 6: enhance the capability of independent thinking. Item 7: boost literary esthetic capability of appreciation.
4. Improving English communicating abilities-the capacity to communicate with others using spoken and non-verbal expressions in the target language.	Item 11: enhance questioning and answering skills in English. Item 12: enhance the ability of preparing and making reports in English.
5. Becoming an independent reader-the capacity to read the assigned literary works and information by applying reading skills (e.g., scanning, guessing, predicting, and finding main ideas).	Item 10: enhance English reading ability. Item 13: increase organizational and analytic ability of searched English information.
6. Cooperating with others and in groups-the capacity to work as a member of a group to achieve shared goals and complete tasks.	Item 15: boost the team spirit of cooperating and sharing among students.
7. Using technology-the capacity to operate equipment and materials and to explore and adapt them. That is, to locate information on	Item 12: enhance the ability of students to prepare and making reports in English.

Key Learning Outcomes/ Competencies	Students' Learning Achievements
the Internet and use tools or instruments relevant to the study of literature.	Item 13: increase organizational and analytic ability to search for English information. Item 14: enhance the skill of searching for related English information on the Internet and in libraries.
8. Collecting, analyzing and organizing information-the capacity to find, sift, and sort information and to present it in a useful way. (the language-based approach).	Item 13: increase organizational and analytic ability to search for English information.
9. Elevating learning motivation-the capacity to increase the learning motivation and lower the affective filter in the cooperative learning process.	Item 9: increase the motivation and interest in learning WL.

Table 9. Descriptive Distribution of WL Learning Achievements

	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)	MN (%)	Mean	Ranked Order	SD
1. Enhance the knowledge of WL terminology in English	0	2.3	14.0	9.3	51.2	23.3	0	4.84	8	.97
2. Increase literary vocabulary, phrases and usage in English	0	0	7.0	16.3	44.2	30.2	2.3	5.0	4	.88
3. Enhance the understanding of Western culture, history and politics	0	0	2.3	9.3	39.5	48.8	0	5.35	1	.75
4. Enhance the understanding of major WL movements	0	0	2.3	9.3	55.8	32.6	0	5.19	3	.70
5. Enhance the capability of logical reasoning	0	0	4.7	55.8	25.6	14.0	0	4.49	12	.80
6. Enhance the capability of independent thinking	0	0	4.7	37.2	34.9	23.3	0	4.77	9	.87
7. Boost literary appreciation	0	0	2.3	23.3	51.2	23.3	0	4.95	6	.75
8. Apply what has been learned to daily life and increase the sensitivity toward life	0	0	14.0	41.9	34.9	9.3	0	4.40	14	.85

	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)	6 (%)	MN (%)	Mean	Ranked Order	SD
9. Increase the motivation and interest in learning WL	0	0	7.0	25.6	34.9	32.6	0	4.93	7	.94
10.enhance English reading ability	0	0	2.3	14.0	41.9	41.9	0	5.23	2	.78
11. Enhance questioning and answering skills in English	0	0	14.0	41.9	30.2	14.0	0	4.44	13	.91
12. Enhance the ability of preparing and making reports in English	0	2.3	16.3	39.5	32.6	9.3	0	4.30	15	.94
13. Increase organizational and analytic ability of searched English information	0	0	9.3	30.2	41.9	18.6	0	4.70	11	.89
14. Enhance the skill of searching for related English information on the Internet and in libraries	0	0	9.3	27.9	41.9	20.9	0	4.74	10	.90
15. Improve the team spirit of cooperating and sharing among students	0	0	0	27.9	46.5	25.6	0	4.98	5	.74

Note: Greatly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Slightly Disagree=3, Slightly Agree=4, Agree=5,

Greatly Agree=6. MN=Missing Number.

As shown in Table 10, the students improved their final exam scores in the 1st semester, compared to the mid-term exam result in that semester, with a p value below .01 *(df= 43, t=-3.833, Sig.=.000)*. In the 2nd semester, the final mean score was still higher than that of the mid-term; however, there was no significant score discrepancy between the exams. When examining students' overall performance in both semesters, we found that the students performed significantly better on the final exam than on the mid-term, evidence of students' progression and growth in their learning achievements. This finding provides additional evidence of students' overall learning outcomes/achievements as reported in Table 9, as did the fact that the students performed significantly well on their post-quasi-GEPT test as opposed to their pre-quasi-GEPT test (*t*=4.09, *Sig.*=.000) (see Table 11).

Table 10. The Results of Achievement Tests and Paired Samples Test for Differences

Mid vs. Final (1st Semester)			Mid vs. Final (2nd Semester)			Mid vs. Final (Both Semesters)		
Mid-term	Final	t-test	Mid-term	Final	t-test	Mid-term	Final	t-test
N=43	N=43	t=-3.833	N=43	N=43	t=-1.766	N=43	N=43	t=-2.478
M=69.59	M=78.30	df=43	M=75.53	M=78.65	df=42	M=73.69	M=77.09	df=42
SD=17.18	SD=13.03	Sig. (2-tailed) =.000**	SD=14.69	SD=11.54	Sig. (2-tailed) =.085	SD=13.30	SD=11.87	Sig. (2-tailed) =.017*

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 11. The Results of Reading and Listening Tests from Quasi-GEPT Intermediate Tests and Paired Samples Test for Differences

	Mean (Pre/Post)	S.D. (Pre/Post)	*t*	*df*	*Sig.*
Listening	46.458/78.99	14.663/9.5415	5.107	39	**.000***
Reading	48.75/44.25	14.9885/14.5985	-1.524	39	.136
Total	95.208/123.215	25.0083/44.4045	4.090	39	**.000***

*p<.01

The appropriateness of WL instruction

The statistical data revealed a favorable attitude toward the evaluation on the appropriateness of teaching content across ten items (see Table 12). What is of note is the unanimous view endorsing the teaching content that "helps boost literary esthetic ability of appreciation." It is also found that around 98% of the students supported the statements that the teaching content "helps enhance the understanding of Western culture, history and politics," "helps enhance the understanding of major WL movements," "helps enhance the knowledge of WL terminology in English," and "cultivates students' motivation and interest in learning WL."

Table 12. Descriptive Distribution of Evaluation on the WL Instruction

	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)	Mean	SD
1. The teaching content is suitable to my English level.	0	2.3	4.7	44.2	39.5	9.3	4.49	.83
2. The teaching content helps enhance the knowledge of WL terminology in English.	0	2.3	0	16.3	41.9	39.5	5.16	.87
3. The teaching content helps increase literary vocabulary, phrase, and usage in English.	0	2.3	2.3	14.0	44.2	37.2	5.12	.91
4. The teaching content helps enhance the understanding of Western culture, history, and politics.	0	0	2.3	18.6	27.9	51.2	5.28	.85
5. The teaching content helps enhance the understanding of major WL movements.	0	0	2.4	11.6	46.5	39.5	5.23	.75
6. The teaching content helps increase my reading comprehension.	0	0	4.6	18.6	44.2	32.6	5.05	.84
7. The teaching content helps increase my ability to reason logically.	0	0	4.7	48.8	34.9	11.6	4.53	.77
8. The teaching content helps increase my ability for independent thinking.	0	2.3	4.7	34.9	39.5	18.6	4.67	.92
9. The teaching content helps boost literary esthetic ability of appreciation.	0	0	0	18.6	46.5	34.9	5.16	.72
10. The teaching content cultivates students' motivation and interest in learning WL.	0	0	2.2	23.3	51.2	23.3	4.95	.75
11. The teaching methods help students absorb and appreciate the beauty of WL.	0	0	2.3	20.9	44.2	32.6	5.07	.80
12. The teaching methods help motivate students' interest in learning WL.	0	0	4.7	27.9	37.2	30.2	4.93	.88
13. The teaching methods cultivate students' ability to appreciate literature.	0	0	2.3	32.6	34.9	30.2	4.93	.86
14. The written tests are valid and correspond to the content taught.	0	2.3	0	20.9	34.9	41.9	5.14	.92
15. The written tests appropriately reflect students' learning achievement.	0	0	4.7	20.9	37.2	37.2	5.07	.88

	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	6(%)	Mean	SD
16. The written tests stimulate students' independent thinking about related literary issues.	0	0	2.3	20.9	34.9	41.9	5.16	.84
17. The oral reports heighten students' confidence in expressing themselves.	0	0	4.7	39.5	34.9	20.9	4.72	.85
18. The oral reports enhance students' ability to express themselves in English.	0	0	4.7	25.6	53.5	16.3	4.81	.76
19. The written reports enhance students' motivation and interest in learning WL.	0	4.7	2.3	37.2	37.2	18.6	4.63	.98
20. The written reports train students' abilities to organize and analyze the search for related information.	0	2.3	0	27.9	32.6	37.2	5.02	.94
21. The written reports train the skills of searching for related information on the Internet or in libraries.	0	2.3	0	34.9	30.2	32.6	4.91	.95
22. The written reports enhance the ability of reading related information in English.	0	2.3	2.3	23.3	39.5	32.6	4.98	.94
23. The written reports in groups boost the team spirit of cooperating, sharing, and learning from each other.	0	4.6	0	20.9	41.9	32.6	4.98	.99

Note: Greatly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Slightly Disagree=3, Slightly Agree=4, Agree=5, Greatly Agree=6.

The evaluation of the teaching methods (Items 11-13) displayed a favorable student view with at least 95% of the students offering their satisfactory perceptions. Among which, the area of "help students absorb and appreciate the beauty of WL" received around 98% agreements.

As for the issue of student assessment, the written tests (Items 14-16) received above 95.3% agreements while the items related to oral reports (Items 17 and 18) both gained 95%. Five items related to the written reports that "enhance students' motivation and interest in learning WL" (Item 19), "train students' abilities of organizing and analyzing searched related information" (Item 20), "train the skills of searching for related information on the Internet or in libraries" (Item 21), "enhance the ability of reading related information in English" (Item 22), and "boost the team spirit of cooperating, sharing, and learning from each other" (Item 23) were all supported by at least 93% of the participants.

Conclusion and Implications

This study has provided evidence that students' gained both learning motivation and Western literature knowledge from the WL course. After the completion of the course,

the students' attitude distinctly altered for the better, with students' reporting their progression from lacking interest in or having no knowledge of WL to being highly motivated to study it. The investigation into the issue of proper time allocation also revealed students' higher WL learning motivation in their post-course attitude, which, in turn, supports students' general endorsement of the WL course.

The statistical results illustrate students' high levels of favorable attitude toward the issue of learning achievements across all the 15 areas, evidence that the WL course led to positive learning outcomes. Worthy of note is that students expressed unanimous agreement (100%) that the course improved "the team spirit of cooperating and sharing among students." The literary competence achieved and the cultivation of literary esthetic appreciation topped the priority list of the learning outcomes. The outcome that the course was conducive to improved general English reading ability was also high in the second place. The findings that students' performance on the final surpassed the mid-term in both semesters added evidence of students' overall learning outcomes/achievements gained from this WL course.

The attainments of this WL course were illustrated by the fact that the students maintained a highly favorable attitude toward the evaluation of the WL instruction in terms of the appropriateness of content, methods, and student assessment. The statistical evidence indicated students' satisfaction across these three areas of enquiry. Worth noticing is that 100% students endorsed the statement that the teaching content "helps boost literary esthetic ability of appreciation." Around 98% of the students agreed that content "helps enhance the understanding of Western culture, history and politics," "the understanding of major WL movements," "the knowledge of WL terminology in English," and "students' motivation and interest in learning WL." The evaluation of the teaching methods illustrated a general satisfaction from at least 95% of the students. As for the issue of student assessment, the written tests and oral reports all garnered around 95% student support while the written reports practice received 93% student support.

The WL course, upon reflection, has proven effective and appropriate, producing satisfactory teaching outcomes in line with the pre-designed learning outcomes. This study illustrated that literature teaching can be motivating and conducive to students' language awareness and acquisition especially as Brumfit and Carter (1986) discuss. The contribution of the WL course to students' academic growth in learning literature and literary esthetic appreciation also provides evidence to what Carter and Long (1991) assert, that teaching literature enables students to understand and appreciate cultures. The team spirit of cooperating and sharing among the students prevailed in this literature language classroom. True it might be that only a group of "literary-minded" students (Lazar, 1993, p. 25) opts for literature learning. This literature teaching model, featuring eclectic approaches to syllabus design, holds great promise for teaching literature to English majors in colleges of science and technology in Taiwan due to fact that this type of literature teaching and learning is motivating rather than de-motivating.

As "there has been little real research into the acquisition of literary competence," as expressed by Carter and Long (1991, p. 7), the availability of standard tests with satisfactory validity and reliability to evaluate students' literary competence are hard to come by. The use of GEPT tests, alternatively, in this study served the purpose of the evaluation of the growth in students' language competence. One might find it hard to argue against the GEPT validity in literally reflecting students' literary achievements. There seems to be a gap between students' self-reports on the literature instruction being conducive to general English reading ability and the result of the quasi-GEPT reading test used in this study which showed a lowering, though insignificantly, of reading scores. Before other standardized testing alternatives can be explored in future research, "literature examination should return students to the text and its uses of language as the originating centre of their experience," as maintained by Carter and Long (1990, p. 221). One may hold that literature teaching contributes little to language learning in ESL/EFL classes due to, for example, its intrinsic hindrances resulting from the special nature of literary texts (McKay, 1982), its failure to facilitate the acquisition of communicative skills (Littlewood, 1986), its ungradeability, linguistic unsuitability, and, therefore, irrelevance to learners' needs (Hill, 1986) on top of students' under-preparedness in their English/Western Literature exposure and capacity (Hsieh, 2003; Kuo, 1997; Lazar, 1993, 1994). In fact, this literature course that embraced different genres, terminology, authors, and historical backgrounds did reap fruitful outcomes at the end of the course, albeit posing threats/challenges to students' reading comprehension at the outset. Film-viewing is a promising option for students at technological universities or colleges to enhance motivation and build up the necessary schemata conducive to reading literary works.

A reflection on the present curriculum enquiry by putting EFL/ESL into perspective follows a justification of why English teaching and learning should be included into Western/English literature education, especially in the EFL context. While English–a global language–has penetrated into the world far and wide raising sensitive cultural issues as it threatens the survival of other languages
[12], and, in turn, to alarming claims of national identity, TEFL and TESL seem to be the medium through which English is spreading the potential threats. English "colonization," which imposes Western values on other ethnic groups with different cultural norms, English "invasion" of other linguistic spaces, as well as "endangered languages" and shocking "linguistic genocide" seem to pose themselves as increasingly urgent and striking concerns of linguists, as mentioned by Burns (2004, p. 4). However, while language is the representation of one's worldview, which is initially developed by the surrounding native culture (Chowdhury, 2003; Milambiling, 2000), foreign language learning is indeed an interactive process of shaping bi- or multiculturalism (Chen, 2007).

It becomes obvious that English instruction embracing literature and culture is a consequent and necessary need for increasing? understanding and tolerance of cultural diversity and multilingualism in the world today in a spirit of consensus or harmony where "the target culture and the home culture" of learners must "coexist to make learning the target language successful (Chen, 2007, p. 122). Holding a similar view, Ess (2005) argues for "a middle grounds … that conjoin global connectivity with a plurality

of local cultural identities" (cited in Kern, 2006, p. 191). As argued by Salverda (2002), the English language, though "not enough"(p. 6)[13], is necessary and immensely useful as a *lingua franca* that plays a role in globalization, whereas internationalization fosters multilingualism. More importantly, teaching the English language with essences of literature and culture empowers learners to access information and knowledge and to become more caring about the increasingly globalized world in which they live. As long as English is at the center of international and global culture, teaching the English language is not only a cultural activity but also an important step to keep abreast with globalization (Prodromou, 1992). Conforming to this line of argument, English language literature instruction in the EFL context of this research and, perhaps future related studies, is as significant and essential as it is motivating and justifiable.

Notes

[1] Literary competence refers to "an implicit understanding of certain conventions of interpretation which skilled readers draw on when reading literature" (Culler, 1975, pp. 113-115).

[2] There are two higher educational systems in Taiwan. One is the general education system where the source of students' enrollment is senior high school? graduates who wish to pursue their higher education in general universities. English majors in this educational system are required to study English language and literature in the departments of English language and literature. The other belongs to the education system focused on science and technology, which enrolls students who get advanced from vocational high schools. The rationale of the latter system is to prepare those vocational high school graduates in science and technology colleges or universities for possessing applied science and technology knowledge, practical professional skills, and a capability to join the work force. Burgeoning, and gradually booming, establishment of departments of applied English and foreign languages have commenced in science and technology colleges or universities as a result of the demand to cultivate practical English professionals, who are capable of applying their English communicative skills to technology, and, mainly, business sectors, so as to meet the governmental goal to establish Taiwan as the Asia-Pacific Regional Operations Center commissioned by the Council Economic Planning and Development by The Executive Yuan in Taiwan in 1995 (Council Economic Planning and Development, 2002/12/8).

[3] This curricular evolvement is justified under the banner of making the curricula more practical (refer to Note 2) and less intimidating in order to attract more students' enrollment. There are the cases where *Introduction to Western Literature* has been removed from the departmental core curriculum and downgraded into one of the selective courses in the applied English department where the present author currently teaches and also in another two private institutions in which the author previously worked.

[4] A classroom observation was conducted by the instructor/researcher throughout the

course in an attempt to note students' attitudes and motivation as well as the interactions among the students in the teaching and learning process. The qualitative information extracted from the classroom observation functioned as complementary to the quantitative questionnaire data. This observation practice followed a simplified observation guide; i.e., only when recurrent or special incidents and changes in students' learning attitude/motivation occurred, were fieldnotes taken, upon which the observer/researcher's comments were based. The attitude/motivational changes refer mainly to, e.g., attention to vs. distraction from the class, motivation vs. de-motivation, activity vs. passivity, and/or responsiveness vs. reticence.

[5] The pre-course questionnaires contained three parts. The first part constituted students' attitude toward learning WL and opinions on proper hour allotment for WL Course while the second was concerned with their preferred teaching methods and activities. Students' previous experience of learning literature-related courses was also sought in this part. The third part was related to their personal information.

[6] The post-course questionnaires consisted of four sections. The first section pertained to students' attitude toward learning WL after the course was completed. An inquiry into students' learning outcomes was the focus of the second section, aiming to evaluate the course in terms of the areas acquired by the students such as language abilities, literary knowledge and skills. This inquiry purported to examine the course from the perspective of learning efficiency and achievement. There were questions with regard to the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and, to some extent, writing in English (Items 10, 11), as well as competence using literary terminology and knowledge (Items 1-4). Some questions posed in this part were related to students' affective, attitudinal, and motivational buildups (Items 9, 15) as well as the skills of oral and written reports and searching for literature related information (Items 12-14). Other questions pertained to logical and independent thinking, and esthetic sensitivity (Items 5-8). Another inquiry into the issue of course appropriateness in terms of teaching content, teaching methods and activities, and the tools of students assessment (i.e., mid and final examinations, students' presentations/reports, and homework), which was the content of the third part of the questionnaires. Demographic questions constituted the fourth part of the questionnaires. An extra space was provided in the first three parts for the respondents to write in free responses. A free response forum was also attached to the last section of the questionnaires to invite them to make their extra comments on the course. The free response mechanism in the questionnaires was meant to extract in-depth, qualitative information from the subjects and to complement the statistical data.

[7] Similar devices in the form of questionnaires as a course evaluation can be found in literature (e.g., Richterich & Chancerel, 1980; Smith, 1989).

[8] The GEPT (General English Proficiency Test), including Elementary, Intermediate, High-intermediate, Advanced, and Superior levels, was developed by the Language Training and Testing Center under the commission of the Ministry of Education in Taiwan, in a bid to certify and enhance English proficiency of Taiwanese people.

[9] The complementary information used in class was extracted from the websites of, i.e., http://www.italianstudies.org/comedy/index.htm, http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0451208633/ref=sib_rdr_zmin/104-7718737-8387931?p=S001&j=1#reader-page and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Botticelli_ChartOfDantesHell.jpg, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pride_and_Prejudice

[10] Pickering, J. H., & Hoeper, J. D. (1981) *Concise Companion to Literature*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. Cheung, D. (2005) *A Reader's Guide to Literary Terms*. Taipei, Taiwan: Bookman.

[11] The quasi-GEPT tests, including pre- and post-tests, did not count in the scoring system, which served only to be the manifestation of students' achievements in the context of the evaluation of the course design and implementation in enquiry.

[12] Small countries, for example Mauritius, use English as the only official language for communication purposes to connect with other nations, likely at the expense of possible extinction of their indigenous/native languages in a long run. They suffer nervousness over "language death" (Burns, 2004, p. 4), which is reflected by resistance to English.

[13] There are several reasons why English is "necessary but not enough," as claimed by Salverda (2002, pp. 6-7). The obvious one is the advent of the Internet resulting in the fact that the English language used on the internet does not necessarily remain English only. As expounded by Salverda, in fact, English language is in decline on the Internet whereas the number of other languages is on the rise. Customer-friendly multilingualism is another reason, which is crucial. Particularly when one wants to get one's message across in a sensitive case that concerns matters of value and culture that personnel equipped with technical or professional skills along with a competency in another language or other languages are increasingly wanted by companies dealing with international customers.

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