EFL Communicative Language Teaching within a Framework of Response-Oriented Theory

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This study investigated the language learning processes and literary experiences of Korean adolescent students enrolled in a literature-based program. This study utilized practitioner research in which the researcher bridged the gap between theory and practice by teaching an EFL class and carrying out research with the intention of changing her own teaching practice. Data collection consisted of audio-recordings of classroom conversations and interviews, students' writing in and outside of the classroom, a survey, the teacher's field notes, and other classroom documents. Data was analyzed to address the following research questions: 1) How do young EFL learners in a literature-based communicative language learning context respond to literary texts? and 2) What is the role of the classroom teacher who promotes responses from EFL learners in response-oriented communicative language instruction? Data analysis revealed 1) that the students perceived the use of literature as a new and effective way of learning English; 2) that the students' experience went beyond language learning; 3) that the teacher promoted oral and written communication that focused on responses to the literature used. Considering the impact of literature on the EFL students, the author suggests implementation of literature-based instruction and further studies in EFL settings.

In the process of learning a new language, the absence of language socialization − born from the learning environment − is a key factor in the successful acquisition and development of new language skills. In an ESL

situation, English is learned and/or acquired within the context of an English-speaking society. In an EFL situation, however, English is not a primary medium of general social or academic communication.

When Krashen (1981) makes a distinction between language learning and acquisition, he uses the term 'learning' to refer to the conscious learning of explicit rules, and 'acquisition' for the subconscious internalization of knowledge. In ESL, both learning and acquisition occur in and outside of the classroom while in EFL, English learning is limited to instructional activities. VanPatten and Lee (1990) use the terms SLA (second language acquisition) and FLL (foreign language learning) to define second language (SL) development in a native speaking environment against the classroom learning context of a foreign language (FL).

Since ESL learners are exposed to English in and out of the classroom, they have opportunities to practice and observe how the language is used in real situations and to develop their use of the language as they interact with communicatively competent English speakers. However, in an EFL situation, a learner's opportunities for English practice are limited to instructional activities since English is not commonly used for communication. EFL learners thus lack both opportunities to practice and to observe multiple instances of genuine English communication and may not develop the pragmatic knowledge which is needed for developing communicative competence (Kim & Hall, 2002).

Following the introduction of authenticity as a primary issue in communicative language teaching, literature has gained growing recognition as a source of authentic material (Carter & Long, 1991; Collie & Slater, 1987; Liaw, 2001; Malloy, 1999). Many studies (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Ghosn, 2002; Ho, 2000; Lazar, 1996; Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000; Povey, 1967) report that literature is beneficial to and has been utilized in language classrooms as a means of promoting students' language development, enhancing cultural understanding and extending knowledge of the world.

As literature-based teaching gained attention in ESL/EFL teaching, language teachers faced the challenge of using literature in a communicative context in

which readers actively react to text while reading and then generate discourse in order to contribute a constructed meaning of the text (Hirvela, 1996). Accordingly, studies in teaching literature which adopt reader response approaches in second language classrooms have been carried out (Ali, 1993/1994; Clifford, 1979; Elliot, 1990; Samway & Whang, 1995). Only a few studies in teaching literature in EFL settings focused on learners' responses such as Carlisle (2000) and Liaw (2001) in which the written responses of college/ university students were examined. Studies have rarely been conducted on exploring young EFL learners' literary responses in a communicative context.

To understand how response-oriented theory and practice in communicative language teaching relate to one another when using literature, this study investigated a literature-based approach in an EFL setting. Two specific research questions were formulated from the researcher's experiences of EFL teaching. The questions, products of theoretical perspectives of EFL/ESL teaching and reading response theory are as follows:

1. How do young EFL learners in a literature-based communicative language learning context respond to literary texts?
2. What is the role of the classroom teacher who promotes responses from EFL learners in response-oriented communicative language instruction?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study employed communicative language teaching and reader response theory or the transactional theory of reading as theoretical frameworks from which to study a literature-based approach to the teaching of English as a foreign language.

Communicative Language Teaching

Savignon (1972, 1983) defines communicative competence as the ability to

function in a truly communicative setting. In reviewing the history of CLT since the 1970s, Savignon (2002) readdresses the concept of communicative competence as "the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning" (p. 1) which involves interaction between two or more people, and therefore, should be interpreted as a dynamic rather than a static concept.

In adopting a communicative approach to language teaching, Yalden (1981) views language as an instrument for interpersonal communication as well as a body of knowledge about sounds, vocabulary, and grammar. In communicative language teaching, language should be taught through language use; language usage refers to the language system or rules; and language use concerns how to apply the language system to real conversations (Widdowson, 1978). The goal of language teaching in CLT, therefore, is "learner ability to communicate in the target language" (Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 8). However, studies (Gorsuch, 2000; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2002) have shown some of the problems that teachers face when dealing with a communicative curriculum in language classrooms. Sato indicates that teachers have a lack of understanding of the movement of CLT in spite of attending pre-service or in-service programs.

While many advocates of communicative language teaching have focused on oral language, others have argued that written language is also most effectively taught and learned through authentic use (Faltis & Hudelson, 1998). One example of written language in use is the dialogue journal, in which teacher and student carry out written conversations about topics of importance to them, thus creating a cycle of writing and responding (Staton, Shuy, Peyton, & Reed, 1988; Todd, Mills, Palard, & Khamcharoen, 2001). Research has demonstrated that in the second language classroom, the teacher's comments and feedback have provided language input to the learners that they use in subsequent journal entries (Peyton & Staton, 1993).

Transactional Theory of Reading

Reader-oriented theories, including Rosenblatt's (1994, 1995) transactional

view of reading, have been adopted by many classroom teachers in search of a way to conceptualize literature instruction that would parallel the learner-centered approach to writing instruction (Faust, 2000). When language teachers employ Rosenblatt's transactional theory in their classrooms, "literature becomes a mode of personal life experience that involves a potentially powerful combination of intellect and emotions not available in other areas of study" (Connell, 2000, p. 27).

Rosenblatt viewed reading as a process in which a literary work is created in the reciprocal relationship between the reader and the text. Rosenblatt emphasizes the importance of the reader and the text in a dynamic reading transaction in which the relationship between reader and text is recognized as a specific situation at a particular time and place. In this dynamic transaction, each element conditions the other in an ongoing process during which the elements are seen as aspects or phases of a total situation (Rosenblatt, 1994). Reading is thus a transactional process that occurs between a particular reader and a particular text at a particular time, and under particular circumstances (Rosenblatt, 1986). Therefore, transaction is a means of establishing the active role of both reader and text in interpretation, and in transaction, any interpretation is an event occurring at a particular time in a particular social or cultural context (Rosenblatt, 1990). As Connell (1996) states, in the process of constructing meaning, the transactional theory of reading stresses the interconnection between the reader and the text.

Rosenblatt's reciprocal reader/text theory suggests that learners' experiences with a text bring new potentials through formulating new meanings. By locating meaning in transactional relationships between reader and text, transactional theory gives great significance to the meaning generated by the reader-text relationship. More importantly, as Willinsky (1990) has stated, Rosenblatt has established "the importance of the reader's experience of the poem [i.e. literary transaction] as an educational ideal" (p. 103).

METHOD

Research Design

This study utilized practitioner research which has been characterized by Anderson, Herr, and Nihlem (1994) as a new genre related to but also different from qualitative research. Richardson (1994) defines practitioner research as "practical inquiry" since it focuses on the improvement of practice. By employing practical inquiry, practitioner research generates and enhances practical knowledge and responds to the need for knowledge. Practitioner research, therefore, can bridge the "theory-practice gap" (Noffke, 1997, p. 324) by creating a connection between university researchers and educational practitioners since it is action-based research.

In exploring the potential and benefits of using literature in an EFL curriculum, the working definition of practitioner research as systematic, intentional inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990, 1993) guided the study. The study was planned on the basis of relevant theories and in consideration of the special aspects of the research context. For example, the researcher generated two questions designed to address specific issues of employing communicative language teaching and transactional theory of reading in a literature-based approach, and analyzed the collected data systematically.

In designing this study, the author, who was a doctoral student at a university in the States, developed a literature-based EFL curriculum for the participants, setting up class materials and methods[1], and taught a class for Korean 6th, 7th and 8th graders. Twenty 100-minute English classes were offered to the participants. Half of each 100-minute class was devoted to the study of a story book with several chapters, and the other half was left for poems, picture books, mini-lessons, creative story writing, and dialogue journal writing.[2] Each evening at home students read one or two chapters of a story book and in class conversed about their reading. In the case of poems

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[1] Refer to Appendix A for the syllabus of the study.

[2] Refer to Appendix B for a sample lesson.

and picture books, the teacher or the students read them aloud for the rest of the class and then the class talked about the contents. To organize the utilization of dialogue journals, the teacher prepared a notebook for each student in which she and the students wrote back and forth to each other. The students wrote dialogue journal entries at the end of each class, sharing personal thoughts and experiences, responses to their teacher, reflections on the literature, and personal experiences related to the text. After each class, the teacher collected the dialogue journals and responded to them in writing. Additionally, students were given opportunities to create their own stories. The teacher supported students to brainstorm in order to frame a storyline by modeling character analysis map. Later, students utilized the character map in developing their stories.

Participants

Fourteen students from middle or elementary schools in Daegu or Kyungpook province, South Korea, parcipated in this study. They were enrolled in a science-math program for gifted students at Kyungpook National University during the period of this study. The students' levels of English language abilities and experiences of literature-based approach were diverse. These students were learning English as one of their subjects at school and taking an extra class or classes at private language institutes.

Eight students out of fourteen had participated previously in a four-week summer course when the author taught a literature-based class with almost the same format of this study as a pilot study. They returned for another literature-based class for this winter since they enjoyed the summer class. In general their level of English reading comprehension was higher than that of the six students who had not had previous experience with a literature-based approach. The descriptions of the students are summarized in Table 1.[3]

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[3] The first eight students in the Table 1 are returning students who had previously participated in a four-week summer course.

TABLE 1
Summary of the Background of the Participants

Initials of students' pseudonyms	K	Ha	M	D	C	S	Y	J	W	B	G	I	Ji	Hy
School grade	7th	7th	7th	7th	8th	8th	8th	8th	8th	8th	7th	6th	6th	6th
Gender	F	F	F	M	M	F	F	M	M	M	M	F	M	F
Extra-curricular experiences	PI	PI	EC+PI	PI	PI	N	PI	PI	PI	PI	PI	PI	PI	PI
English level	HI	LI	LI	LI	LI	HI	LI	LI	HB	HI	HB	HB	LI	HB

Note. PI = Private Institute in Korea; EC = English Camp in the States for 1 month; N = No private lessons; HI = High intermediate; LI = Low intermediate; HB = High beginner

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected in two ways: audio-tape recordings of the daily classroom conversation conducted in both Korean and English, three group interviews, and written data from both the students' and the teachers' work. For the audio tape recordings, entire whole-class sessions were recorded, and three group interviews were conducted in Korean by the researcher in the middle of the session to access the students' perceptions of the literature-based class. Students' writings included their dialogue journals, other classroom works written during the class, and answers to written survey questions on the next to the last day of this study. The teacher's writing included her responses in the dialogue journals. The teacher also wrote in a journal which included her plans for the class, and field notes which included observations and reflections upon each day's class. Classroom documents such as syllabus plans for each class, the attendance sheet, and students' records were also important data sources for this study.

To analyze the data collected, audio tapes were transcribed and the parts which were spoken in Korean were then translated into English. Answers to the survey questions were also translated into English since most students wrote in Korean. In presenting the transcribed data, this study adopted the convention of using abbreviations and annotations for transcribing suggested

by Altrichter, Posch, and Somekh (1993), and placed the translated part of audio transcription and answers to survey questions within the marking "{ }."

Data analysis began with multiple readings of all the data sources, and in categorizing and coding data, a mixture of both deductive and inductive methods was used. Some categories were chosen from the researcher's theoretical knowledge, and the data was scrutinized by the author for relevant passages. Most categories were developed by inductive methods during and after scrutinizing the data. For example, the researcher anticipated that students would experience different cultures by reading literature. However, she had not expected that the students would articulate what they did about the literature-based program as a new experience of language learning, nor had she anticipated assertions about gaining confidence not only in English learning, but also in other aspects of their lives.

FINDINGS

The analysis resulted in three major findings. The first two related to the students' experiences with literature and the last focused on the teacher's role. The first major finding, A New Experience of Language Learning, is divided into two categories – Literature As New Materials, and New Ways of Language Learning. The data showed that the students' experience of language learning was different from what they were accustomed to in terms both of the materials used and the ways they were learning. The second finding, Moving beyond Language Learning, includes three categories: Beyond Language Learning, Cultural Experience, and Lived through Experience. The data also revealed that the students' experiences in the literature-based program went far beyond language learning. The third finding, Promoting Communicative Language Learning, showed that the teacher utilized several strategies to encourage students' oral and written participation in class activities. This finding is separated into two categories -

Encouraging Oral Communication and Supporting Written Communication - to characterize two different types of communication in the language classroom.

A New Experience of Language Learning

Literature As New Materials

The students in this study viewed literature as new material for language learning, and as interesting, enriching and authentic material. From the beginning, for example, most students described this literature-based English class as "interesting" or "fun," because they were reading interesting stories. Dialogue journal entries make this clear:

> Today is very interesting. Next week, I'll join class, study hard. (Woojin, Jan. 4)
> I expected a day that I meet you. I was very interesting at <u>Superfudge</u> and <u>Amber Brown</u> in summer vacation. (Mihyun, Jan. 4)

Beyond fun or amusing stories (*Superfudge* by Blume, 1980, and *Forever Amber Brown* by Danziger, 1996), these adolescents wanted to read material which would enrich their lives. In responding to questions about the three adolescent novels that they read, they revealed that their favorite was *On My Honor* (Bauer, 1986) although it was a serious rather than a fun story.

> {All three books were very interesting. Among them, however, *On My Honor* was the most touching.} (Survey, Inyoung)
> {There are lots of implied meanings I didn't expect.} (Survey, Hyunjung)
> {I really liked the friendship between the friends.} (Survey, Youngjoo)

The students also recognized that the literature they were reading was authentic material which reflected the real life and language of people who speak English as their mother tongue. They contrasted the authentic literature

with the conversation books usually employed by other teachers. Students indicated that the conversation books which contained dialogues in artificial situations were not only unnatural, but also, would not work in real-life situations with people from all over the world. The issues of the authenticity of the materials were raised and discussed during the group interview.

> S: {Yes, in other words, in the textbook, they should include good materials, and topics children can be attracted by. For example, social issues which draw students' attention. It will be good if they include recent information when they edit textbooks if possible.}
> T: {Right. First, it is not interesting. Such as new information...}
> S: {No. It is not interesting because they use common things as examples that most people already know. If possible, I like something which is more closely related to life.}
> (…)
> T: {But there are materials which are easy and good.}
> S: {Such as *Fly Away Home*.}
> T: {Right. It's easy, but it makes you think.}
> S: {Yes.}
>
> (Interview from group 3)[4]

From Soomi's perspective, Eve Bunting's children's picture book *Fly Away Home* (1993), the story of a homeless father and son who live in an airport, met the criteria of easy and good since it was written in easy English, but it contained real life situations and serious topics for the students to think about.

New Ways of Language Learning

Students also realized that they were engaged in new ways of foreign language learning, ways that could be characterized as student-centered, integrated, communicative, voluntary, and comprehensive learning. The

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[4] In all transcripts, T stands for the teacher and other letters represent students.

students commented that these ways of learning changed their concepts about and habits of learning English.

During group interviews, one student described her English classroom at school:

> Hy: (…) {The teacher just covers materials, does not care about what her students are doing, and just works by herself.}
> T: {She doesn't care about students and works by herself?}
> Hy: {She just writes on the board. She does not care if students are not listening. And then she just gives them tests.}
> (Interview from group 3)

This description above typifies what the students said about English classes at both school and commercial language academy classes in Korea. Students described these classes as teacher-centered and focused on the memorization of fragments of vocabulary and grammar, which were not helpful in improving their English.

In contrast the students characterized this literature-based class as helpful to their language learning, and they explained why:

> K: {Like *Fly Away Home*, listening to the tape, reading scripts, and doing the book report.}
> M: {With one book,}
> K: {doing various activities.}
> T: {Right. Doing various activities with one book.}
> (Interview from group 1)

With the picture book, *Fly Away Home*, the students had opportunities to improve their English skills by watching and talking about the video version of the book[5], reading the text, and then by writing a book report and dialogue

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[5] Fly Away *Home* [video recording] (1996). Great Plains National Instructional Television Library and WNED-TV Series (*Reading Rainbow* Hosted by Burton, L.)

journal entries. These diverse activities integrated the different language processes.

The students also saw the reading of literature outside of class as something different from typical assigned homework. Youngjoo, for example, noted that she did not study English willingly when she had to do homework or study for tests. In contrast, she enjoyed reading literature outside of class and found that she was reading for her own pleasure and learning:

> Y: {At school or commercial language academies, we only study during the class and do not study outside of the classroom if we don't have homework. But here in this class, we prepare and study everyday since it is for ourselves.}
> (Interview from group 3)

Similarly, in his dialogue journal, Dongjin contemplated writing more at home because story writing during the class was an enjoyable experience.

> Today's very interesting and fun class because, write a noble[novel] is really fun. Of course, I don't write noble[novel] very well. But it's interesting. Today, when I did[finish] every homework, then I [will] write it more. (Dongjin, Jan. 8)

The voluntary work of the students created an extended language learning environment because these students studied the target language outside of the classroom.

The students had definite opinions about how a language classroom should be structured or what it should look like. The students insisted that an English class should be one in which student talk is encouraged. In addition, the conversation class should involve comprehension between the teacher and the students, and among the students. Many English conversation classes offered through commercial language academies were taught by English native speakers and students' talk, in fact, was encouraged. However, the communication between students and only-English-speaking teachers was very difficult.

> T: {How do they teach in commercial language academies?}
> C: {Mostly speaking.}
> T: {Then, you can speak English well.}
> C: {Foreigners [English native-speaking teachers] just give questions.}
> T: {They just give questions?}
> C: {On the board. They read a part of the text because they can't speak Korean at all and then they write questions on the board.}
> T: {That means you do not communicate with them?}
> C: {No, but they give a topic and talk about it.}
> T: {So you can speak very well.}
> C: {I don't think so.}
> (Interview from group 2)

When Chanho mentioned "{They can't speak Korean at all}," he suggested that real communication often did not occur between the teacher and students when they could not use L1 to help construct meaning when necessary.

When the students in the literature-based classroom studied English with literature, they learned expressions which they could apply to real situations.

> J: {We learn conversation skills which we can't learn from a textbook.}
> T: {I see, conversation. Are reading books helpful in conversation?}
> J: {It is very helpful in … }
> C: {Literary expressions.}
> T: {Ah! Literary expressions.}
> Ha: {Usually, we memorize boring expressions from textbooks, but here we learn interesting expressions, which we will be needing in real conversations, from books you brought.}
> (Interview from group 2)

As Hannah pointed out, students needed to learn a foreign language in a more natural way where they can apply it "{in real conversations}."

The students also recognized dialogue journal writing as a way of communication. Written communication between teacher and student occurred when they wrote dialogue journals to each other. The survey and interviews affirmed that the students were well aware that writing dialogue journals was a good

way of learning communication.

> K: {It is something to exchange between two people.}   (Interview from
>   group 1)
> {It initiated the dialogue with the teacher and was helpful in writing in
> English.} (Survey, Hyunjung)

As indicated by the students, communicative learning with literature made it possible for them to acquire the target language more naturally, akin to how they acquired their native language.

As a result, students changed their views and attitudes toward English learning. Byunghyun indicated that book discussions enhanced his understanding of language use in contexts. He started to view language learning as a holistic process of constructing comprehension of a text:

> T: {Anything?}
> B: {We do not learn fragments one by one, but we read books and discuss
>   them as a whole.}
> T: {Do you like it? Is it different?}
> B: {It's different.}
> T: {It's different. Okay. Then how about talking about the book wholly
>   rather than translating one by one?}
> B: {I can understand the contents.}
> T: {Better?}
> B: (nods)
> (Interview from group 2)

The students concluded that they had an opportunity to learn real-life language when they experienced different ways of learning English through literary texts. They came to view literature-based instruction as a new way of learning English since the learning experience was an enjoyable process in which they gained a more comprehensive knowledge of English and they learned the new language more holistically.

Moving Beyond Language Learning

Beyond Language Learning

Students articulated that they gained confidence and thinking skills as they responded to literature. When asked what was important to them about the literature-based class, most of the students mentioned that the class helped them develop "confidence." The confidence they mentioned was not only for language learning, but also beyond. During the interviews, Soomi noted that she had developed "{confidence in reading English books}." Other students asserted that they gained confidence in other parts of their lives. Woojin specifically indicated that he felt "{confidence other than learning English}" (Survey). Korean students have been educated to be silent in the classroom. This way of being a good student denies learners opportunities to express themselves in front of others with confidence either in English or Korean. Kyunghwa explained this during the interview:

> K: {At school, we don't have lots of opportunities to talk, especially since the class is big. In addition, if we talk, we are punished for making noise.}

The literature class, in contrast, encouraged self-expression. Many students mentioned that they gained "thinking skills" which they used as a term that they contrasted to the rote-memorization typical in traditional grammar-translation classrooms. In this literature-based language class, the students needed to think about the meaning of the texts they were reading in order to talk about them with other students and their teacher. Soomi, for example, emphasized that the opportunity to read diverse genres of literature gave her the chance to think about her life:

> T: {Next, do you have any other benefits of reading books?}
> S: {I think I thought a lot.}
> Y: {Such as about cultural difference.}

S: {Yeah. People here think one way, and there are other thoughts. I became able to understand such situations. And by reading poems, we read good poems right? By reading those poems, I thought a lot.}

T: {What are they?}

S: *{Do you remember the bird from Langston Hughes's poem we read during the summer session? I thought that dream is very important when I read it.}*

(Interview from group 3)

To other students, writing dialogue journals made this class different from others and, as Kyunghwa noted, "{extended the scope of thinking}."

Students recorded the development of their own opinions or thoughts through dialogue journal writing. For example, Hannah recorded changes and development in her thinking as she was responding to my question about one of the characters in *On My Honor*:

> You asked me 'Why Joel's personality is not so good?' But now I think Joel's personality is good. Joel always allow Tony's opinion. It seems too poor to me. So I like Joel more than Tony. (Journal, Jan. 15)

Students can construct meaning while they are reading literature written in a foreign language. In the process of meaning construction, language learners develop thinking skills, and promote understanding of the target cultures.

Cultural Experience

Students' experiences with diverse literary texts also helped enhance their understanding of another culture. During the interviews, most students mentioned that their experiences with literature provided them with the means to learn about other culture. They specifically addressed it as "{American culture}," different cultures, "{cultural difference}," and "{the difference of cultures}." Experiences from American culture were frequently mentioned through the interviews, the survey and journals:

> And I lea[r]ned many things from <u>Chocolate Fever</u> and <u>On My Honor</u>. I think they were good stories. Because they said to me about culture of America and real friendship. (Journal, Chanho, Jan. 22)

Although many students perceived American and Korean culture as different from each other when they were exposed to literature from the United States, Inyoung went below surface cultural differences to think more in terms of young peoples' similarities rather than their differences.

> T: {What do you think, Inyoung?}
> In: {I thought that people in other countries had very different lives. But they are more similar than different.}
> T: {I see. There are differences, but a lot of things are similar.}
> (Interview from group 3)

Inyoung's experience of representatives of American culture through literature provided her with an opportunity to realize that people around the world share many similarities as human beings.

Learning about specific aspects of American culture or life considerably enhanced the comprehension of a text. The example below reveals a student's endeavor to understand the meaning of a text and how the teacher helped him to comprehend it by communicating other types of life or culture.

> T: I think we have two new people. Who are they? Who are the new characters?
> W: {The driver and}
> T: The driver?
> G: Ahh
> W: {And then the boy}
> T: {The driver is the boy.}
> W: {What? Boys are driving?}
> T: {The driver. It said that the boy was eighteen or nineteen years old.}
> W: {Then, how can he be a boy?}
> T: {Because of –teen from eighteen or nineteen, he is a teenager. A teenager is a boy.}

(Classroom conversation, Jan. 22)

Woojin struggled when he did not understand the range of ages of the word, "boy," and the American culture of teenagers driving. The lack of background knowledge about other cultures interrupted his comprehension. Therefore, he was very surprised when he learned that "the driver" and "the boy" were the same person, and that there was actually one more character, the boy's girlfriend.

Lived Through Experience

The students connected events in stories to their own experiences. For instance, in responding to "If I were Joel[6], I would ….," most students responded that they would not take Tony's side since Tony initiated the adventure which resulted in his own death and left his best friend Joel to suffer from it. Youngjoo, however, responded differently: "If I were Joel, I would go to the Starved Rock Bluffs. It's exciting" (Classroom Work, Jan. 15). She expressed her desire to take risks and live an adventurous life. Later Youngjoo used her dialogue journal to clarify her personal opinions about Tony, because the classroom conversation favored Joel rather than Tony.

> I like Tony better than Joel, because I'm same Joel, and my friend is a little same Tony. So I like Tony. Tony is stubborn. I like it. It don't want to anything, it had better be stubborn. (Jan. 15)
> Usually other people liked Joel. I also liked him. But, I just like Tony better than Joel. … Tony lended Joel's bike. People don't like it. But I like it and understanding. (Jan. 16)
> I didn't like Joel, but now I like him. Because I like that Joel's heart. If I were Joel, I would die. Because I'm very sad. And I want to not to die Tony. So he tricks Joel. (Jan. 29)

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[6] The main character of *On My Honor.*

While reading and responding to literature, the students experienced personal growth as they related the texts to their own lives. To Mihyun, the encounter with the poem "Dreams," by Langston Hughes, was significant in that she made a connection to the meaning of her own life. When the students were asked to write a letter to their favorite poet, Mihyun wrote a letter to Hughes:

> You wrote "Dreams," didn't you? I read that poem. It gives me many lessons. If I don't have any dream, my life is a bird who has broken wing. Before I read your poem, I didn't have any dreams, but now I have dreams. Thanks very much. (Journal, Jan. 28)

Other students made intertextual connections, relating their reading of one text to their reading of another. Kyunghwa, for example, connected the characters - Joel from *On My Honor* with Midori from a Korean book she had read before entitled *Norwegian Wood* (Murakami, 1987). She related Joel's predicament, waiting for Tony to come back alive, to Midori's waiting for Watanabe to love her.

> Ah, there's someone like Joel in the "Norweigan Woods." Midori, she wait for the Watanabe coming to love her. She knew Watanabe loves Naoke, but she wait untill Watanabe forget Naoke.   (Journal, Jan. 17)

The students also connected the text world and real-world experience. Hyunjung produced a personal interpretation which connected her own experience with a text theme - friendship.

> My friend, Hoerin, she is very kind. She is very friendly. I and she are forever friend. Almost I and she are together. We're good friend. Hoerin and I, same Tony and Joel. (Journal, Jan. 17)

After reading the story of Joel, who experienced the death of his best friend, students empathized with his grief and grief experienced in their own lives. Kyunghwa, who had experienced her own friend's death recently,

produced an emotional response, relating her experience to Joel's.

> I was thinking about my friend while Joel thought about Tony, who died. I was thinking about Jayoung and is the alive better than dead. Um… I don't think so. I agree with Joel's opinion. The only thing easy is dead. If someone died, the people around he (or she) is very hard to live, especially he is their son. My friend, Jayoung, died by car accident in September, 2001. Her parents cried and cried. But we can't help them because we were also very sad. Now they look better, but still they look very sad. It'll be same as Mr. and Mrs. Zabrinsky know about Tony's situation. They become very sad… like me and people around Jayoung. (Journal, Jan. 25)

As she read the story of a young person experiencing the death of his friend, Kyunghwa could imagine the grief of the character because she had experienced grief herself. At the same time, she gained an understanding of the nature of bereavement by relating her own emotional experiences of grief to the text.

Promoting Communicative Language Learning

Encouraging Oral Communication

The students learned to communicate in English orally as they were talking about literature with their teacher and each other. To encourage students' oral communication, the teacher needed to begin by getting the students to talk. At first the teacher focused on eliciting any kinds of responses from students who were not used to talking at all, even if the responses were short and limited to simple expressions. Once the students started to participate in classroom conversation, the teacher employed strategies to broaden and deepen their responses.

The typical classroom discourse pattern (IRF) of teacher initiation, pupil response and teacher feedback (Barnes, 1976; Ellis, 1988), was adopted as the starting point for these EFL students who were reluctant to talk even in their native language. The data revealed that this discourse pattern was useful

in the beginning stage of encouraging oral communication.

> T: How many people are there?
> PP: Five.
> T: Five, five okay. Can you name them?
> K: Henry.
> T: Henry. Why Henry first?
> K: He is main character.
> T: Yeah, … and do you have anybody else?
> PP: Mr. Green (soft).
> T: Huh?
> PP: Mr. Green (louder).
> T: Mr.
> PP: Green.
> T: Green. Okay. Who is Mr. Green?
> PP: Henry's father.
> T: Ah, so, what is their relationship?
> K: Hum. Father and son.
> T: Yeah. This way, father. Right? And …
> K: son.
> T: Son. Okay. Do we have anybody else?
> (Classroom conversation, Jan. 4)

Although the pattern of the classroom conversation shown above had the typical three classroom phases, the teacher's feedback included more than "Yes," "Okay," or "Good." The teacher repeated the students' responses in order both to confirm the students' comments and to provide language input. The teacher also used these repetitions as opportunities to address students' mistakes in pronunciation without correcting them directly. Although the basic pattern of IRF in this classroom might be critiqued as being unnatural, the students had opportunities to review and correct their own language without having the feeling of repetitive instruction.

To further encourage students' oral participation, the teacher employed diverse strategies, preparing situations that would challenge the students to speak in front of the whole class. For example, after the class had talked

about the characters in *Chocolate Fever* (Smith, 1972), the teacher asked students to create characters for the stories they were writing and draw character maps. Each student made a character map of his or her own characters and, with the teacher's assistance, shared them with others:

> T: How many characters do you have?
> K: Three.
> T: Three. Okay. Who is your main character?
> K: Jisu.
> T: Jisu? And? And who else?
> K: Her father and mother.
> T: Mother? That's three characters. Next? How many characters do you have?
> (…)
> T: (…) Gunwoo?
> G: Five.
> T: Five characters? Who's main character?
> G: Suwhan, Suwhan (very soft).
> T: Suhan?
> G: Suwhan (louder).
> T: Suwhan. Okay. Any other characters?
> G: His father.
> T: Father? Mother?
> G: (Nods) Sister, brother.
> T: Are the sister and brother older than Suwhan?
> G: Yes.
> T: Okay. Good. What about Chanho?
> (Classroom Conversation, Jan. 4)

The teacher also collaborated with the students to help them understand story content. When the students were focused on the meaning of separate words as they read a chapter in *On My Honor*, they could not comprehend the meaning behind the sentence of "How about working in the pool?" So the teacher helped them to construct the meaning of the text:

T: And then Joel suggests something else, right? What was that?
PP: How about working in the pool?
T: In the pool. Why?
PP: Because it's.
T: Because it's?
PP: cleaner.
T: cleaner. Right. And then they will have trouble?
PP: No.
T: No trouble. Right. So that's why Joel suggested it, right? And then what was Tony's response?
PP: Working out in the middle of Main Street.
T: Why? Why did he think this way?
M: ever, ever
T: Main street is not actually a swimming pool. It is not river. There's no water. Right? Then why?
M: Every, everyone.
K: Everyone can see.
T: Does Tony really want it?
M: No.
PP: No.
T: No. Why?
C: Because.
PP: he can't swim.
T: Actually he is very sarcastic. Right? He is sarcastic.
(Classroom conversation, Jan. 18)

By talking with the teacher and among themselves, the students learned the skills of communication as well as a foreign language. In other words, in the process of constructing meaning through oral communication, the students were learning how to use the target language.

Supporting Written Communication

An analysis of the students' written products demonstrated that the classroom teacher took on the role of promoting students' participation in the class. On the first day of class, the students talked about one chapter of a

chapter book and a poem. Then, in a mini-lesson, the teacher introduced the use of dialogue journals, as a way of engaging individually with the students about the literature. She asked the students to write to her, urging the students to initiate written communication with her, their teacher. For the duration of the class, the students used their journals to engage with the teacher about literature and about their own lives:

> It's large stadium and beautiful. Do you go to world cup stadium? (Inyoung, Jan. 9)
>
> Why Emily don't go out? And why Emily don't married? I don't know. I want your answer. (Gunwoo, Jan. 21)
>
> He didn't want Joel to know that he couldn't swim. But nothing is more important than life. Don't you think so? (Soomi, Jan. 18)
>
> I'll write about "Chocolate Fever." I think that's very old book. But I felt much fun in this book. How do you think about this book? (Byunghyun, Jan. 7)

The students employed different strategies to engage their teacher. Inyoung asked a direct question about something of interest to her, the "World Cup Stadium." Gunwoo added an imperative form to his questions about Emily Dickenson and Soomi expected agreement rather than opinion. Byunghyun began by sharing his topic.

The teacher's responses to the students were diverse depending on the nature of the questions and the students' levels of comprehending written English. The responses below, for example, were answers to each student-initiated communication just quoted:

> I have never been to the stadium before. I wish I could go there. (Teacher's response to Inyoung, Jan, 9)
>
> Emily Dickinson felt that she was "nobody" because nobody noticed her and her poems. They thought her poems are nothing. What will you do if people think you are nothing? (Teacher's response to Gunwoo, Jan. 21)
>
> Could you think about Tony's feeling before he tried to swim? (Teacher's response to Soomi, Jan. 18)
>
> I think Mr. Smith is very creative. While I was reading Chocolate Fever, I

> laughed a lot. I like this book for two reasons: it is fun and we can learn English. (Teacher's response to Byunghyun, Jan. 7)

The teacher also initiated written communication in order to promote students' participation, usually by drawing students' attention to the literature they were reading. For example, on the first day with the new book, *On My Honor*, the teacher asked Byunghyun a direct question: and he responded to the teacher's question with his opinions.

> What do you think about Tony from <u>On My Honor</u>? (Teacher's question to Byunghyun, Jan. 14)
> I get an answer for your question. I think Tony has brave. But he was died. I read final parts in <u>On My Honor</u>. I don't like Tony. Because he knew that's dangerous. He didn't cancel his plan. Finally, he was dead. I think he's so stupid. His death looks like suicide. Some people read that book, they like Tony. They have some reason. I understand that. I like Joel more than Tony. Because he's so serious. He was considerable. He had friendship. He live when Tony was dead. But I want Joel has brave. Because he scared in danger. (Journal, Byunghyun, Jan. 15)

While most frequently journal entries connected stories to the students' lives, there were also occasions when entries related the English literature to other literary works. For example, in the following exchange both the teacher and Kyunghwa related the picture book, *Emily* (Bedard, 1992), to their previous experiences of Korean female writers and a Korean novel.

> When I read the poems that written by Emily remains [reminds] me Hu Nansulhun. She's Hu Gun's sister who wrotes the *Hongildong*. She's also good at with poetry, drawing, and singing. But, the world doesn't notice her because she's a woman. It's not fair, why do the women like Hu Nansulhun must disappear in history. Don't you think so? These days, of course there are women writers like Park Wansuh. But until these days women can't be a person who's important because of the old men. I hope that the world changed for the women. (Kyunghwa, Jan. 21)
> I hope that there is no prejudice toward women. It's getting better, but

there are still barriers for women to accomplish something. For example, when I announced going to graduate school, many people around me thought that I was "crazy." Well, what do you think about my story? (Teacher's response to Kyunghwa, Jan. 21)

Education is a power of that country. So it's not crazy thing if you start to study just right now. Emily… and the girl. I'm talking about the book Emily. You know it's the frame novel. The famous frame novel in Korea is the Baeddaragi. I'm already having the background knowledge about the frame novel. And I think it makes the readers believed the story in the frame and also he makes readers have more interested in. (Kyunghwa, Jan. 22)

Since Kyunghwa was not forced to summarize the story or to accept preconceived notions about the text, she extended her thinking by writing journal entries. As the teacher responded to Kyunghwa's entries with her own ideas, the teacher encouraged the student to think more deeply about the story and other issues. Thus, Kyunghwa experienced the world and developed her views about people.

Dialogue journal writing was also a good place for EFL students to experiment with their new language at their own language level. For example, one of the lower level students, Inyoung, wrote in her dialogue journal that she indeed enjoyed her first literature-based English class: "Today is funny, but I'm think English is difficult" (Journal, Jan. 4). By writing her dialogue journal on her language level, Inyoung not only overcame her limited ability of the target language, but also learned to actively participate in written communication with the teacher. Therefore, literature-based instruction can benefit all levels of EFL learners.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study challenged traditional ideas regarding language learners and their responses. Literature was thought to be an integral part of developing reading comprehension skills, but not useful for personal growth or extending

experiences, because the students' linguistic abilities were not sufficiently advanced. The adolescent EFL students in this study, however, showed that literary texts could be used for aesthetic experiences as well as resources for language development.

A major appeal of this study was that literature in a response-oriented context provided students with opportunities to reflect on the meanings of their lives and to extend their real world experiences. By reading literature from another culture, students could access the culture of the people whose language they were studying. To these EFL adolescent learners, learning about another culture represented the first step in the process of developing cross cultural and human understanding. The students thus enhanced their understandings of other ways of life. Interchange from one society to another became an important factor in the children's cultural growth and enrichment.

The study revealed that Rosenblatt's transactional theory of reading could be used successfully in an EFL setting. The students were encouraged to play active roles in the process of constructing meaning from texts, to explore their own responses to the stories, and to activate their own background knowledge when reading. They were not forced to accept one correct meaning; they were supported to create their own meanings. This way of transacting with texts enhanced meaning construction as students shared their experiences of the texts with other students; enriched their own and other students' experiences by sharing their backgrounds; and connected their life experiences with the texts.

Combining the perspectives of communicative language teaching with the transactional theory of reading, the teacher created a language learning environment where it was safe to talk and write. To promote oral communication, the teacher employed diverse strategies. For example, she took up the role of collaborator and encouraged the students to complete utterances their classmates initiated so that students became each other's models for language learning. Also, in contrast to many ESL classrooms, the teacher allowed the students to use their first language for the development of text comprehension and classroom participation. The data showed that

communication across two languages supported the construction of broader and deeper meanings.

The teacher promoted written communication through dialogue journal writing. Staton (1988) has asserted that writing a dialogue journal is a "communicative event" consisting of an authentic written conversation between the students and the teacher on a regular or continuous basis using a letter format. This study affirms the efficacy of using dialogue journals in EFL settings. In their journal entries, students asked questions and made requests, since they were well aware of the presence of the audience - their teacher. Dialogue journals offered both the teacher and the students the opportunity to act as both initiators of and responders to the communication.

Overall, this study revealed the possibility of promoting students' communication in a foreign language by employing diverse activities in a literature-based curriculum. The students were not just accumulating context-free, structurally based linguistic units and vocabulary lists in the target language. Instead, they were developing communicative language skills with meaningful materials and goal-directed communicative activities.

Notwithstanding all these benefits, there are limitations or obstacles in implementing a literature-based program in EFL settings. In many EFL countries, the purpose of learning a foreign language is still to pass college/ university entrance examinations and to gain academic success. Teachers' lack of knowledge of literature and weak communicative language abilities are other significant issues. The availability of literature is another obstacle in EFL environments since access to diverse children's literature is limited in foreign countries.

Nevertheless, the implications of this study for foreign language teaching are significant, since the study demonstrated that it is possible to make changes in an English as a foreign language teaching and learning environment. When the students were exposed to authentic materials, they developed the communicative competence needed in real communicative situations requiring the target language. The diverse collaborative activities utilizing diverse genres of literature showed promise for restructuring the classroom.

Therefore, the researcher suggests that further studies need to be done in different types of settings, in different sizes of classrooms, and with different ages of students. In many EFL countries, especially in the school environment, language teachers face difficult tasks such as dealing with big classes with limited teaching resources. Another suggestion for future study would be a long-term period of literature-based instruction or comparative studies in which the researcher can set up control groups which do not receive literature-based instruction and experimental groups which do. Such a study would provide comparative evidence regarding grammatical and communicative language development in literature-based versus traditional foreign language approaches.

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APPENDIX A

Syllabus of the Study

Syllabus: Materials and Activities Used for the Study

Date	Class schedule and materials	Activities
Jan. 4 Fri.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch.1 (Meet Henry Green); Ch. 2 (A strange feeling): • Poem: "Chocolate-Covered Salami" by Jack Prelutsky, "We are numbers" by Theoni Pappas. • *The Pain and the Great One,* • Mini lesson: how to write a dialogue journal • Writing dialogue journal	Drawing family tree Character analysis Semantic map Pair work: reading a two-voice poem Listening practice
Jan. 7 Mon.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 3 (Mrs. Kimmelfarber's Problem) & Ch. 4 (Pop): • Poem: "I Seem to Have a Problem" by Jack Prelutsky • *The Pain and the Great One*, 2nd trial • (Story writing) • Writing dialogue journal	Problem solving questions Listening practice Writing a story from character analysis Map
Jan.8 Tues.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 5 (Calling Dr. Fargo) & ch. 6 (Catch that boy!): • Poem: "Supermarket" by Felice Holman. • *The Pain and the Great One* (Reading the text) • Story writing • Writing dialogue journal	Question-answer activity: homework Role play Listening practice
Jan. 9 Wed.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 7 (In the schoolyard): • Poem: "The Alien" by Julie Holder	Question-answer activity

	• *The Pain and the Great One,* class discussions • Writing a story from character analysis map • Writing dialogue journal	Pair work, Class discussion: about siblings
Jan. 10 Thur.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 8 (Mac) • Poem: "Happy Birthday, Dilroy" by John Agard • *Fly Away Home* by Eve • Writing a story from character analysis map • Writing dialogue journal	Role play Watching video tape
Jan. 11 Fri.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 9 (Hijacked) & 10 (Taking a Licking): • Poem: "No Difference" by Shel Silverstein • *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting • Writing a story from character analysis map • Writing dialogue journal	Role play Watching video tape
Jan. 14 Mon.	• *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 11 (At Sugar Cane's) & 12 (The Lesson Learned) • Poem: "Running Away" by Karla Kuskin • *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting • Writing dialogue journal	**Favorite character analysis** Drawing a Face Map
Jan. 15 Tues	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 1: • Poem: "Homework" by Matt Miller (from Nancy Atwell, *In the Middle*) • *Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting • Writing dialogue journal	*Completing sentences: If I were ____, I would _____.* Character analysis Written response to *Fly Away Home*
Jan. 16 Wed.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 2: • Poem: "Water Boatman" by Paul Fleischman (from *Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices*) • Mini Lesson: Book Review 1 • Writing dialogue journal	Vocabulary quilt Writing tips about book reviews Van diagram: Schwinn vs. BMX
Jan. 17 Thu.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 3: • Poem: "Two People I Want to Be Like" by Eve Merriam from *Poetry Break* • *Emily* by Michael Bedard, • Writing dialogue journal	Role play Small group activity Listening practice
Jan. 18 Fri	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 4: • Poem: "The Wandering Albatross" by Paul Fleischman (from *I Am Phoenix: Poems for Two Voices*) • Listening Practice: *Emily* by Michael Bedard, read transcript	Road map: time line of *On My Honor* Pair work: reading a two-voice poem Listening practice

	• Writing dialogue journal	
1-21-02 Mon.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 5: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 1, 2 • Poem: two of Emily Dickinson's poems • *Emily* 3 by Michael Bedard, • Mini-lesson: Be-verb and writing titles • Writing dialogue journal	What's the main idea? Problem solving questions Listening practice
1-22-02 Tues.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 6: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 3,4,5 • Poem: "Winter Dark" by Lilian Moore • *Emily* 4 by Michael Bedard, • Mini Lesson: tense agreement • Writing dialogue journal	Homework, questions Discussion: What is poetry?
1-23-02 Wed.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 7: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 6 • Poem: "Book Lice" by Paul Fleishman • Pop song, "Seasons in the Sun" • Mini Lesson: punctuation 1 • Writing dialogue journal	Question-answer activity Pair work Listening Practice Cloze test with a pop song: fill in the blanks
1-24-02 Thur.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 8: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 7, 8 • Poem: "Dreams" by Langston Hughes • Pop song, "Seasons in the Sun" • Mini Lesson: Punctuation 2 • Writing dialogue journal	Question-answer activity Listening Practice
1-25-02 Fri.	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 9: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 9,10 • Poem: Five poems for acting out • Listening Practice: *The Paperboy* by Dav Pilkey • Writing dialogue journal	Small group work: Acting a poem Listening practice
1-28-02	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 10: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 11,12, 13 • Poem: "My Snake" by Jack Prelustsky • Oral Book Report 1: • Writing dialogue journal	Role play: Small group work Writing a letters to your favorite poet Video tape example & preparation
1-29-02	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 11: • *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 14, 15. • Poem: "Zero" by theoni pappas • Oral book report: presentation 1 • Writing dialogue journal	Problem solving questions: Vote a poem: Choose your favorite poems and write why you

		like them.
1-30-02	• *On My Honor,* Ch. 12:	Role play: father-son talk
	• *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars,* Ch. 16, 17	
	• Poem: "Remember" by Rachel Anne Schlein & "Forever" from Nancy Atwell	
	• Oral book report: presentation 2	Presentation
	• Writing dialogue journal	
1-31-02 Thur.	• *Not for a Billion Gazillion Dollars*.	Discussion
	• Poem: "Right Here" by Alice Schertle	
	• Writing celebration	Presentation

APPENDIX B
Lesson Plan for the Second Day of the Study, Jan. 7

	Contents	Procedure (Total 100 mins.)	Activities & materials

Part I
 	
Introduction & Chapter book
(50 mins.)
	➢ Introduction
	➢ Chapter book: *Chocolate Fever*, Ch. 3 (Mrs. Kimmelfarber's Problem) & Ch. 4 (Pop)
		● Greeting and roll call (2 mins.)
		● Summary(10 mins.): The teacher and students talk about major events.
		● Role-play(15 mins.): Form small groups of 3 students. One student becomes the narrator of the story, and the other two students role-play as Henry and Mrs. Kimmelfarber.
		● Problem solving questions(10 mins.):
		  1. Students find and write answers for problem solving questions.
		  - What is the problem?
		  - Why is this a problem?
		  - What causes the problem?
		  - What can we do about the problem?
		  2. Students in turn present their answers.
		● Classroom discussion based on problem solving questions. (8mins.)
			➢ Small group activity
			
			➢ Handout: Problem solving questions
			
			➢ Classroom discussion

		● Development: What will happen to Henry in Ch. 5? (5 mins.)	
Part II Poem, Picture book, Writing, & conclusion (50 mins.)	➢ Poem: "I Seem to Have a Problem" by Jack Prelutsky	● Read aloud (5 mins.) ● Discussion (10 min.): If something strange happens to you, what do you do?	➢ Pair work ➢ Classroom discussion
	➢ Picture Book: *The Pain and the Great One*	● Listen to the tape of the whole story. (5 mins.) ● Talk about the two main characters, the Pain & the Great One. (7 mins.)	➢ Audio tape ➢ Classroom discussion
	➢ Story writing	● Each student writes his/her own story he/she developed through character analysis map last class. (10 mins.)	➢ Use character analysis map
	➢ Dialogue journal wiring	● Writing the second dialogue journal (10 mins.) - Respond to the texts and the teacher's questions.	➢ Dialogue journal
	➢ Conclusion	● Next class announcement (3 mins.) - Read *Chocolate Fever,* Ch. 5 (Calling Dr. Fargo) & ch. 6 (Catch that boy!) at home.	