

The Impacts of an Adapted Literature Circle Model on Reading Comprehension, Engagement, and Cooperation in an EFL Reading Course

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Abstract : There is a dearth of research on the literary circle as a teaching strategy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes in Chinese colleges and universities and even fewer empirical studies on its impacts. In this one-quarter, design-based project, the researcher aims to increase students' engagement, cooperation, and, on top of that, reading comprehension performance by utilizing a researcher-developed, adapted reading circle model in an EFL reading course at a Chinese college. The model also integrated team-based learning and portfolio assessment, with an emphasis on the specialization of individual responsibilities, contributions, and outcomes in reading projects, with the goal of addressing current issues in EFL classes at Chinese colleges, such as passive learning, test orientation, ineffective and uncooperative teamwork, and lack of dynamics. In this quasi-experimental research, two groups of students enrolled in the course were invited to participate in four in-class team projects, with the intervention class following the adapted literature circle model and team members rotating as Leader, Coordinator, Brain trust, and Reporter. The researcher/instructor used a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach to quantitatively analyze the final grades for the pre-and post-tests, as well as individual scores for team projects and will code students' artifacts in the next step, with the results to be reported in a subsequent paper(s). Initial analysis showed that both groups saw an increase in final grades, but the intervention group enjoyed a more significant boost, suggesting that the adapted reading circle model is effective in improving students' reading comprehension performance. This research not only closes the empirical research gap of literature circles in college EFL classes in China but also adds to the pool of effective ways to optimize reading comprehension performance and class performance in college EFL classes.

Keywords : literature circle, EFL teaching, college english reading, reading comprehension

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