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Reading logs: an application of reader-response theory in ELT

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Abstract

This article introduces the activity of student-written reading logs as a practical application of reader-response theory in EFL literature teaching.

Since reader-response theory stresses the synthesis between reader and text, so it is proposed that practical applications should be based on this interaction. Students make notes in their reading logs as they read a novel, setting down their thoughts and feelings. This encourages them to interact with the text, and to tap into their individual responses to the literature. While reading logs are already used in L1 literature teaching, this article argues that the activity is particularly appropriate for L2 use, since it stimulates foreign language readers to go beyond the first barrier of semantic understanding and to move towards critical appreciation. The article describes how reading logs were successfully used in literature classes at a junior college in Taiwan.

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