The Giver as content-based reading instruction: Student beliefs about using literature for ESL

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The Giver as content-based reading instruction: Student beliefs about using literature for ESL

by

Hannah Bingham Brunner

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: Teaching English as a Second Language/Applied Linguistics (Literature in English as a Second Language)

Program of Study Committee:
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Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa
2016

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DEDICATION

For Jason, mom, and B. Belle, and all those who made this possible.
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<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<td>ELL</td>
<td>English Language Learner</td>
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<td>EAP</td>
<td>English for Academic Purposes</td>
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<td>CBLT</td>
<td>Content-Based Language Teaching</td>
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<td>KF</td>
<td>Knowledge Framework</td>
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ABSTRACT

Although many instructors claim that literature and literary fiction are beneficial to ESL learners, little research exists to support these claims. Using literature in the language classroom through Content-Based Language Teaching (Mohan, 1971) offers a methods-based framework, but still lacks a linguistic backing to support its use in the EFL or ESL classroom. This study seeks to fill this research gap by integrating Mohan’s (1986) Knowledge Framework (KF) with his theories of CBLT in order to provide theory-driven research to the use of literature in the language classroom.

By using a single case metrology, this study aims to document the teaching of a set of lessons using literature for teaching English reading skills to ESL students. Using the first four lessons of McCulloch’s (2015) EFL university unit plan for the award-winning young adult novel The Giver, this study pilots the use of the KF with adult learners. The present study modifies the existing unit plan to meet the needs of two classes of adult ESL learners studying in community language classes in the US. The purpose of this study is to illustrate participants’ beliefs about the effectiveness of this piece of literature in teaching them English reading skills. Additionally, the study seeks to find out about the perceived effectiveness of particular activities within these lessons in order to inform future use of the KF with adult learners.

The results showed that learner beliefs remained stable over the course of the study, indicating that an introduction to literature in a second language may not change the opinions of adult learners. Additionally, results indicate that adult learners appreciate KF-based
activities and lessons, but need explicit instruction in the knowledge structures in order to transfer the skills learned during activities to broader language contexts.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

With the rise of English as a global language, students around the world have found themselves in elementary and secondary school English classes, and each year many of these students choose to continue their post-secondary education in English-language countries and universities. This growing student/learner population introduces a unique set of learner needs into school, adult education, and university ESL programs, including a strong focus on English language learner (ELL) literacy and reading skills. Learners need the academic literacy and reading skills to read and understand texts from a variety of genres. Learner reading needs include the ability to comprehend a text, such as grammar and vocabulary knowledge, and a variety reading strategies, according to Grabe and Stoller (2014). To successfully use these skills, learners then need extensive and intensive reading practice in order to prepare them to read broadly in their second language.

Teachers and researchers disagree about the best way to meet these needs, with most supplemental English reading classes utilizing textbooks such as the Inside Reading series (Zimmerman, 2012), made up of short nonfiction articles and essays designed to mimic the type of reading students can expect across various academic disciplines. Others, however, advocate for extensive reading programs, with students given a role in choosing their own reading materials, and the emphasis on reading practice over genre or strategy (Carrell & Carson, 1997; Day & Bamford, 1998; Elley, 1991; Grabe & Stoller, 2014; Hamp-Lyons, 1982; Krashen, 2004; Lin, 2014; Yamashita, 2008). Extensive reading finds endorsement from second language theory, such as Krashen’s input
hypothesis (Krashen, 1985) and also classroom researchers and practitioners (Yamashita, 2008).

With the topic of extensive reading comes the concept of literature as a means of extensive reading, and of teaching English. P. Widdowson (2013) defines literature as part of “corpus of writing [which] identifies itself quite self-consciously as belonging to the artificial (i.e. pertaining to ‘artifice’) discursive realm of ‘creative’ or ‘imaginative’ writing” as opposed to communicative forms of writing, like letters or newspapers (p. 5). The Encyclopedia Britannica (2016) notes that the term ‘literature’ “has traditionally been applied to those imaginative works of poetry and prose distinguished by the intentions of their authors and the perceived aesthetic excellence of their execution.” For the purpose of the current study, literature pertains to works of prose or poetry, especially fiction, which merits reading in its own right.

Using literature as a method of teaching English as a second language (ESL) has become the subject of argument, with both its followers and its critics. Some argue that literature is more motivating to learners than traditional reading class materials (Aghagolzadeh & Tajabadi, 2012; Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010; Khatib, Rezaei & Derakhshan, 2011; McKay, 1982; Songören, 2013; Van, 2009) while others argue that the content of literature and fiction are not applicable to academic ELLs, and particularly the large base of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) ELLs in English-language universities and adult education courses today. However, some note that although teachers and instructors claim that literature and fiction benefit their students in the classroom, literature for the language class is often presented or used without theory or empirical data to back up its implementation (Aghagolzadeh &
Tajabadi, 2012; Arthur, 1968; Collie & Slater, 1987; Reid, 2002). Hall (2007) agrees, stating that literature in language teaching “is generally characterized by speculation, assertion and counter-assertion” (p. 5).

Based on the diverse learner needs of adult and academic ELLs, and varied researcher and practitioner perspectives, a more comprehensive approach is needed in order to give a clear justification regarding the case for literature in the ELL classroom.

**Content-based language teaching (CBLT)**

With the growing demand for reading and literacy teaching, new research and theories appear to help answer the question of the method most suited for ELL reading instruction. It is an established method, though, that can marry literature to the diverse needs of today’s ELLs: Mohan’s Content-Based Language Teaching. Mohan (1989) defines content-based instruction (CBI) or content-based language teaching (CBLT) as “the integration of content learning with language teaching aims” (p. vii). According to

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**Figure 1.1 Motivating factors for the current study**

Based on the diverse learner needs of adult and academic ELLs, and varied researcher and practitioner perspectives, a more comprehensive approach is needed in order to give a clear justification regarding the case for literature in the ELL classroom.
Snow (2014), CBLT is “the use of subject matter for SFL (second or foreign language) teaching purposes” (p. 438). CBLT utilizes subject matter, such as topics or themes, or even entire class subjects, in the target language, or L2, to teach language. In CBLT, language and content are not seen as distinct, but are best learned in tandem (Mohan, 1979, 1986, 1989; Molle, Sato, Boals, & Hedgspeth, 2015; Snow, 2014).

Although early discussions of CBLT centered around the needs of ELLs in primary education, various models have arisen with its popularization, including immersion, theme-based, sheltered, and adjunct. Immersion involves all coursework learned in the L2, whereas sheltered indicates ELL separation from main classrooms while keeping information in the L2, and adjunct implies concurrent content and language courses with the same subject matter (Snow, 2014). These too, though, remain in effect in primary education, rather than university or adult education.

Mohan (1989) claims CBLT provides a clear strategy for meeting the academic needs of ELLs by allowing instructors to integrate and develop students’ academic language and providing them with “a familiarity with scholarly discourse” that can be transferred to future academic work (p. vii). The theme-based model is most representative of the type of CBLT utilized in the current study, in which language classes made up of a diverse group of students apply a particular content, theme (like culture, TV news, or marketing), or subject matter, as with the other models of CBLT, for their in-class language learning and practice, as with the other models of CBLT (Mohan, 1989, p. 14-15; Snow, 2014, p. 440).

Typically in CBLT, both the content and the linguistic forms involved in the content are important to the language learning task (Mohan, 1971). If this is the case, any
content can be useful to help students acquire English. Choosing literature as the content allows literature-supporters a new means for justifying their close-held beliefs concerning the benefits of literature. These include claims of literature’s ability to illustrate to readers how to meet various communication goals, teach the four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening), and teach cultural and cross-cultural issues (McKay, 2014).

Further, literature in the language class works well from an extensive-reading point of view, allowing students to practice and build fluency with highly motivating texts (Arthur, 1968; Carrell & Carson, 1997; Krashen, 2004; Yamashita, 2008).

In this way, literature serves to guide the “form and sequence of language presentation,” while CBLT takes into account the needs and desires of ELLs, including ELLs’ future L2 needs. With this combination of factors, literature as content for language teaching fills all requirements for teaching ELLs except, perhaps, the most important: theoretical linguistic support. If CBLT stipulates that language and content are intrinsically related, then teachers and instructors need a way to make that relation clear to learners. This support comes from the Knowledge Framework.

**The knowledge framework (KF)**

Along with a broad literature as content approach, further theoretical backing for literature as content ESL classes comes from Mohan’s CBLT linguistic theory, the Knowledge Framework (Mohan, 1986). The KF is a heuristic that helps to relate language with content through knowledge-building activities. These activities, in turn, link language and content learning by providing context to enable an understanding of the language, and thus the content. Mohan (1986) claims that “cross-content reading skills must be related to the cognitive processes required by all content areas” (p. 15). The KF
then seeks to find ways to relate the teaching of reading skills to these mental processes via knowledge structures, the building blocks of language skills and thinking skills.

The Knowledge Framework integrates these structures, or basic skills, of learning and understanding a given content: practical skills that can be found in real-life communication, and the structure of background information that comes in the form of more theoretical knowledge (Mohan, 1986). These knowledge structures include “description, sequence, and choice [which] can be found in any story, process, or procedure,” while theoretical, general information has its own structures: “classification, principles, and evaluation” (Mohan, 1986, p. 29). These structures help the learner break down existing information in order to learn how to process this information. For ELLs learning to read in content areas, breaking down a text by knowledge structure helps to simulate the process of reading, guiding them through future reading tasks and showing them ways that varies content areas use language to construct meaning.

Teachers and curriculum developers can utilize these basic structures in the classroom by organizing activities based upon a knowledge structure. This can be done in the classroom via key visuals that help guide the learner through the knowledge structure. This in turn helps learners break down and more fully understand a topic on their own. Key visuals can take the form of graphic organizers in various arrangements: classification through a tree or web, principles that explain or predict with a cause and effect chain, Venn diagrams and pie charts to describe two things, and more (see Appendix E Fig. 1). These can fulfill learners’ need for visuals to help contextualize content, without oversimplifying complex content. This also helps learners to conquer linguistically diverse subjects, and provides scaffolding so that learners can move onto
more complex language tasks, such as writing a summary or making predictions with the information in the graphic organizer.

Mohan (1986) claims that the framework “has been applied successfully in the classroom” (p. 46). Most existing research on its use in the classroom is limited to primary school classrooms, though (Huang, 2003; Huang & Morgan, 2003; Huang, Normandia, & Greer, 2005; Huang & Normandia, 2007; Mohan & Slater, 2006; Slater & Mohan, 2010). Whether the KF can help adult learners, as well as young learners, integrate language and content, as well as young learners, requires implementation and examination in the form of a research study.

The study

This single-novel case study seeks to marry the research-proven field of content-based language teaching and the linguistically driven Knowledge Framework using literature as content for ELLs. In order to set the stage for further studies which can support the future use of literature and fiction within the language classroom, the current study utilizes an existing content-based unit plan for teaching the young adult novel *The Giver* (Lowry, 1993) to a group of adult English language learners (ELLs) with TOEFL scores below university graduate school requirements. The unit plan, which utilizes contemporary fiction to teach academic English to ELLs, was designed using the KF and CBLT in order to teach language, while working in the content area of literature.

This qualitative study aims to explore the beliefs of adult ESL learners in regards to the use of literature for teaching English reading skills, and whether those beliefs changed during the initial lessons of the unit plan. This study aims to test out a reading unit plan for ELLs, created by Meg McCulloch (McCulloch, 2015) for her Creative
Component. This unit plan utilizes the young adult dystopian novel *The Giver* to teach English to university-level English learners. Taking a literature as content-based approach to language teaching, with influences from Mohan’s Knowledge Framework, the original unit plan aimed to utilize literature to teach English to EFL learners in a Korean university environment.

The researcher surveyed learners concerning their preconceived notions and beliefs about using literature and fiction in the classroom, along with interviewing them regarding their beliefs on the subject after reading and participating in the lessons. By learning about learner beliefs and learner experiences, this study seeks to reinvigorate the use of literature and fiction in the ESL classroom. Learner beliefs can offer a glimpse into the hidden process of reading, helping researchers to better understand the real and perceived benefits of literature as content with KF support. Additionally, in order to assess the usefulness of paired readings and unit plans for language classes, the study also examines the unit’s materials and a teaching of the materials with implications for instructional design and materials development. Learner beliefs about individual KF activities also give insights into the use of the KF with adult learners, a previously under-researched area.

**The unit plan**

The unit plan that this study has employed aims to teach particular language skills to EFL students for an English-speaking university setting. These include specific English grammar structures such as hypothetical conditionals, passive and active voices, tenses and inference, reading skills, and academic word list items. Not only do these
specific structures occur throughout the chosen novel, but they also appear across university ELL reading syllabi.

The unit plan is a set of lesson plans covering the entire novel, with focus on the Knowledge Framework skills of classification, description, principles, sequence, evaluation, and choice (Mohan, 1986). McCulloch (2015) has utilized a combination of the Knowledge Framework and Content-Based Language Teaching for a set of lessons about *The Giver* that makes accessible the language-content divide. McCulloch (2015) claims that

Rather than relying on language courses to give students the requisite knowledge for content classes, teachers should work cooperatively to ensure their classes provide students with the support they need to facilitate both knowledge of content and language learning. This unit offers one way in which to do this and hopefully provides a potential model for EFL teachers considering the use of literature. (Appendix E)

A selection of the first four lessons were put into practice in a three- to four-session workshop for ESL learners, in order to learn about the potential benefits of using literature with ESL learners and the strengths of the unit plan with ESL learners. The first of these lessons merged the original first and second lessons into one class period, along with the learners’ initial survey. These two initial lessons were designed to take time to introduce students to the novel and its genre. The second two lessons focus on the first three chapters of *The Giver*, along with McCulloch’s KF- and CBLT-based lessons and activities. McCulloch (2015) hoped that “though the content of this teaching unit focuses only on a single literary text, students can theoretically apply the language skills they will
learn across their courses” (Appendix E). Survey and interview data about student beliefs then attempted to support this concept.

**The Giver**

Many American English speakers first encounter Lowry’s *The Giver* (1993) in the middle school English classroom; its award-winning status, intermediate reading level, and dystopian themes make it a favorable novel for sparking interest in young adult readers. Set in a utopia based on “Sameness,” this novel is particularly open to intercultural critique and discussion.

McCulloch (2015) explains her choice of *The Giver* thus:

*The Giver*, first published in 1993, is a young adult novel that chronicles the change in its main character, Jonas. Jonas lives in a dystopian society in which the idea of “Sameness” is prized above all. Differences are frowned upon and choices are made for the citizens. Those who deviate from the rules are killed, or “released.” No one feels any pain, sees colors, or understands complex emotions like love, save one person, the Receiver, who is appointed to hold all of the memories from past societies. When Jonas is chosen to become the next Receiver and starts getting these memories from the Giver, he begins to question the society in which he lives. (Appendix E)

The genre of *The Giver*, utopia/dystopia, marks one of its abiding draws for readers and instructors alike; the increasing popularity of the genre in books and movies in recent years only adds to this popularity. *The Hunger Games* and the *Divergent* series are just two examples of utopian/dystopian young adult novels-turned-films that join *The Giver*
in recent popularity with readers and viewers of all ages. Indeed, those that advocate for the use of literature in the language classroom, such as Bagherkazemi and Alemi (2010), claim that young adult fiction such as *The Giver* “can benefit a wide range of learners because of their inherent simplicity, both linguistic and literary” (p. 8).

McCulloch (2015) claims that the lessons using *The Giver* can emphasize the benefits of CBLT: “The use of actual subject matter within the classroom, rather than language learning material, affords students the opportunity to learn underlying discourse structures in context, not just practice decontextualized linguistic forms of the target language” (Appendix E).

In order to provide further theoretical backing to the use of *The Giver* in the ESL classroom, a portion of the novel was analyzed for Academic Word List (AWL) items and the number of most frequent English words to support McCulloch’s claim that *The Giver* contains underlying structures than learners need. According to Coxhead (2000) and Blue (2010), if learners can recognize 570 Academic Word List items and most frequent 2,000 English words, “they will be familiar with nearly 90% of the vocabulary occurring in academic texts,” which puts them near the 95% necessary for reading comprehension. Although a young adult novel such as *The Giver* may not contain many AWL items, its use of most frequent words can help build pre-academic level readers towards reading comprehension in English.

To this end an online lexical tool, LexTutor, was used to identify Academic Word List items and frequency of types of words, including most frequent English words, within the novel to examine the novel’s potential to be used to teach vocabulary. Although *The Giver* falls into the young adult genre, its concepts and science fiction
themes complicate the language issue with off-list words and terminology specific to the novel. Based on the analysis of chapters one through three of the novel, an average of 2.5% of words per chapter are AWL items. However, 82% of words from the first three chapters come from the 1000 most common words. This shows that although most vocabulary items may not cross over to academic reading, the frequency of these most common words allows linguistic access to the complex subject matter and raise learner familiarity with necessary English words. This 82% also allows lower-level ESL readers to access higher-level concepts while reading *The Giver*, and build the necessary vocabulary and comprehension skills needed to read fluently in a second language.

**ESL versus EFL**

ELLs can fall into two general categories, depending on the locus of language learning: learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), and English as a Second Language (ESL). McCulloch’s original unit plan was designed with EFL learners at a Korean university in mind. ELLs in Korea would be learners of EFL or ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) because English is taught where it is not the primary spoken language. ESL learners, on the other hand, are students learning English while in an English-speaking environment, typically in primary school, at an English-speaking university, or in an English-speaking country. University-level ESL learners typically began as EFL learners in their home country, so a unit designed for university EFL learners should remain as relevant in an ESL university context as in an EFL university context. The learners in the current study have been ESL learners from 0-7 years, and were all EFL learners prior to study in the US. However, ESL learners in a pre-university or non-academic adult education setting may not have the reading skills necessary for a
university EFL course, which may cause some problems with the level of lessons, an issue which will be addressed again later in this thesis.

Motivation

I grew up with a literature major for a mother, so my early life was marked with stories and novels of all kinds. As I grew up and began school, I continued to read fiction voraciously, even during other subject classes. Although reading at times distracted me from my school work, it also taught me valuable lessons about the world and different cultures, and gave me the skills I needed to be successful in both high school and college. When it came time for me to choose a college major, literature naturally came to make the most sense, as it allowed me to read an even wider variety and utilize the motivation I had from reading. Once at university, I quickly became friends with students from all over the world, and naturally helped them improve their English in the course of our friendships. While abroad in Japan during my sophomore year, tutoring students in English and attending intercultural communications courses with Japanese university students, I came to realize that reading was not my only skill, but I also excelled in helping others learn and read English. Once back in the US, I combined my two loves with a Literature major and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) minor, and continued on to Iowa State University seeking to continue to find ways to blend the two together via Iowa State’s unique opportunity to get a master’s degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) with a focus on using literature to teach English. Because my chosen specialization is using literature to teach English as a Second Language (ESL), when it came time to think about my thesis I knew that first and foremost my
thesis needed to make a point about the usefulness of literature for teaching second language skills, and start to support empirically what I believe is true about the usefulness of literature in the ESL classroom. My hope is to help ESL students find the same benefits I did in reading, to increase their English reading and literacy skills, but also to help them thrive in an American university setting.

**Rationale**

Plenty has been done to integrate literature into ESL classes over time. It is well-known that for most of the recorded time languages have been taught, literature was the primary means of instruction, with students translating passages in order to understand both the language and the text (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow, 2014). This Grammar Translation Method held precedence in language classes until the twentieth century, when increasing globalization led to the need for more communicative methods to learn a language, such as Skinner’s Audiolingualism, or Berlitz’s Direct Method, which are still used in classes today. Methods continued to evolve as English began to take global precedence as a lingua franca, prompting the communicative approaches emphasized today in most language-teaching courses. However, this speaking-based emphasis has often left behind literature entirely as the tool of a more primitive time in language instruction (Celce-Murcia, et al., 2014).

Other practitioners, though, have clung to literature based on the benefits they believe that it has to offer to L2 learners, particularly for children and adolescents learning ESL in an English-speaking context, such as the American school system. Teachers cite the benefits of reading that L1 students enjoy, such as increased motivation and a strengthened vocabulary, and claim that L2 students can and should take advantage
of those same perks. Many more have applied contemporary informal literature, such as young adult fiction, to the teaching of English learners of all ages, based on the idea that the lower level and high interest in such novels can benefit and motivate learners to improve their English skills, particularly their reading ability and lexicon.

However, not many of these communicative-era uses of literature in the ESL classroom have involved a clear linguistic framework to back up their usage; this is indicated in the lack of research available concerning student interest and motivation with such texts (Aghagolzadeh & Tajabadi, 2012). Nonetheless, by combining a research-based approach to the experience-based hopes of book-lovers, such as CBLT and the KF, literature in general and contemporary fiction in particular can make their way back into the ESL classroom with the linguistic backing it needs to become accepted into the research-driven world of contemporary teaching English as a second language methodology.

Similarly, publications about the usefulness of *The Giver* in middle school settings, such as in teaching history (Brugar, 2012), and about its applicability in algebra class (Lawrence, 1999), are not empirical studies in any sense, leaving no basis to justify its broad use across content areas. Brugar (2012) has utilized *The Giver* to enhance “students’ ability to think chronologically, comprehend the past, and analyze historical evidence [which] enables them to pose their own historical questions” (p. 88), while Lawrence (1999) uses the novel as a source of “vivid, engaging context for mathematics investigations” (p. 504). However, no research appears about using the novel with ESL students, displaying a need for research, such as the current study, to fill this gap and justify its use in and out of the ESL classroom.
Significance of the study

This study is significant for several reasons, in part due to its various facets: analysis of teaching materials, the novel’s reading level and academic application, student perceptions of literature-based ESL curriculum, and student growth while using literature. Additionally, the study fills a gap in CBLT and KF research among adult learners, making this study unique in its area. Each of these under-researched areas addressed in the current study will help shape a new direction of ELL reading research and CBLT and KF application, and ultimately suggest the benefits of literature to help improve ESL learner readings skills, and literature’s place in the ESL classroom.

First of all, this study will provide guidance and feedback on the types of materials that are useful for ESL and literature teachers. By utilizing, adding to, and critiquing the existing unit plan, the current study can give support and direction for instructional designers working on materials for ESL and literature classes alike. In addition, the study fills a gap in CBLT and KF research by applying these frameworks to adult learners. By eliciting the feelings of adult learners about the personal benefits of CBLT and KF, the study examines the relevance of such frameworks outside their researched uses in primary school ESL contexts.

By surveying and interviewing students both before and after the workshop concerning their beliefs about using literature to work on their English skills, this study seeks to find out about what changes in those beliefs after students have become more immersed in literature in order to lend credibility to the use of literature as content in the ESL classroom. These changes are observed from survey and interview data, and student in-workshop interactions. Learner beliefs and feelings provide insight into individual
learning experiences, and into the effect of a social event on those beliefs (Kalaja, Barcelos, Aro, & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2016).

Additionally, the study seeks to make claims about the usefulness of particular activities in the unit plan, and the entire unit plan itself, based on which activities students reported most helpful and least helpful in the post-workshop interview, and what feedback they had for the instructor/researcher. This activity-based feedback also helps establish adult learners perception of the KF in the language classroom, which will be discussed later in the thesis.

**Format of the thesis**

The thesis study is written up in five chapters: the introduction, review of literature, methodology, results, and conclusions. The introduction has offered a brief background and the motivation and significance of the study. Chapter two, the review of literature, focuses on the relevant research that backgrounds the foundations of the study and introduces the need for research such as the current study. It also presents the research questions that guided it. Chapter three presents the methodology of the research and the investigation of the research questions, including details concerning the participants of the study, along with data collection and analysis. Chapter four focuses on the results of the study, a discussion of findings, and particular attitudes across participants, and the outcome of particular activities. Finally, chapter five concludes the study, including particular limitations and directions for further literature-based ESL research.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of research regarding the place of literature such as *The Giver* in ESL teaching, prior research that provides a foundation for the current study, and the need for the current study. Because there is a lack of existing research relevant to the current study, the review of literature also includes justification as to why the topic of reading remains an important part of any discussion on education, especially for ESL learners. This literature review seeks to provide an inclusive examination of first and second language literacies as well as first and second language academic literacies.

The chapter next moves on to examples of content-based language teaching (CBLT) and how, in conjunction with Mohan’s Knowledge Framework (KF), it can provide a useful framework for teaching various skills in an ESL setting. It then examines the particular benefits and problems that come with using literature in the ESL classroom, both in terms of CBLT and in prior manifestations. This leads to a discussion of the current study, and how it seeks to fill the gap that occurs in existing research.

Literature for ESL

Teaching academic language through literature-based ESL classes has been questioned as a method, especially because literature’s association with old or outdated forms of language teaching, such as grammar translation and the reading approach (Celce-Murcia, et al., 2014). However, use of literature in the ESL classroom today has both its followers and critics. Some such as Aghagolzadeh and Tajabadi (2012), McKay (1982), Khatib, Rezaei, Derakhshan (2011), Songören (2013), and Van (2009) claim that literature brings unique benefits to the ELL classroom. Others, such as Bagherkazemi and
Alemi (2010), take a close look at the history of literature’s use in regards to language teaching, along with a survey of current practices incorporating literature into the language classroom, in order to advise the use of literature in the ESL/EFL class with proper preparation and framework selection.

Despite theoretical support of literature in the ESL/EFL classroom and possible application via frameworks such as New Criticism, Stylistics, Structuralism, Reader-Response (Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010), ESL classrooms, and especially EAP classrooms, continue to leave literature out of their toolbelt of resources. Among many others, reading researcher Rosenblatt (2005) claims that literature and language together offer a fuller understanding of being human, extending the focus beyond language itself. Based on such claims, literature offers a particular benefit to the language classroom, especially in terms of educating and attending to the whole learner, rather than just the linguistic abilities of the learner, mirroring a content based understanding of language acquisition.

In order to counteract the effect of decades without literature in the ESL classroom, researchers must prove literature’s benefits for students, humanly, motivationally, and academically. Some such researchers include Aghagolzadeh and Tajabadi (2012), Bagherkazemi and Alemi (2010), Khatib et al. (2011), Reid (2002), and Van (2009). Reid (2002) believes that “fiction and nonfiction” can both help ESL learners create the schema and scaffolding that helps them gain the knowledge and skills needed in a variety of areas of study (p. 1-2). Khatib et al. (2011) go on to list multiple benefits of using literature with ESL students: authenticity, motivation, cultural awareness, reading practice, sociolinguistic/pragmatic knowledge, grammar and
vocabulary knowledge, language skills, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking. If all these benefits can be put at the fingertips of ESL teachers and students, literature might soon find a new place in the ESL classroom, rejecting the old dichotomy of Grammar Translation versus communicative approaches, and replaced with a method that synthesizes literature’s human and cultural benefits with its academic and linguistic potential for ESL classes.

Existing research studies of literature in the ESL classroom, such as those studies in Watson and Zyngier (2007), integrate research and literature in the language class, introducing research-driven support for the use of stylistics to introduce literature in the language classroom. However, many authors in support of literature in the ESL classroom lack research to back their methods (Aghagolzadeh and Tajabadi, 2012). Collie and Slater (1987) lay out a methodology to utilize in the language classroom, including specific novels and texts, but do not reference any studies that support their proposed methods. Likewise, Reid (2002) makes claims concerning the value of “fiction and nonfiction” to “provide scaffolding on which ELs can build both content knowledge” and language skills, without any reference to relevant research studies utilizing such texts (p.1-2).

**Literacy**

In order to understand the requirements for teaching reading in the language classroom, more must be understood about reading and literacy skills. Literacy is central to a discussion of second language instruction because it is key to all modern education. Lems, Miller, and Soro (2009) note that while some skills, such as speaking and listening, are the basic pieces of all languages, reading and writing are not; because of this, they
claim that “considerable energy and effort are needed to learn to do them in a new language” (p. 4). To help language learners develop the literacy and reading skills they need, a better understanding of L1 and L2 literacy is necessary.

Some basic understanding of the language in general is needed in order for literacy to develop in the first place. These skills then continue to develop throughout the learner’s primary and secondary education, culminating in a functional life-literacy in their L1, or serving as a building block for further education. In fact, beyond basic reading and writing come more complex types of literacies, even within a learner’s first language. Krashen (2004) asserts that all modern literacy requires a much higher level of reading and writing than what has in the past been regarded as literacy, or the basic literacy up to a certain reading level that was once prescribed (i.e., an eighth grade reading level). Ediger, Brinton, and Snow (2014), too, note that the term literacy no longer denotes simply reading and writing, but also the oral ability to talk about reading and writing, critical readings, visual literacy, and the new literacies involved in online media. These primary literacies, then, serve as a building block for more advanced literacy, and literacy in a second language.

Molle, et al. (2015) put forward three models of understanding literacy learning: cognitive, in which the texts and development of skills are central; sociocultural, in which approaches focus on cultural and historical literacy practices and privilege; and macrosocietal, in which institutional factors outside the individual are the most important. These three must be understood together to support ELL literacy development, so as to recognize the diverse components that affect the literacy of an individual ELL, including L1, L1 orthography (Birch, 2007), level of education in the L1, and even cultural and
personal identity (Cumming, 2013). In fact, Krashen (1996) notes that several factors support the claim that “literacy transfers across languages”: the similarity of the reading process and literacy formation across languages, along with positive correlation between first and second language literacy development and the success of bilingual educational programs (p. 23). Pre-established L1 literacy, then, is a key issue that must be addressed in adult ESL reading programs of all levels.

Further matter that should be taken into consideration when teaching ELLs is the reading process itself. Although reading tests are often used to give instructors and understanding of learner reading abilities, reading in and of itself takes place internally, and cannot be seen or observed in the way speaking and writing can be. Thesen and van Pletzen (2006) note that reading as a process is mostly invisible because “the moment individuals start reading quietly to themselves their meaning-making activities and emotions for the most part slip beyond detection” (p. 105), complicating the ability to teach reading as a process to students, due to the “faultline” this invisibility creates (p. 106). To remedy this situation, Thesen and van Pletzen claim that instructors and teachers must better understand “the reader's active role as meaning-maker” (p. 110). Once learners are active in the reading process, in cooperation with the text, learners may benefit from ownership of the process and the experience of reading and learning.

Rosenblatt (2005) comments on the ability of readers to be active meaning-makers, as they must draw on their “linguistic-experiential reservoir” of prior knowledge, or what most researchers would refer to as ‘schema’ or ‘schemata’ (Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010; Gajdusek, 1988; Hamp-Lyons, 1982; Early & Tang, 1991; Van, 2009). This reservoir or schemata is, according to Rosenblatt (2005), the “inner capital” that “all that
each of us has to draw on in speaking, listening, writing, or reading,” which in turn allows us to make meaning from language “by applying, reorganizing, revising, or extending public and private elements selected from our personal linguistic experiential reservoirs” (p. 5). However, language learners with only L1 schema or those reading in a new cultural environment may struggle to bring in prior knowledge during the reading process.

**Academic literacy**

One serious area of research concerned with readings skills lies in the study of academic literacy. Blue (2010) points out that academic literacy moves beyond the more basic literacy skills of reading and writing into the diverse skills needed in a given academic community, such as technological, emotional, and political literacies. Molle et al. (2015) too note that literacy does “not simply refer to reading and writing” but to “students’ ability to make meaning across the disciplines in ways that are valued in the 21st century classroom” (p. 3-4). These diverse literacies must then be individually developed among students, along with continued writing in their discipline. However, basic academic literacy must be developed first, allowing students the basis for register-specific literacy. In keeping with this, Schleppegrell and Colombi (2002) assert that “literacy cannot be thought of as something that is achieved once and for all” (p. 2). CBLT and the KF can help learners understand and prepare for this by introducing them to skills that can be utilized regardless of discipline or profession.

In discussing academic literacy, L1 and L2 English speakers alike must also adjust to a university reading level. However, most L1 speakers are able to read at the level necessary for their new academic environment and integrate existing literacy skills
into their new academic literacy via schema developed during secondary school. Nonnative readers and language learners entering into a university which is not conducted in their L1, however, are presented with a vast swath of new skills requirements, of which reading is one of the largest. Indeed, Janzen (2007) claims that reading is “critical to ELL’s academic achievement” (p. 707), making the development of academic literacy pertinent to teachers of L2 reading. For students who do not begin higher education in their L1, their primary education’s L2 literacy and L2 academic literacy skills may be underprepared for the requirements of both language and content classes in their L2. Thesen and van Pletzen (2006) noted that although ELLs may enter English-speaking universities with the verbal fluency necessary, they may yet lack the “forms of language knowledge necessary for fulfilling the decontextualized and often hidden cognitive tasks characterizing higher education,” such as that needed for “classification, comparison or indicating causality” (p. 117). Carrell and Carson (1997) found that these students most need to learn “literacy skills that are transferable to academic contexts” (p. 48).

Lems, Miller, and Soro (2009) point out that “it had been assumed that ELLs would naturally pick up the academic language that native speakers in schools are already likely to possess, but all too often, this was not at all the case” (p. 12). However, most L2 university students begin their university career with only a primary literacy in the L2, complicating the job of EAP instructors to include both literacy and academic literacy focii in their limited time in the language classroom. Schleppegrell and Colombi (2002) note some factors affecting the development of advanced literacy in ESL learners, such as L1 literacy, oral English proficiency, and interactions with L1 English speakers. Without
these, learners may have further difficulties with academic literacy in the L2. Further, Thesen and van Pletzen (2006) point out that the “inner capital” that makes up the academic schemata of ELLs may not be equal to their L1 peers (p. 126). This necessitates the building of schemata alongside reading and linguistic fluency for pre-university, university, and professional ELLs. For students still struggling with primary L2 literacy and reading, developing L2 academic literacies may seem daunting or almost impossible, and translating or transferring what academic literacies they have in their L1 into a diverse array of L2 disciplines even more so.

**Prior reading research**

In terms of language acquisition during the reading process, Krashen (1985) claims in his input hypothesis that learners acquire a language by understanding messages in it. Reading is suited to this hypothesis, particularly because of this emphasis of understanding messages, and the “incidental” learning that occurs during reading. Because English learners must build their reading and academic literacy skills, and specialize their English reading skills across a variety of registers, Krashen’s input hypothesis provides an ideal theory to background this study, regardless of its detractors since its first publication. Krashen (2004) later applies his $i + 1$ theory in his concept of Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), in which he asserts the usefulness of free reading for literacy development of both L1 and L2 readers. Krashen (2004) goes on to point out the high correlation of avid L2 readers and high test scores, including the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) for those learners seeking to advance their education in the L2. If, then, all these factors mediate and define academically-focused ESL reading instruction, the modes and methods with the strongest theory that are likewise supported
by empirical studies must then be found that suit these critical modes of academic
English communication.

Academic reading skills are some of the most important skills ESL and EFL
learners need to survive in an English-speaking school, university, or professional
environment. Most often these are taught in a reading for Academic Purposes course,
with particular textbooks designed for EAP or intermediate-level university ESL courses.
These textbooks, such as *Inside Reading* (Zimmerman, 2012), typically bring together
various reading passages, along with reading strategies and AWL items, in order to
prepare students for university-level L2 reading.

Miller (2011) notes that lexical knowledge and L2 syntax are among some of the
most difficult aspects of reading for ESL learners; however, register-specific features are
among the most difficult for such students to master. Interestingly, Miller also points out
that the majority of readings in university ESL reading textbooks already come from
newspapers, magazines, novels and transcribed speeches, which Miller does not find
pertinent to EAP reading courses. Further, Miller believes several areas of cross-
reference are worth examining between ESL reading texts and university textbooks:
lexico-grammatical features, vocabulary items, and syntactic structures.

However, “university-applicable” texts and scientific tracts do not elicit an
emotional response, like literary and popular culture texts, such as novels, do. Teaching
the process of reading with such emotion-inciting texts, though, can perhaps give ESL
reading instructors better access to the reading process, and allow greater ESL reading
success. According to Nuttal (1996), “getting students to read extensively is the easiest
and most effective way of improving their reading skills” (p. 127).
Researchers claim that reading skills involve using cues, making informed predictions, activating schemata, reader transacting with a text, and motivating factors such as learner affect (Rosenblatt, 2005; Thesen & van Pletzen, 2006). Ultimately, though, instructors need to allow readers to make meaning while reading a text, along with learning language during the process. Carrell and Carson (1997) note that this kind of intensive reading instruction via teaching strategy has become common across L1 and L2 university preparatory courses. However, Krashen (1985) has long argued for extensive reading as the primary means of reading practice and instruction, so that learners can gain the benefits and practice of reading while focusing on the larger meaning of a complete text; this, however, does not preclude the implementation of reading strategies, as well.

More recently, Grabe and Stoller (2014) assert that the academic reading skills pre-university ESL students need require “comprehension abilities,” a “large vocabulary,” “good command of grammar,” and a “repertoire of reading strategies” and “plenty of conscious practice using strategies in meaningful combinations”; in other words, both intensive (strategy-based) and extensive (practice-based) reading experience (p. 189). Furthermore, skilled reading requires “fluency practice, extensive reading… and time spent on the development of a large recognition vocabulary” (p. 190). Carrell and Carson (1997)’s earlier research supports these same needs, and thus “a curriculum which includes aspects of both intensive and extensive reading” (p. 53). Often EAP reading classes seek to fulfill these requirements via textbook-centered syllabi, which can come across as dry and unmotivating to learners, discounting the role of affect in reading. However, an examination of the principles of academic reading that Grabe and Stoller
(2014) advocate makes clear that textbook reading selections are not the only material that fits the bill in terms of meeting the needs of L2 readers.

**CBLT and KF**

As discussed in the introduction, Content-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is based on the notion that language and content are inseparable (Mohan, 1979, 1986, 1989; Molle et al., 2015). Although early discussions of CBLT centered around ELLs in the public school system, further research and discussion led to its use throughout educational levels, including the pre-university and university language classroom.

Mohan (1989) claims that CBLT particularly allows instructors to integrate and develop students’ academic language, by providing them with “a familiarity with scholarly discourse” that can be transferred to future academic work (p. vii). According to Snow (2014), content-based language teaching (CBLT) is “the use of subject matter for SFL (second or foreign language) teaching purposes” (p. 438). If this is the case, any content can be useful to help students acquire English.

CBLT alone, however, remains a theory for teaching, and needs linguistic support in order to gain credence. Mohan (1986)’s Knowledge Framework (KF) serves well as this support. The KF is “a systematic framework for relating language and content” (p. iv). As the introduction to this thesis discusses, the KF “integrates language with content” via basic skills: classification, description, principles, sequence, evaluation and choice (Mohan, 1986). These skills then allow the instructor to give students an understanding of both content and framework; this makes students “better equipped to manage content learning tasks independently” (Mohan, p. 75, 1986). According to Slater, Link, and Mohan (2012), the KF integrates these skills into thinking skills, language involved in
these skills, and key visuals to better understand these thinking skills as a means of scaffolding. Early (2001) describes a study of content classroom and ESL integration through the KF in Vancouver schools. In the course of the study, it became clear that teachers were not only “apprenticing” learners in the content area, but also “introducing students to the social practice of identifying KS in contexts, texts, and graphics” (p. 174). The KF can help instructors and learners tie content and critical thinking, by providing a means of breaking down longer texts and understanding complex linguistic cargo through key visuals. Early and Tang (1991) assert that key visuals of KSs can be used “a) to prepare students to read content text in a way which acknowledges students' background knowledge, and b) to enable students to incorporate strategies into their own approach to reading content text” (p. 36).

Various studies concerning CBLT in the primary school classroom have examined content-based teaching of science, math, literature, and more with support from the Knowledge Framework. These include science classroom studies, which focus on the introduction scientific writing and allows for academic literacy for those in sciences, include studies from Mohan and Slater (2005, 2006); Huang (2003), Huang and Morgan (2003). Others examine CBLT in the math classroom, such as Huang and Normandia (2007), and Huang, Normandia, and Greer (2005). Other examinations include CBLT and project-based learning (e.g., Slater, Beckett, & Aufderhaar, 2006), and CBLT and literature (Slater & McCrocklin, in press).

Huang and Normandia (2007) take a “functional approach to discourse analysis” in order to understand CBLT or CLIL (content language integrated learning) in the math classroom. Their analysis examines discourse structures related to writing for
mathematics in order to “better equip” CBLT math teachers “with the knowledge they need to provide more explicit instruction to promote the desired kind of writing for targeted aspects of mathematic understanding (p. 296). Other studies take a similar approach, outlining what is necessary to achieve academic literacy for a particular discipline. This follows what Slater and Mohan (2010) refer to as a register, which is the specific language of meanings that belong to a certain discipline, such as science in the case of Huang and Normandia (2007).

For the university student struggling to form L2 academic literacies, CBLT may also serve as a bridge into their respective disciplines. However, Carrell and Carson (1997) note that CBLT “has been little used in EAP programs in which adult learners are being prepared specifically for the demands of post-secondary academic course work” (p. 53). This is likely due to the diverse needs of individual EAP students; there is no one academic literacy that can ultimately prepare ESL learners for academic studies. For the STEM students, STEM content seems to be most beneficial; for the historian, her own, for the sociologist, his own, ad infinitum. No one content introduced into the language classroom can provide for the diverse needs of interdisciplinary language courses as they stand.

**Literature as content**

Whereas no one content area can scaffold the particular academic literacy needs of every discipline on a given university campus, literature’s broad scope provides a more comprehensive possibility than any other given content area. Paired with Krashen’s (2004) Free Voluntary Reading (FVR), literature as content becomes a source of building complex literacy skills for second language readers, and allows them readers to build
their schema, allowing them to go from basic second language skills to more advanced skills. Additionally, free voluntary reading allows learners to follow their interests in selecting reading materials, allowing them to choose register-specific materials.

However, Carrell and Carson (1997) point out that “it can be difficult to convince students that a particular subject area will be essential to their success in post-secondary academic settings, given that future content needs of EAP learners are so variable” (p. 53). In order to motivate learners towards FVR, they must first come into contact with literature as classroom content in order to find out about the particular benefits and motivating factors literature offers. McKay (2014) claims that using literature as content provides three benefits: that “literature demonstrates for learners the importance of form in achieving specific communicative goals,” that “using literature as content in the second language classroom provides an ideal basis for integrating the four skills” and that “literary texts are valuable in raising students’ and teachers’ cross-cultural awareness” (p. 488). Because writing is a central form of communication in the English-language university, form is a central need for these students. Additionally, literacy is not the sole need: listening and speaking skills, often underprepared for in the EFL setting, are equally necessary in university and graduate school courses. Finally, the cross-cultural awareness of texts set in sundry locations allows students an outlet to express and understand culture shock, and instructors an outlet to explain the various socio-linguistic content within a particular work.

McKay (2014) also points out that literature is “ideal as content for extensive reading programs in L2 classrooms. Becoming engaged with a piece of literature will certainly increase students’ interest in reading often and widely in English” (p. 495).
Motivation is often the most difficult aspect of teaching to improve learner reading skills. By providing interesting materials with relevant themes, instructors can motivate students to develop the reading skills needed within and across curricula.

Although literature appears infrequently in ESL classes today, Khatib, Rezaei, and Derakhshan (2011) claim that literature was once the primary source of language in language classes, but has since fallen from favor. Arthur (1968) reports a possible cause for this fall; that literature in ESL courses fails because teachers do not “encourage or even to allow students to receive such texts as literature, that is, as a literary experience” (p. 199). In many cases students would be asked to translate literature word for word, rather than to read or experience the text for itself. Although Arthur wrote to dispel this feeling almost 50 years ago, the attitude continues to prevail in the ESL community that literature is only a means to language instruction, and not valuable in itself in regards to its use in the classroom. Two decades later, Gajdusek (1988) found that most instructors believe that “literature is too ‘hard’ for ESL students,” preventing them from implementing it in their own classrooms (p. 227). However, at about the same time Sage (1987) contends that literature is essential in the ESL classroom, because “literature is inherently human; its stories, poems, and plays portray a wide variety of human concerns and needs... Because it reflects people’s timeless values and preoccupations, literature attracts readers” (p. 3). If all this research is correct, the literature can offer its own academic and indirectly academic benefits to reading, by allowing and teaching students to access their humanity in the new language via literature, even as instructors use it for its continuing academic usefulness.
Reid (2002) believes that novels and “trade books” can both help ESL learners create the schema and scaffolding that helps them gain the knowledge and skills needed in a variety of areas of study (p. 1-2). Khatib et al. (2011) go on to list multiple benefits of using literature with ESL students: authenticity, motivation, cultural awareness, reading practice, sociolinguistic/pragmatic knowledge, grammar and vocabulary knowledge, language skills, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking. If all these benefits can be put at the fingertips of ESL teachers and students, literature might soon find a new place in the ESL classroom, rejecting the use of literature only in terms of the Grammar Translation method and replaced with an approach that synthesizes literature’s humanity and cultural benefits with its academic and linguistic potential for ESL classes.

**Justification**

When it comes to reading and education, Arthur (1968) claims that “literature is valuable not only because it may be useful but also because the act of reading literature is, at least potentially, a pleasant experience” (p. 200). Not only can literature benefit learners, but also motivate them. According to Lazar (1996) “literary texts, well chosen, delight and motivate the learner. They clue learners into other cultures. They encourage students to make meaning from language” (775).

In addition to being an ideal content for learning English, Arthur (1968) asserts that “through the use of literature, a language learning experience might become at the same time a source of immediate pleasure and satisfaction for the student. This possibility makes literature an appealing teaching device for ESL teachers” (p. 200). Considering the claim by Grabe and Stoller (2014) that teachers need to “integrate reading skill instruction with extensive practice and exposure to print, reading resources that are
interesting varied attractive” (p. 190), literature provides a way to make extensive reading practice more attractive to students, as well as more enjoyable. Nance (2010) stated that “the close and careful reading that takes place when students work with the complex and varied discourses of literature… helps them to become more analytical about all forms of language” (p. 3). In supplementing textbook readings materials, literature as content becomes an ideal method to meet the principles outlined by Grabe and Stoller (2014) while simultaneously giving students interesting, enjoyable texts on which to practice and improve their reading skills.

Little research exists that explores the intersections of academic reading, CBLT via the KF, literature as content, and adult ESL learners. This study seeks to begin filling this void with an exploration of learner beliefs and experiences while reading The Giver, a non-academic young adult novel, and studying using the Knowledge Framework to learn specific linguistic structures and vocabulary from the novel.

**Research questions**

1a Based on survey and interview information, what are learners’ thoughts about the use of literature in teaching university English reading skills?

1b How do learner beliefs change over the course of the workshop?

2a What activities within the unit plan do learners say they find most helpful? Which do they say are the least helpful?

2b What are the implications of this learner feedback for future similar materials?
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter lays out the research methodology and workshop set-up of the present study, including recruitment and selection of participants, design and use of data gathering materials, and data analysis. Institutional review board (IRB) approval was given for the study and the research design that is presented in this chapter.

A qualitative methodology was chosen for the present study because the research problems, concerning instructor use of literature for ESL courses and learner beliefs about the benefits of literature, fit within the bounds of problems best researched via qualitative measures as outlined by Creswell (2007), Holliday (2015), and Denzin and Lincoln (2005).

In the present study, themes emerged both during the course of the research itself as well as during data analysis. Not only did themes emerge throughout the research process, but also the research design, which was altered in conjunction with emergence of these themes, in order to gain the richest possible data concerning the study’s participants. Creswell (2007) claims that this is characteristic of qualitative research, which is “inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing the data” (p. 19).

Research design

This case study aims to document the teaching of a set of lessons using literature for teaching English reading skills to ESL students. The purpose of the case study is to illustrate participants’ beliefs about the effectiveness of this piece of literature in teaching them English reading skills. Additionally, the study seeks to find out about the perceived effectiveness of particular activities within these lessons.
Qualitative methods

Qualitative measures can best answer research questions related to learner beliefs and learner needs based upon the high quality of data gathered while using such measures. Indeed, Holliday (2015) claims that “the aim of qualitative research is to search for the richest possible data” (p. 49). Rich data enables researchers to better understand the issue, while seeking more information about it. Creswell (2007) claims that the need for qualitative research stems from “a need to study a group or population, identify variables that can then be measured, or hear silenced voices” (pp. 39-40). In the case of this study, qualitative research is needed on behalf of several groups: instructors already using literature for ESL without research-driven support for their methods, instructors wary of using literature for ESL with the same reasons, and the ESL students themselves being taught with or without the benefits of literature.

Creswell (2007) notes that “we also conduct qualitative research because we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue” (p. 40), which the data from this study will allow, in the case of using *The Giver* as literature. As Holliday (2015) points out, one of the central issues for qualitative research is “making appropriate claims” because “qualitative research looks at instances of behaviour rather than broad tendencies in that it cannot prove” (p. 52). Although this study may have implications for further content-based studies using literature to teach English as a second language, the study itself can only make claims about the usefulness of *The Giver*. Holliday also notes that “the purpose of qualitative research is not to prove anything, but to generate ideas which are sufficient to make us think again about what is going on in the world” (p. 53). Although the claims of the current study will be limited to instances of teaching ESL with *The
"Giver," the conclusions based on an analysis of the data generated in this study may help to generate ideas that support and encourage a more frequent use of literature in ESL classrooms.

**Case study**

Although some aspects of qualitative study emerge over the course of research, others, such as study type, require careful planning. This study falls into the category of case study, which according to Creswell (2007)’s definition is “the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context)” (p. 73). According to Yin (2014), case study research allows researchers to explore a real-life situation and its context, such as the use of literature in an ESL environment. Due to the relatively few existing research studies concerning literature for adult ESL reading, a case study examining adult learners is necessary to explore and describe existing beliefs and opinions about using literature.

As such, the setting for the current case study is made up of two high-level ESL classes at a local community college. The unit of analysis, or the case, was determined by the data; because the present study is made up of two classes, each made up of several individual students, the researcher sought to define the type of case after collecting and analyzing data. Although including two different classes of participants offered the possibility of comparing each class as its own case, ultimately too few participants from one class completed the data collection process. Rather than examining the two classes as separate cases, the researcher chose to analyze the final group comprised of participants that completed the introductory survey, the entire workshop, and the final interview, as a single case (Yin 2014).
Recruiting

Since the study aimed to learn about ESL university and adult learner beliefs about using literature in the adult ESL classroom, participants had to be adult ESL students with low enough levels to still benefit from a literature-based reading workshop. As such, it was determined that participants should be pre-university ESL learners, or early-university ESL students. Participants were sought from a variety of pre-university and early university ESL groups, including local ESL clubs and classes, entry-level university ESL courses, university conversation clubs, community ESL programs, and community college ESL courses. Although there was some interest from conversation club members, university ESL courses, and community programs, scheduling prevented most from joining the study. Ultimately, two levels of free ESL courses from a community college were selected based on student interest, along with institution and instructor requests.

Workshop instructor

The workshop lessons were taught by the researcher in the role of instructor. Along with instructing the lessons, the researcher also interviewed students after the workshop. Although this allowed for the emergence of issues and themes during the research process from the point of view of the instructor, it also complicated the interview process, and may have prevented students from full honesty in terms of the success of the workshop. More on these types of limitations will be addressed in chapter 5.
Workshop participants

Based on interest from both learners and instructors, the workshop was conducted during the existing class time of ESL non-credit courses at a local community college. These ESL courses are free to the community, and do not count for university or college credit, giving learners a low-stakes opportunity to improve their English skills. After hearing about the workshop and the study, two classes of ESL learners volunteered to add the workshop into their existing daily class time: level 4 (18 students) and level 5 (22 students), the two highest pre-university ESL courses offered at the community college. All students within each course section expressed interest in the study and elected to hold the study-workshop during class time for their course, for a total of 40 students participating in the workshop’s pre-survey, 4-5 lessons, and post-workshop movie party. However, only 16 participants also completed the post-workshop interviews. The analysis data was then made up from the survey and interview data from these 16 participants.

The ESL classes took place at a community college in a university town with a large international population of undergraduate and graduate students. Many graduate students bring their spouses with them when they come to the US for graduate school, and these spouses make up most of those enrolled in community college pre-university level ESL programs. This helps explain why there were more women than men taking the ESL courses, both overall and in the final 16 who participated in the final interviews of the study (12:4 women: men).

These students enrolled in the community college seeking to improve their English, either for their own interest, academic interest, or to improve general communication skills. Because many students are the spouses of international graduate
students and researchers at a nearby research university, few claimed that they chose to study with academics in mind; most cited “personal interest,” likely because they wanted to improve their English skills while living in the (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant motivation to study</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason for learning English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal interest</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although participants were enrolled in pre-university level ESL courses in a US community college, in line with their age group, most attended college or graduate school before coming to the US. Not only had a majority of participants already attended college, participants also came from a variety of academic disciplines and areas of work (Table 3.2). This diversity of experiences further illustrates the broad spectrum of learners in this study, and the divergence from the unit’s original design (see Limitations in chapter 5).

Table 3.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields represented in participant group</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and Engineering</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreported</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All participants were adult learners of English, with only 3 out of 16 under the age of 27 (see table 3.3). Most participants were over the typical university age, further differentiating this study from the expected target group for the workshop’s unit plan.
The final 16 participants included in the data of the study came from two course levels, with 11 from level 4 and 4 from level 5, with one participant attending class for both levels 4 and 5. More learners from level 4 were willing to participate in the final interview than those from level 5 (see table 3.3).

Participants came from a variety of language backgrounds, with L1s including Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Arabic, Tamil, Hindi, Korean, and Turkish (see table 3.3). This linguistic diversity is reflective of the diversity of internationals at the community college.

Table 3.3
Participant information by participant number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Years studied in US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 to 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24-26</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>21 to 23</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>24-26</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>27+</td>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instruments

In order to find answers to the research questions (see chapter 2), a qualitative research study was designed. The study takes the form of a workshop, which allows for “in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information” (p. 73). These multiple sources include survey data, interview recordings, and in-workshops notes and recordings to determine participants’ pre- and post- workshop self-assessed English reading ability, pre- and post- workshop perceptions about using literature as a method of language study, and assessment of workshop lessons and activities. Instructor notes and reflections from workshop sessions, along with data from individual surveys and interviews with students, is used to create a descriptive account of the unit plan’s success to meet the students’ reading goals, and analysis of common themes across students and workshop sessions.

As a workshop, the study takes place as in a normal classroom setting, with the investigator playing the dual role of researcher and instructor. Importantly, Holliday (2015) legitimizes this duality, claiming that “it is recognized (in qualitative research) that the ideas and presence of the researcher will be influential in what the data looks like and the way in which it is interpreted” (p. 49). As a means for overcoming this influence, he notes that “the researcher must submit to the data in such a way that the unexpected is allowed to emerge and perhaps change the direction of the research” (p. 52). Thus it is in the analytical stage that the researcher can prevail over their own influence and make conclusions unhampered by their own guidance during the course of the study.
Teaching Materials

As discussed in chapter 1 of this thesis, the workshop was based on the first four lessons of an existing unit plan intended for university EFL students, and modified for university or adult ESL learners. The unit plan introduces literature to ESL learners in the form of the young adult novel *The Giver* (Lowry, 1992). The lessons introduce the novel’s genre and vocabulary, and utilize the Knowledge Framework (Mohan, 1986) to scaffold learner understanding of the novel. For the purpose of the study the first four lessons, which work with the first three chapters of the novel, were modified to meet the needs of participants.

Lesson plans

Although all of various factors (low stakes, free courses, relaxed classroom environment, learner interest) made the two community college class levels ideal for implementing the workshop for this study, it also meant that some aspects of the existing lesson plans needed to be modified to meet the needs and abilities of participants. These modifications were made during the course of the workshop as different needs arose for each level, including the addition of another day for level four, to ensure that learners were on track and able to understand the storyline.

Other modifications were made to fit four lessons into 3-5 class days, and to match the workload of the lessons to the low-stakes course where the lessons took place. For this reason, homework objectives were not assigned and/or collected, and quizzes were not administered as they might be in a university language course.
Data gathering instruments

Creswell (2007) notes that a case study requires “in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information,” in this case made up of a preliminary survey, audio recording and researcher reflections during the study, and a post-study interview (p. 73).

Wagner (2015) notes the usefulness of survey research to the field of applied linguistics, including “in the areas of learner beliefs, learning strategies, learner motivation, and language learning anxiety” (p. 83) Wagner also observes that surveys allow researchers the ability to measure these typically unobservable areas. For these reasons, surveys were chosen as the best way to find out about learner beliefs at the beginning of the workshop, learner experiences during the workshop, and changes in learner beliefs at the end of the workshop. Survey research breaks down into two areas, questionnaires and interviews, both of which are utilized in the present study.

However, Richards, Ross and Seedhouse (2012) claim that learners are vulnerable to suggestibility during surveys, and that surveys need corroboration through observation and interviews. For this reason, the current study supplements surveys with interviews, audio recordings, and instructor reflections from the course of the entire workshop.

Whereas questionnaires survey participants via a written format, interviews take place orally “to get more in-depth information from a smaller sample of individuals” (Wagner, p. 87, 2015). Because interviews allow one-on-one conversations with participants, researchers can get a better sense of learner feelings and beliefs through body language and tone of voice. Interviews also give the researcher the chance to mitigate uncertainty through co-construction of meaning. In the current study, this co-
construction between participant and researcher is vital due to the language barrier low-level speakers and writers may still face in accurately reporting their beliefs and feelings.

Holliday (2015) further advocates for a variety of types of data, noting that “it could be said that the data comprises whatever can be seen or heard which helps the researcher to get to the bottom of the issues implicit in the research questions” (p. 50). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) agree, noting that “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p. 3). It is then the researcher’s job to “make the world visible” (p. 3). The current study seeks to make that “world” visible via instructor reflections corroborated by workshop audio recordings. During each workshop session, a minimum of five audio recorders were placed around the classroom, including one on the body of the researcher/instructor.

**Surveys and Interviews**

The surveys and interviews asked students about their experience using literature to practice reading skills, and whether they believed using literature to practice reading skills can be beneficial. The questions touched on demographics but mostly focused on participant evaluation of the workshop and its activities. The survey also included a pre-check of relevant vocabulary items, which allowed learners to mark their familiarity with a given word on a scale from ‘never seen,’ to ‘seen but don’t know,’ ‘know but have not used,’ ‘used in writing or speaking’ and ‘used in both writing and speaking.’ This framework was based on Zimmerman (2012)’s *Inside Reading* vocabulary pre-checks. The survey as it was given to students appears in Appendix A, along with the guided questions utilized in the post-workshop interviews. The survey and interview used the same questions about learner beliefs in order to assess change in beliefs over time.
According to Kalaja, Barcelos, Aro, and Ruohotie-Lyhty (2016), learner beliefs “have a social origin: they emerge while the individual is interacting with the physical world or taking part in social practices” (p. 28). By recording and comparing learner beliefs before and after the workshop through survey and interview, belief changes that emerged as a consequence of the social practice of the workshop can be evaluated and better understood.

**Instructor reflections**

Instructor notes included reflection notes about the process of the workshop, along with notes about the success of particular workshop sessions. Notes also included problems and successes during workshops, and overall satisfaction with the workshop class. These were about material successes of the course, not student success. Other notes were on what activities worked well, were too easy, too difficult, problematic for presentation (language), whether students were engaged, and details that related to the value of the workshop. Students’ comments were roughly categorized and taken down, but not identified to particular students, but to the success of the activity as a whole. Additionally, audio recordings were used to confirm field notes, and give more evidence and higher validation for findings.

**Procedures**

The study focused on learner growth in three workshop sessions and a one-on-one interview session with the researcher, followed by a movie party, with no data collected in the final optional meeting. The first workshop session was 80 minutes long, with the other two sessions 50 minutes long each. These three sessions focus on the first four lessons of McCulloch’s complete unit plan, with some modifications in order to primarily
focus on reading. During the first workshop session, lessons one and two were merged (see Appendix E) in order for learners to gain information about the novel, before beginning reading the novel in preparation for the second workshop session.

Additionally, between lesson one and lesson two during the first workshop session, learners filled out an informational survey comprised of demographic information, pre-workshop beliefs about using literature as a language-learning tool, and their familiarity with some of the academic and novel-specific vocabulary relevant to the workshop and novel. This survey’s primary function was to set a benchmark for participant beliefs at the beginning of the study, along with information informally assessing their level of preparedness for the further sessions.

In the workshop, participants read portions of the novel and did various reading activities, such as group discussions, graphic organizers, pair work, and writing summaries. Both levels met 4 days a week and the workshop took part of their normal classroom time 2 to 3 days a week for 2 weeks.

Participants not only had the chance to improve their readings skills by joining in these workshop sessions, but also received a copy of the novel. Additionally, as an extra
incentive, after the workshops sessions students were invited to attend a pizza party at which we watched the Hollywood film based on the novel, and continued discussing the novel’s plot beyond the workshop.

**Data Collection**

Data collection began with participant consent, to ensure that all participants were over the age of 18. It then continued via workshop audio recordings, pre-surveys, post-interviews, and researcher reflections. The audio of the interview sessions was transcribed, while other recordings served to verify researcher reflections and notes.

**Data analysis**

Learner reading skills (as indicated by the learner and observed by the instructor/researcher), learner beliefs about using literature as content, and pre- and post-surveys to examine student belief about learning, and interviews with individual students, along with notes from workshop sessions, make up the body of data to be analyzed via themes appearing throughout this data. All types of data were analyzed and triangulated, along with researcher reflections, to create a report of the “case description and case-based themes” (Creswell, 2007, p. 73) to find out about using *The Giver* in an ESL classroom (see chapter 4).

**Survey analysis**

Pre-workshop surveys were analyzed according to descriptive statistics for likert and best answer items, based on practices put forth in Cotos (2011). This method was used to give evidence towards reading levels and beliefs of workshop participants before the reading began. Due to the small sample size, descriptive statistics are reported by frequency.
Survey information was compiled into a spreadsheet, and frequency of responses were counted for likert items, best answer items, and pre-workshop vocabulary. This information serves as the baseline for changes over the course of the study, including self-reported learner reading skills, learner beliefs, and learner expectations for the workshop. These frequencies both stand on their own to report pre-literature beliefs, and in tandem with interview information to establish changes over the course of the workshop.

**Workshop analysis**

Workshop analysis went on during the course of the workshop itself; as noted by various researchers, analyses and research are two parts of one whole, and analysis cannot be separated from the research process. The body of workshop analysis went on the post-session note taking by the researcher along with concession note taking by the ESL course’s instructor and post session listening to recordings. Holliday (2015) notes that “the process of analysing data is not always separate from collecting data” (p. 53). For this reason, researcher reflections are used to confirm survey and interview findings, and to extend an examination of themes apparent to the researcher.

**Interview analysis**

Post-workshop interview recordings were transcribed by a single transcriber, and a second transcriber checked transcriptions for accuracy. These transcriptions were then analyzed using SFL, according to the framework described in Huffman (2015). Huffman (2015) puts forth an SFL of language as meaning-making (Halliday, 1994; Mohan, 1986) in conjunction with Martin and White’s (2005) APPRAISAL network, in order to find
evidence for participants’ perceived usefulness of the workshop, and enjoyment of the reading process.

As Huffman (2015) notes, “spoken language is less grammatically complex than written language” (p. 104), so the APPRAISAL framework was extended from adjectives, adverbs, and adverbial phrases to also include verbs, nouns, and verbal phrases (as in Huffman, 2015). Learner interviews were coded using the appraisal resources affect, judgment, appreciation, and graduation. Engagement was examined but not found relevant in light of interviewee self-selection. Initial coding bolded relevant phrases, which were then transferred to a spreadsheet and labeled by participant number. Separate data sheets were created for each research question, and coded phrases were distributed based on application. These were then coded as positive or negative for affect, judgment, and appreciation with a ‘+’ or ‘−’ in the corresponding column. These were all then coded in a fourth column for high, medium, or low graduation. Positives and negatives for each code were counted for each data sheet, and analyzed in order to answer each research question.

Coded phrases from RQ1 were then grouped by their survey question parallel and graduation into a chart reflecting the survey’s likert ranges, with positive high graduation = 5 and negative high graduation = 1. This allowed for comparison of pre-and post-beliefs via the survey and interview.

Unit analysis

Unit analysis took into account learner goals and preferences reported in post-interviews and coded in the spreadsheet for RQ2a. This extended the SFL analysis of participant interview responses and open-response comments in order to find out about
participant preferences. Additional analysis took into account changes requested during the workshop, and an additional summary day requested by level 4 during chapter one of *The Giver*. 
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will report the findings of the study in regards to workshop sessions, and students’ pre-surveys and post interviews. The first section of the survey collected demographic information presented in chapter 3 to describe participants; however, parts 3, 4, and 5 of the survey were used to establish a baseline for participants’ beliefs about reading, using literature in a class setting, and their beliefs about their current skill level. Additionally, students were asked to fill out a vocabulary pre-check chart with vocabulary words from *The Giver* and the unit plan, in regards to whether they have experience using the words. These survey and interview questions serve as the themes which govern this presentation of the research results.

At the end of the workshop students were asked to volunteer for a post-workshop interview, containing some of the same questions answered in the survey, instead as a conversation with the researcher (see interviews, chapter 3). These interviews were not required due to the time constraints of the hosting courses and the lack of participants. Therefore, the interview data comes from a group of participants who felt they had the most to say about the workshop. This may be reflected in fewer neutral responses than positive or negative; however, more highly engaged responses are more useful for the purpose of the current study than neutral responses, making the disparity negligible. The researcher took notes and recordings during interviews in order to collect the most specific information possible in regards to student beliefs and feelings. During interviews, participants were also shown the same vocabulary chart from the pre-check,
and this time asked simple word recognition, in order to establish any vocabulary changes from the workshop.

Pre-workshop survey responses establish a baseline for learner beliefs, and post-workshop interview responses provide insight into changes in these beliefs due to the workshop (as the workshop is a social practice, see Kalaja et al. 2016). However, Kalaja et al. (2016) also point out that learner beliefs are both “dynamic” and “partly stable” and thus “can be both variable and stable across time and space” (p. 208). With this in mind, learner beliefs may either change from pre- to post- and/or remain stable from before the workshop to its end.

This chapter will be organized around the codes identified from the survey and interview questions, which are each ordered and grouped based on relevance to other questions. These include:

- **Reading enjoyment**
- **Reading habits**
- **Workshop reading enjoyment**
- **Practice and learning**
- **Strength of skill and growth**
- **Vocabulary**
- **Likes, dislikes, and recommendations**

These codes serve to guide and focus an understanding of learner beliefs and preferences put forth in survey and interview data. Before addressing each of these in turn, a thick description of the workshop will be given, and the analysis method will be reviewed in context.
**Workshop description**

The workshop began by introducing both classes to a broad outline of the workshop and the novel, and ensuring that all were willing to participate fully in the research. Once all class members gave their informed consent to be part of the current study, the researcher began passing out the participants’ copies of the novel. All participants seemed highly motivated, especially the level five students. Level four were also highly motivated, but it seemed that more of them are studying for themselves, while a lot of fives seem to be studying toward graduate school or reentering their career field in the US, in English.

Lesson one began by asking students to consider the novel now in their hands, and asking them to guess the meaning of the title, with help from the blurbs on the book jacket. This approach sparked interest in both levels four and five; both groups predominantly came up with the idea that the novel was about the gifts being given, although a few got close to the idea that the novel was about a person who has something to give.

Lesson one then jumped ahead to an activity using the knowledge structure (KS) choice. First the instructor asked the class to consider the language of making a choice. The target grammar structures were phrases such as ‘I choose,’ ‘I want,’ and ‘I might;’ once learners had come up with these, the instructor introduced the concept of hypothetical conditionals, using the key visual and a target structure (Appendix E, lesson one): “If I could choose X, then I would do y because”. As a class the instructor and participants came up with possibilities, then in groups learners filled out a graphic organizer with what memory they would choose if they could only keep one memory of
their life, and the ramifications of that choice (if they choose to remember their family
classmates about their choices.

This memory concept was hard to explain and confusing for some of the level
fours that had just moved up from level three. I’m not sure that they ever understood.
Some gave reasons for the choice they made, rather than the implications of that choice.
For those who did understand the activity, it seemed to make a strong impression with
them, but it did not translate into their understanding of the book. It worked well with
almost all of level five, possibly aided by their regular instructor pulling up images that
corresponded to the memories mentioned during the discussion. As such, only one
participant mentioned the choice activity as their favorite, which they referred back to as
“imagine and expect.” However, it could also be due to the fact that as the first activity, it
was no longer fresh on their minds by the time of interviews.

After a bathroom break, lesson two continued on the first day of the workshop, in
order to limit the number of class times taken up by the workshop. The hosting class met
for two hours each day, meaning that two lessons the first day did not go past class time.

The KS for lesson two was classification, done by discussing the characteristics of
different things, like types of fruit, using language like ‘consists of,’ ‘is made up of,’
‘classify’ and ‘categorize.’ The instructor also focused on discussing these categories
with active being structures (There are different kinds of fruits like apples, bananas,
oranges, etc.)
Once students were familiar with the concept of characterization, the instructor moved on to discussing characteristics of the genre of *The Giver*, dystopia. The instructor asked if they knew the words ‘utopia’ and ‘dystopia,’ then discussed and explained the features of dystopia through a slideshow. During this activity, the instructor began eliciting their knowledge of other dystopian works. Once they understood the basic concept of dystopia, participants not only were able to identify dystopia in literature, but also governments with the characteristics of dystopia from real life.

Doing this unit in a classroom of students from many different countries brought out a lot of results, with some noting that ‘surveillance’ and other dystopian characteristics sound like the US and China, with others noting the same about Cuba, Venezuela, and North Korea. For dystopian literature, level five thought of *1984* and *Hunger Games*, while level four thought of *Divergent*, *Hunger Games*, and *Maze Runner*, and even the new film, Star Wars episode 7. Students ended the lesson by writing down useful vocabulary to look up while reading, and looking for characteristics of dystopia while reading chapter one of the novel.

Again, during interviews only participant 7 mentioned the classification exercise as the best, claiming to appreciate the “categories” activity, but did not have much to say about it. Participant 13 mentioned it as the most difficult activity or one in need of changes, saying they disliked the classification activity less in terms of the activity framework, and more because its application to the genre terminology, citing that the “dystopian characteristics were difficult to identify.” As a whole level four, where most interviewees came from, had a harder time with this activity than level five, which reflects back on the materials’ university audience.
For lesson three, the KS was sequencing, done in the form of a summary activity that asked students to recreate chapter one in cartoons. The lesson introduced the language of summary like first, second, and third, and use of the present tense to discuss literary works. Learners practiced sequencing language by discussing what they did yesterday and what they will do today, and comparing the language they use in each. The class also used this sequence language to discuss Lowry’s use of past events in the first chapter.

During class discussion, the society was a big topic of interest, and the ways in which it seemed to work differently than our own. However, some participants in level four had trouble differentiating between vocabulary words and terms in the society, especially the idea of “release,” which later in the book readers find out is a euphemism for death in this society. The higher-level learners within level four had less trouble separating lack of linguistic knowledge from information to be found out later in the novel, but many others worried that they were missing something. One participant even said that the novel and her confusion about this concept gave her a bad dream.

For the sequencing summary activity, students were asked to create a six-panel comic strip of important events in chapter one, with images and writing. Many of the over 27 year old participants did not feel skilled enough to draw, and were unwilling to asking that they be allowed to write instead of draw. Those that were comfortable with drawing reported enjoyment of the activity.

The differences in language ability between levels four and five became especially clear during this lesson, with a full modification of the activity needed for level four, done in additional class period. With level four there were also a lot of questions
and concerns about being able to finish chapter one, so they were given extra time along with an extra lesson that reframed the sequence activity. A group of participants from level 4 approached their regular course instructor about their confusion with the first chapter. The instructor then passed this along to the researcher along with a request to “slow down” and go back over some of the concepts from lesson three. Because this lesson took place after the initial lesson covering sequence and summary, the researcher took a second approach to the sequencing activity, this time by printing and cutting out cards with the events from chapter on them, for groups of participants to order and discuss. This additional lesson and activity began with an open floor for questions and concerns about chapter one, then utilized the white board to walk them through the sequencing activity, this time with the events on cut out slips of paper which groups of students were asked to put in order. Students who had been feeling unsure about their reading abilities regained confidence with this activity, which verified their ability to comprehend the first chapter of the novel.

Although it seemed that level five understood the first chapter much better than level four, it soon became clear that most of the level five class were working with an incomplete copy of chapter one. Instead of giving them the sequence activity in class, the instructor read the missing part of chapter one aloud. They were then given the whole chapter one to write summaries with.

Due to these issues, the data gathered for the sequencing activity was incomplete (see limitations). However, one participant, number 5 preferred the sequence activity because it incorporated drawing: “The draw pictures - that one, I like it, ‘cause you need image [to imagine] what happened. And what, step by step. Even [if] my-my picture
terrible (laughs), I can’t draw very well, but I like draw.” Other participants, however, were uneasy drawing for the activity, preferring to write, and in addition did not have enough grasp of the first chapter to complete the sequencing activity confidently the first time it was done. Participant five also disliked the summary assignment that followed the sequencing activity. Participant 5 noted that it was too difficult to sequence the events, then use the transitions from class to put it together.

Many level four students reported liking the second version of the sequencing activity, including participants 2 and 6. These participants were both part of the group that “complained” (6) to their instructor to ask for a second day of summary for level 4. After this day, though, participant (6) said that “The paper cutting, because I wasn’t sure of what I understood, but this showed me how—not the event, but the full story. Like you said, it started with the past, so at one point I wasn’t sure whether it’s in the past or is present, so when I did the papers, I understood more.” Some participants, such as participant 6, took their confusion with the plot as a sign of their own weakness, rather than as a part of the plot. This indicates some need for modified book choices now only for reading level, but also for literary complexity, paired with level-appropriate activities.

Lesson four in making predictions was a favorite with both levels. The lesson opened by asking students to come up with common reasons for making predictions, such as to forecast the weather. Each class then used a short text from farther along in the novel to discuss the language of making predictions and make their own predictions about what would happen in the novel. The text for this activity came from a part of the novel that the workshop would not cover, when the main character Jonas is skipped over during the job assignment ceremony. As a class participants brainstormed, with the
instructor writing their answers on the board to questions like “Why do they think the Elder skipped Jonas?” and “What will happen?” After participants came up with several ideas, the instructor asked them to come up with evidence from the novel to support their idea. Learners then worked in groups to make predictions about Jonas’s job assignment using a key visual, which promoted framing their prediction with the “If ___ then ___ because” structure. Participants then presented their group’s ideas to class, with the class as a whole discussing which prediction they thought was most likely. As the last workshop lesson before watching the film version of the novel, students were able to find out if their predictions were correct in the next workshop period.

This predictions lesson was a favorite with both levels, which is reflected in the interview responses and participant feedback from 8, 14, and 15. Participant 8 says that “I think to give us paper and that try to-try to prediction, and uh, open-open my mind. I think it’s good, and uh, widened my eyes. It’s very good.” Participant 15 also reported the prediction activity as a favorite. However, the prediction activity was the most recent activity to the interview, possibly influencing their decision based on memory. This activity may have influenced participants even more because the workshop ended before finishing the novel. These and other limitations will be discussed in chapter 5.

APPRAISAL

In order to compare learner beliefs before the workshop (from survey data) and learner beliefs after the workshop (from interview data), interview data were coded using Martin and White’s (2005) APPRAISAL network (see chapter 3). Data were coded for affect, judgment, and appreciation. These were then coded as positive or negative, and for
graduation (see chapter 3 for full discussion of coding practices). Table 4.1 (below) illustrates the feedback given during the interview sessions.

Table 4.1  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affect

Learner affect—instances in the data of positive or negative feelings—tended to indicate learner preferences based on emotions, reactions to specific lessons, activities, processes, or events during the workshop.

For all 16 interviews (table 4.1), positive affect appeared more than negative (47 positive to 26 negative). Both appeared frequently, indicating mixed learner feelings about the workshop.

Judgment

Judgment appeared in the data in examples of learner attitudes towards behavior, or learner admiration or critique of a given lesson or activity—what they liked about specific aspects of the workshop, and what should change about other aspects. Judgment appeared frequently when interview questions ask learners to evaluate activities and instruction.

Unlike affect, judgment skewed strongly negative (48 negative to 8 positive). This may be because interview questions asked for participant judgment in terms of negatives. When asked “what was most or least helpful about the workshop,” many interviewees had trouble with the original question. The interviewer tended to recast in negative terms,
such as “what was worst?” or “what was most confusing?” which led in turn to high negative judgments.

*Appreciation*

Learner appreciation appeared in evaluations of the workshop events according to value in a given area, such as helpfulness of a lesson or activity. Appreciation also appeared when learners evaluated the choice of text and the workshop process.

As table 4.1 shows, appreciation coded most frequently, with a majority of appreciation responses indicating a positive evaluation of the workshop (66 to 28).

*Graduation*

Graduation was used to help parallel interview responses to likert survey responses. This was done by evaluating strength of a claim, based on use of comparatives and superlatives like “more” and “most,” with positive answers using “most” equal to strongly agree on the likert scale (5), positive answers using “more” or no comparative marked as agree on the likert scale (4). Negative responses using superlatives were scaled as strongly disagree on the likert scale (1), and negative responses with comparatives as disagree (2). Responses that could not be coded as positive or negative and which lacked comparatives or superlatives of any kind were marked neutral, or 3 on the likert scale.

*Knowledge structures and activities*

Interview responses and researcher reflections were used to create a full picture of participant preferences for four in-class activities: choice, classification, sequence, and principles (prediction). This section also takes into account researcher reflections in conjunction with participant interview responses in order to understand the context in which each activity is assessed.
Interview data was once again organized and coded for affect, judgment, and appreciation. Interview question responses about particular workshop activities display more judgment and appreciation resources overall. Six participants offered no opinion on the activity.

Table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prediction activity for the principles knowledge structure was one of the most popular activities from the workshop, with two participants mentioning it as their favorite. Interestingly, along with the prediction activity, the second sequence and summary (sequence/summary 2) activity for level four was also claimed as favorite by two participants. This sequence and summary activity was part of an additional lesson added to level 4’s unit by the researcher between lessons three and four.

Participants were much more likely to name the “best” or “most helpful” activity than least helpful activity, leading to more positive activity-based feedback, as expressed in table 4.3 (below). For each activity, the participant(s) who claimed each as best (+) or worst (-) is listed by participant number.
Table 4.3  
Participant-reported best and worst activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Summary 2*</th>
<th>Principles (predict)</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All +</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All -</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*activity only done with level 4

**Choice**

The choice knowledge structure seeks to elicit the choices, conflicts, alternatives, dilemmas, or decisions of a topic. This structure helps students build the language resources to make decisions, propose alternatives, solve problems, and form opinions.

The activity for choice in the workshop came in the first part of lesson one. This activity presents a choice related to the theme of the novel: memory. The students prepare by learning hypothetical conditionals (If I could ______, I would __________). For the activity, learners are asked to fill out the graphic organizer in answer to the question: “If I could choose one memory, but would forget all other memories, I would choose ________.” The learner must choose a memory, then support their decision with reasons
for their choice, and possible outcomes. If learners choose a memory with their family, one outcome would be forgetting their friends. Students share with a partner, then share with the class.

**Classification**

Classification looks for general concepts, and their relation to each other. This includes sorting and grouping information, defining, and identifying parts and wholes. McCulloch (2015) points out that “While these groups can change based on the subject of classification (kinds of fruits, types of insects, or characteristics of a certain genre of novel) the underlying forms are the same and therefore adaptable to any circumstance” (Appendix F).

The classification activity in lesson two asked students to identify dystopian characteristics in film clips. They were then asked to categorize the elements of a dystopian society, based on a discussion during the same class of these characteristics.

**Sequence**

Sequence asks about the events of a topic, the plot, procedures, and routines. This knowledge structure is helpful to understand literature, and beneficial in constructing summaries.

The sequencing activity asked learners to draw comics for six events from the first chapter of *The Giver* and put these events in order. The first chapter and its key events were discussed as a class and placed on the board. Learners were then asked to draw and describe these events in the sequence they occurred in chapter one. McCulloch (2015) notes “Lowry uses flashbacks to help introduce the reader to Jonas’s community in her exposition. This activity will help students understand the way events are ordered
and to distinguish past from present in Jonas’s community” (Appendix F). However, these flashbacks also led to learner confusion with the sequence of events.

Due to learner misunderstanding of the first chapter and difficulties with the original sequencing activity, a second version of the sequencing activity took place to accommodate learner abilities for level 4. The answer key for the sequencing activity was cut apart for learners to manually sequence.

Principles/prediction

Students working in the principles knowledge structure are applying multiple thinking skills. Principles guides learners to examine existing principles in the topic material through strategy, cause and effect, explanation, prediction, testing and hypothesizing, and interpretation.

For the workshop, the activity that focused on principle in lesson four asked learners to make predictions by using evidence. For the prediction activity, learners first read an excerpt from a later chapter. Then, learners were asked to use evidence to guess what might happen after the excerpt using “If _____, then ______.” Learners worked in groups to compile evidence and fill out the graphic organizer with their prediction and corresponding evidence.

Other knowledge structures

Although the unit materials include multiple lessons for each knowledge structure, due to time limitations only four lessons, and thus four structures, were introduced during the workshop.
Learner beliefs

Pre-workshop survey data and post-workshop interview data was used to compare learner beliefs before and after the workshop. When relevant, researcher reflections are included to confirm or supplement participant responses.

Table 4.4 (below) illustrates the overwhelmingly positive feedback given during the interview sessions in terms of learner beliefs about the effectiveness of *The Giver* as literature after gaining experience with English literature during the workshop.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affect coded high for both positive and negative instances, although instances of positive affect appeared almost double as often as negative. Whereas judgment coded the fewest times for beliefs, appreciation coded equally as frequently as affect, with the only variance more positive codes and fewer negative.

In light of interview data, this correlation of affect and appreciation gives insight into the role of feelings on beliefs; the strong correlation between positive affect and appreciation illustrates a link between positive feelings and positive appreciation. For example, participant 2 discussed how she noticed fewer vocabulary difficulties as she read past chapter one. In chapter one “I work out, I try to find, translate every word I find, if I can.” The first chapter was full of unfamiliar words for participant 2. By the second chapter, she said “I know more vocab than I did before.” These comments fell under appreciation. She followed these with a statement of affect: “I feel happy that’s all I have
to do.” Other participants similarly report positive or negative feelings along with similarly positive or negative evaluations of reading, or workshop activities.

Judgment coded fewer times overall for learner beliefs, likely because the type of interview questions about learner beliefs did not encourage judgment-based APPRAISAL resources. Additionally, judgment was more likely to be negative because participants were more likely to volunteer for the interviews when they had positive global praise for the workshop (in the form of affect and appreciation), or specific issues with the workshop, or workshop activities, that use terms of negative judgment. Learner attitudes about text selection, for example, tended to use negative judgment resources: “Too many words” (participant 5), vocabulary “not used in life” (participant 5) or “didn’t contact our daily conversation” (participant 1); others found the “first chapter confusing” (participant 13) or the genre “confusing” (participant 8); while others reported that the novel was “too difficult” (participant 4).

**Reading enjoyment**

Before the workshop, most participants had not been in a class that utilized literature to teach English reading. In fact, only one out of the final sixteen reported taking a prior English reading class that used literature. Although most participants reported enjoying reading, almost a third fewer reported enjoying reading in English (see table 4.5).
Table 4.5  
*Participant pre-workshop beliefs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-workshop</th>
<th>Post-Workshop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you enjoy reading?</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you enjoy reading in English?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the workshop there was no change in reading preference out of the sixteen participants—fifteen out of sixteen reported enjoying reading both before and after the workshop, and six out of sixteen still preferred reading in their L1 at the end of the workshop.

In the post-workshop interviews, many reported that although they enjoy reading in their first language, they do not enjoy reading in English due to structural, grammatical, and vocabulary difficulties. Participant 4 explained: “because English is not my native language, it is too difficult for me to read it in fiction, novel *(sic)*.”

**Reading habits**

The perceived difficulty of reading in English relates to the lack of habitual reading in English across the board, especially before the workshop. This is further supported by participants’ self-reported reading habits. Before the workshop, five out of the sixteen reported that they “never” read for fun in English (Table 4.6). However, a majority (10 out of 15) reported reading for fun in English at least once a month, which is indicative of the driven nature of participants. One outlier reported reading daily for fun in English before the workshop. This also demonstrates the connection of reading habits to potential enjoyment of reading.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of participants</th>
<th># of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to the short time between the survey and interview, participants were not asked about changes in these reading habits. Despite no direct data to compare pre-workshop and post-workshop reading habits, some participants reported plans to continue reading the novel after the workshop had ended, stating that they had continued reading beyond the last workshop chapter (participants 2, 6, & 8), and participant 14 bought the whole *Giver* series to keep reading them for fun. Participant 11 was more interested in reading more books because she is able to understand more than before, and participant 15 said that the “workshop made [her] feel more confident for new books.”

Figure 4.1 (below) displays participant comments regarding post-workshop reading enjoyment, for fun and during the workshop, scaled based on participant use of graduation resources.
Enjoyment of reading in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affect and Appreciation</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High +</td>
<td>“I love to read in English because I want to implement my skills.” (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium +</td>
<td>(I’m) “up to chapter 5 or 6” (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Enjoy” (4) (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Now I do” (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Enjoy, encouraged&quot; (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low +</td>
<td>&quot;Like for class” (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low -</td>
<td>“Little” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Not by (my)self”(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Lot of words” (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“English is more difficult” (3) (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium -</td>
<td>“Too difficult” (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High -</td>
<td>“Don't enjoy reading” (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.1 Interview quotes coded based on affect and appreciation, positive or negative, and graduation. Participant number in parenthesis (see table 3.3 in reference to participant numbers).*

**Workshop reading enjoyment**

Despite their infrequent pre-workshop reading in English and preference to read in their L1, the majority of participants (13 out of 15) still expected to enjoy reading in English (see Table 4.6). Out of sixteen participants, only two were “unsure” if they would enjoy reading in English for the workshop, with all others agreeing or strongly agreeing that they expected to enjoy reading in English during the workshop (Table 4.7). After the workshop, only one participant’s belief showed change, but no participants reported disliking the reading itself.
Table 4.7  
*Participants self-reporting at each level of agreement (pre- and post-)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>Strongly agree or Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree or Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expect to enjoy workshop reading in English</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actually enjoyed workshop reading in English</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Practice and Learning**

The trend of high pre-workshop expectations for practice reading and learning follows the high expectation for enjoyment reading during the workshop (table 4.8), which has similarly high participant expectations of literature’s effectiveness for practicing reading in English, and learning effectively.

Table 4.8  
*Pre- and post-workshop beliefs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Effective or Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Not Very Effective or Not Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expected effectiveness of practice</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual effectiveness of practice</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectation of learning effectively</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual effectiveness of learning</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This presents a contrast to participants’ personal reading practices as presented in tables 4.6 and 4.7 (above). The high rate of positive expectations for learning and enjoyment by participants may be due to the participant suggestibility that Richards, Ross, and Seedhouse (2012) warned about, with participants led to report higher expectations by the survey itself. This possibility is supported by survey design, as
affirmative answers were on the left side, making “strongly agree” and “agree” the first two options participants read. Out of sixteen surveys, none marked either ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ when first asked if they expected to enjoy reading (Table 4.6). This trend follows in table 4.8, which has similarly high participant expectations of literature’s effectiveness for practicing reading in English, and learning effectively. Once again only three participants marked lower than “effective” for either item (table 4.8).

These high expectations may be in part due to the course in which the workshop took place. Prior experience in the course led participants to hold positive attitudes toward their regular instructor, which may have carried over into the study as well, particularly in the pre-workshop surveys. During post-workshop interviews, participant 6 recommended that for future lessons their regular instructor’s use of gestures and visual actions be added to help overcome learner confusion. This follows what Kalaja et al. (2016) say about learner beliefs about learning: that once given “a model for how to learn English,” learners cling to this model as the only “model for learning English” (p. 45).

Figure 4.2 (below) reflects learners’ beliefs about the workshop’s effectiveness in helping them to learn English and practice reading in English effectively.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Learned effectively</th>
<th>Practiced effectively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High +</td>
<td>“Learned lots of words” (9)</td>
<td>“Yeah, accumulate knowledge” (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Very helpful” (4)</td>
<td>“Good practice, new words” (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium +</td>
<td>&quot;Helped&quot; (4)</td>
<td>&quot;Happy&quot; (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Helpful” (7)</td>
<td>&quot;Interesting&quot; (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low +</td>
<td>Helpful because “learn vocabulary” (12)</td>
<td>“I think will help” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helpful for “different words” (16)</td>
<td>Helpful because “forced to read” (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low -</td>
<td>“Need it to connect to daily conversation” (1)</td>
<td>“Not used in life” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Confusing things in book” (8)</td>
<td>“Didn’t contact our daily conversation” (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“First chapter confusing” (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium -</td>
<td>&quot;Confusing things in book” (8)</td>
<td>&quot;Too many words” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High -</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 4.2 Interview quotes coded based on affect and appreciation, positive or negative, and graduation. Participant number in parenthesis (see table 3.3 in reference to participant numbers).

**Activities.** Learner experience with the workshop activities can help support their beliefs about learning during the workshop and gaining useful reading practice. Some, like participant 15, felt that she could not tell whether or not she learned well during the workshop, and believed that the workshop needed “to go farther” in terms of activities like prediction and background information in order to help her learn.

Participant 16, though, realized that the key visuals “helped organize” his ideas, which he noted is harder in an L2. Others reported useful practice using the knowledge structure activities, such as the classification activity (participant 7), or the prediction activity (participants 8 and 15). Participant 8 said that “I think to give us paper and that try to-try to prediction, and uh, open-open my mind. I think it’s good, and uh, widened my eyes.”

The sequence knowledge structure proved especially useful for the level 4 students who were struggling to understand the plot of the first chapter. Due to a
researcher error level 5 did not do the sequencing activity, and most of level 4 had
difficulty with the first sequencing activity. However, one participant, number 5,
pREFERRED the first sequence activity because it incorporated drawing: “The draw pictures -
that one, I like it, ‘cause you need image [to imagine] what happened. And what, step by
step. Even [if] my-my picture terrible (laughs), I can’t draw very well, but I like draw.”
Other participants, however, told the instructor that they were uneasy drawing even for
themselves, and did not have enough grasp of the first chapter to complete the sequencing
activity confidently.

More students reported liking the second version of the sequencing activity,
including participants 2 and 6. This activity was added by request, and reframed the
original sequence activity to accommodate for level 4. Participants 2 and 6 were both part
of the group that “complained” (6) to their instructor to ask for a second
sequence/summary lesson for level 4. After this day, though, participant 6 said that she
liked the new sequence activity “the paper cutting.” The new sequence activity worked
well for participant 6 “because I wasn’t sure of what I understood, but this showed me
how—not the event, but the full story.” Some participants, such as participant 6, took
their confusion with the plot as a sign of their own weakness, rather than as a part of the
plot. This indicates some need for modified book choices not only for reading level, but
also for literary complexity, paired with level-appropriate activities.

The prediction knowledge structure also allowed learners to practice with their
new skills. Participant 8 says that “I think to give us paper and that try to-try to
prediction, and uh, open-open my mind.” Participants 14 and 15 also reported the
prediction activity as most helpful.
Overall, learners reported best practice and learning experience with the novel with activities that helped them “know we are on the right path, or we are right direction (sic),” just as the second version of the sequence activity, and the prediction activity.

**Strength of skill and growth**

The area of the survey that differed from the other highly positive pre-workshop data was their original self-reported strength of English reading skills (table 4.9), and vocabulary pre-check (see Figure 4.3). No participants reported their skills under the highest and lowest (“strongly agree” or “strongly disagree”), which would be expected before these participants began reading the text itself.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-workshop perceived strength of reading skills in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong reading skills in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were not asked to re-assess their reading skill level after the workshop. They were, however, asked if their reading skills would grow (pre) and if they did grow (post). Fewer learners expressed agreement that their skills grew after the workshop than those that expected them to grow, but this shift was between agree and unsure, rather than agree and disagree (table 4.10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants self-reporting at each level of agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you expect your reading skills to grow?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your reading skills grow?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many claimed that the workshop was too short to help their skills grow for several reasons: because “three chapters not enough” (13); because they need “more time to read, go deeper” (16); or because they “can’t feel” improvement yet (11). Many participants linked their lack of skill growth or neutrality of growth to the short length of the workshop, with claims like “not yet,” and “not now” for skill growth (see fig. 4.3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill growth</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High +</td>
<td>“Definitely improving” (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium +</td>
<td>“Speaking and listening is improve”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low +</td>
<td>“I guess” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Must be” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Ability” (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Helped” (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Work good for understanding wor practice, learning” (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low -</td>
<td>“Can’t feel yet” (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Will help” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium -</td>
<td>“Not now” (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Confused” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.3 Interview quotes coded based on affect and appreciation, positive or negative, and graduation. Participant number in parenthesis (see table 3.3 in reference to participant numbers).*

**Vocabulary**

In the vocabulary pre-check, likelihood to know a particular word varied by class level. Level 5 participants were more familiar than level 4 participants to mark they had used a given word “once or twice,” the highest mark without asserting definite knowledge. Similarly, level 5 was much less likely to mark that they had “never seen” a given word before compared with level 4 (see figure 4.4 for sample vocabulary check).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Never seen the word before</th>
<th>Seen but don't know what it means</th>
<th>Seen the word and understand what it means</th>
<th>Used before, but not sure if used correctly</th>
<th>Used confidently in speaker OR writing</th>
<th>Used confidently in BOTH speaking and writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acknowledge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquire</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adequate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consequently</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coordination</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dispose</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dystopia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enhance</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>establish</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incident</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obvious</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oppression</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prior</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>propaganda</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sufficient</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surveillance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technically</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>totalitarian</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>utopia</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 (below) displays the percent of total learners overall and at each level reporting word recognition and use by column. Over both levels, learners tended to report strong familiarity with a word, or complete unfamiliarity. After breaking these down by level, however, it becomes clear that level 4 was more likely to mark “never seen,” “seen,” or “used in both speaking and writing” while level 5 was more likely to choose from one of the three most confident choices, indicating that most words on the list were already part of their vocabulary.
During post-workshop interviews, some participants were asked to look at the same vocabulary list and say whether or not they recognized the workshop vocabulary words after completing the workshop. Many reported familiarity with these words after the workshop, with only genre-specific words like ‘dystopia,’ ‘propaganda’ and ‘totalitarian’ remaining unfamiliar. These words were part of the first day’s lesson, but did not appear in the novel.

**Likes, dislikes, and recommendations**

The last theme from interview questions discussed are the open-ended final comment questions. The researcher asked participants about the workshop as a whole in terms of likes, dislikes, and possible changes. Table 4.1 reflects the coded instances for these open-ended questions.

Interestingly, judgment and appreciation appear in nearly inverse proportions, with a similar number of negative judgment to positive appreciation resources utilized by participants. Both judgment and appreciation are indications of evaluation, which may account for this inversion (see table 4.12).

### Table 4.11

**Pre-workshop vocabulary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Never Seen</th>
<th>Seen</th>
<th>Seen &amp; used</th>
<th>Used, unsure meaning</th>
<th>Used in speaking or writing</th>
<th>Used in speaking &amp; writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charge</th>
<th>Affect</th>
<th>Judgment</th>
<th>Appreciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Judgment and appreciation

Judgment coded frequently in regards to final comments because interview questions asked for participant judgment in terms of negatives. When asked “what was most or least helpful about the workshop,” many interviewees had trouble with the original question. The interviewer tended to recast in negative terms, such as “what was worst?” or “what was most confusing?” which lead in turn to high negative judgments.

Appreciation may have been coded with slightly more frequency than judgment due to overlaps between the two. Taken together table 4.12 shows that in terms of activities and the strength of the workshop, participants had more negative feedback than positive.

Most learner feedback in the open-ended questions centered on novel-choice, length of the workshop, or usefulness of vocabulary items. Participant 2 recommended choosing “more interesting stories” or more culturally relevant stories, or “real stories happen in American life, social life.”

Others made recommendations for future workshops in terms of past learning experiences. Kalaja et al. (2016) note that based on longitudinal studies of learner beliefs “core beliefs acquired earlier about more traditional views of learning English were still present” (p. 209). Participant 5 said:
I think for us, because our English is not very good, so we can learn some difficult words before we read the book, I think is very helpful for us. Because in China, we learn the English lessons, the teacher will told us, ‘in this part is some words very difficult’, tell us the means of this words, and then we read this part. Is very helpful, we can understand all things.

Others, like participant 6, compared the workshop to its host class, and still another (participant 2) compared it with her own language teaching, emphasizing the need for real-life vocabulary.

**Summary**

Overall, the pre-workshop survey results mirror the researcher’s reflections from the first lesson in which the survey took place: that participants were hopeful about the workshop, eager to learn, and motivated to begin reading. Additionally, table 4.3 establishes that nearly all participants reported enjoying reading, despite difficulties reading in their L2 reflected in figure 4.1. This helps account for their positive attitudes and enthusiasm for the study, which offered them the chance to extend their enjoyment of reading to English as well as their L1s. Figure 4.5 (below) summarizes post-workshop learner beliefs about their experience during the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation</th>
<th>Enjoyment of reading in English</th>
<th>Learned effectively</th>
<th>Practiced effectively</th>
<th>Skill growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High +</strong></td>
<td>“I love to read in English because I want to implement my skills.” (9)</td>
<td>“Learned lots of words” (9)</td>
<td>“Yeah, accumulate knowledge” (8)</td>
<td>“Definitely improving” (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium +</strong></td>
<td>(I’m) “up to chapter 5 or 6” (6) “Enjoy” (4) (8) “Now I do” (16) “Enjoy, encouraged” (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low +</strong></td>
<td>“Like for class” (4)</td>
<td>“Helped” (4) “Helpful” (7) Helpful because “learn vocabulary” (12) Helpful for “different words” (16)</td>
<td>“Happy” (2) “Interesting” (6) “I think will help” (5) Helpful because “forced to read” (12)</td>
<td>“I guess” (5) “Must be” (5) “Ability” (4) “Helped” (2) “Work good for understanding words, practice, learning” (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low -</strong></td>
<td>“Little” (5) “Not by (my)self” (4) “Lot of words” (7) “English is more difficult” (3) (8)</td>
<td>“Need it to connect to daily conversation” (1)</td>
<td>“Not used in life” (5) “Didn’t contact our daily conversation” (1) “First chapter confusing” (13)</td>
<td>“Can't feel yet” (3) “Will help” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium -</strong></td>
<td>“Too difficult” (4)</td>
<td>“Confusing things in book” (8)</td>
<td>“Too many words” (5)</td>
<td>“Not now” (1) “Confused” (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High -</strong></td>
<td>“Don't enjoy reading” (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.5* Interview quotes coded based on affect and appreciation, positive or negative, and graduation. Participant number in parenthesis (see table 3.3 in reference to participant numbers).
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This thesis aimed to answer the questions posed in the second chapter concerning learner beliefs about using literature in the language classroom and the success of a particular unit plan based on the giver in an ESL pre-university classroom setting.

1.a. Based on survey and interview information, what are learners’ thoughts about the use of literature in teaching university English reading skills?
1.b. How do learner beliefs change after the workshop?

2.a. What activities within the unit plan do learners say they find most helpful? Which do they say are the least helpful?
2.b. What are the implications of this learner feedback for future similar materials?

This chapter will examine what the researcher found in light of these questions. Because this is perhaps the first study of that has elicited adult learner feedback for KS activities, answers to the above research questions have implications for teachers, materials designers, and future research.

RQ1

Learner beliefs before the workshop indicated that participants believed that literature could be a good way to practice literacy skills and learn English. Kalaja et al. (2016) establish that learner beliefs are “highly context-dependent and dynamic, and so they can vary or remain stable across time and space” (p. 10). These beliefs did not change after the workshop, indicating that learners still believed reading literature could be helpful for them. This indicates that although literature has fallen from favor with language teachers (Arthur, 1968; Gajdusek, 1988; Khatib, Rezaei, and Derakhshan,
2011), many language learners do not share this belief, before or after reading in their second language.

The implications for teachers regarding learner beliefs in the current study are several. Due to the correlation between high incidence of positive affect resources and positive appreciation resources in the interview data, it became clear that learners who enjoyed reading the novel were also likely to report benefitting from the workshop. By offering an opportunity for extensive reading (Grabe & Stoller, 2014; Nance, 2010), learners who believe that reading can benefit them can garner further benefits as they continue reading over time. Additionally, some participants told the researcher that they planned to continue with the novel, the series the novel is from, and other literature, illustrating the motivating tendency of literature for some language learners. This also supports the claim that introducing literature as content for the classroom can motivate learners towards Free Voluntary Reading (Krashen, 2004), which can in turn help them to accumulate register-specific vocabulary and structures. By incorporative extensive reading into the classroom and creating a reading environment that learners will enjoy, teachers can help learners self-motivate to read more, and thus help strengthen their English skills in and out of the classroom (Carrell & Carson, 1997).

**RQ2**

Out of the five activities that took place during the workshop, learners did not point to one particular activity as the most useful for the whole group. Most activity feedback was concerned with understanding the content information than understanding how to use the knowledge structures. This reflects back on the inseparability of one from
the other (Mohan, 1979, 1986, 1989; Molle et al., 2015), and the necessity of teaching knowledge structures explicitly in order to support skill transferal across disciplines.

Researcher reflections confirm that no one activity worked well for everyone. Researcher reflections show that the first activity, “choice,” was difficult for most learners due to their inability to understand the prompt. Students in level 5 were more successful than those in level 4. Additionally, the researcher’s reflection in conjunction with the feedback for the “classification” activity reflects learner difficulty with the activity based on content, not KS, and that this particular activity may not be suited for lower levels like level 4. This in conjunction with researcher reflections demonstrates the need to customize and individualize lessons whenever possible, and to utilize diverse structures and activities each day in order to benefit the most learners. Furthermore, when using pre-made lessons, activities should always be adjusted according to the level of students.

Due to limited time with participants (five class periods), only the sequence activity was modified for the level. However, the second version of the sequence activity garnered more positive learner feedback, which supports the necessity of tailoring materials to learner level. Furthermore, learner confusion based on the genre and the dystopian characteristics activity illustrates that materials must not just be chosen based on level, but altered or exchanged for better-fitting materials for each learner group. Although level 5 participants and some level 4 participants could understand the novel, others from level 4 would have benefitted from a more straightforward novel. Rather than take this a strike against literature for ELLs, though, this demonstrates Bagherkazemi and
Alemi’s (2010) point that materials, method, and framework for using literature with ELLs must be chosen specifically for each group.

**Additional findings**

Based on research question two and participant feedback about the workshop, learners appreciate and benefit from KF-based activities and lessons, supporting the extension of the KF from its traditional place in primary education. However, learners also want more direct vocabulary instruction that can benefit their immediate situation. In the case of the present study, learners wanted more vocabulary related to their everyday lives. Once again, the needs of the particular group of learners must be assessed while choosing a framework and outlining activities and goals.

In order to make knowledge structures more transferrable for adult learners, explanation of each structure along with the activity is advisable. Learner interview data time pointed to a desire to own and understand their language learning. When learners understood that they were not only learning about the book, but also learning how to organize and understand materials; like participants 7 and 16, they were able to rate their learning and practice higher than those that still felt they did not understand the particular novel. To this end, teachers should teach knowledge structures explicitly to adult learners in order to apprentice learners in both the content area and the process of identifying KSs “in context,” and make CBLT learning transferrable across disciplines (Early, 2001).

**Limitations**

One limitation of the present study was the scale and scope possible for a thesis. Although the topic of the current study could benefit from a longitudinal study, the
present study’s timeline allowed the researcher to get initial feedback from adult learners concerning the KF, setting the stage for future studies covering the entire novel.

For the same reasons, resources were relatively limited, keeping the participant number low. Future studies with funding, or set in a classroom with a set of novels, could help overcome limitations imposed by the need to purchase a book for every participant, thereby increasing the possible number of total participants.

Although this study included a variety of language backgrounds and academic experiences, there were still several limitations as there were not enough speakers from any one language group to generalize about specific linguistic backgrounds and answers to these research questions in terms of learner beliefs.

Future studies should further clarify the types of reading that participants qualify as “fun” in order to judge correlation with the type of reading that takes place in the workshop.

Moreover, future studies utilizing varied survey design with reversed right-to-left agree-to-disagree are needed. Additionally, future studies should assess learner beliefs with surveys before and after the workshop, rather than a survey and an interview, in order to have clearly parallel data to compare changes in learner beliefs. Surveys may also be extended to incorporate a larger range of learner beliefs. Due to participant suggestibility, survey likert items should be varied by direction (agree to disagree left to right, disagree to agree left to right), and interview questions vary in terms of the APPRAISAL resources each question prompts, in order to widen the possible responses, and increase the likelihood of collecting the most accurate learner beliefs possible.
Several issues arose which limited the data gathered in regards to the sequence activity, including level 5 not participating in the activity, and level 4 requiring a modified activity. More research is needed in order to correct for the various limitations of the current study, and also to expand the research base of KF and CBLT studies.

Additionally, some possible limitations are due to a single researcher for the present study that also acted as instructor for the workshop. Because the participant interviews were conducted by the workshop instructor, learners may not have felt comfortable giving critical feedback of the workshop to the instructor/researcher’s face. For future replications, separate instructor and researcher can help make up for this. Alternatively, another anonymous survey at the end of the workshop, in conjunction with post-workshop interviews, could allow participants to give honest critique without this problem.

However, the present study provides an initial foray into studying the use of the KF with adult learners. This preliminary examination can provide a variety of implications for future directions.

**Future directions**

As mentioned in chapter 3, the specific implications of this qualitative study are limited to *The Giver* itself; however, the limitations open up an emergent area for future research studies of a similar type. More research is needed in the area of literature as content for ESL, which the current study intended to broaden.

Because this was a qualitative study focused on one young adult literature novel, *The Giver*, further research is needed in order to generalize these findings for reading
fiction in the language classroom including other types of novels and the larger genre of young adults.

Additionally, studies replicating the present study while controlling for its limitations, or replications with different participant groups and levels, could give more specific findings than those presented here. Modifications of the present study could follow learners through the entire unit in order to find out more about learner beliefs about reading and knowledge structures after completing the novel. Alternately, the current study could be repeated with the addition of a follow-up survey or interview after learners finish the novel.

Other replications of this study are needed in order to learn more about explicitly taught knowledge structures. This study found that learners believe that literature can benefit their reading skills and English skills, and that learners who become conscious of the organizing function of KS activities benefit more from KF-based classroom activities than those who remain focused on the content. In order to find out more about this, materials designers should aim to raise learner awareness of the knowledge structures through explicit teaching of both KF and content should be designed and tested. Alternatively, the current unit plan could be modified with this in mind, in order to compare learner beliefs about the success of the unit and reading when they are given knowledge structures in the form of reading strategies to be taught and practiced.

The present study has its limitations. Despite these limitations, however, the current study makes a clear link between learner feelings and beliefs, represented in the current study as affect and appreciation, and learner’s self-reported likelihood to continue building language and literacy skills through reading. Future work now needs to
overcome the limitations of the current study replicating and modifying it in order to broaden the field of CBLT and the KF, and provide further research to ground the use of literature in the language classroom.

One question that arose in the course of this study in regards to material design relates to participants’ preference for approaches in line with their prior learning experiences. However, given the content-based framework of the existing unit plan, the question of the ability to focus on students’ needs and wishes comes into some contrast with CBLT and Mohan's knowledge framework. This question of learner beliefs versus research-driven theory requires further longitudinal studies to find out how to best marry learner preferences with educator-assessed learner needs.

The present thesis contributes to the body of teaching ESL research by providing a framework for meeting learner reading needs (Grabe & Stoller, 2014) and providing learner feedback and empirical data to support the use of literature in the language classroom, an under-researched area of teaching ESL (Aghagolzadeh & Tajabadi, 2012; Bagherkazemi & Alemi, 2010; Khatib, Rezaei & Derakhshan, 2011; McKay, 1982; Songören, 2013; Van, 2009).

In addition, the study adds to the body of CBLT and KF research by extending them into the adult language classroom, providing critical information about using the KF with adult learners and their particular needs.
REFERENCES


Huang & Mohan, (2009)


Lin, (2014)


APPENDIX A

READING WORKSHOP SURVEY QUESTIONS

Choose a number to stand for you in this workshop, and write it here: _______

Circle or write down the best answer to the following questions about yourself.

1. What is your gender?  M  F  Other:_________
2. How old are you?  18-20  21-23  24-26  27+
3. What is your first language?  Chinese  Arabic  Hindi  Farsi  Korean  Spanish  Malay  Other:_________
4. How long have you studied English in an English-speaking country?
   Less than 1 year  1-3 years  4-6 years  7+ years  Other: _______
5. Are you enrolled in any university English courses?  Yes  No (If no, skip to question #10)
6. Where?  Iowa State  ISU-IUEP  DMACC  Other:______
7. Circle any of the following English courses you have taken or are taking now:
   IEOP Reading: level 4, 5, 6  English: 99L  99R  101B  101C  101D
8. What is your major? ________________
9. Are you  a graduate student?  Yes  No
10. Why do you want to learn English?
   My own interest  Academics  Other:________

Circle the best answer to each question.

1. Do you enjoy reading?  Yes  No
2. Do you enjoy reading in English?  Yes  No
3. Have you ever taken an English reading course that used literature, like novels, before? Yes  No

4. If so, how many literature for English courses have you taken?
   0  1-3  4-6  7+

5. How often do you read for fun in English? (Circle all that apply)
   Never  Once a month  Once a week  Daily

**Answer the following questions with 5-1, 5 being very effective and 1 being not effective**

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<tr>
<th>Very Effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Somewhat Effective</th>
<th>Not Very Effective</th>
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1. How effective do you expect reading literature, like novels, to practice reading to be?
   5  4  3  2  1

2. Do you expect to learn effectively while reading literature?
   5  4  3  2  1

**Answer the following questions with 5-1, 5 being strongly agree and 1 being disagree.**

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1. Would you say your English reading skills are strong?
   
2. Do you expect your reading skills to grow during this workshop?
   
3. Do you expect to enjoy learning during this workshop?
   
Post-workshop Interview Questions

1. Do you enjoy reading? Why or why not?

2. Do you enjoy reading in English? Why or why not?

3. How often do you read in your first language?

4. How often do you read in English?

5. What types of reading do you prefer? Why?

6. During this workshop, how have your English reading skills gotten better?
   Why do you think so?

7. Did literature help you practice reading skills? Why or why not?

8. Do you think literature, like novels, is better or worse than regular reading class materials? Why or why not?

9. What workshop activity do you think was the most helpful for your reading skills? The worst?
Please think about the words on the left side of the chart and put a checkmark (✓) in the correct column for your experience.

I have...

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APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Title of Study: Literature for ESL

Investigators: Hannah Bingham Brunner (primary investigator) Tammy Slater (adviser),

This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time. hanb@iastate.edu mailto:kellyc@iastate.edu

INTRODUCTION

This study is being conducted by a graduate student, Hannah Bingham Brunner, at Iowa State University to collect data for her thesis as part of the degree requirements for an MA in teaching English as a second language/applied linguistics. It is supervised by Dr. Tammy Slater.

The purpose of this study is to learn about the effectiveness of literature, like novels, to teach English skills to ESL students in a university setting, including specific language structures and academic word list items. Additionally, the study seeks to make claims concerning the applicability of literature, specifically in the form of novels, to teach English, with implications for materials developers for future ESL courses.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to attend 3-4 workshop sessions and 1 interview session, plus an optional movie party after the workshop is done. It is expected that all of this will take about 3.5 hours total.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will include the following:

- Attending 3-4 workshop sessions, which are 50-80 minutes long
  - 50 minutes long each for 4 workshop sessions
  - Workshop sessions are audio recorded
- Participating in workshops as in a class session
- Completing a survey about yourself, your experience with English, and your beliefs about using literature to learn English
- Attending 1 individual interview session at the conclusion of the study to explain how the study worked for you, which will be 15-20 minutes long
- Attending an optional movie and pizza party at the conclusion of the workshop
Data Collected

- demographic information (your first language, your age, your gender, your time learning English, etc)
- beliefs about reading in English
- in-workshop comments and questions via audio recording
- in-workshop participation via audio recording
- individual interview data after workshops are complete

**Email.** If you choose to participate, you will give the researcher your email address at the bottom of this form. Your email will be used to send out information related to workshop sessions, including a poll to schedule workshop times and locations.

**Sessions.** If you participate, you will attend 3-4 workshop sessions. Before the study begins we will use email poll data to set a time and place for each workshop session. The session will take place in a classroom setting on campus. During the session, you will participate as if in a class session, including reading the novel, talking to other participants, participating in workshop activities, and discussing your views about the workshop sessions with the researcher. These sessions will be 50-80 minutes long.

The researcher will be present to answer any questions you may have about the study and to help with any language or reading questions you may have. The researcher studies language & reading and has six years experience studying English and two years teaching English.

**Interview.** When we finish the workshops, the researcher will schedule and individual interview to ask you a few questions about the workshops and how useful they were to you. This will take about 15-20 minutes. This part of the session will be audio recorded and transcribed.

**RISKS**

The risks of this study are very minimal. While participating in this study you may experience possible anxiety or stress because you are reading a novel in English and taking workshop sessions. Your participation is not part of a course grade and will not be shared with your teachers.

Since the audio recording will be recording during workshop sessions, all activity will be recorded. Please keep this in mind as you participate in workshop sessions.
BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there may be some benefits. You may benefit from extra time practicing your English reading skills, working with an ESL instructor, and three workshop times in English as you participate in learning activities.

Additionally, at the first workshop session students will receive a copy of the novel, *The Giver*. Additionally, as an extra incentive, after the workshops sessions students will have the opportunity to attend a pizza party at which we will watch the Hollywood film based on the novel.

It is also hoped that the information gained in this study will help teachers and materials designers create better lessons and activities for ESL students. This information may lead to future studies that look at these and other units using literature and novels to help students get better at reading in English.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. If you participate in this study, you will be given a copy of the novel. At the end of the study, students will be invited to a movie and pizza party with the film version of *The Giver*. You are not required to complete every workshop to receive the novel and attend the pizza party.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may decide not to participate or leave the study at any time. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer and you may stop answering questions at any time. Your participation in this study has no effect on your grade in any course.

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential and will not be made publicly available. To ensure confidentiality the following measures will be taken: The participants will choose a random study specific number that will be used in saved documents and data pertaining to the study instead of their names. All data gathered will be kept in a password protected computer file. A list connecting real names and the id numbers will be available only to the researcher and will be deleted after all data has been collected and the results written up. The persons who will have access to the individual data are the researcher and her supervisor. During write-ups or presentations on the study, your name and identifiable information will remain confidential.

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies, auditing departments of Iowa State University, and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy study records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.
QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS
You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study.

- For further information about the study contact: Hannah Bingham Brunner (researcher) by e-mail at hanb@iastate.edu
- To contact the researcher’s supervisor: Tammy Slater tslater@iastate.edu
- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011

***************************************************************************
***
PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you ARE 18 YEARS OLD OR OLDER and voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You can receive a copy of this form by email.

_______________________________________
Participant’s Name (printed)

_______________________________________
_______________________________________
(Participant’s Signature) (Date)

email address: __________________________________________________________

Your email address will be used only to contact you about the study and provide you study information such as to set up session times and locations.
**FURTHER CRITERIA**

Please circle the appropriate answer to the following questions to ensure that you are eligible for this study.

Have you read *The Giver* before, in English or in your first language?  **YES**  **NO**

Have you passed the ISU EPT or ENGL 99L, 99R, 101B, 101C? Circle those you have passed.

Please give a brief outline of your weekly schedule and any conflicts below. Place an X in the box of each class or time conflict:

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Hello everyone! You are invited to participate in a study I am conducting about learning English and practicing reading skills by reading books and novels, which I’m referring to as literature. The study will be like three reading class sessions, but we will be reading the book *The Giver* instead of normal ESL reading class textbooks. If you sign up for the study I will provide you with a copy of the novel. My hope is that by reading a different kind of book in this study you will become more interested in reading in English, and will be able to improve your reading skills, too.

The book is intermediate reading level, so everyone should be able to enjoy reading it. It is a type of novel called dystopian fiction, which is kind of like the Hunger Games or Divergent. We will be talking about this genre and how it relates to our lives and our world, too.

This study will have three workshop sessions, one interview session, and a movie and pizza party at the end of the study. The first workshop will be the longest, 80 minutes, so that we can take a survey and so I can find out what experience you have learning English and reading in English, and learning about the book.

The other two sessions will be 50 minutes long, and the interview meeting won’t be more than 20 minutes. In the workshop sessions we will have class-type sessions, with discussing the first three chapters, practicing vocabulary, and using reading strategies to improve your reading skills in English.

Once we finish all of that we will find a time to watch the movie version of the book together, and eat pizza! Or another type of food that everyone would like (within reason).

During the workshop sessions I will take notes and audio record so that I can get the most information from each session about what you think about the lessons and activities. I will also record the interview sessions. However, all of your information will be kept confidential and safe.

In my notes I will not refer to you by your names, and the interviews and surveys will be related by a number you assign to yourself. This number will not be written down in relation to your name, for privacy. When I write about the study no names or identifying information will be included. Notes will be about material successes of the course, not student success. I expect to take notes on what activities worked well, too easy, too difficult, problematic for presentation (language), whether students were engaged, and details that relate to the value of the workshop.
APPENDIX D

MCCULLOCH AUTHORIZATION

I, Margaret McCulloch, authorize Hannah Bingham Brunner to use my Creative Component entitled *Using The Giver as a medium for content-based language teaching* in her thesis. I give permission for any and all portions of my Creative Component to be reproduced and distributed as necessary during the course of her research.
The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University according to the dates shown above. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 50), please be sure to:

- Use only the approved study materials in your research, including the recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.
- Retain signed informed consent documents for 3 years after the close of the study, when documented consent is required.
- Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes to the study by submitting a Modification Form for Non-Exempt Research or Amendment for Personnel Changes form, as necessary.
- Immediately inform the IRB of (1) all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) any other unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others.
- Stop all research activity if IRB approval lapses, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.
- Complete a new continuing review form at least three to four weeks prior to the date for continuing review as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Please be aware that IRB approval means that you have met the requirements of federal regulations and ISU policies governing human subjects research. Approval from other entities may also be needed. For example, access to data from private records (e.g., student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. IRB approval in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns at 515-294-4566 or IRB@iastate.edu.
APPENDIX F

MCCULLOCH CREATIVE COMPONENT: “USING THE GIVER AS A MEDIUM FOR CONTENT-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING”