Shakespeare as a Prompter of Language Awareness: Stylistics as a Way of Reading between/beyond the Lines

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Abstract

This study responds to a double call. Firstly, it aims to develop an empirical and pedagogical perspective on the integration of language and literature teaching. Secondly, it attempts to construct a language awareness (LA) assessment tool to keep pace with developments in reading. To this end, the study investigates the extent to which a stylistic exploration of Shakespeare's language can enhance EFL students' language awareness, which is defined for the present purpose in terms of a number of stylistic devices (e.g. metaphor) which potentially contribute to the 'literariness' of a text.

Pedagogical materials and activities were designed accordingly in order to raise awareness of a group of 22 Taiwanese university students over a 10-week period of intervention. Extracts from Shakespeare's sonnets and plays were used as the medium to sensitise students to various linguistic devices and their literary functions. Further non-Shakespearean materials, both literary and non-literary (e.g. advertisements, newspaper headlines, political speeches) were drawn upon as backup resources to consolidate the stylistic exploration done in the classroom.

At the end of the course, students' LA development is demonstrated qualitatively in their course diaries, quantitatively in the researcher-developed LA Test, and different forms of questionnaires students filled in. The study concludes with suggestions regarding the refinement of assessment tools, with implications for future research into the scholarship of teaching.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview and scope of study

Following recent works on the interface of language and literature (e.g. Carter, 1995; Carter & Long, 1991; McRae, 1991; Carter & McRae, 1996; Short, 1996; Montgomery et al, 2000; Simpson, 2004, among others), this study is rooted in an effort to enhance students' awareness of the properties of 'literary' language. It is believed that a stylistic approach to literary works may help students of language better see the densities of linguistic texturing and thereby develop their ability to make meaning in imaginative and analytic ways. Such a belief is formulated on the ground that literary texts contain substantial amounts of patterning, figuration, sound effects, and deployment of rhetorical tropes among other devices. Knowing how these verbal artefacts work is essential to the overall understanding and appreciation of literary language.

To understand and appreciate literary language not only consists of recognising the linguistic form, but also of an understanding of its relation to meaning in a particular context (i.e. recognising its identity and understanding its novelty and originality).

Nonetheless, it is generally assumed that literary texts are more difficult to process than expository prose, either because of the multiple layers of

meanings literary texts are held to contain, or because of the wider and more complex range of language they exhibit. As Herman (1983: 119) makes it clear:

> Along a spectrum of discourses, it may well be that literary discourse will turn out to be at the most complex end. Precisely because the full resources of language are open to exploitation for literary ends, with nothing excluded in advance, language for literary use has a vast reservoir of forms at its disposal.

Additionally, in terms of purpose, literary texts tend to involve the reader in direct experience rather than simply convey information (as found in expository writing). Because of this, literary texts are characterised by an absence of many contextualising devices that are used to provide background and signal relationships (Gajdusek, 1988). The lack of explicit contextualisation often forces the reader to come to grips with the world found in the text in a more strenuous fashion. This is one explanation of why literature makes a greater interactive demand upon the reader than do ordinary texts.

Given that literary texts contains highly abstract vocabulary, complex syntactical structures, and even sophisticated style which even native-speakers often cannot read without effort, reading literary works makes even more demands on students who study English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL, or L2). This is partly because a gap exists between their level of linguistic/literary competence and the level or standard required of them to study literature of English. We are reminded by Maley (1989: 10) that when it

comes to reading literature in English, most EFL students, with relatively few exceptions, are 'nowhere near competent enough'. Lack of skills and confidence in reading, many EFL students tend to read a literary work the way they read, say, a textbook, (i.e. they read it literally), with no intention of processing and interpretation (Aimone et al., 1997).

A further difficulty is that students' interpretative skills and analytic abilities are often taken for granted, as if they have already attained the level of competence in the language to study literature (Short, 1983). Therefore, fostering textual analysis skills is often ignored in this context (McRae & Clark, 2004). Like a vicious circle, the gap keeps turning students away from a continuous exposure to literary texts of a serious nature.

One of the main implications for teachers looking for effective teaching methods emerges: that to perform adequately in response to 'literature' demands a certain degree of linguistic sophistication in the student. To achieve this certain degree of linguistic sophistication, EFL students need a more systematic introduction to the activity of literary study than is usually provided in many traditional literature courses[1], as the testimony of many literature teachers and literary scholars reveals (Widdowson, 1990; Carter & Long, 1991; Cummins, 1998).

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[1] By the 'traditional' approaches, I mean that literature is assigned a special place in language learning, treated as a body of knowledge instead of an integral component of language learning. Secondly, view pedagogically, literature is taught predominantly as a teacher-centred, transmitted model.

To improve the quality of literary study in the classroom, Aimone et al. (1997: 103) argue, 'much of our work (as a teacher) is to break down barriers so that students are not afraid of what they've already experienced as literature'.

Apart from the aforementioned language barriers between the students and the literary texts, *curricular, affective,* and *methodological* barriers are evident, all of which had been largely ignored in language teaching context in Taiwan. Here I shall give a brief view of these obstacles and return to them in the next chapter for a more thorough discussion.

First, literature courses have faced the most serious form of attack. The study of literature, according to proponents of functional approaches, is too far removed from the practical need of the EFL learners (Harper, 1988; Duff & Maley, 1990). Consequently, many educational institutions in Taiwan have put the main emphasis on the basic four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) approach to language learning/teaching at the direct expense of literature. In view of the tremendous emphasis placed upon practical values in education, it is inevitable that one college course after another is put to the test of practicality. It is, then, difficult to justify the place of literature in such a learning context.

Second, what many language practitioners and literary scholars (e.g. Gilroy-Scott, 1983; Belcher & Hirvela, 2000) observe and describe about the drop in the interest in studying literature also holds true in the Taiwanese

context. Students of language generally show a low level of enthusiasm for studying literature. This affective barrier is often the result of a bad experience of learning literature. As Harper (1988: 402) notes, 'the way the academy presents literature may be one of the reasons for the decline over the past decade'.

Third, the methodological barrier denotes the traditional teaching approaches that still haunt many literature classrooms in Taiwan (Liao, 2004). In these highly traditional contexts, cramming is normal (Gold, 1996). The study of literature is often characterised by a content-based, desk-bound, and teacher-centred methodology. The classroom dynamics is as simple as a transmission-reception one, where the teacher functions as the authoritative expert and transmitter of knowledge conveyed to students in the form of 'background' to be memorised and reproduced when the examinations require it (Carter & Waker, 1989; Erbaugh, 1999). Since teaching literature in this way bears little relation to the development of linguistic skills to read literature, students often fail to learn how to make their own meaning when reading texts (Carter, 1982).

To remove these barriers to the study of literature, a number of methods are derived from a range of standpoints. Rodger (1969a: 89) suggests an 'intrinsic' methodology for literature:

> I assume it as axiomatic that our task is not to hand over pre-digested meanings but to teach our students how to read and interpret for

themselves ... When they leave us, they should not be critical parrots who have been taught what to think and feel about a number of pre-valued prescribed books, but reasonably skilled and sensitive readers able to think, feel and judge for themselves, with fidelity to the textual facts, in response to any work of literature they may choose to read.

To Rodger, the use of linguistic techniques in the literature class can refine the sensitivity of responses to literary texts and sharpen powers of interpretation.

Widdowson's (1975, 1979, 1999) advocacy of literature is also linguistically oriented. The use of linguistics in approaching the study of literary texts is based on the assumption that literature, due to its interpretative appeals and suggestive powers, can raise 'conscious[ness] of the procedures we employ in the understanding of any discourse' (1979: 159). Similar claims have been made in a number of publications that concern the development of appropriate linguistic capacities in the students (e.g. Collie & Slater, 1987; Carter, & Long, 1987a; 1987b; Clarke, 1989; Maley & Duff, 1990; Halász, 1991; Lazar, 1993).

In seeking a middle ground between linguistics and literature, language-based and stylistic approaches repeatedly appeared and have been taken up by many language and literature teachers as the better options than the traditional approaches to learning language and literature (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Widdowson, 1992; Carter, 1995; Short, 1996; Clark, 1996; Toolan, 1998).

Because of its recourse to systematic and explicit knowledge of linguistic

norms, stylistics contributes substantially to the development of the learner's awareness of and sensitivity to the ways in which patterns of language are exploited in literary texts (Cummings & Simmons, 1983; Bain, Fitzgerald & Taylor, 1992; McCarthy & Carter, 1994; Carter, 2003; Simpson, 1997; Bolitho et al., 2003).

Even though there has been an increased concern in the integration of language and literature, it remains a relatively unexplored territory in the domain of language teaching in the particular context of Taiwan. What seems to be spectacularly absent is classroom-based research, particularly in the EFL context. Such a view is strongly put by Nunan (1992: 106), who ably argues, 'If context is important to research outcomes, then we need far more of these classroom-based, as opposed classroom-oriented, studies'. This argument demonstrates the fact that classroom approaches and pedagogies in the area of leaning about language have been so far relatively limited, leaving in this whole domain of development many intriguing issues untreated.

In addition, most published studies on stylistics tend to be theoretical in nature. Classroom-based issues such as how this kind of reading process contributes to learners' awareness and how it influences learners' affect towards texts remain typically untapped. This is merely as a consequence of the fact that, glossing Short (1989: 2), 'stylisticians tend to be long on theory but short on practice'. Hanauer (2001: 296) also points out that 'much stylistic research involves the analysis of literary texts, not how real readers, let alone non-native readers,

understand these texts'.

The same observation is made by van Leir (1996: 27), who notes that theories in relevant fields such as linguistics and second language acquisition (SLA) 'do not generally address language-pedagogical issues, neither at a theoretical nor at a practical level'. Especially when one examines the literature on related classroom research, one is struck by the relative paucity of related discussion in the EFL educational setting.

In fact, to my awareness, the potential benefits of seeing literature and language as interrelating and interrelated systems, which have been a source of many instructional innovations in L1 context, have not yet been explored extensively in the Taiwanese context, either at the level of research or at the level of practical implementation.

In view of such a scarcity of primary research, the theory needs to be put into practice if its relevance to pedagogy is to be effectively assessed. I see this position as consistent with Widdowson's (1990: 6) claim that within the disciplines concerned with language and learning, 'efforts are of no eventual pedagogic value unless they can be carried through into the classroom context'. From the teacher's perspective, *practice* provides the chief impetus for the development of a theory of practice. I would therefore give a priority to the empirical verification of theories, as this kind of research may heal the rift that exists between academic theories and pedagogical practices.

As a corollary to this concern, this empirical enquiry, as realised through action research, aims to explore a range of stylistic pedagogies which would help students hone a skill that can be transferred to the reading of any common text —newspaper, speeches, songs, and advertisements. This provides one of the impetus and points of departure for the investigation. Following this line of enquiry, the second attempt is directed at finding out the cognitive and affective development of awareness-raising in the learner's perception of language.

To substantiate the position that learners could derive greater benefits from learning language through stylistics, extracts from Shakespeare's plays and sonnets are taken as the basis for analytic works and activity designs. That is, Shakespeare's language is pedagogically intended to be used as a literary medium for stylistic exploration.

It must be emphasised that this pedagogical stance subscribes to 'the *use* of literature as a resource for language learning' propounded by Maley (1989: 10). In a learner-centred literature teaching seminar, Maley made a valuable distinction between the *study* of literature (Purpose One) and the *use* of literature as a resource for language learning (Purpose Two). It may be argued that each of these two approaches derives from different traditions and implies different foci and methodologies.

What is important for Purpose Two is that it makes literature one source among others to be exploited for promoting language teaching/learning.

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Methodologically, texts can be manipulated, dissected, transformed, compared, decontextualised, or rearranged to suit different teaching purposes and to activate student response. Fundamentally, the orientation is to move away from teacher-centredness towards learning-centredness. The argument—pedagogical, linguistic, humanistic, and cultural—in favour of *using* literature in ESL/EFL classes have been convincingly made before this, and therefore they are not repeated here.

1.2 Why Shakespeare

As many scholars amply demonstrate, the linguistic resourcefulness which typifies literary discourse creates a valuable nexus for exploring the English language (Carter & Burton, 1982; Birch, 1989; Durant & Fabb, 1990; Toolan, 1998; Simpson, 2004). While many pieces of literary works may provide for fostering knowledge *about* language, Shakespeare is the preferred choice here. This brings up a fundamental question of the present study: Why Shakespeare?

Reasons for taking an interest in Shakespeare are well informed by many, both pedagogically and scholarly (Bailey, 1985; Epstein, 1993; Bergeron & de Sousa, 1995; Bloom, 1998; McEvoy, 2000; Collins, 2001; Cartmell & Scott, 2001; O'Toole, 2003; Metzger, 2004). The factors which condition such a choice are manifold. Reductively, the choice of Shakespeare to prompt language awareness (LA) in the present study is both a *linguistic* and *cultural* one.

Shakespeare's durability is often attributed to his language (Kermode, 2001). From a linguistic point of view, the unique qualities of Shakespeare's language provide a particularly appropriate test case for a stylistic approach. Collins (2001: 205) emphasises that what makes a story enduring is 'the way it is told to us, our experience of it. The wordplay, the rhymes, the repetitions and variations all combine to make our experience of the story deeply satisfying'. To study Shakespeare's language, students can see how he transforms his stories and sources into something more 'rich and strange' (ibid).

Crystal's (2003: 77) statement is informative in this respect:

> From Shakespeare we learn how it is possible to explore and exploit the resource of a language in original ways, displaying its range and variety in the service of the poetic imagination. In his best writing, we see how to make a language work so that it conveys the effects we want it to.

As an instrument and channel of understanding the aesthetic working of language, Shakespeare's writing is herein regarded as an enabling facility, an access to the study of literariness in language.

By stressing reading and interpretation, rather than the scholarly dissection of texts, this pedagogical stance challenges the narrow concept of a canonical Shakespeare or high-class scholarship in which the theoretical considerations can be too abstract and remote from students' felt experience of language at work. It is in this regard that Shakespeare as a prompter of language awareness

is founded in this research. It is believed that to perceive the linguistic patterns and to sense the artistic structures is to achieve a small intellectual victory for students. It is believed that if students can crack Shakespeare 'code', they can decipher nearly anything literary. Therefore, Shakespeare becomes the primary prompt, whose works serve as springboard texts.

Cultural

The use of Shakespeare also involves a considerable baggage of shared knowledge, familiarity with Western culture, and overall cultural awareness. McRae's (1996) statement that awareness of language leads to awareness of text and then to awareness of culture contains some of the axioms that characterise the relationship between literature and culture. To this McRae (2002) explains in a conference held in Taiwan:

> The most innovative recent textbooks and the best practice over recent years have implicitly been incorporating materials which require interpretation skills and which expand cultural awareness as well as developing the basic language skills.

The growing importance given to 'culture' in language education is reflected in McRae's argument. If we agree that 'a piece of literature is a highly charged cultural artifact' (Gajdusek, 1988: 232), then it follows that studying Shakespeare invariably implies learning something of western culture as well. Shakespeare's close relationship with culture is expressed explicitly by Kermode (2001: ix): 'a true acquaintance with Shakespeare is as necessary to

our [western] culture as an understating, however partial, of the greatness of Mozart or of Cézanne'.

Here I shall give a few examples of how Shakespeare repeatedly returns in different contexts, accounting for why Kermode thinks an 'acquaintance with Shakespeare' is necessary.

Firstly, contemporary culture and advertising are rife with allusions to Shakespeare. Examples include titles of *Star Trek* movies ('The Undiscovered Country') and may even be found in print advertisements for cleaning solutions ('Out, damn spot!'). This can perhaps be seen most clearly when Kastan (2001: 107) observes that

> The lineaments of his plots are ineradicably a part of our cultural legacy, often reappearing in modern disguise. *King Lear* is reborn in our times in Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*; *Hamlet*, perhaps, as *The Lion King*.

Shakespeare's works transcend his period to achieve a kind of universality, which is why his plot types, which are recognisable within all cultures: e.g. the dramatic representation of enduring human types, archetypal theme of betrayal, revenge, love triangles, battles between good and evil are eminently transferable into other cultural contexts.

Secondly, Shakespeare's works have been read widely, much discussed over the years, and annotated continuously. John Gross's *After Shakespeare: Writing*

Inspired by the World's Greatest Author (2002) attests to the enormous impact Shakespeare has had on later writers. Many segments of writing are written from and about the spaces Shakespeare left between the lines[2].

To promote cultural awareness, English teachers have at least to equip students with a modicum of familiarity with Shakespeare's works, for '[a]wareness of Shakespeare has become part of the mental equipment expected of educated persons in many different countries' (Wells & Cowen, 2003: 5).

That said, it would be a gross misunderstanding to assume that other literary works should be abandoned out of hand. On the contrary, many literary resources have potential for further exploration. Hence, I would like to clarify here that by delimiting my examples for analysis to Shakespeare, I am not arguing against the inclusion of other literatures of English. Nor am I suggesting that canonical texts are the only sources for studying language, because creativity and literariness can also be found in what used to be considered non-literary texts. This is not particularly my original proposition. Many modern linguists and literary scholars (e.g. McRae, 1991; Carter & Nash, 1990) have demonstrated the potentiality of 'seeing through language' by means of a wide range of texts from travel brochures, newspaper headlines, popular fictions, and political speeches.

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[2] Works referred to include Fydor Dostoevsky, Aldous Huxley, Emily Dickinson, Duke Ellington, James Joyce, Jean-Paul Sartre, John Osbourne and several others.

The consistent use of Shakespeare's works is to bring his language into sharper focus, to realise the main objective of prompting the learner's language awareness through his textual composition.

As this study concerns pedagogies related to Shakespeare rather than Shakespearean criticism, theoretical 'isms' would fall outside the scope of study. However, this does not preclude some significant theoretical issues, especially those that underline the rapidly developing concepts of pedagogic stylistics and Language Awareness. Theoretical principles can help us understand why certain methodologies and practices are more appropriate and effective than others in different settings.

A study like the present one, therefore, is interdisciplinary in nature. In my view, an interdisciplinary approach attempts to contribute to at least two fields, rather than borrowing methods from one field and simply applying them in another. Since this study relies substantially on methods and theoretical conceptions from stylistics and Language Awareness, it should be possible to obtain results which are not only relevant to literary studies alone, but also to practical pedagogies in particular.

Therefore efforts are made to advance relevant theoretical discussion and practical experiment in what has so far been a much overlooked part of English education in Taiwan. Thus, this study has the potential to extend the current research agenda, as well as to provide language teachers with a greater range of

pedagogical intervention strategies than is currently encountered within the research literature.

1.3 Organisation of the study

The purpose of this introduction is to provide a general context and rationale for the chapters in this study. Also described are some preliminary definitions of key terms to forestall misinterpretation and, if possible, to facilitate the discussion of issues of concern. In what follows, I set out the terrain to be covered, and provide a map to some of the substantive findings and methodological issues to be found. The structure of the main body of this study is as follows:

Following this introduction, **Chapter 2** examines the teaching/learning context where this study is situated. It looks at the merits and demerits of the traditional and communicative approaches, as these are the dominant approaches widely employed in the Taiwanese context. This critical examination leads to a conclusion that there is much left to be desired for seeking a better means to make students of language in Taiwan aware of the potential rewards of systematically applying linguistic knowledge to the study of literary texts.

More particularly, some recommendations, as a complementary route to conventional approaches to literature, are made for a pedagogic change and balance. The proposed approach provides an alternative avenue, unlike a

traditional literary study, to show students *how* what is said is said and *how* meanings are made, thus laying a basis of preliminary and pre-literary techniques and procedures which will give students increasing confidence in their own understanding and appreciation of literary discourse.

As this study is interdisciplinary in nature, an effort is made in **Chapter 3** to show how viewpoints derived from Shakespearean pedagogies, stylistics, and Language Awareness can be fully linked. Pivotal theoretical underpinnings are thus justified as to how an effective liaison between the partnership of Shakespearean language and stylistic approaches can contribute to language awareness in the learners.

Here the theoretical definition of language awareness is made operational in the classroom context. This preliminary theoretical exercise will result in the formulation of a number of motivated assumptions about the literary competence and awareness, which will be empirically tested in the chapters that follow.

From **Chapter 4** onwards, the methodological points of departure for this study are expounded. It includes clearly stated research objectives and research questions. Next, I present the methodological procedures of working with texts, which set up the pedagogic framework and the research design. This groundwork prepares for the subsequent development of practical approaches to the analysis of Shakespeare's language.

Chapter 5 is the extended part of methodology, where I discuss how different types of measurement tools—diary, tests, and questionnaires—are administered, designed, and processed to elicit and capture the development of language awareness, the construct I wish to enhance and measure in the participants. As the development of LA cannot be directly observed, learner diaries, widely acknowledged as an insightful tool of introspection, are used to capture the affective domain of LA development.

The teacher-developed LA test, via the implementation of pre- and post-test, is used with a focus to capture the cognitive domain of LA development. In addition, various forms of questionnaires are used as backup to triangulate the findings so that the validity and reliability can be enhanced. Thus seen, concurrent mixed methods are utilised to better understand research questions by converging quantitative and qualitative data.

Chapter 6 gets down to the specifics of classroom instruction. It consists of eight self-contained units, each of which centres on one linguistic/stylistic feature accompanied by illustrative materials, teaching techniques, and learning activities. The aims have been to give students the linguistic principles that allow them to do stylistics themselves, to read between the lines, and to make sense of other challenging texts. Pedagogical process is thus presented, along with the ways students are involved in the stylistic investigation of different 'levels of language'. Throughout this chapter, a rich array of data can be found, as the student's voices are integrated to reflect on changes in perceptions,

awareness, and feelings about literariness in their reading.

Chapter 7 is the most extensive chapter in this thesis, and is pivotal in a number of ways. Issues of data coding and data analysis are discussed respectively. Then different data sources are brought together, and lines of connection explored. The overall impact of the course on participants' development of LA is evaluated in two fundamental perspectives: the cognitive domain and the affective domain. Finally, the two essential qualities of measurement—reliability and validity—are examined.

Chapter 8 sums up the research questions being raised, along with a discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the study. Based on the benefits of hindsight, refinements of evaluative tools and pedagogies are provided. Furthermore, suggestions are made for further researches that endorse the continuation of the scholarship of teaching.

1.4 Some preliminary definitions of key terms

The theoretical basis of this study and its terminology and approach derives from a polyphony of literary linguistics, Language Awareness, and stylistics. I wish to clarify the usage that will be followed in this thesis to avoid misinterpretation. It is here that the specificities of some primary terms are to be sought.

In attempting to define a phenomenon like 'literary language', however elusive or inconclusive that phenomenon may be, we are actually asking the question to which a resurgence of attention has been drawn — what is literature?

'Literature' is a term currently being argued about and redefined. From a traditional point-of-view, or in the view of Taiwanese teaching context, literature typically refers to canonical literary texts of the kind which occupy secure positions in university and college curriculum.

For teachers and students of literature, novels by Jane Austen or Charles Dickens, poems by John Donne or William Shakespeare, etc. are literary works to be held in great reverence, or even in deference. On the other hand, newspapers, political speeches, or even nursery rhymes have no literary quality or particular sway in the academic field. There is a clear literary-nonliterary divide.

However, the term 'literature' is subject to a reconceptulisation. There is a strong case, argued creatively by McRae (1991), that any representational materials appealing to the reader's imagination and stimulating reaction and response can be called literature. Although many teachers of classical literature may find this much to disagree with, I have opted here to use the term 'literature' to embrace both the concept of a capital 'L' and a small 'l' (McRae, ibid) in the widest sense of the word. In other words, literature is not taken here

to be exclusively high-art in a traditional sense. To avoid a sacrosanct view of Shakespeare, I use 'texts' in preference to the word 'literature'

Literariness

The concept of literariness has been widely discussed (Mukařovský, 1964; Herman, 1983; Carter & Nash, 1990; Miall & Kuiken, 1998; Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000; McRae & Clark, 2004). Extant theories addressing this topic range from those that process through internal analysis to those adopting a contextual approach. This area of study will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3. For current purposes, literariness is conceptualised as formal features in literary texts that typically require and reward interpretative acitity. Although this formulation tends to be rejected by poststructuralist critics, I want to argue that the elusive question of literariness can be partly resolved by delimiting it to specific poetic devices, such as rhythm and metaphor.

This has its rationale. For one, to see literariness as being composed of text-intrinsic features can provide a secure basis for empirical investigations. For another, to base the notion of literariness on linguistic dimension does not necessarily mean to disregard the reader's role in shaping literariness. In fact, the notion of literariness is created by the interplay between textual features and the reader's mind. One primary aim of this study is to create such an interaction in the classroom, by prompting in the learner the palpability of textual devices and their representational effects. And it is here that Language

Awareness, a pedagogical approach which aims to help learners gain insights into *how* language works, makes a crucial contribution to a theory of the relation between literary texts and the mind of the reader.

Language Awareness

Defining the term language awareness is problematic, but before going on, it is worth noting that the term is used here in a specific sense. In general, language awareness is an umbrella term referring to a sensitivity to or consciousness of a wide range of discourse in use. To delimit the investigation into a manageable scope, language awareness needs to be narrower than the general view implied above. I have thereby restricted the term to mean particularly awareness of 'literariness' in a spectrum of discourse, be it literary or non-literary. I will further stipulate what I take this construction to be in section 3.3.

CHAPTER 2
CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the educational milieu where this classroom-based study is situated. In particular, I examine some of the problems raised by the teaching of literature. In response to these problems, some recommendations are made for the development of effective literary education.

2.1 Literary curriculum and the teaching of literature in Taiwan: barriers to literature study

For the moment, some ideas about the educational setting, in particular association with the teaching of literature, must be discussed. As this is not the place to do a thorough examination of the English language curriculum of higher education in Taiwan, I will describe briefly the special circumstances as it relates to the present study. Many observations can be presented, but I shall list what I deem the principle ones:

First, that there is a tendency to play down the relevance of literature in language curriculum.

Over the past ten years, there has been a significant declining trend in the

amount of reading literature (Davis et al., 1992; Belcher & Hirvela, 2000). Recent studies show that the reading of literature by students is diminishing in two ways.

First, students tend to read less than the generations before them did. Younger generations are shifting their attention to other leisure activities like watching television or getting online (Knulst & Kraaykamp, 1998; van Schooten & de Glopper, 2004). Second, students are showing a less favourable attitude towards reading as they grow older (Mckenna & Kear, 1990; Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Kush & Watkins, 1999).

According to van Schooten and de Glopper (2002), the type of education students receive is an important variable in predicting the reading attitude and reading behaviour. A critical examination of Taiwan's higher education offers proof of this declining trend.

The past ten years in Taiwan has witnessed a dramatic increase in the number of English departments. Of the 67 universities and 75 colleges, English departments have become one of the most popular areas of academia where students choose to do a degree (Ministry of Education, ROC, 2004).

However, the rise of the number of English departments among universities does not mean that literature has gained popularity. Inspection of the nation-wide language curriculum will reveal that many schools (except some

prestigious 'key universities') have generally placed more emphasis on training in the instrumental functions of the language than on training in the aesthetic understanding and appreciation of the language. In other words, English teaching across the school curriculum reveals a commitment to a pedagogy in which teachers instruct students in the correct forms of the language.

This overriding focus on forms can be partly attributed to a rapid rise of 'Applied English' departments, where the curriculum prioritises basic functional skills of language for specific purposes. Behind such a utilitarian concern of pedagogy is a widely held assumption that the study of literature has little bearing on EFL learners' needs to promote a functional command of English.

In fact, the relevance of literature to language learning has always been minimised in a foreign language context (McRae & Clark, 2004). The situation in Taiwan is no exception, especially when the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is officially promoted by the Ministry of Education. Under the auspices of the utilitarianism advocated by CLT, literature is seen as not providing the appropriate kinds of language required to convey everyday messages. The result is that literature courses, being taught as specialised subjects, have been on the wane in the curriculum.

This mark of paucity of literary study is identified elsewhere by many researchers and teachers (Moody, 1983; Littlewood, 1986; Boyle, 1986; Sihui,

1996). For instance, in a discussion of university curriculum in Guangdon, Sihui (1996: 169) expresses many literature teachers' well-founded anxieties about the shrinkage of English literature because 'English Literature Course (a history of English literature and selected readings) for the forth-year undergraduate students has been forced to shrink into a one semester-course'.

Boyle (1986: 199) remarks well on the new awareness of the problem in most EFL contexts:

> This tendency is reinforced when English for Specific Purpose (ESP) becomes fashionable and the generalities of literature are considered less relevant to the student's needs than the more purpose-specific language of other disciplines.

As Boyle suggests above, unless educational administrators and language teachers are convinced that leaning English means more than day-to-day communication, the teaching/learning of literature will not be of direct relevance to the practical needs of the students.

Second, that a teacher-centred, transmissive model of teaching dominates literature classroom.

The characteristic of many literature classrooms in Taiwan is a preoccupation of traditional teacher-fronted teaching. In fact, the extended teacher-led presentation is often what students expect and desire. As Erbaugh (1999: 18)

accurately describes, 'Chinese students expect teachers to lecture and to provide models which will yield notes to pass exams'.

Traditional practice has normally been to include discussion and analysis of literary texts in class. However, the emphasis is on *product* rather than on *process*. A substantial amount of time is spent on the historical/cultural background, biography about the authors, particular literary conventions, synopses of the works, so much so that literature teachers tend to retreat into teaching *about* literature. In other words, literature is presented in a way that is 'directed towards a development of knowledge *about* literature rather than knowledge *of* literature' (Carter & McRae, 1996: xxi). Inevitably, knowledge *about* literature often replaces the texts (Carter & Long, 1991; Faber, 1998).

Short and Candlin (1986: 90) provide a possible explanation of why the process of *how* texts work is often missing in the classroom. They explain that non-native teachers of English have always felt uneasy to provide 'sophisticated response to minute details of language'. As a result, there is normally little concern with how to use linguistic knowledge to read literature for how meanings are arrived at. Elioglu (1992: 19) acknowledges this to be true:

> Reading between the lines can become a painful process for the Turkish English-teacher, just as it is for the students, who is not equipped with the cultural insight to decipher the text.

In this sense, the meanings are 'pre-given', not created by a process of meaning-creation (Short & Candlin, 1986). Passing over the ready-made interpretation to students, as Protherough (1986: 36) argues, 'simply short-circuits the process by which the students develop their own response to the work'.

There may be some inspiring lectures that benefit students considerably in this way. Generally, however, students in such a teacher-led classroom have little provision of opportunities to open and close conversation, exercise discourse skills, express what they think, or experiment with the language. The lecture is a one-way, transmissive process, which may be represented as in figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1

One-way text presentation

$$\boxed{\text{Text}} \text{ (as a product)}$$

Teacher ⟶ Students
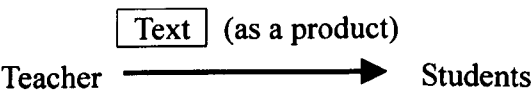
Such a standard interpretative tradition only provides students with a pre-packaged view of the literary work, and is prone to a mere information transfer (Long, 1986). Scholes (1985: 31) contends that the prevailing passivity of teaching methods only increases 'the instructor's mysterious powers and the

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student's sense of powerlessness'. As a consequence, students learn to rely on authorities outside themselves, either in the form of the teacher or the study-guides they read.

In an ideal literature classroom, what we are working towards would look more like this—an integrated, self-reflexive process, as the following figure might suggest:

Figure 2.2

Classroom Presentation of Literature (adapted from Long, 1986: 55)
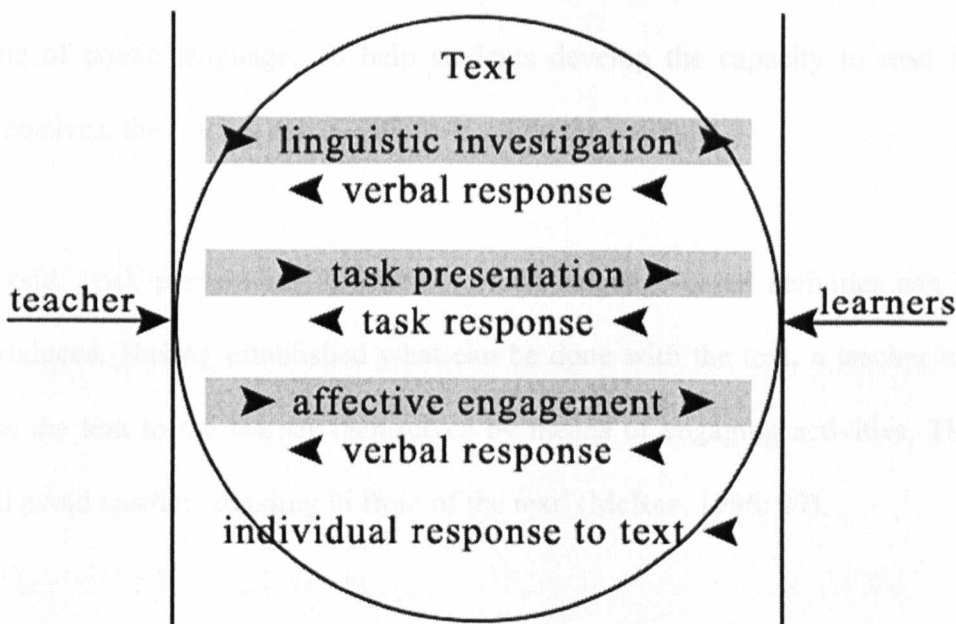
As the diagram shows, both the teacher and the learners have a part to play in the process of thinking how a text works. The interaction between the teacher

and the learners multiplies.

There are (at least) three modes of input running from the teacher. These inputs, as represented by the grey areas, include: (1) linguistic investigation, (2) task preparation, and (3) affective engagement, all of which aim to help students become active readers of texts through more careful, aware reading skills.

First, 'linguistic investigation' channel involves learners in a cognitive, investigative, and analytic process, where students need to read a text slowly and patiently so as to see exactly how and where its richness lies. Instead of skimming the text, or merely reading it for understanding the plot, students will gain experience of working closely with the semantic, syntactic, and discoursal logic of poetic language. To help students develop the capacity to read for themselves, the teacher ask questions to guide the reading.

Second, 'task preparation' is where various language-based activities can be introduced. Having established what can be done with the text, a teacher can pass the text to the learner themselves by means of engaging activities. This will avoid teacher 'standing in front of the text' (McRae, 1996: 27).

Third, 'affective engagement', as its name explicitly suggests, concerns the emotional aspects of learning. The teacher activates students by asking questions that elicit feelings and emotive responses towards the text or a particularly notable illustrative passage. Students might sometimes like to

suggest what feelings, memories or associations a text brings to mind for them. To complement cognitive investigation, affective engagement is indispensable in instruction—especially when we embark on a voyage into the realms of literature (Kissock & Iyortsuun, 1982).

On the other hand, the learner channels of responses—(1) verbal response (based on linguistic investigation), (2) task response, (3) verbal response (based on affective engagement) correspond and integrate with the teacher-input channels. Yet, there is likely an 'invisible' response channel running from the learner. The reason why it is invisible is that there are oftentimes when learners response to the text individually or internally, unseen. This explains why there is no indication of an arrow directing to the teacher in the diagrammatic representation. In Long's (1986: 57) formulation, the area is 'where the learners, as a result of the stimuli they have received, begin to make their own value judgments of liking or disliking of a certain work'.

With this framework, the goal cannot be to teach what a text means, or even what various critics have claimed about the text being studied. Rather, it is to enable students to become active interpreters in their own right, develop reading strategies, locate topics as they arise in the process of reading, and recognise where and how a writer offers a linguistic and narrative logic within which to explore them.

In such a multi-directional mode of teaching, more opportunities are opened up

for EFL learners. They can explore and interact with texts instead of sitting passively in an extended lecture. There might be admittedly an element of utopianism to those of us who have taught English as a foreign language, but 'ideals' are nonetheless 'always useful and sometimes necessary as models, even if in practice compromises have to be made' (van Lier, 1996: 20).

Unfortunately, the current situation in Taiwan seems, by and large, not very promising in this respect. The prevailing mode of working with texts in the classroom remains a teacher-centred way.

Third, that the teaching of literature has lacked a consistent methodology for presentation to learners.

Because the traditional, teacher-centred modes of presentation die hard, there has been a dearth of innovation to open up a varied approach to the teaching of literature in the classroom. To fully realise the potential of literature, Moody (1983: 18) argues, it is of particularly importance 'to ensure that teachers understand how to present literature (which may involve more than conventional teaching)'. However, it is not uncommon to find situations in Taiwan where 'the teacher translates passages and dictates notes, in an examination-centred approach' (Littlewood, 1986: 177).

A further difficulty with the teaching methods is that many students who later become teachers of English will still feel uneasy to teach literary texts since the

traditional 'chalk and talk' forms of experiencing literature have a strong influence on their teaching practices. When called upon to teach literature in the classroom, most teachers will 'hark back to how they themselves were taught' (Krahnke, 1987, quoted in van Lier, 1996: 88).

Another impediment to the teaching of literature in Taiwan is the massive discrepancy between the students' level of linguistic competence and what the teacher expects. Mysteriously, a majority of literature teachers tend to assume that students come to class with the required competence to meet the text, when actually many of them are not. Normally, in the large classes the students' linguistic competence shows extreme ranges, from reasonably good down to very limited. Regardless of these extreme ranges, the analysis of the text is often conducted in a way that is beyond students' comprehension.

According to Short (1989), the core of critical activities is composed of three levels of analysis, with the arrow indicating a dependency relationship:

Figure 2.3

(Level 3)

(Level 2)

(Level 1)

Description ——▶ Interpretation ——▶ Evaluation
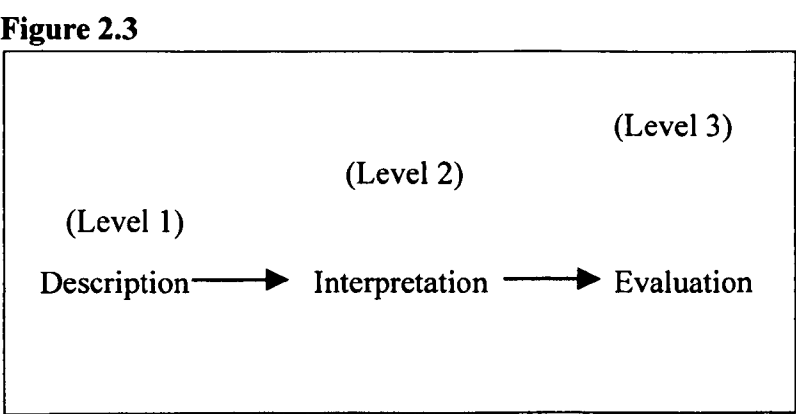
As the diagram shows, a *descriptive* activity of a literary text should be logically prior to an *interpretative* or *evaluative* one. Without a fundamentally linguistic description (lexically or syntactically) of the text, it is likely that a plurality of interpretation is produced without a basis. The underlying assumption is shared by Carter (1989: 2): 'Description of the language lays a clear basis for interpretation and evaluation'.

The common practice in a literature classroom, as suggested above, has tended to rely on the advanced levels to the exclusion of the basic one (Short, ibid). Pedagogically, this is putting the cart before the horse. It is no wonder why many Taiwanese students of language and literature fail to grow insight into the way language works to convey meaning. And very often, it is one of the primary reasons why students abandon literature in frustration (Harper, 1988).

All these barriers in Taiwan prompt a reappraisal of the pedagogic principles of teaching literature. Teachers need to find innovative ways of approaching literary works that many EFL students instinctively perceive as remote, inaccessible or unattractive. In other words, the present climate might encourage us to depart traditional classroom routines and consider alternatives to teaching literature. As Faber (1998: 83) points out, 'the secret of using literature in the foreign language classroom is to avoid traditional classroom teaching roles' so that motivation can be stimulated and a literary text can come alive.

In this context, teachers of literature are now faced with a challenge that calls into question traditional ways of teaching and learning literary texts. Literary education is in need of modification on a number of counts. It is best served by a list of points and issues for discussion.

2.2 Changing the balance: some recommendations

On the basis of a deep concern with the barriers mentioned above, the following are some points to recommend the teaching of literature in Taiwan. This is by no means sorely limited to a personal concern; these suggestions are built upon established concepts within the framework of what is known as pedagogical stylistics and Language Awareness. These suggestions are also generally shared and acknowledged by recent modes of thinking found in those who subscribe to a pedagogy that synthesises language and literature (Widdowson, 1975; Carter & McRae, 1996; Simpson, 1997; Montgomery, 2000). Although these insights have been previously brought up elsewhere, I would like to review them within the EFL learning context in Taiwan. To be more specific about my attempts at an 'alternative' pedagogy, I shall outline some principles:

1. Literature and language teaching should be linked and integrated to be mutually reinforcing.

The gap between literature and language, as noted previously, can be narrowed

without making a drastic revision to the language curriculum, since it needs a long time to redirect the strand of the education systems. To do this, language and literature, which have long been regarded as two intractably split subjects, should be linked (Widdowson, 1975). No longer should literature be entirely omitted from curricular because it is impractical, nor should it be taught entirely at an advanced level, creating the old-fashioned anomaly of a situation where 'students studied more English literature than they have studied English language' (Carter & Long, 1987a: 1).

Although language and literature may appear to be distinct from the viewpoint of some teachers and curriculum designers, they do not, intrinsically, appear so. It has been argued very clearly that 'students have to learn how to analyse language before they can respond subjectively to a text (Brumfit & Carter, 1986: 3). Perhaps a strong tie between language and literature is best illustrated by such an authority as Widdowson.

Widdowson (1975: 1) makes the claim that the teaching of literature should 'draw a good deal from linguistics'. It is now widely recognised in language education that students learn not only language per se, but they also *learn through language* (Derewianka, 1990; Carter & Nash, 1990; Hess, 2003). To cite just one example from many, Hess (2003: 20) explains thus:

> Entering a literary text, under the guidance of appropriate teaching, brings about the kind of participation almost no other text can produce. When we read, understand, and interpret a poem we learn

through the expansion of our experience with a larger human reality. Through a poem, we can grapple with the problems of a parallel life.

In conjunction with much received opinion, Benton and Fox (1990: 5) describe: 'The writer shapes his images, via the use of words, into a text'. Therefore, the first attempt here is to establish a pedagogic liaison between literature and language in classroom practice, for it will be possible for students to make quite strong gains in the sorts of learning promoted by such integration.

To fulfil the objective of exploring ways in which language and literature can be integrated, practitioners of both literature and language should help students to encounter genuine literary texts and assist students to get closer to the text. Such a view presupposes Carter's (1995: 9) argument that 'language is patterned in highly interesting ways in literary texts so they are in a primary sense of fascinating sources for the study of literature'. This argument is, of course, shared by many other literary scholars, applied linguists, and practitioners (Widdowson, 1975; Elkins, 1976; Benton & Fox, 1985; Abbs & Richardson, 1990; Grove, 1998). Seen thus, literature is indivisible from language and is a potentially useful aid to the language teacher.

If it is accepted that literature can be more extensively incorporated into the language classroom, then how is this best achieved in the classroom? This leads to the following points.

2. Language should be an essential foundation for understanding literature: Of central importance is the text itself.

Taiwanese students have long been taught little or nothing about language and *how* it works. The study of literary texts is often concerned with *facts:* the background, context, history, and criticism. As a consequence, the necessary foundation for appreciating literature can hardly be established. The result is that after learning and reading literature for years, many students are still unable to provide or explain their responses with direct reference to features of the text.

A 'flight from the text' referred to by Short and Candlin (1989: 178) is a remark germane to this circumstance. This acute observation virtually points out the fact that little attention is placed on *how* language is involved in the construction of meaning. Since language is vitally important to the appreciation of the style, effects and techniques of the writing, there is no point in studying a text without first looking into its language (McRae & Vethamani, 1999). Although studying the relationship of a literary text to its biographical or historical background can be valuable and interesting, it remains, according to Short (1983: 70), 'ancillary to the central critical task of understanding and judging literary works'.

What comes first is to find *how* language works, because it 'necessitates the ability to interact with the texts' (McKay, 1986: 192). For this reason, students

need to be encouraged and guided to explore the language choices made in the text. So, *how* the text achieves its effects can be clearly seen.

3. The students should be made more sensitive to the processes involved in reading literary texts.

There has been a presumption in considerable number of literature classrooms that students naturally know how to read texts placed in front of them (Brumfit & Carter, 1986). Certainly, teachers have taken care to ensure that the materials are usually manageable and accessible, but they have not often paused to think about some of the possible ways of making engagement with the texts the student might be reading. In the traditional literature classroom, where little attention had been paid to reading processes, few students were led to some essential insights into the interplay of linguistic implications and literary interpretation.

Blake (1983: 131) is convinced that as long as students are still struggling with 'meaning and vocabulary', they are not developing an awareness of language. To do other than struggling with the content, EFL students need to be made aware '*how* what is said is said and how meanings are made', not merely to be fed more and more literature (Brumfit & Carter, 1986: 3). In agreement with Brumfit and Carter, McKay makes a point (1986: 198): 'if we wish to promote truly aesthetic reading, it is essential that literature be approached not efferently, but in a manner which establishes a personal and aesthetic interaction between

a reader and a text'.

For this reason, it will be argued that the primary emphasis should be placed on the negotiable aspects of language in contrast to the conventional concerns with plot, character, setting, meaning, and criticism. Only when learners are explicitly taught to notice aspects of language at work, to consider why it has been employed in that manner, will they begin to make and remake relationships with the texts. The important point to address is that students should become more confident and clearer in their capacity to know how language works, and how the subtleties and nuances of meanings are being conveyed through the author's linguistic choices. This seems to be the strongest justification for the teaching of literature, for many Taiwanese students 'have little sense of how to make the linguistic knowledge that they have accumulated' (Gray, 1994: 132).

4. Learning and teaching should be process-oriented.

With a pioneer of process-oriented instruction such as Bruner, teachers are reminded that

> We teach a subject not to produce little living libraries on that subject, but rather to get a student to ... take part in the process of knowledge-getting. Knowing is a process not a product. (Bruner, 1966: 72)

The process-oriented approach has become in recent years an important

educational goal in language classroom (Vermunt & Verloop, 1999; Dörnyei, 2000; Bolhuis & Voeten, 2001). The main assumption underlying process-oriented instruction is that learning is viewed as a multidimensional process.

First, the interest needs to be activated. Next, the interest generated has to be actively maintained and protected while the learning lasts — a notion running parallel to what Sperber and Wilson (1986, cited in McRae 1991: 54) call 'an act of ostensive communication must attract the audience's attention'. Finally, following the completion of a learning circle, there should be a retrospective self-evaluation of how things went. All these process means that a dynamic view of learning is adopted to account for the changes and development (e.g. attitudes, language awareness, strengths and weaknesses in skills required) over time in classroom contexts.

However, process-oriented teaching occurs very little in regular lessons because it can be inferred that many teachers have difficulties realising this way of instruction (Bolhuis & Voeten, 2001). One very obvious obstacle is the difficulty involved in the assessment of learning results: it requires a move from simple paper-and-pencil tests to more complex forms of evaluation based on, for example, co-operative learning, portfolio, or think-aloud protocol.

Despite the subtleties of appropriate grading, this issue alone should not prevent us from pursuing a process-oriented approach to literature, for Carter

and Long (1991: 10) ascertain, 'It is only through process-oriented teaching rather than through product-based or transmissive teaching that such goals of fuller interpretation can be reached'.

5. The process of learning should be task-based and learner-centred.

Given that many literature classrooms in Taiwan are characterised by much chalk and talk, activities are somewhat under-utilised. In this regard, more discussion and interaction between students and teachers must be sought. Of course one cannot expect that process-oriented and task-based approaches can exist in isolation from more traditional lecture-format practices.

While it is recognised that the teacher needs time for direct and explicit teaching, it does not mean that the teacher adopts a didactic role. The abiding principle is that the class sessions should be made genuinely investigative and exploratory, with the possibility of more responses and language-based exercises to ensure that the students are properly engaged, an idea adopted by McCarthy and Carter (1994: 178), who argue that students are expected to engage properly with texts 'only by *doing* it'.

'Learning by doing' reflects a strong argument in favour of the task-based approach as advocated by Carter and Long (199), Whiteson (1996), Nunan (1988, 1989), Willis (1996), Carless (2002), among others. According to Willis (1996: 18), for instance, one of the main benefits of task orientation is to

'remove the teacher domination'. As the teacher moves away from centre stage and devolves responsibility for learning, s/he becomes an 'enabler', who steps 'down from the pedestal' to look around, walk around, address a group of students, or explain instruction again when students are working on tasks during the lessons (Carter & Long, 1991: 7). This implies that students are called upon to play a more active role in learning than they used to be in a traditional literature class. By engaging students with activities like these, the classroom dynamics ties in directly with the general tenet of learner-centeredness (Tudor, 1996).

The foregoing principles are not to be considered as exhausting the possibilities in the teaching of literature, nor are they meant to be a panacea. They are rather to be taken as additions, or alternatives to approaching literary texts. As far as I am aware, there is yet not an established orthodox that could be acclaimed as universally accepted. Therefore, it is necessary to reiterate and recognise that there is more to literature than just the language. Many aspects pertaining to the study of literature have a part to play in a fuller understanding and interpretation of a literary text. As McRae concisely puts it (1991: 53), 'Language does not exist in a historical vacuum, but specific historically-based study of language and texts remain a specialised area of interest'.

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I have pointed out some neglected problems evident in literary

curriculum and literature teaching in higher education of Taiwan. In responses to these problems, some recommendations are provided for the development of effective literary education. The argument came to the conclusion that many of the difficulties could be overcome by adopting a learner-centred, process-oriented, and language-based approach to literary texts.

CHAPTER 3
LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

To ensure the theoretical and pedagogical accountability of the present study, this chapter presents a literature review in three major concepts: Shakespearean pedagogy, the nature and variations of stylistics, and Language Awareness. The purpose is to provide connections between and among these concepts and support the legitimacy of raising learners' language awareness through stylistic approaches to Shakespeare's dramatic texts.

3.1 How Shakespeare was taught: behind the background

Shakespeare's works have been a part of the school's curricula in English-speaking countries. In the United Kingdom, the National Curriculum makes it compulsory for every student of GCSE English to study a play by Shakespeare (Blocksidge, 2003). Every examination board also specifies that a piece of English coursework should show an understanding of a Shakespeare play (School Examinations and Assessment Council, 1993; Wade & Sheppard, 1994; Gilmour, 1996, 1997). As an explicit requirement of the National Curriculum, Shakespeare remains central to the education experience of students (Berkowitz, 1984).

Interesting parallels can be drawn between the situation in the UK and in the USA, where Shakespeare is an essential component of the high school curriculum (Beehler, 1990; Salomone & Davis, 1997). In most American college English classes, as Willson (1990: 208) indicates, Shakespeare is 'among the few dramatists whose work is studied in any depth in American university English departments'. Elsewhere, in Australia, Shakespeare's universal value has become a naturalised assumption, which underpins his role in Australian secondary school syllabus and most literature syllabuses (Elsden, 1999).

Given that Shakespeare commands such a high academic position, many teachers 'have been trying to puzzle out the best way to teach Shakespeare for nearly a century' (O'Brien, 1995: 165). A review of literature specific to teaching Shakespeare will reflect developing ideas about how Shakespeare was taught and help considered judgements to be made on what is appropriate for Taiwanese students.

3.1.1 Teaching Shakespeare: an overview

A review of literature specific to teaching Shakespeare reflects a shift from philological explication, rhetorical and interpretative study, towards a performance-based and media-oriented study. With no intention of being exhaustive, the pedagogical transition is discussed below (for a bibliography of scholarship on Shakespearean pedagogy, see O'Brien, 1995; see also Frey,

1984, for a historical account of how Shakespeare was taught).

The traditional Shakespeare

Criticism of the '50s and '60s reflected a text-based, word-by-word study that focused on imagery, symbolism, metaphors, and ironies (Svendsen, 1965). This is linked with the rise of New Criticism, which has exerted a complex and lasting influence on the shaping of educational programmes in literature (Levin, 1976). The teaching of Shakespeare, accordingly, was influenced and dominated by the tenet of new critical approaches, formulated by I. A. Richard as a pedagogy and as a text-reading practice (Bergeron & de Sousa, 1995).

However, a widely held position against such a 'construe' method is that it assumes the aim of education to be the creation of scholars. And since the New Critics aim at finding one 'correct' reading, they tend to 'deprive the reader of the right to feel his own experience of the text' (Ragland, 1978: 176). In a frontal attack on the philological explication of Shakespeare, Hudson (1957: 12) maintains, 'A small amount of philological commentary may be necessary to an understanding of the text, but to make it an end instead of a means is to stand values on their heads'. Shakespeare was, seen in this light, made an unbearable bore.

The Dramaturgic Shakespeare

Another caution against the philological model was also proposed: that

Shakespeare's plays were written to be performed. In the early eighties, educational publishers began to show a growing interest in teaching Shakespeare through performance (e.g. Styan, 1974; Barry, 1974; Adams & Gould, 1977; Beckerman, 1978).

The basic premise of performance-based teaching is that 'the reading of a play is a necessarily incomplete experience' (Wells, 1970: ix). Proponents of a performative model propose teachers to see Shakespeare through the lens of drama, whereby it engages students more fully than the traditionally close-reading pedagogy. For example, Styan (1974: 199) holds in his 'Direct method Shakespeare' that these performative experiences of Shakespeare 'create a live experience in a dead classroom'.[1]

For years, then, these convictions have been echoed by Gilbert (1984), O'Brien (1984), Bailey (1985), and Muir (1984). In her article titled 'Teaching Shakespeare through performance', Gilbert (1984: 601) contends that 'using performance in a college classroom was not merely a desirable but a necessary way of getting students involved in what drama is really about'.

In the last decade or so, literature on teaching Shakespeare contains a majority of prints embracing the value of performance approaches. In an account of the RSA Shakespeare in Schools project, Gilmour (1996, 1997) provides accounts

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[1] See also Derek Peat's (1980) 'Teaching through performance: an interview with J. L. Styan', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 1, 2: 142-52, for more about Styan's philosophy of teaching Shakespeare.

of performances of Shakespeare plays at a number of primary and secondary schools.

At the same time, Shakespeare's dramaturgy has been undertaken by the Cambridge School Shakespeare series under the direction of Gibson. In *Teaching Shakespeare*, Gibson (1998: xii) points out that Shakespeare's plays are for performance and that 'It is in that context of dramatic realisation that the plays are most appropriately understood and experienced'.

While the current dialogue resonates with more discussion of performance-based strategies than of any other pedagogical approach to Shakespeare, Wade and Sheppard (1994) discover that it is still rare to find acting the principal means of dealing with plays in school. Based on a survey on methods of teaching Shakespeare, Wade and Sheppard found that performance-based methods are often ignored or under-utilised by teachers. Instead, traditional, desk-bound, literary study is shown to be the most popular.

To Wade and Sheppard, the reasons for this remain a matter of speculation. Nonetheless, it is perhaps a matter worth pausing to consider. Viewed from a teaching/learning context such as Taiwan, there are a number of obvious answers. Obstacles entailed in performance-based methods may include:

1. Time constraints

Given the reality of constant time pressure in many school contexts, time is

inimical to a performance-based approach. Rehearsals to polish the staging and both in and out class preparations are rather time-consuming. McDonald (1995: 151) examines current practices of how Shakespeare is taught in schools and in an interview that he conducts, one teacher acknowledges: 'the biggest obstacle for me is the same for everything: TIME, or the lack of it'.

Similar contention is substantiated in Carter and Long (1991: 124):

> For a class, or group, to produce the play being studied may be desirable, but is for the most part impractical; among non-native speakers the learning of a large 'part' may be a task which is too difficult, and may take up a disproportionate amount of time if the literature course is to be more than a single play.

In experimenting with this performance-oriented methodology, time remains a problem many teachers have to wrestle with.

2. Inhibition

Unlike listening, reading, and writing, performative activities require a certain degree of exposure to an audience. These in-front-of-the-class activities—like oral skits and oral presentations in the target language—are reported as the most anxiety-provoking ones for many students (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Horwitz, 1995). In a culture where learners tend to be very reserved and antagonistic to 'role play' in front of a large group, the performative method might inhibit the learners from speaking a line (Erbaugh, 1990).

To some learners, it could be a nerve-wracking instead of an enjoyable experience to do a performance. This discomfort or apprehension, according to Oxford (1999b: 63), is a manifestation of 'social anxiety', which keeps students passive and reticent in the classroom. Therefore, a more culturally sensitive practice needs to be built into a performative approach so as to motivate EFL learners to get Shakespeare off the page and onto the stage.

3. Uneven participation

In Taiwan, an average class size is forty or so. Closely related to this issue is the uneven allocation of turns. It is unlikely that contributions are fairly evenly distributed in a large group size class. The problem has a cultural as well as a pedagogical dimension: in places such as Taiwan, where the present study took place, student-student interaction is simply not typical of the culture of most classrooms. Student reticence has been one of the major problems facing many language teachers.

This observation is echoed by Tsui (1996: 145), who states: 'The problem of getting students to respond is particularly acute with Asians students, who are generally considered to be more reserved and reticent than their Western counterparts'. As a consequence, a dramatic performance tends to be dominated by a minority of more 'daring' or extrovert participants. A certain proportion of students are bound to play minor characters who utter only a few lines.

4. Use of mother tongue

Since the most immediate focus of active method are directed at first language learners, it fails to consider the prevalence of language anxiety in EFL language classroom. As Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986: 128) assert, 'any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic'.

This view is confirmed by Duff and Maley (1990). When students are asked to speak lines which they cannot get their tongues around, it often 'leads to embarrassment, which is one of the reasons why "performance" in a foreign language often fall flat' (ibid: 91). In an EFL context where all the learners share the same mother tongue, most of them are prone to shy away from using English but the mother tongue, which they think more natural and less threatening.

5. The teacher's role as a director

Finally, the role played by the vast majority of Shakespeare teachers needs to be critically examined. In many classrooms, most teachers are supposed to teach the curriculum rather than spend time on directing a drama. And the question: 'Are teachers capable of dealing with pedagogy that goes beyond the literary method?' is a valid one. As Thompson (1990: 141) maintains, 'not all teachers have the time, inclination, or talent to turn their classrooms into drama

workshops'.

In the teaching issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Barry (1974: 167) concedes that teachers of Shakespeare can do little more than offer 'explication of the texts'. This argument resembles the position taken by Holmer (1990: 190), who considers the role of teacher as 'explainer':

> The role of teacher as explainer, one who imparts a body of knowledge gained through years of study and experience, has not changed much. What has changed is *how* — by what methods — the teacher chooses to impart that knowledge in individualistic responses to a more open attitude toward pedagogical experimentation.

In most teaching contexts, 'teacher as explainer' seems to be the prevailing orthodox in literature teaching, as Wade and Sheepard's (1994) study attests.

The textual Shakespeare

At the same time as these ideas about performance have been forming, new notion about literature instruction in general have also been developing. Among the most influential of these notions is the emphasis on training students in *interpretative procedures* in the process of reading literary texts.

Svendsen (1965: 25) argues the primacy of formalist literary theory in teaching Shakespeare to aesthetically unskilled students.

> Formalist criticism encourages awareness of language as a living act

the student working with symbols, images, syntactic patterns, and figurative language is at once experiencing them and learning what happens to him and to the discourse before him when he does.

From a viewpoint of stylistics as the connecting force between linguistics and literary studies, Widdowson (1975, 1982) suggests a pedagogy that allows learners themselves to discover rules of language and language use by looking into literature (what Widdowson calls 'textual data') for the deviant linguistic features and their poetic qualities.

Using Shakespeare's well-known lines from *Antony and Cleopatra* (...and I shall see/ Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness/ I' the posture of a whore), Widdowson points out the interpretability of the word 'boy' which operates as a transitive verb (Widdowson, 1975: 15-16). His intention is to demonstrate the representational quality of literary texts as contrasted to the referential, and to point out 'how phonological, lexical, and grammatical realignments pattern together to representational effect' (Widdowson, 1992: 45).

As a result of Widdowson's conviction that literary texts should not be sanctified and that the student should be able to approach without the help of an absolute authority, the 'learning by doing' method starts to resonate. This can be reflected both in Carter and Long's (1987a, 1987b) introductory text for the study of stylistics and in Scholes' (1985: 24) pedagogy of textual power: 'Our job is not to produce "readings" for our students but to give them the tools

for producing their own'. In other words, with a small amount of scaffolding, the teacher should provide study skills for students in their personal process of interpretation, not to usurp the interpreter's role.

Meanwhile, the argument made by those who embrace active teaching methods is being questioned. Short (1998: 6) expresses reservations about performance-based criticism, arriving at a different conclusion:

> If merely reading a play is truly inadequate, much traditional criticism would need an interpretative 'health warning' appended to it, and our common educational practice of reading play-texts and discussing them in seminar and tutorials would need to be replaced by performance-based theatre studies.

Short's argument is quite contrary; he opines that a sensitive understanding of a play can be arrived at through 'mere reading'.

This premise is akin to an argument made by Thompson (2001: 14), who asserts that unlike modern forms of dramatic and cinematic performances, which can readily appeal to audio-visual effects, 'Shakespeare theatre itself was very dependent on words', because 'the language was required to do the kind of work which can now be done by stage design, artificial lighting and special effects'. Somehow like Renaissance playgoers, modern readers are dependent on the words of the plays that evoke gestures, actions, and relationships.

Around the turn of this century, Shakespeare is continually reinvigorating and reinvigorated. Indeed, the territory of Shakespearean pedagogy has come to appear less and less a single, unified thing. It is instead a vast set of different, and sometimes contradictory forces.

The pluralism of Shakespeare pedagogy could be seen as united by Salomone and Davis's *Teaching Shakespeare into the Twenty-first Century* (1997). Articles assembled here represent a wide spectrum of critical stances and pedagogical methods practiced in the classroom. Some are concerned with the study of text (e.g. Liston; Plasse; Swope), others are devoted to performance exercises as a teaching tool (e.g. Pierece; Maher).

Because of the advancement of modern technology, films/video/computer applications are given a large share of attention in different educational contexts (e.g. Coursen; Beehler). The number and availability of Shakespeare movies that have appeared in the last decade have revolutionalised the teaching of Shakespeare (Cartmell, 2000; Burt & Boose, 2003).

The expansion of the teaching of Shakespeare, which has gone hand in hand with the growth of research in Shakespeare, signals a growing recognition that interpretations of Shakespeare cannot be finalised. One manifestation is the increasing awareness of the need for an eclectic approach—that is, an approach that uses several different methods in teaching Shakespeare (McEvoy, 2000).

Various methods of interpreting and studying Shakespeare, which open up the plays rather than close them down, signify a unanimous view that 'it is better to lead students and readers to make their own choices and explorations, than to try to coerce them into accepting one determinate point of view' (Foakes, 1994: 71).

3.1.2 Determining the role of Shakespeare in the classroom

Confronted with ever more increasingly variable methods, teachers of Shakespeare might be bewildered by the absence of any real agreement as to the specific objectives and methods of teaching Shakespeare. What are the goals of a course in Shakespeare? What do teachers hope to accomplish in teaching Shakespeare? Might it be that some of the historical-biographical background, some of the thematic and character analysis, some of the performative activities, or some of textual study? Could focusing too much on background information fail at giving students knowledge and skills needed for reading Shakespeare? To be as comprehensive as possible, is it better to squeeze as many plays as possible into a semester? Given that we cannot cover all the plays, might a close study of one enable the students to appreciate the best scenes in the others?

Determining the role of Shakespeare in the classroom, teachers need to consider the complexity of classroom realities, seeking pedagogical approaches that fit their own abilities, context, students, course goals, and so on. As Carter

and Long (1991: 27) describe, the role of the teacher is to 'decide on the process which is most appropriate to making the text more accessible'.

Sharing the view of Adamson (2004: 605), I wish to stress that 'no method is inherently superior to another; instead, some methods are more appropriate than others in a particular context'. In what follow, I wish to examine what many scholar-teachers find intellectually and pedagogically valid ways of teaching literature, and thereupon argue for a critical stance to illuminate the assumptions, choices and practices governing the Shakespeare pedagogy adopted in the present study.

3.2 Stylistics: further possibilities

The danger of the direct method, along with the uses of media in teaching Shakespeare, is its tendency to get off the track of the text and to lose sight of its intrinsic aspects.

As mentioned earlier (2.1), Taiwanese students generally lack ways of and enthusiasm for reading literary texts, so the present study seeks to relocate a pedagogical interest in Shakespeare's *language*. It is hoped that by examining Shakespeare's style and language—the uses of rhetoric, verse/prose styles, metrical development, imagery, wordplay, and so forth—students can develop analytical strategies for critical reading and attend to the language much more carefully than they tend to be now.

My reasoning is based on the premise that the more students can understand Shakespeare's linguistic manoeuvres and how he 'manipulates ("bends and break") linguistic rules' (Crystal, 2003: 33), the more likely students can appreciate literary texts. As Greenblatt (2004: 14) notes, the study of Shakespeare needs 'to look carefully at his verbal artistry—his commend of rhetoric, his uncanny ventriloquism, his virtual obsession with language'. Ewbank (2003: 391) also expresses, 'The marvel of Shakespeare's language will fully open itself to appreciation only in close reading of texts.

However, a close reading of Shakespeare needs to be effective. For this reason, several language educators (e.g. Carter & Long, 1991; Carter, 1996; Webster, 1999; McRae, 1991, 1998; Simpson, 2004) concur that language-based pedagogy should be encouraged more than it is currently practiced in literature courses.

A language-based approach to Shakespeare is further substantiated by Hussey's (1992: vii) penetrating argument: 'proper appreciation of any great writer must begin with his language'.

My contention is that a study of Shakespeare language will gradually lead students from *reading* to *interpretation*, for Shakespeare's language is 'deeply patterned into the ideas and themes of his prose and poetry' (Carter & McRae, 1997: 93). A close-reading approach will throw considerable light on how these ideas and themes—the unsaid, the implied—are told (Scholes, 1985). As

Verdonk (2002) believes, examining linguistic features can provide a 'precision of analysis' and therefore 'help to substantiate' literary impression, and 'contribute a clarification' to impressionistic understanding (3, 40, 78). In part, it is an attempt to take away the crutch by means of which students can allow someone else's interpretation to supplant their own firsthand experience of literary texts.

The above points lead to the basic premise on which the present study is based: to engage students (especially the introductory student of literature) in Shakespeare's works, a teacher can activate this experience by an engagement with primary texts, because language will provide important clues to the nuance and intricacy of a literary work and open the way towards interpreting the text.

It is clear that the contribution made by scholars who have been working on the integration of language and literature offers a new pedagogical possibility. This is where 'stylistics', with its close attention to the broad resources of the system of language, comes in.

The next step, obviously, will have to reflect on the nature of stylistics and see how a variety of its developments can offer us in the way of advice about how to teach Shakespeare in the classroom.

3.2.1 Stylistics: a definition

According to Verdonk (2002: 4), stylistics is the study of style in language, i.e. 'the analysis of distinctive expression in language and the description of its purpose and effect'. In general, it relates to the study of (literary) texts with a sharp concern for how the language element works in texts.

However, the term 'stylistics' is quite an open concept since it is used in many senses in practice. McRae and Clark (2004: 328) make the point that stylistics

> has proved notoriously difficult to define, since it functions as an umbrella term, covering a range of different stylistic approaches to the study of texts. A further difficulty is that although stylistic analysis originated as a way of applying linguistic models to literary texts, it has become clear that such models can be applied to the analysis o f any type of text: to non-literary register as well as the literary.

Perhaps Wales's (2001: 437-8) *Dictionary of Stylistics* can offer a clearer definition:

> STYLISTICS: The study of style . . . Just as can be viewed from in several ways, so there are several stylistic approaches. This variety in stylistics is due to the main influences of linguistics and literary criticism . . . By far the most common kind of material studied is literary; and attention is largely text-centred . . . The goal of most stylistics is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but in order to show their functional significance for the interpretation of text; or in order to relate literary effects to linguistic 'causes' where these are felt to be relevant . . .

As the definition reveals, there are different types of stylistics, all of which involve the application of linguistic techniques to the analysis of style in language and the identification of its patterning. Methodologically, stylistics establishes principles[2] capable of explaining the particular choices made by the writers in their use of language.

To prepare the conceptual ground, it is advantageous to have a broad map of the terrain sketched out. I shall attempt to put some varieties of stylistics into a historical perspective by presenting a very brief overview of its development as an academic discipline. A discussion of these perspectives will deepen our understanding of the most important and relevant issues facing this classroom enquiry. Here, the explicit aim is to examine some of the existing views on stylistics, its relevance and pedagogic significance to language teaching and by doing so finding a niche for the present study.

3.2.2 Variety in stylistics: a developmental view

Over the past ten years there have been striking advances in stylistics (Weber, 1996; Simpson, 2004). These advances have given rise to new terms and to revised thinking of concepts and re-definitions of terms. With its growing prominence and development, stylistics is now a word with many shades of meaning. To understand the subtle nuances of meaning, a good starting point is

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[2] Simpson (2004: 3) proposes that the practice of stylistics conforms to three 'Rs'; that is, Rigorous, Retrievable, and Replicable.

to look at the major tendencies in stylistic approaches. The following survey concerns five categories of stylistics, starting from the formalist study of texts towards the contextualised, discourse-based approaches practised today.

1. Objective stylistics

One of the earlier progressive forces in stylistics can be traced in Roman Jakobson's (1960) famous paper, 'Closing statement: linguistics and poetics'. In this foundational work of stylistics, Jakobson calls for an objective and scientific stylistics (as what he calls 'poetics'), to be based on the structuralist linguistics of the time. He emphasises the importance of specific language patterns found in poetry, a genre of texts that heighten our awareness of language patterning.

In his formulation, the textual features of the poem draw attention to themselves. Accordingly, while reading such a text, the reader will be forced to pay close attention to these specific textual features. In this respect, the reading process is directed by specific textual features that stimulate a stylistic response.

2. Affective stylistics

Formalist stylistics eventually came under increasing censure for what was perceived as its exclusion of the reader for scientific efficiency. Starting from a reader-based approach to literature, Fish (1980), along with other

reader-response critics such as Iser (1978), attacks Jacobson's view of style as an inherent property of the text.

By arguing, conversely, that poetry reading is a process directed by specific conventions for reading, Fish locates stylistic effects not in the text but in the activity of reading. The argument is based on the assumption that the reader's interpretative process is determined by the particular 'interpretive communities' to which they belong. That is, the production of meanings, based on this reader-oriented criticism, lies not in the structures of the text but in the structures of the reading experience. Furthermore, the reading experience is not stable because 'interpretative strategies are not natural or universal, but *learned*' (Fish, 1976: 484).

3. Pedagogic stylistics

At this point in the debate, stylistics in the late 1970s turned away from such theoretical matters and developed in a direction associated with pedagogy — heralded by Widdowson's seminar work of *Stylistics and the Teaching of Literature* published in 1975. This enables one to view the detailed task of stylistics from an entirely new perspective.

The development of pedagogical stylistics seems promising in that it adds a dimension to research undertaken into practice in the real classroom, one of the loci where reading and interpreting texts take place. Stylistics in this

pedagogical guise gives students a large armoury of analytical weapons to overcome the difficulty of literary texts.

A further aim has also been claimed for such teaching in the classroom: a justification for the inclusion of using literature in the language classroom (Duff & Maley, 1990; Lazar, 1993; Short, 1996; Carter & McRae, 1996). Since pedagogical stylisticians 'turn away from theoretical matters', impart methods of analysis that can be 'rigorous, systematic, and replicable, and hence achieve inter-subjective validity and pedagogical usefulness' (Weber, 1996: 3), their aim is of direct use to students and welcomed by language teachers, especially in an EFL context. This aspect of stylistics will be elaborated further in the next section.

4. Contextualised stylistics

As a result of the rise of discourse analysis and pragmatics, another growing trend in stylistics is an orientation towards contextualisation (Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998). Stylisticians, as pointed out by McRae and Clark (2004: 329), 'have begun to take greater account of the relationship between the text and the context in which it is both produced and received'.

These discourse-oriented stylisticians assume that there are important style markers which reside not within an individual sentence, but rather in the ways in which sentences are combined to form texts (McCarthy & Carter, 1994). As

a consequence the concerns for stylisticians became one of how to blend the increased desire for contextual, cultural, sociohistorical and intertextual analysis into its foundation in formalist linguistics.

The movement towards greater contextualisation displayed itself in a variety of ways: literary stylistics, pragmatic stylistics, and feminist stylistics, to name only a few. With the emergence of contextualised stylistics, 'it became increasingly clear that style is not either inherent in the text (as the formalists claimed) or totally in the readers' mind (as Fish and other reader-response critics claimed) but an effect produced in, by and through the interaction between text and reader' (Weber, 1996: 3).

This interactive relationship is endorsed by the results of recent empirical investigations. For example, in a study of literary readers and reading, Hanauer (1998) weighs the claims of conventionalists (e.g. Fish) against more formalist and traditionally stylistic reading of literary texts. Based on the findings of the study, Hanauer (ibid: 578) asserts that 'a complex relationship, within which both conventions of reading and specific textual features play a role in the categorization and reading of a poem'. This finding is consistent with a former research carried out by Zwaan (1993).

In the twenty-first century, a new way of thinking about this interactional force in the reading process — how readers shape a text and in turn are shaped by it — constitutes the largest portion of a field that might justifiably be called

'cognitive stylistics'.

5. Cognitive stylistics

Since its earliest days, the focus of stylistics has tended to be on text itself. What has largely been missing from this approach is the account of how information is represented and processed in the reading minds. To supplement existing methods of analysis, supporters of cognitive stylistics, also known as 'cognitive poetics', draw upon psychological theories of processing to describe the mental processes that inform, and are affected by, the way we read and interpret literary texts (Semino & Culpeper, 2002; Stockwell, 2002).

For example, one of the notable examples of this research paradigm is Werth's Text World theory (1999), which refreshingly sees that all readers process and understand all discourse by constructing mental representations (i.e. text worlds) of it in their minds. By implications, the sentences of fictional texts are gateways through which the reader build up new worlds in their cognitive spaces. This concept provides a unique insight into the complex conceptual process involved in our understanding of a narrative experience. In this regard, how literary texts work and how they are processed cognitively in the reading minds is heuristically justified. This concept brings forth greater explanatory power for literary analyses than earlier forms of stylistic practice.

While contemporary stylistics makes important strides in expanding our

understanding of the reading process, most of the discussions seem to have been directed at critics to facilitate further research, rather than to promote educational purposes. To paraphrase: research in contemporary stylistics is evolving into a force that is, for Weber, 'much more directly in line with modern literary theory' (1996: 7). In support, Mackay (1994: 193) argues that 'it is difficult to assess how the average reader or undergraduate students must feel when faced with such diffuse yet overlapping areas of study [of stylistics]'.

To spell this out explicitly, while these models of stylistics are descriptive and analytical, they are not pedagogical models. Except a few successes, which have been attained in the works of Carter and Long (1991), Carter and McRae (1996), and Simpson (1997, 2004), many of these literary studies, rather too scholarly and dense, may not contribute to new ways of thinking and reading for EFL students who have had little exposure to theoretical approaches to literature.

In fact, much of the published research can only be shared with a closed system of specialist and literary scholar. Marsh's (1998: 200) penetrating criticism offers a timely nudge of a theory-driven Shakespeare:

> Thousands of books and articles have been written about Shakespeare's tragedies by academic critics. Several hundred are published each year. They are often written in a confusing, over-complicated or pretentious style: academics are just as fond of showing off as anybody else!

To benefit students, the present study urges that a pedagogical framework be

constructed prior to a more advanced, and subtle criticism. It is important, then, that we need to make these analytical models pedagogically sensitive. For this reason, I return to my current priority, pedagogical stylistics.

3.2.3 The need for pedagogical stylistics in literature classrooms

For the purpose of the present study, pedagogical stylistics, which has been 'intrinsically linked with the teaching of written texts to speakers of English as a second/foreign language' (Clark & Zyngier, 2003: 339), serves the need for bridging the gap between researching stylistics and teaching stylistics. Secondly, it also serves the need for initiating EFL students into *how* texts work. An illustration will help clarity the role of pedagogical stylistics.

Figure 3.1

Pedagogical stylistics as a way of keying students into literary texts

Literary texts

Pedagogical stylistics

EFL learners

linguistic barriers

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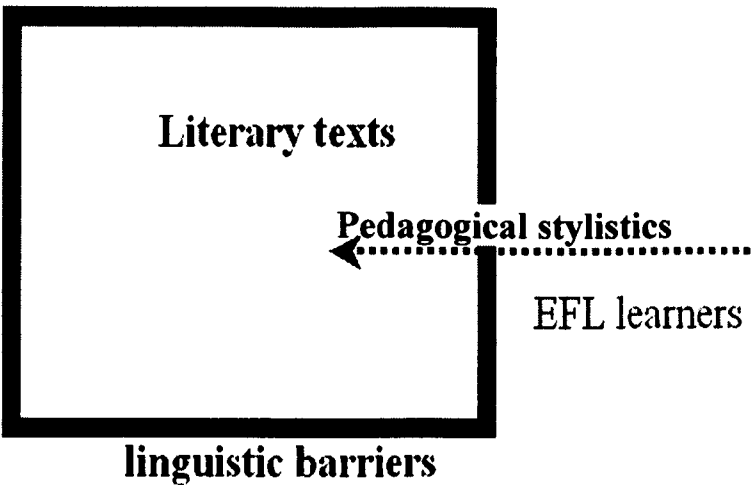
As the diagram suggests, the thick walls present barriers between students and the text. In a form more suitable for EFL students, pedagogical stylistics has the potential to guide students to break down these barriers — barriers that make students reluctant and passive readers. To put it another way, a teacher can use stylistic methods to help students read *into* a text (Widdowson, 1992). In a simple sense, these stylistic methods usually denote language-based activities, which we must now consider.

3.2.4 Ways to implement stylistic approaches

To bring the findings of stylistics to bear on the practical issues of language teaching/learning, teachers need style-diagnosing apparatus, from which a direct experience of literature depends. Pedagogical stylistics offers teachers a sophisticated and powerful set of procedures for accomplishing precisely this task. To be more specific, instructors can employ techniques such as language-based activities (e.g. gap-filling, unscrambling, and other creative writing/reading exercises) to help learners look at the way language is used for conveying messages.

A language-based approach to literature can be explained with the help of two quotations. The first is from Lazar (1993: 27):

> A language-based approach is quite a broad approach which covers a range of different goals and procedures. Generally speaking, proponents believe in a closer integration of language and literature in the classroom, since this will help the students in achieving their

main aim—which is to improve their knowledge of, and proficiency in, English.

The second is from Carter (1996b: 2):

> Language-based approaches are essentially integrative. They seek to integrate language and literature study. They also offer approaches to literary texts which are accessible not just to more advanced students but to a wider ranger of students, from lower to upper intermediate level.

These two viewpoints are united by a recognition that language and literature is related and can go hand in hand to develop a good knowledge *about* language. To foster a conscious understanding of *how* languages work, proponents of a language-based model poise two main principles: (1) the activity-principle, and (2) the process-principle.

These two key principles, as I have advocated in Chapter 2, allow students to play a more active and productive role by a close engagement with the texts. In this manner, students are more likely to 'appreciate from the inside' through such a process of discovery.

The teaching point is that a heightened degree of attentiveness to the text can be brought about by these activities, which in turn will help learners discover layers of meaning and distinctive patterning within a text. For Carter (1996a: 152), the technique can be regarded as an 'enabling device for students in their personal process of interpretation or engagement with the text'. Therefore the

use of activities can enhance qualitatively and incisively students' independent responses to a piece of literary writing. According to Clark and Zyngier (2003), it is these classroom activities that characterise pedagogical stylistics.

It is worth pausing to illustrate some of these activities, for they go to the heart of pedagogical stylistics, as Clark and Zyngier indicate. But this is not the place to attempt a full-scale illustration of the approach. I am going to take a few examples of it, only, to illustrate the pedagogical principle. More examples can be found in Chapter 6, where I propose a set of techniques for stylistic analysis and apply a selection of theses techniques to Shakespeare's texts.

3.2.5 Methods of working with literary texts

First and foremost, every class meeting should involve activities. The use of activities can inject a dose of vitality in literature classrooms. Activities will ensure that the teacher can be removed from the role of information-giver so as to create the right conditions for students' genuine involvement. Methodologically, this means that literary texts are studied and explored differently in several respects from those we have come to associate with 'traditional literature teaching'.

To ensure concrete interaction with texts, the teacher can present a text in an unconventional approach. A text can be manipulated a variety of ways, not merely as a static, intact block of words. For different purposes, a text can be

cut up, blanked out, graphically transformed, or withheld until the end of the activity. The purpose and emphasis, glossing Pope, is to explore 'possible permutations and realisation of texts in and out of their original contexts' (1995: 1).

By allowing literary texts to be tinkered with, literature is no longer a sacrosanct object for reverential product-centred study. Maley (1987: 94) highlights this point when he says, 'One of the key factors in learning a foreigner language is the ability and opportunity to play with it, to test its elasticity'.

The kind of activities adopted in the classroom fall into several basic formats list below. Most of these activities can be done singly, in pairs or groups, as team competitions, collaborative problem-solving projects, students' presentations, or teacher-led sessions with the whole class. Some could also be prepared by learners as homework.

    1. Textual questionings (e.g. high-order vs. low-order)

    2. Dichotomous item (e.g. true and false)

    3. Multiple choice

    4. Gap-filling (i.e. cloze)

    5. Jigsaw reading (e.g. reordering)

    6. Matching

    7. Comparison

    8. Illustrations

9. Reading aloud

10. Creative writing

    A. Multiple summary tasks

    B. Gapped summary

    C. Mimetic paraphrase

    D. Re-writing

        (a) verse to prose paraphrase

        (b) Rewriting viewpoints

Here I shall delineate some kinds of activity and point out why they can be valuable in stylistic analysis.

A. Cloze procedure

Cloze procedure is a device often associated with language tests. None the less, it is increasingly utilised for purposes of language development where the aim is to direct attention to the ongoing interaction between the reader and the text (Soudek & Soudek, 1983; Carter & Long, 1991). Weston (1996: 116) offers some practical suggestions as how the cloze procedure might be done in the classroom.

> The gap can be one word only, several words, or whole sentences; they can be filled (a) at the student's choice, (b) from a multiple choices selection per gap, or (c) from a word bank for the whole passage, either one solution per gap, or more perversely, more solutions than gaps, so that some words are blank.

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To this, Carter and Long (1991: 80) stress, 'In the case of cloze with literary texts it is important that by removing words that students' attention is drawn to items which are performing an important literary job'. The implication for the teacher is not difficult to draw. That is, gaps are created not at random nor arbitrarily, but with a purpose of drawing attention to the literary function(s).

What makes the cloze procedure a pedagogically rewarding activity is that it leads to 'involvement with the text' (ibid), allows the reading process to be stopped for discussion and experimentation, and increases awareness of the striking patterns of words. (For further examples and further discussions of the uses of cloze techniques in the literature class, see Carter & Long, 1987a; Hunt, 1982; Soudek & Soudek, 1993; McRae, 1991; Simpson, 1997: 84-92)

B. Questioning techniques

Another strategy, which also allows the reading process to be stopped for examination is by means of questions. Maley (1987: 100) makes it clear, 'The most common way of getting at an understanding of a text is through asking questions'.

Questioning has been widely acknowledged as a valuable instructional strategy to encourage learners to use higher order thinking processes (Gall, 1970). Long (1986: 50) contends that if the questions help learners penetrate delightfully the text, the process could be 'justified as a teaching method for non-native

speakers'. In terms of these accounts, questioning strategies are of paramount importance in the heuristic process of students' own responses to a text.

Carter and Long (1991: 36) provide a useful taxonomy of questions that can be used in the literature classroom. The classification is enumerated below.

(a) High-order vs. low-order questions

A division can be made into *low-order* and *high-order* questions. Low-order questions tend to focus on factual content and literal meanings of a text, so they are used to assist with 'preliminary orientation to a text' (ibid: 37). Particularly, this type of questions 'provide confidence and a sense of security' in the learner even though they are unlikely to give deeper insights into the text (Willis, 1996: 110).

On the other hand, high-order questions attempt to elicit individual responses, help learners draw inferences from the data, involve learners in more subtle issues and higher interpretative order. Thus the answers to this type of questions often go beyond a right/wrong dichotomy.

(b) Open vs. closed questions

Another related taxonomy of question types is whether they are *open* or *closed*. Closed questions, like low-order questions, are meant to retrieve factual information from a text. These questions are particularly useful in the case of

checking understanding at the process of reading, in order to assure that students reach the threshold of further work.

Open questions, like high-order questions, open up more opportunities for textual exploration and imaginative investigation. In this respect the teacher's role is not to settle the rightness or wrongness of the answers provided by students, but to increase interaction, to negotiate interpretations. To use McRae's (1991: 103) phrases: 'we are not necessarily working in the realm of clear-cut answers; the expressing and justifying of opinion is what we are aiming at'.

(c) Macrocosmic vs. microcosmic questions

Still another classification of questions is into categorises of *macrocosmic* and *microcosmic* questions. These questions function as analytical tools which will help students penetrate the text. To this end, these questions are targeted at different linguistic aspects on which students can draw when analysing the texts. In a micro-structural analysis, smaller units of language features (e.g. lexis, punctuation, rhyme scheme) are examined, while in a macro-structural analysis, larger-scale organisations (e.g. discourse, genre) are explored (Pope, 1995).

Carter and Nash (1990) provide a theoretic framework for language analysis. In this framework, language is divided into five levels: phonology, vocabulary,

grammar, discourse, and context. They may be diagrammatically represented as in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2

Levels of Language Analysis

MACROCOSM

Context	(Relations between participants in a context)
	↓
Discourse	(relations between sentences; paragraphs; speaking turns)
	↓
Grammar	(phrases, clauses, patterning)
	↓
Vocabulary	(words, semantic density)
	↓
Phonology	(sounds, rhyme, aural senses)

microcosm
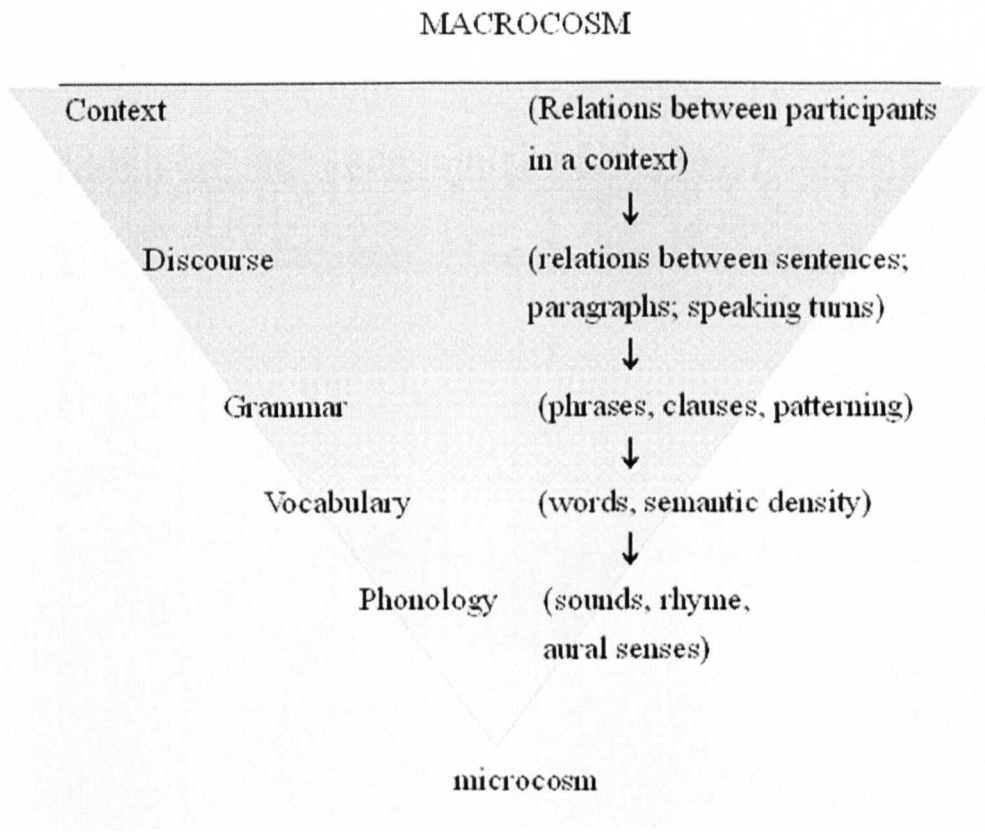
The value of formulating these types of questions is that students' attention is drawn to local details of the text, to the textual patterns of the text. Equally importantly, when these levels of language are identified and teased out in the exploration of text, the process of stylistic analysis become more 'organised and principled' (Simpson, 2004: 4). Therefore, we can also claim that knowing

the organisational patterns which operate at varying levels can 'make significant contributions to [our understanding of] the overall coherence of discourse' (Arndt, Harvey & Nuttall, 2000: 84).

In any given reading, then, many different combinations of questions will be operating simultaneously. What to note is that when questions are posed, the teacher might expect an initial silent period where students need time to get a feeling for language, of responses to the texts. For this reason, the teacher needs to give students as much as focused thinking time to do these cognitive activities and negotiate for potential meaning (Gill, 1986; Willis, 1996).

An important caveat needs to be heeded is: although questions imply answers, they 'are not necessarily to be answered. They can be *explored*, thought about, discussed' (McRae, 1998: 10, emphasis original). As espoused by McRae, questions can serve as the springboard for a useful discussion, or simply a moment of contemplation (for further techniques of questioning, see Montgomery et al., 2000: 12-15; McRae, 1991; 1998; McRae & Vethamani, 1999).

C. Creative writing and re-writing

To ask students to write is to make them a more productive role than that of readers. An impromptu exploratory writing will focus attention on concrete aspects of the texts. For example, writing a summary within an approximate

word limit is a practical linguistic task which can help learners develop ability to manipulate language structures (Carter & Long, 1987a). A series of summary varying between a single sentence, thirty words, or fifty words can be very revealing in establishing what a student-writer considers progressively more or less central with regard to themes, personal relevance, etc. Each of these can then be compared with those of other student-writers so as to identify areas of overlap and difference.

An extension to writing activity is *re-writing* a text. Re-writing exercises hold out many possibilities. In its simplest form, students may look through the text and underline any words or expressions that could be expressed in a different way.

Another way of approaching the text through writing is to ask students to rewrite it from a different point of view. A case in point is that students read 'The True Story of the Three Little Pigs' and rewrite it from the wolf's point of view. This exercise can lead the learner 'to look more closely at the *original* angle, and the special impression produced by that particular (literary) angle' (Carter & Long, 1991: 116). Scholes' (1985: 28) argument is clearly relevant here. One of his forceful points in the teaching of literature is that the teacher should find ways of allowing students 'to produce written texts that are "within" the world they have constructed by their reading. They should be invited to retell the story, to summarize it and to expand it'.

Still other possibility is *mimetic paraphrase*, in which a passage of a well-known text is taken and key words re-written. An example given by Carter and Long (ibid) is paraphrasing Wordsworth's 'A Slumber'. For ease of comparison, two versions are juxtaposed below, the changes being underlined and boldfaced.

Original	Mimetic paraphrase
A slumber did my spirit <u>seal</u>,	A slumber did my spirit **feel**,
I <u>had</u> no human fears:	I **shed** no human fears:
She seem'd <u>a thing that</u> could not <u>feel</u>	She seem'd **a girl who** could not **heel**
The touch of earthly years.	The touch of earthly years.
No <u>motion</u> has she now, no force	No **movement** has she now, no force
She neither <u>hears</u> nor sees	She neither **feels** nor sees
Rolled round in earth's <u>diurnal</u> course	Rolled round in earth's **daily** course
With rocks, and stones, and trees.	With rocks, and stones, and trees.

By analogy, Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 18', which opens with 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?' might be mimetically paraphrased as 'Shall I compare thee to a devil's advocate?' During the process of re-writing, it is clear that students' attention can be focused on diction and structure of the text. They will understand better the quality of the original. As Carter and Long (1991: 90) claim, the activity will 'put the text and its organisation in focus and which can aid appreciation of how form and meaning are interrelated'.

What all these writing exercises have in common is that they have at their centre the very act of reading itself. All of them are ways to enrich the reading

process so that what is happening in the text can be thought about, discussed, or modified (for further extensions to creative writing assignments in the classroom, see Carter & Long, 1991: 90-92, 116-121; Spiro, 2004; Scholes, 1985: 18-38; Pope, 1995; Durant & Fabb, 1990: 98, 186; McRae & Clark, 2004: 339-342).

D. Reading aloud

There are some reasons for reinstating the rather unfashionable practice of reading a text aloud in classes, especially when reading texts by Shakespeare.

It is commonly argued that the way to read Shakespeare is 'First, if at all possible, read it aloud' (McEvoy, 2000: 22). The advantages of reading aloud are many. First, a good oral reading of a text can bring a text alive, enhance and modify students' own experience (Carter & Long, 1991). Second, an effective oral rendering of a text can aid comprehension and clarify difficulties since 'difficult words can be "enacted" and unclear or complex syntax can be unravelled in the process of an oral dramatisation' (ibid: 82). Hunt (1982: 350) expresses a similar view, stressing how accessibility can be facilitated by a good reading:

> The better the reading, the more sophisticated an understanding it requires beforehand—and the more the reading will embody an aesthetic interpretation as well as a literal comprehension of the language.

Of course, it is vital to stress that teachers need to improve their own reading, for whether a text can come to life or not depends much on how well it is read. Alternatively, as suggested by Carter and Long (ibid) and Byrom (1998), a practised reading may be put on tape. Audiobooks are a very popular reading medium for learners. Their use with EFL students as a means of supporting reading is certainly a great deal of potential in these alternative texts. McRae (1991: 45) also concurs with such an argument: 'Listening to a recording helps greatly in the L2 learners' process of cognition – in finding out, rather than working out, some of the basic ways in which the text works and some the basic things it is doing'. It is generally acknowledged that the more the students hear the language of Shakespeare read professionally, the better they can interact with the text (Carter & Long, 1987b).

There is something which should be remembered about reading aloud, however. According to McRae (1991: 111), 'The practice of having students read texts in English around the class is largely counterproductive'. Although there are several counter arguments which tie into the skills of oral storytelling (e.g. Ewers, 1992; Collins, 2005), this technique has not yet really been investigated to any great extent in a non-native context. It is important, then, that better ways of practising pronunciation and concatenation should be sought. Cater and Long (1991: 84) suggest that a good starting point is to introduce students to the idea of 'contrasting variables'. That is, an initial choice of reading the text is offered to students: (a) loud or soft? (b) fast or slow? (c) high pitch or low-pitch? etc. By experimenting various variables of reading, students will

notice that that variables seldom remain constant, and that they can add meaning to the words on the page.

The literature on the subject is vast and here we can only touch upon the works and approaches I found most significant and useful. These examples provided above help us see how language-based activities expand the traditional range of how to do literature exercises in some very creative ways. As the teacher leads students on a literary dig, a collection of these activities in the classroom 'may result in a more relaxed attitude' towards literature (Morrissey, 2001: vii).

3.2.6 A more comprehensive definition of stylistics: integrating language-based approaches and stylistics

Although language-based approaches have gradually developed to stand in their own right from stylistics, there is in reality a considerable overlap between the two (Carter, 1996b). Widdowson's (1975: 31) definition of stylistics attests to its affiliation to language-based approaches:

> By 'stylistics' I mean the study of literary discourse *from a linguistics orientation* and I shall take the view that what distinguishes stylistics from literary criticism on the one hand and linguistics on the other is that it is essentially a means of linking the two. (emphasis added)

In a similar manner, Short (1996: 27) notes that

> detailed and systematic stylistic analysis can be seen as an aid to our understanding and appreciation of the text under discussion as well as providing *a rational language-based account* to support interpretation

and giving insights into the process by which we interpret when we read. (emphasis added)

Given that stylistics and language-based approaches have been designated as building bridges between linguistics and literature, it seems to me useful and productive to think the two as analogous. My contention is that we adopt a more comprehensive view of stylistics, under which language-based approaches are subsumed. On this basis, we can seek greater pedagogic benefits, because analysis activities can be adapted and made more or less challenging according to the level of the students.

Here, both of these two models may be seen as standing at a continuum. The relationships could be presented as follows:

Figure 3.3
Levels of textual activity

learner-centred   teacher-centred
(non-specialist)   (specialist/critics)

Reading ⟶ Interpretation ⟶ Criticism

(language-based approaches)   (stylistic analysis)
(pre-stylistic analysis)
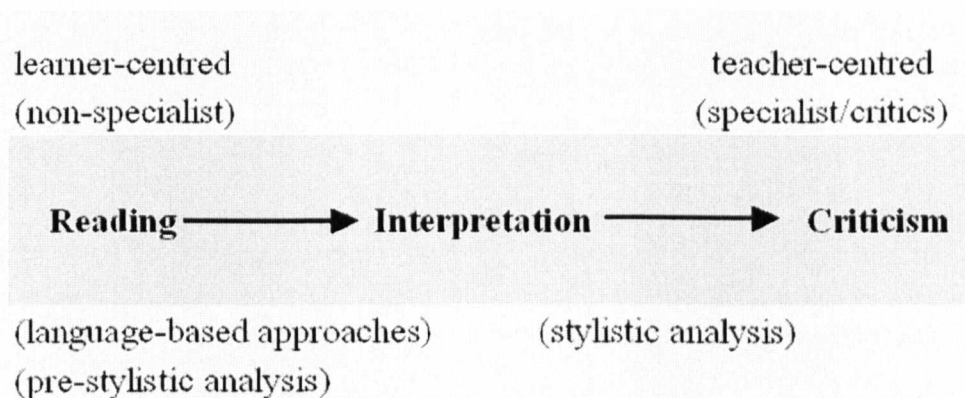
This continuum is analogous to what Leech calls 'three levels of exegesis' (quoted in Verdonk, 1989: 243)

Level 1 — the linguistic level of non-aesthetic discussion
Level 2 — an intermediate level of the stylistics
Level 3 — the literary critical level of aesthetic discussion

The approaches used in the present study could be situated half-way along this continuum. Key emphasis is laid on Level 1 and Level 2 as the pedagogical goals. In terms of Taiwanese students' limited linguistic competence and literary experience, Level 3 is excluded here out of a strong view that it may not help students who have not yet received rigorous training in stylistics. As Littlewood (1986: 181) explains, linguistic structures function either as a 'gateway or barrier' to more advanced level: 'it is fruitless to expect pupils to appreciate literary works for which they are not linguistically ready'. From this point of view, which is the one assumed in the present study, I aim to get at the ground on which critical analysis is built.

3.2.7 The value of stylistic approaches

From such considerations arises a question: What justification might there be for advocating stylistic approaches to studying Shakespeare? Or what is the educational impact I see being derived from this methodology? First, it is useful to answer this question in the light of what Clark and Zyngier (2003: 341) assert: 'the overall aim of pedagogical stylistics is raising students'

awareness of language use'. In the following some of the pedagogical values that have been propounded on the strength of stylistic approaches are listed.

To quote Widdowson (1996: 140):

> It provides a basis for aesthetic appreciation by bringing to the level of conscious awareness features of the text otherwise only accessible to trained intuition.

Since all literature professors face similar problems in teaching students how to discuss, describe, and analyse literary works, Cummins and Simmons (1983: vii) consider the purpose of doing stylistics is

> to make the student a stylistician, someone who can comprehend literary texts through a comprehension of their language structures. Someone who can say not only 'I know what I like' but also 'I know why I like it, because I know how it works'.

This emphasis is aligned with Simpson's (2004: 3) position:

> Why should we do stylistics? To do stylistics is to explore language, and, more specifically, to explore creativity in language use. Doing stylistics thereby enriches our ways of thinking about language and, as observed, exploring language offers a substantial purchase on our understanding of (literary) texts.

Again, Jackson (2003: 192) establishes the validity of these claims from a cognitivist perspective:

> It enables successful writers of literary interpretation to have a

certain confidence in the validity of their claims, to take intellectual pleasure in successfully providing their point, and in an important way this confidence and pleasure will be similar to those of the scientist.

Taken together, the broader educational impact being derived from this methodology is to offer an accessible overview of Shakespeare's verbal art, with activities, study questions, and key readings to enable the learner to build gradually on the linguistic knowledge gained. As such, we can say in a nutshell that 'language awareness' is a fully legitimate stylistic aim.

3.3 Language awareness

Since this classroom enquiry aims to investigate the teaching of stylistics to promote language awareness, it is essential to provide some conceptual clearing for a discussion of what language awareness is. In the process of this clarification I shall define and delimit the scope of Language Awareness in accord with the operational agendas in the present study.

3.3.1 Current conceptions of Language Awareness: a definition

Language awareness (henceforth LA) is a term that has gained more and more academic and pedagogical attention since the British Language Awareness Movement in the early 80's. A vast amount of critical energy has been expended in the study of LA from a variety of perspectives (Carter & Nash, 1990; McRae, 1991; Carter & Long, 1991; James & Garrett, 1991; Fairclough,

1992; Wright & Bolitho, 1993; McCarthy & Carter, 1994; Hawkins 1999; Carter 1997; van Lier, 1995, 1996).

The growth of LA has brought with it a proliferation of voices in different ways, leading to an increased lack of clarity and consensus as to its meaning. A glance at how LA is defined will show this to be so:

- Language awareness is a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life. (The National Congress on Language in Education, quoted in Donmall, 1985: 7)

- Explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use. (Association for Language Awareness)

- An understanding of the human faculty of language and its role in thinking, learning and social life. (van Lier, 1995: xi)

- Language awareness refers to the development in learners of an enhanced consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language. (Carter, 2003: 64)

Taken as a whole, LA refers to one's sensitivity to and conscious (as opposed to intuitive) knowledge about the forms, functions, and uses of language.

However, each of these interpretations is still highly ambiguous in its own right. Each has capacity for self-diversification. In the preface to James and Garrett,

Candlin (1991: xi) points out that the definition of LA 'clearly needs unpacking'. This is because both of the terms are likely to stimulate debate, dependent on how narrowly or broadly, how formally or functionally, how objectively or subjectively they are defined. To avoid confusion, we need a more detailed definition.

To start with 'awareness', it should be emphasised that when it comes to LA, we need to distinguish subsidiary awareness, or peripheral attention, from focal awareness, a higher level of awareness (van Lier, 1995). According to Eschholz, Rosa, and Clark (1974: xi), people are usually aware of language only in a subsidiary sense:

> Few people are aware of the extent to which language is used dishonestly to mislead and manipulate them. Few are fully conscious of the ways, subtle or not so subtle, in which their own use of language may affect the lives of others. Still fewer recognize that their perceptions of the world in which they live are influenced, and their thoughts at least partially shaped, by language.

Language awareness, on the other hand, is a form of focal awareness, which is required when we need to reach higher level of knowledge or skill. As van Lier (1995: 4) argues,

> Language awareness, as an educational goal, holds that it is necessary (or at least useful) at times to focus systematically on language in the second sense, of focal awareness...at times, and for certain purposes, we need a higher level of awareness, a focal awareness, to accomplish some language-related or language-mediated goal.

In this sense, the term 'awareness' underlines the importance of a sustained reflection on the nature and functions of language instead of a peripheral attention.

As for 'language', it can be used in either a broad sense or a specific sense according to different areas of interest to different teachers and researchers for different purposes. In the wider sense, it refers to language in general. In the more restricted sense, it denotes a particular genre of language. In either sense, the primacy is assigned to language itself: thinking about language and learning to talk about it more precisely and stylistically.

For the purpose of the present study, where most language work aims to raise learners' sensitivity to Shakespeare's language, 'language' is meant in a specific sense, i.e. the specificity of literary texts. In this case, we may call it a 'literary language'. Yet, one question immediately arises: Is there a 'literary language', after all?

In fact, it is increasing difficult to maintain that there is a 'literary' and 'non-literary' language (Carter & Nash, 1990; Simpson, 1997; McRae, 1991; 1996). The notion of literary language is discarded for a variety of convincing reasons. To discuss these reasons brings us back to the term 'literariness' briefly defined in the Introduction. The section that follows will discuss how the term *language* is used and why it needs to be used in a specific sense in the present study.

3.3.2 The literary language issue: literariness

The short answer to the question above is 'no'. According to Simpson (2004: 98), 'there exists no feature or pattern of language which is inherently or exclusively "literary" in all contexts'. In other words, it is not possible to say and prove any vocabulary or linguistic feature that is genetically and distinctly 'literary'. Short and Candlin (1986: 107) also deny the polar distinction between standard language and literary language, saying

> it is difficult to make a linguistic distinction between literature and the rest of language. By this we mean that, despite a widespread assumption to the contrary, we know of no particular linguistic feature or set of linguistic features which are found in literature but not other kinds of text. (emphasis original)

To solve the problematic issue of 'literary language', Carter and Nash (1990: 16-18) develop a notion of 'cline of literariness' along a spectrum of discourses. They argue that literary reading is a matter of relativity and different texts manifest different degree of literariness. For this reason, it will be more productive to look not at dichotomies but at continuums. In view of the comments made by Carter and Nash, we may as well say that literary language is language invested with literariness. (Herman, 1983: 99). It makes sense therefore to approach the issue of literary language through the concept of 'literariness', to use Roman Jakobson's term.

In what follows, my discussion will centre around one question: how 'literariness' is established. This will have a crucial bearing on the way I define

language awareness. There are at least three perspectives of literariness which are relevant to the present work.

One of the most important and earliest notions of literariness is offered by the Russian Formalists, who attempt to answer the elusive question of literariness by turning to linguistics. They characterise literariness as specific verbal 'devices' which deviate ordinary language and disrupt expectations. By deviating from the normative language, these formal devices (e.g. parallelism) are marked or 'foregrounded'.

The concept of 'defamiliarisation' is further elaborated by Jakobson's (1960) delineation of six functions of language — the emotive, referential, phatic, metalingual, conative, and poetic functions. For example, if the focus of communication is primarily on the content, the function is *referential*. If the focus is primarily on social contact rather than on content, the function is *phatic*. In verbal art, and poetry in particular, the *poetic* function is dominant. Central to this argument is that the poetic function is a determinant of literariness. As highlighted by Mukařovský (1964), poetic language is intended to maximise foregrounding. To quote Mukařovský,

> In poetic language foregrounding achieves maximum intensity to the extent of pushing communication into the background as the objective of expression and of being used for its own sake; it is not used in the services of communication but in order to place in the foreground the act of expression, the act of speech itself. (ibid: 19)

In short, Jakobsonian practice centres the notion of literariness exclusively on formal, linguistic patterning to the exclusion of other considerations.

Following directly from this is a second notion of literariness. While Jakobson treats literariness as a textual phenomenon, Miller (1960) contends that the role of the reader has been underplayed. From a cognitive viewpoint, Miller claims that we could not define literariness solely on the basis of textual properties, because the role of the reader needs to be acknowledged.

> The poet announces, by the form in which he writes it, that this product is a poem; the announce carries an invitation to consider the sounds of these words as well as their meaning. If we wish to participate in this game, we will adopt an attitude of phonetic, as well as semantic, sensitivity to the words he uses. (ibid: 390)

As Miller argues, the reading and comprehension a literary text requires the reader to activate an attitude of literary system to help them to process the text. Such a cognitive approach to the definition of literariness is now in the forefront of research (e.g. Zwaan, 1993; Cook, 1994; Stockwell, 2002). Again, we are reminded by Carter and Nash (1990: 59) that 'the ideological "position" of the reader are important and cannot be "bracketed out" by a focus on text-intrinsic linguistic properties'. Any reader is ineluctably situated in a particular socio-cultural context which begins to constitute the interpretive community.

A third notion of literariness is raised by literary scholars such as Culler (1975)

and Fish (1980), who regard literariness as a matter of *convention*. To them, the major determinant of literariness is conventional expectation, an interpretative construction. This can be seen in the quotation of Fish (1980: 326), 'It is not that the presence of poetic qualities compels a certain kind of attention but that the paying of a certain kind of attention results in the emergence of poetic qualities'.

The concept of literariness from linguistic, cognitive, or conventional stances is more complex than this brief sketch suggests (for more discussions of literariness, see Randall, 1985; Miall & Kuiken, 1998; Semino, 2001).

For pedagogical purposes, it is important to know how literariness is conceptualised in the present study. As I point out in 1.3, central to the notion of literariness in the study is a *linguistic* phenomenon, although I do not deny the fact that the construction of meaning is dependent *both* on the text and on the reader.

What I want to stress here is that the elusive question of literariness can partly be resolved by delimiting it to specific stylistic devices such as rhythm and metaphor despite the fact that such devices are not necessarily exclusively restricted to literature. My rationale is that to see literariness as formal/stylistic features can provide a secure basis for empirical investigations, because these features can be identified, teased out, and commented on by students in the stylistic analysis of text.

Related to this is the point that if the teacher needs to evaluate whether students have gained knowledge *about* language by stylistic approaches to literary texts, s/he needs certain criteria of assessing this knowledge. And it is these certain stylistic features that can serve as *objective criteria* for assessment to be made. This perspective widens in Chapter 5 as attention turns to the assessment of learners' attainment in a process-oriented literature classroom.

Second, to base the notion of literariness on linguistic dimension does not necessarily mean that the reader's role in shaping literariness is disregarded. In fact, to investigate the reader variation in shaping literariness, we need to take into account of a *'readerly* dimension' of stylistics (Simpson, 2004: 39). Therefore, we can borrow from developments in cognitive stylistics to supplement a discussion of the formal manifestations of language, to describe and rationalise 'the effects of literary texts on the mind of the reader' (Gavins & Steen, 2003: 2). From this it follows that cognitive stylistics can add an 'emotive point of view' to the discussion of stylistic analysis (Verdonk, 2005: 235).

To bring this section to a close, let me recap the notion of language awareness that I seek to define in the previous section. Perhaps a diagrammatic illustration (see overleaf) will help clarify this better.

Figure 3.4
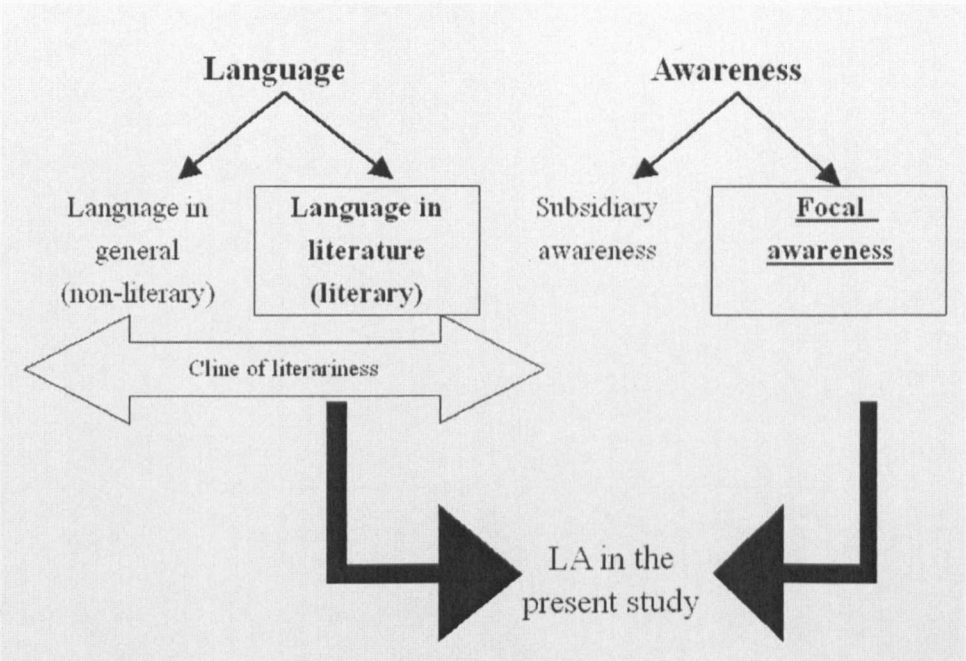
The claim that stylistics can enhance students' awareness of language use within literary texts because linguistic analysis helps make intuitions conscious can be thus repositioned in a more precise way; that is, *stylistic approaches to text analysis can help students achieve a higher level of awareness, a focal awareness, of perceiving the degree of literariness in the reading of all texts, whether 'literary' or not.* It ought to be pointed out, again, that this is the kind of language awareness the study tries to enhance in Taiwanese learners of language.

3.3.3 Delimiting the scope of LA

Another way to look at what LA means is to examine the various branches it

commonly encompasses in the research literature. LA can be divided into five
inter-related categories. Van Lier (1996: 83) provides a succinct and useful
summary of these domains:

Table 3.1

Domains of Language Awareness

Domain	Description	Reference
Cognitive	• Relations between language and thought • metalinguistic awareness • cognitive academic language • learner training	Vygotsky 1978 Birdsong 1989 Cummins 1989 Willing 1989
Affective	• relation between knowledge and feeling (including feeling of knowing) • consciousness includes intellect and affect • language awareness involves 'forming attitudes, awakening and developing attention, sensitivity, curiosity, interest, and aesthetic response' • affective filter, humanistic approach, learner-centred second/foreign language teaching	Sorace 1985 Vygotsky 1978 Wertsch 1985 Donmall 1985 Stevick 1976, 1980 Moskowitz 1978
Social	• linguistic tolerance • relations between ethnic groups • bilingualism, biculturalism	Trueba 1989 Romaine 1989 Rampton 1987
Power	• 'conscientizacão' • exploitation • social practices • literacy	Freire 1972 Bolinger 1980 Fairclough 1989, 1992 Gee 1991
Performative	• relations between declarative and procedural knowledge • automatization and control • communication strategies • language practice	Anderson 1982 Bialystok 1990 Tarone 1988 Ellis 1988

As the *cognitive* and *affective* aspects of awareness are more related to the concerned issues of teaching literature, other domains are discounted in the present study. For *social* domain of LA, reference maybe made to Adams and Yulasiewicz (1993), in which they emphasise the necessity of LA in a multicultural and multilingual society as it is a means of effective communication for asserting ones' identity without clashing with that of others.

As for the *power* domain, reference maybe made to Fairclough (1992), the leading figure in critical language awareness (CLA). The key principle of CLA is based upon the conviction that a critical awareness of language is 'a prerequisite for effective democratic citizenship, and should therefore be seen as an entitlement for citizens, especially children developing towards citizenship in the educational system' (Fairclough, 1992: 2-3). While CLA brings to light many important issues of power, control, and manipulation in language use in contemporary society, it is an issue with special regard to political discourse, which it is not a major part of this work to explore.

A brief review of the cognitive and affective domains will serve as a background for the scopes of LA to be explored in the present study. It is to these two specific domains that I will now turn.

The cognitive domain

One of the main rationales for LA is its promotion of cognitive development. A

cognitive rationale underlines the intellectual benefits followed by an increased awareness of language through a process of sustained reflection on the nature and functions of language. Simpson (1997: 4) is direct in his support for this cognitive dimension of LA:

> Language Awareness has an *intellectual formative effect*. Reflecting on language teaches pupils to use and develop their *reasoning* and abstraction faculties and their observation and *analysis skills*. It encourages them to develop learning strategies which are transferable to the learning of other subjects. (emphasis added)

The Kingman Report also made an explicit claim that if teachers take it to be a prime purpose of education to help students function intellectually, they 'must spend time in English classes examining words and how each contributes to the meaning of a sentence' (DES, 1988, quoted in James & Garrett, 1992: 15).

By looking closely at what writers are doing linguistically, students engage in a textual analysis which is presented as a productive means of 'developing awareness of pattern, contrast, system, units, categories, rules of language in use and the ability to reflect upon them' (Donmall, 1985: 7). This cognitive foundation for the study of literature has long been recognised (e.g. Elkins, 1976; van Peer, 1990). As Elkins makes it clear, 'it takes many experiences over a long period of time for appropriate schemata to develop. Literature is there to offer the experience' (1976: 6). Therefore, the object of analysis is often drawn from literature, whether it is institutionally sanctioned 'Literature' or more popular, non-canonical forms of creative writing.

This cognitive advantage — a heightened appreciation of the richness, flexibility, and vitality of language and a wish to explore it further — can not be developed in isolation from an *affective* one.

The affective domain

Teaching EFL learners is more than just the attainment of language skills (McRae, 1996; Spiro, 2004). Such teaching will also take on board the learner's attitude towards the target language and uses of it, and learners' emotional responses. As Scott (1991: 179) puts it, learning should help students understand 'with their hearts as well as their heads'.

The development of a personal response to literary texts — one which engages not only the intellect but also the feelings — is greeted by Carter and Long (1991), Crystal (1996), and Oxford (1999a). For instance, embracing the value of using literature for the purpose of language exploration, Carter and Long (1991: 3) maintain:

> Helping students to read literature more effectively is helping them to grow as individuals as well as in their relationships with the people and institutions around them. To encourage personal growth the teacher has to stimulate and enliven students in the literature class by selecting texts to which students can respond and in which they can participate imaginatively.

Therefore knowledge *about* language must be considered in conjunction with *affect*, a term defined by Arnold and Brown (1999: 1) as 'aspects of emotion,

feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviour'. The role played by affect in thinking and learning includes not just immediate instructional goal but also what Carter and Long (1991) calls 'personal growth'. In the context of these discussions, it is clear that the affective aspect of LA, along with its cognitive rationale, is a potent factor in determining the quality of language learning. The purpose of using literature as a medium of language exploration is founded on such a premise.

To be able to capture the complexity of this construct (i.e. language awareness), I shall offer an operational definition so that it becomes possible to assess and even quantify such a fuzzy concept for pedagogical purpose. In this way we can evaluate how language awareness might be fostered by a stylistic approach (The measurement issues will be taken up in more details in Chapter 5).

3.3.4 Language awareness operationally defined

Because the present study puts a premium on cognitive and affective dimensions, language awareness is construed here as

> The ability to *identify* stylistic features in a (literary) text and, beyond that, to evaluate sensibly how these features might contribute to their representational significance (or 'effects') in that particular context.

From a methodological perspective, language awareness is further operationally defined as an awareness of a definite set of stylistic devices. Of the various linguistic devices employed by Shakespeare (among others), the

following list is offered to assist students to ground a stylistic interpretation of Shakespeare's texts.

    1. metre (that creates rhythm)

    2. sound patterning (e.g. alliteration)

    3. binary

    4. repetition

    5. metaphor

    6. antithesis

    7. voice

    8. genre: prose/verse

In one respect, these stylistic features can be seen as *components of literariness*, which are what EFL learners need to comprehend Shakespeare through a comprehension of his language structures. As McRae and Clark (2004: 336) note, 'the linguistic tools of stylistics are preciously what EFL/ESL learners need in order to develop their approaches to reading any text, be it literature with a small 'l' or institutionally-defined literary study'.

Admittedly, the list is not comprehensive, but it consists of style features that are omnipresent, repeatedly appearing on the stylistic checklists in several textbooks (Cummings & Simmons, 1983; Carter & Nash, 1990; Clark, 1996; Gibson, 1997; McRae, 1998; Simpson, 1997; 2004; Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998; Montgomery *et l.*, 2000). The rationale behind the selection of each style feature is substantiated in Chapter 6, where a thorough lesson plan is presented

for why and how it is taught and learned.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I offer a justification for using stylistic approaches to Shakespeare's dramatic texts, with a view to enhancing Taiwanese students' language awareness. To put my theoretical stance into practice, I combine the tools of pedagogical stylistics with those of cognitive poetics to anchor teaching methodology (in Chapter 6) and account for the initiation and development of language awareness in the learners (in Chapter 7).

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the methodological perspectives are expounded. These include: research objectives, research questions, profiles of participants, the use of teaching materials, and methodological issues inherent in this study. A systematic procedure of working with texts in the classroom is proposed. This groundwork will lay a basis for the subsequent development of pedagogical approaches to Shakespeare's language discussed in Chapter 6.

4.1 Objectives of the study

Meaning, according Halliday (1979) and Widdowson (1979), is created in the interaction between the reader and a text. A text has 'meaning potential' to be realised by the readers. The realisation of this meaning potential depends much upon the reader's knowledge *about* language. Since readers differ in their knowledge *about* language, the levels of understanding will also necessarily differ. This difference can perhaps be characterised by Gray's (1960) tripartite division of 'reading the lines', 'reading between the lines', and 'reading beyond the lines'. Clearly, these differences lead to a hierarchy of the levels of understanding in that reading beyond the lines (critical reading) is considered as a higher level than simply reading the lines (the literal meaning of text) within a

text.

As most Taiwanese students of language often appear 'word-bound', their reading of a representational text tends to remain as a mere literal translation of the text. This is in part, as suggested earlier, due to the language-teaching context where referential materials predominate. Therefore, how to lead students from 'reading the lines' to 'reading between the lines' and then 'reading beyond the lines' becomes of paramount concern for meaningful language instruction to take place.

In keeping with the arguments I have been rehearsing, this study aims to

1. Promote students' awareness of literariness through a sensitising process of 'how-language-works' activities.

2. Help students acquire a repertoire of 'skills of linguistic engagement' to gain greater confidence in their independent encounters with texts of an imaginative/creative/representative kind.

3. Develop assessment tools necessary to measure and evaluate the development of language awareness and the learner's attainment.

Accordingly, ample data in genuine classroom contexts will be collected to offer a fuller picture of what students have achieved and learned, and how the learning has taken place.

4.2 Research questions

The research was set up to explore a number of issues. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions from the *product, process,* and *perception* perspectives:

1. If appreciative skills have developed, can they be applied with equal effectiveness to any text? (i.e. Are students, after the pedagogic intervention, able to transfer the analytical strategies to novel tasks not only in the set grooves of Shakespeare but also into other literary texts as well?)

2. How is language awareness developed in a group of L2 tertiary students and how can such awareness influence their reading?

3. How do students perceive stylistic approaches to Shakespeare's language at the end of the study? Which style feature(s) appeal to them the most/least? Why?

In keeping with the foregoing questions to be answered, there is still one research question relevant to the present study — a question raised by McCarthy and Carter (1994: 169), which has not yet been answered by the testing or related community:

4. Should learning *about* language be assessed? Can it be effectively measured? If so, how is this best done? What are the advantages and disadvantages to such an approach?

'Exploratory-interpretative' in nature (Grotjahn, 1987: 59), the present study is designed to illuminate these issues rather than to test specific hypotheses.

Accordingly, the present research is more in line with the nature of a qualitative paradigm. Such a naturalistic enquiry seems to be more appropriate in the field of language teaching given the fact that 'most of what we study is truly complex, relating to people, events, and situations characterized by more variables than anyone can manage to identify, see in a relationship, or to operationalize' (Peshkin, 1993; quoted in Richards, 2003: 9).

4.3 Profile of participants and instructional context

The participants in this study consisted of 22 Mandarin-speaking Taiwanese students who enrolled in the second-year undergraduate composition class for Applied English majors at National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology (NKFUS) in southern Taiwan. Students ranged from 21 to 28 years of age, with a mean age of 21. There were 3 males and 19 females in the group of students. This ratio reflected the preponderance of females in the Applied English Department at the time.

The majority of students (except two) had already completed courses such as 'An Introduction to Western Literature', 'English and American Literature', and 'Children's Literature' prior to taking this course. Only about one-third of these students had attended a course on 'An Introduction to Linguistics' before. Most importantly of all, they are beginning students of Shakespeare and his many works. Almost all of them had previously experienced journal writing as an in-class activity before joining this class.

4.4 Teaching materials

(a) Extracts from Shakespeare's plays

It is always hard to leave out some dramatic texts in order to select others, but selection has to be made. Of all of Shakespeare's works, three tragedies (*Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, and Macbeth*), one comedy (*As You Like It*), and four Sonnets (18, 130, 138, 140) are used in the design of this study. Extracts from each of works are illustrated in Table 5.1 (overleaf).

The use of these various excerpts is not without purposeful benefits. Firstly, it aims to expose students to a diversity of the distinctive voices Shakespeare assigned to his dramatic characters (*dramatic personae*). Secondly, it aims to prod students into reading more of the texts for which only extracts are used. Thirdly, it aims to provide students with a convenient entry point into Shakespeare's intricate 'web of words'. Above all, these selections were chosen because they will bring students into vital touch with parts of Shakespeare's dramatic texts that may not have otherwise happened.

Table 5.1 The 'pool' of play extracts

Plays/Sonnets	Extracts	Excerpt	Unit (focus)
Sonnet 18	Whole text	'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day'	Unit 1 (metre) Unit 2 (sound)
Sonnet 130	Whole text	'My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun'	Unit 5 (metaphor)
Sonnet 138	Whole text	'When my love swears that she is made of truth'	Unit 3 (binary) Unit 7 (antithesis)
Sonnet 144	Whole text	'Two loves I have of comfort and despair'	Unit 3 (binary)
Romeo &	I.i.130-136	'Here's much to do with hate...'	Unit 3 (binary)
Juliet	I.v.89-92	'Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting'	Unit 2 (sound)
	II.ii.2-3	'But soft! What light ...'	Unit 1 (metre)
	III.v.3-13	'Wilt thou be gone...?'	Unit 6 (antithesis)
	III.ii.19-27	'Come, Night, come, Romeo...'	Unit 4 (repetition) Unit 5 (metaphor)
Macbeth	V.iii.32-37	'The weird sisters, hand in hand'	Unit 1 (metre)
	I.v.57-60	'Your face, my than, is as a book...'	Unit 5 (metaphor)
	II.iii.132-133	'There's a dagger in men's smile...'	Unit 5 (metaphor)
	V.iii.25-26	'I have lived long enough...'	Unit 1 (metre)
	V.iv.21-30	'To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow'	Unit 4 (repetition) Unit 5 (metaphor)
	V.ii.21-22	'Those he commands move only in command,'	Unit 5 (metaphor)
	II.iii.4-13	'What three things does drink especially provoke...'	Unit 8 (genre)
Hamlet	I.v.105-109	'O most pernicious women...'	Unit 4 (repetition)
	I.ii.10-13	'Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy...'	Unit 6 (antithesis)
	III.iv.12-16	'Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended'	Unit 6 (antithesis)
	III.i.66-97	'To be, or not to be...'	Unit 7 (voice) Unit 8 (genre)
As You Like It	II.vii.147-174	'All the world's stage, ...'	Review Unit

<u>Note</u>. References to Shakespeare's works are from *The Oxford Shakespeare* (1914).

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(b) Supplementary texts

Language development, as McCarthy and Carter (1994: 167) make clear, can be best supported in a classroom context where 'a continuum of texts including all kinds of examples of creative and purposefully play with the resources of language' are made available to the students. Therefore, whenever and wherever appropriate, Shakespeare's texts are juxtaposed with some other texts that display a certain degree of dexterity and creativity in their context. These may include songs, advertisements, speeches, and idioms, which have traditionally been seen as non-literary.

Additionally, audio resources are drawn upon as an essential part of the learning process. The study included the use of compact disc recordings that were read by professional performers trained to have awareness of the metre in Shakespeare's works. Audio media featuring plays and sonnets by Shakespeare offer students a valuable extra perspective on the texts. The purpose is to hold students' attention and help them to 'tune in' to the cadence and feel the emotion of the verse.

As Long (1986: 47) argues, a taped reading, of professional standard, is 'a considerable stimulus as well as an aid to *correct reading, and therefore comprehension* (emphasis original). McRae (1991: 45) also concurs with such an argument, contending that 'Listening to a recording helps greatly in the L2 learners' process of cognition — in finding out, rather than working out, some of the basic ways in which the text works and some the basic things it is doing'.

4.5 Methodological issues

A number of issues may come to the fore when focusing solely on Shakespeare's language *per se*. Limitations of the methodology to be used here are endemic to stylistics in general. I offer some justifications for the methodological stances taken.

4.5.1 Shakespeare amputated

What needs to be raised here is that we study conveniently play extracts. One possible objection to using mosaic pieces of a play is that it may risk the danger of reducing students' awareness of the complete play (Cook, 1986). However, reasons of space and time do not permit otherwise. The dangers inherent in this are openly acknowledged. It is fairly commonly asserted that stylistic analysis is time-consuming and that the literature content of a course syllabus would have to be reduced accordingly (Verdonk, 2002).

Although a complete play is customarily set for classroom study, students are less likely to read intensively through every part of the text. A line-by-line exegesis of a play is both wearying and intimidating to students, especially beginners. The teaching of Shakespeare, as Holmer points out, invariably involves the 'art of amputation' (1990: 191). Oftentimes, a teacher has to face the difficult task of selecting some pivotal points of the text to elaborate on.

A similar view is also reflected in Tan (1998), Protherough (1983) and Carter

(1995). For Carter (ibid: 14), 'in activities such as stylistics — where close verbal analysis is a paramount concern — there is often no practical alternative to a selective use of extracts'.

Styan (1997: 10) also offers a justification for the use of extract:

> The short extract from a key scene is only a sample of the rest, of course, but it should prove that the student could read the rest of the play with equally close attention to what matters in the theater and the real values of the play.

By implication, each excerpt can be seen as a self-contained unit for analysis, with no ambitious attempt to study a whole character or a whole play. According to Buckledee (2002: 13), 'that is not such a bad trade-off: reduction in the number of texts in exchange for the acquisition of interpretative skills and greater learner autonomy'. Suffice it to say here that the use of extracts makes it possible to deal with the text in a more concrete and in-depth way than without.

Although the completeness of a play is sacrificed in exchange for a stylistic reading, the students are introduced to the idea of linking the plays with Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* (1807). One such practical combination is well established in Picchi's *Shakespeare's Greatest Tragedies* (1982), in which some famous scenes are set in the context of prose texts of Lamb's famous tales from Shakespeare. As students are referred to *Tales from Shakespeare* for the complete plot, some language difficulties can be diminished and accessibility enhanced through the use of these ancillary texts.

4.5.2 Difficulties with Shakespeare's language

The biggest problem in teaching Shakespeare is breaking the language barrier (Liston, 1997; McEvoy, 2000). It has been pointed out that Shakespeare does present some real problems in a classroom setting. According to Gilmour (1996: 5):

> Not least of these is the complexity of Shakespeare's language. Much that he wrote is in verse, and at times the meaning is obscured by archaic words and expressions, and differences in usage of grammar and punctuation.

Compared with the kind of language students expect to find in a modern newspaper, magazine, or popular novel, Shakespeare's language can be frustratingly difficult for EFL students because of the nuanced shadings and subtlety for which his works are so well known.

Of course there are problems in reading Shakespeare, and the task will demand a little effort, but 'this is hardly a reason to dispense with him altogether' (French, 1976: 87). There is no reason why EFL students shouldn't be able to enjoy the very essence of a Shakespeare play simply because its language seems impenetrable, or difficult at the very least.

Rather than making the lazy excuse that it is 'too difficult' for students, language teachers should help learners identify what causes problems and find some ways to help students deal with the texts which they would not have otherwise read. And it must be emphasised that students need not define every

single word to have a rich, rewarding experience with Shakespeare. McRae's (1991: 104) practical ways of looking at this issue is salutary:

> The teacher's solution should not be to reject the passage just because of lexical difficulties, but to find ways of diminishing the problems *in terms of students' receptiveness.* I have been at pains to stress the importance of reading and listening together, and of clearly delineated pre-reading tasks with deliberately restricted aims, in order to help students to the psychological satisfaction of reading the text to the end. At that point, students' receptiveness has overcome a great deal of the inherent resistance to unfamiliar lexis, and vocabulary exploration can begin from the positive achievement of something already understood. (emphasis original)

As McRae suggests, with an appropriate teaching apparatus, the goals of stylistic enquiry can be overcome. Instead of tailoring the texts to the students' proficiency level, what is needed is to simplify the task, not the text (Bernhardt, 1986). Again, to quote McRae (1996: 30), 'it is hardly ever possible to clarify every single concept in a text, or to examine every single new lexical item . . . If necessary the questions should be simplified, not the text. A text is only as difficult as what the learner is asked to do with it'.

While it is widely acknowledged that Shakespeare's language is difficult to modern readers, Thompson (2001) builds a convincing case that Shakespeare's language is in some ways really like everyday modern language. As Thompson puts it, there is 'a considerable degree of continuity between Shakespeare's dramatic language and everyday modern language' (2001: 6). In an attempt to demonstrate her argument, Thompson reminds us that a range of 'heightening'

devices employed by Shakespeare (e.g. puns, metaphor, repetitions, etc.) can be regularly found in 'ordinary, colloquial language' (ibid: 11).

In discussing Shakespeare's metrical pattern, Wright (2001: 52) also argues that the five-foot line of verse has the capacity to 'sound like the English that everyone spoke, only a bit grander and more eloquent'. Shakespeare's four-stress verse, especially the singsong speeches of fairies and witches, also resembles some nursery rhythms and popular songs. The following two examples, cited in Wright, suffice to provide an illustration:

    (1)   Up and down, up and down,

          I will lead them up and down

                        (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III.ii.396-397)

    (2)   Double, double, toil and trouble;

          Fire burn, and cauldron bubble

                        (*Macbeth*, IV.i.10-11)

By implication, therefore, Shakespeare's language is not as formidable as it is generally assumed to be by so many students. Too often in the past our notions of Shakespeare's linguistic difficulty have been biased by the presence of unknown or unfamiliar words found in the plays or poems. If we attend more closely to what Shakespeare does with words, we would find Shakespeare's stylistic devices are commonly shared with many modern writings. This is the reason why, in the present study, we juxtapose Shakespeare's language with

some texts written in modern discourse and consider it to be a linguistic springboard for the cream of literary talent.

4.5.3 Pedagogical limitation

Another issue worthy of mentioning is that enquiries into social and historical background, Shakespeare's biography, his development, influences from and to other literary figures and texts, literary criticism, are all important considerations but often are ignored in class because the focus is a linguistic and stylistic one. Although knowledge of the author and cultural background is helpful, a linguistic focus still allows for students to 'proceed a fair distance with no knowledge of the author at all' (Short & Candlin, 1989: 179).

Some sobering thoughts on the potential danger of background information are given by Brumfit as well: 'there is a risk of such information becoming more important than the reading itself' (1984: 259). In many cases, as was pointed out earlier in Chapter 2, this kind of background information provided by teacher-talking input, often eclipses reading in the classroom. That said, students should not be discouraged from gathering relevant or background information for further reading. It is recognised that the reading of a work of literature can be enriched by skilful use of background materials.

4.6 Procedures of working with texts

As a required subject in an intermediate level for the Applied English majors, the class met every week for a total of two hours per week during a 10-week academic quarter. The instruction, which lasted about 20 hours, was interspersed with other focuses on academic writing, which totalled 36 hours. For each of the meetings, a similar instructional procedure was adopted, which consisted of four episodes within two hours:

A. Introduction: students are introduced to the targeted feature by means of simple questions that whet interest and motivate discussion. Then explicit explanations on the stylistic feature are provided to prepare students for the subsequent tasks described below. For example, by introducing 'metaphor', students are asked to come up with an example they would use in daily life. From the discussion involved, issues relating to metaphor and how it could enrich language are brought up and further explained.

B. Development: the stylistic device is illustrated extensively and amplified through a reading of various texts, with emphasis on what and how Shakespeare is doing linguistically. This creates an awareness of the possibilities of reinforcing meaning by a deliberate use of a style feature. Sometimes Shakespeare's texts are juxtaposed with less literary texts featuring the same devices. One purpose of the juxtaposition is to convince students that the style feature being studied is not held as a monopoly of

the Bard, but ubiquitously shared by many others, even for commercial purposes.

C. Exploration: this stage forms the major part of the pedagogy. Students were engaged in a range of language-based activities for the text, especially mini text analysis or various tasks discussed in 3.2.5. This stage allows students to relate the device to a new reading task. Sometimes, students are asked to write sentences or short texts, to experiment with the device and then exchange their written pieces with class peers. While students communicate feedback at various points during the writing process, the teacher plays the role of facilitator, working with students and creatively intervening to ensure a relevant and meaningful experience.

D. Extension: As a follow-up activity, students are encouraged to read more examples of how the stylistic device is used by other writers, or in non-literary texts. This will enlarge the pool of material students encounter in the classroom and help them further consolidate and internalise what they have learned during the class.

An apparatus adopted in this pedagogic framework shares a remembrance of the sequential reading stages as advocated by McRae (1991). Let us now examine the reading process covered in such an apparatus.

A. Pre-presentation stage

Collie and Slater (1987) remind teachers that the printed page can be cold and miles distanced, and that only by teachers' power of imagination can lift the image from the page. It seems fairly obvious that in order for students to learn something new the teacher should mediate such new material in a variety of ways so that it appears in a form that is most accessible for initial encounter. In short, there is a need for 'icebreakers'.

As raw, unmediated materials tend to be incomprehensible to learners, it becomes important to warm them up in this introductory phase. Teachers need to integrate activities which help students make connections between the subject-matter and their individual experiences. It is as a result of this consideration that teachers need to actively foster 'engagement—the personal involvement of the learner in the learning at a level which guarantees real interest in it' (Eskey, 1997: 138).

The mediation may be, according to McRae (1991), a preliminary warm-up activity, an introduction to the subject matter, a recapitulation of what have previously done, a reminder of how a new item is linked to something students already known, or a clarification of why the text is chosen. In effect, the function of these triggers is 'the building of schemata' (Hess, 2003: 21).

According to a schema-theoretic view of reading, there is a string relationship between the knowledge of the world a reader brings to text and the

comprehension of the texts. Numerous studies and findings suggest that ESL/EFL readers' abilities to use schemata to derive meaning from texts can make a difference in how well they comprehend in English (e.g. Stevick, 1996; Carrell 1983; Weber, 1998; Greenway, 2002).

Carter and Long (1991) also recognise the need to activate students' actual experiences prior to reading the target text, because this will ensure that they approach the text with the appropriate mind set. When students are tapping into their mental scripts, they are foreshadowing the enjoyment they might gain from the reading. Hence, the teacher's job, prior to the reading of the text, is to activate and harness students' attention by various devices that facilitate learners' entry into and engagement with the text.

B. Pre-reading stage

Following the initial presentation, students are likely to start a dialogue with the text. To keep the dialogue going, the pre-reading stimulus provides students with a precise indication of what to do with the text. Therefore, tasks, which should be concrete and specific, may involve 'picking out theme words; listing the character; evaluating participants in the action in basic terms (positive or negative, sympathetic or unsympathetic)' (McRae 1991: 99).

Some other task sets in this stage, as suggested by Lazar (1993), involve helping learners with cultural background, stimulating interest in the target

material, and previewing vocabulary. To pre-teach vocabulary does not mean that students need to understand every word to understand the meaning of the text. Oftentimes, the activities or tasks accompanying the texts can be explored without a complete understanding of every word in the texts. The teacher should sometimes be 'mean' to students — only presenting those words which present difficulty. The implication for doing this is to encourage students to go for the overall meaning of the text.

Such a quick reading, according to Protherough (1986: 34), is to 'give some notion of the wood before engaging with the trees'. In most cases, all the tasks employed in this stage would serve as building up students' confidence in their ability to delve further into the text. It is therefore important to select, design, and administer practice activities in such a way that students are likely to succeed in doing the task.

To pre-empt the concern of students reading for every word, or the teacher doing the same, several kinds of lexical tasks can be exploited: (a) finding the part of speech of the word; (b) matching up words with their meanings in context; (b) choosing the most appropriate word from a range of synonyms; (c) building up vocabulary clusters on different kinds of core words; (d) evaluating vocabulary: 'Which word is positive?' or, 'What difference does one word make to the overall meaning, impact or effect of the sentence, or the text?' In fact, vocabulary difficulty may not be the only criteria which impedes understanding a text. There are ways in which a teacher can make the task

easier and thus lead students away from the difficult language, and towards ideas they recognise.

C. While-reading stage

At the main part of the process, the teacher does a dramatic reading of the whole text while the students read and listen at the same time. As an alternative to the teacher's reading, a recording (or even a visual media) may be used for possible maximum effect. At this first reading, neither reading comprehension nor listening comprehension is the desired attempt. It is important to stress that 'exposure to the full passage' is the key, allowing students to have an idea of the text as a whole (McRae, 1991: 100).

At the conclusion of the first reading, students may jot down any ideas that occur to them as a preliminary tentative answer to the pre-reading stimulus. There are some suggested language-based activities for students to work closer with the language—using 'wh-' questions, helping students to understand the characters, and so on—to tap the text a little more into students' mental landscape.

Soon after the first reading, the teacher should then elicit some personal responses (i.e. 'affective engagement', see Figure 2.2) before the second reading. The rationale for doing this is to collect students' first impression and initial intuitive reactions, for these valuable interactive insights would be lost if

there is no space between the first reading and the second reading (McRae, 1991). Through subsequent reading and linguistic analysis, the students might reshape their perceptions, negotiate with the texts, and gradually acquire an explicit and rational basis for deciding between interpretations.

D. Post-reading stage

By the time students have finished the activities suggested above, many of them would know the text by heart. This is the time when 'almost wholly subjective reactions will become more considered, more informed and aware, so will become rather more objective responses' (McRae, 1991: 100). Tasks to use after reading the text are of various kinds. They might include: comparing and contrasting two versions of the text, re-writing, summarising, 'correcting' unusual syntax, reading different critical interoperations, etc.

To ensure reinforcement after class, the teacher may provide other checksheets/worksheets for students to reflect upon, or work on as homework (Collie & Slater, 1987; McRae, 1991; Lazar 1993; Short, 1996). All these tasks aim to draw various observations together so that the link between form and meaning can be established more clearly and systematically. Table 4.1 summarises the sequence of teaching/reading procedures discussed in this section.

This manner of presentation is applied to the pedagogical design, aiming to involve the class in a learning process where questioning, discovery, and

confidence finally emerge. The proposed pedagogy, rather than a fixed and arid regularity, should be seen as a flexible framework, which may be subject to modification according to different situations and resources available.

Table 4.1 Apparatus

STAGE	*SEQUENCE*	*EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES*
Introduction	Pre-presentation (warm-up)	• Explain reasons for reading the text(s) • Recap the work done before
Development	Pre-reading (stimulus)	• Link to other texts for comparison • Provide specific tasks
Exploration	While-reading (text)	• Encourage learners' active reading and reflective thinking on the texts themselves • Promote a dialogue between reader/text
Extension	Post-reading (follow-up)	• Keeping course diary • Re-writing tasks • Excavate further interesting texts

4.7 Conclusions

In this chapter, there is a discussion and presentation of the method I will use to answer the research questions. It covers important methodological issues such as the merits and demerits of using extracts and the difficulty of Shakespeare's language. A groundwork is laid for a systematic procedure of working with Shakespeare's texts in the classroom. The next chapter is an extended part of methodology, where it presents a plan for data-gathering and assessment issues.

CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter delineates the kinds of data to be gathered in the present study to address the research questions at hand. It concerns the construction and implementation of an LA test, the learner diaries, and three types of questionnaires to be used. The aim is to create a dialogic confrontation with one another, through which each kind of data can be complemented in the light of others when analysed.

5.1 Assessment issues

Assessment is an indispensable part of any teaching process in a classroom setting. It is important not only because the teacher needs to assess students' work and evaluate course design, but also because the learners need to know how they are progressing towards language acquisition. These demands, however, pose special problems whenever it comes to the practice of a literary education.

According to Brumfit (1990: 1), literature teachers are faced with a complex issue involving the 'assessment of matters of judgment' because 'reading a work of literature is an act of interpretation'. The implication for literature

teachers is that they need to devise appropriate modes of assessment to evaluate learners' performance, be it *knowledge* of the text, *attitudes* towards literature, or *skills* to be used in the analysis of text.

In order to capture how students formulate their interpretation and how they develop language awareness, we need to have a detailed and synthesised data that represent multiple perspectives to ensure that 'biases inherent in any single method could neutralize or cancel the biases of other method' (Creswell, 2003: 15). As Wallace asserts (1998: 130), 'the reliability of data can often be increased by checking it against data generated by some complementary technique'. To enhance reliability, three sets of instruments are used in this research to collect ample data for later analysis. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of enquiry are adopted concurrently to enable the study to form a 'triangulated' picture of the result.

Assessment criteria are adduced by which both *product* and *process* are to be assessed: First, an LA test is developed to diagnose students' level of language awareness before and after the intervention. Second, the implementation of learner diaries in the classroom is intended to reveal facets of language learning experience which are largely inaccessible to external observation. Thus, it aims to capture the continuous *process* of awareness development. Third, in-class empirical data is collected that may reflect students' involvement and performance across various phases used in the completion of a learning task. Finally, the use of questionnaires is targeted at students' attitudes and

perceptions towards their individual learning experience. For ease of exposition, the various research tools are summarised in the following table:

Table 5.1

Instrumentations and implementation

Instrument	Administration
Product measures	
Researcher-developed LA test	Pre-test & post-test
Perception measures	
Questionnaires	Pre-evaluation & post-evaluation
Process measures	
Learner dairies	Weekly assessment during intervention
Classroom empirical data	Exploration phases in each lesson

5.2 Researcher-developed LA test

As described in Chapter 2, the present study takes place in a context where students' abilities are often tested on their knowledge of facts about literature, not on their knowledge of the texts themselves. Students' abilities are often assessed by questions such as the following:

> Select any two of the following: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton. Discuss Evil and Good characteristics as displayed by characters. Compare and contrast the portrayal of Evil in at least two works by each of the authors. Focus on characters, motivations, actions, and consequences. Be complete and be specific.[1]

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[1] This question is taken from the 2003 entrance exam of English literature Examination for postgraduate programme of English language in National Chen-Kung University, Taiwan.

or

> As J. A. Burrow has rightly pointed out, the main strength of Middle English literature lies in narrative. What are the major genres of narrative poetry in medieval writing? Elaborate your answer with specific examples.[2]

Questions of this kind are usually detached from the language of the literary works, and can be answered methodically by reading the texts in translation or by reading lecture notes, summaries, and background books without a directed reference to the texts. As these questions hardly require a 'reading between-the-lines' approach, memory becomes the chief criterion of successfully answering these questions. While this mode of assessment has its own merits, it is of limited use in drawing inferences made towards ascertaining the likely level of language awareness of the test-taker.

To go hand in hand with what we are teaching the works of Shakespeare for, a diagnosis-based, achievement-oriented mode of testing must be developed to assess students' awareness of literariness rather than an incomplete knowledge of facts related to or about literature. In other words, the assessment should be a valid reflection of what is being taught in the present study.

Surveys of several databases in related fields reveal virtually no papers concerning the assessment of language awareness or of literary competence (see Brumfit, 1991, however, for issues of assessment in literature teaching). A

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[2] The question was used in the entrance exam of British literature, undergraduate level, National Sun Yet-san University, in 2002.

test seems to be called for. Consequently, a test for this specific purpose is developed here to measure the construct (i.e. awareness of literariness) under investigation.

5.2.1 Test design

Bachman (1990) and Backman and Palmer (1996) provide a useful framework for test development. As a general guideline for designing a test, this framework is adopted and adapted to suit the purpose of the present study.

Bachman and Palmer's (1996) framework sets out to describe five aspects of inherent tasks: setting, test rubric, input, expected response, and the relationship between input and response. A detailed account of the framework is beyond the scope of this chapter (see Bachman & Palmer, 1996: 48-57; Bachman, 1990: 116-156, for more details). Here I concentrate on the main features and their applicability to the development of an LA test. Let us begin with the characteristics of the input.

5.2.2 Test specifications

(a) Characteristics of the input

The 'input' in a test refers to the text material which test-takers are expected to process and respond to. In the present context, the input is neither an extract from a play nor a sonnet by Shakespeare. Instead, it is a car advertisement

titled 'More Pulling Power—The New Terrano II', herein called 'The Terrano'
in a shortened form.

Box 5.1

The input (text used in the LA test)

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 1em;">

More Pulling Power—The New Terrano II

Power, so they say, is an aphrodisiac. And you can't get much
more powerful than the new Terrano II. Beneath that raunchy new
exterior lies a 2.7 litre turbo diesel intercooler engine that delivers
extra horsepower at low revs, just when you need it. Switch to 4 wheel
drive and you'll be down that rocky gorge (a doodle with the limited
slip differential), through that stream (up to 450mm deep) and up
that mountain (up to 39 degrees) with something close to wanton
abandon.

But perhaps you should begin with something more gentle. Like tarmac.
For it's here that you'll appreciate the Terrano's more sensitive qualities.
Its responsive handling. Its smooth as a satin sheet ride. (Thanks to
anti-roll bars). The ease with which it will tow a trailer, pull a caravan,
and more or less anything else you fancy. Add ABS and driver's airbag
and you have a 4×4 that's too desirable for words. Which is exactly why
it comes with engine immobiliser and an ultrasonic and perimetric alarm.

YOU CAN WITH A NISSAN

</div>

(Text adopted from Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998: 204)

The text is chosen as the input because it contains many stylistic features obviously worthy of comment. Many of these style features—alliteration, antithesis, and metaphor—are what students would encounter while reading Shakespeare's texts. So, it is used here to examine whether or not students can internalise what they have learned and transfer those skills and further apply them to a completely new text. Although a picture accompanies the Terrano advertisement, it is not presented to the test-takers because 'such combinations in text may lead to processing differences' (Alderson, 2000).

The readability of the Terrano

To provide a rough estimate of text readability, I use Flesh's Reading Ease Formula for reference, even though it gives only a crude measure of text difficulty. Using the Terrano advertisement as a basis, the formula produces a reading-ease (RE) score:

$$RE = 206.835 - (1.015 \times ASL) - (84.6 \times ASW)$$

where:

ASL = average sentence length (the number of words divided by the number of sentences)

ASW = average number of syllables per word (the number of syllables divided by the number of words)

.

In this case, the output of Flesch Reading-ease score of the Terrano reads as

follows:

$$RE = 206.835 - (0.846 \times 133.513) - (1.015 \times 13.214)$$
$$RE = 80.466$$

The output of the Flesch Reading formula is a number from 0 to 100, with a higher score indicating an easier reading capacity. Based on this scale, the Terrano text is counted as 'easy'. For reference, the Readability Chart is indicated below.

Table 5.2

Flesh's Reading Ease scores (Flesch, 1949: 149)

Reading Ease score	Style description	Estimated reading grade
0 to 30	Very difficult	College graduate
30 to 40	Difficult	13th to 16th grade
50 to 60	Fairly Difficult	10th to 12th grade
60 to 70	Standard	8th to 9th grade
70 to 80	Fairly easy	7th grade
80 to 90	Easy	6th grade
90 to 100	Very easy	6th grade

It may be admitted, however, that there is one major problem with the use of a readability formula. That is, it may not yield a valid prediction of text comprehension when it comes to direct use of 'literary texts'. Some of the main reasons for this circumstance are discussed below:

Firstly, readability scores are based on the surface characteristics found within the text. Comprehension, however, depends to a greater extent on discourse processing at the text base and situational levels. Since a literary text often exhibits many textual features which produce rhetorical 'deviations', the increased difficulties in the reader's perceptions are hard to predict by use of such a formula.

Similarly, no account is taken as to the coherence and cohesion of a text. Research (e.g. Lee, 2002) has shown empirically that readers have less difficultly reading cohesive texts. This means that that we would expect in most cases lower readability scores for low-cohesion texts than for high-cohesion texts. As discussed in Chapter One, literary texts are often characterised by their lack of 'contextualising devices' which contribute to the cohesion of the texts, so reading difficulties would normally increase in this respect.

Additionally, although text characteristics can predict aspects of readability, there are reader variables to be considered. Reader variables will, of course, affect the nature of reading and comprehension (Podis & Podis, 1990). That readability is significantly influenced by the reader's mindset is a point which literary theory can further illuminate. And this notion — Fish's construct of the interpretative community — has been discussed in 3.3.2.

In short, in many circumstances text difficulty is not definable in absolute

terms. As Halász (1991: 266) claims, the readability of a literary text is harder to predict than expository-descriptive texts since the former is 'continually disrupted by new unpredictabilities' in view of its deviations. Therefore readability should be viewed as an interaction between a text and a reader's cognitive and affective aptitudes (see Alderson, 2000: 32-60, for a more detailed discussion of potential factors within the reader).

(b) Characteristics of the setting

Physical setting can be an important variable in a test. So, to have the setting controlled, the test was taken in a well-lit classroom containing 40 movable student desks and a teacher's table with a lectern. As the classroom is where students regularly attend for various courses, it is a familiar environment for each test taker. In general, the test was conducted in favourably physical conditions for a testing situation. However, the time of task occurred at 1.00 p.m. at which quite a few test-takers might feel drowsy after lunch, as some of them reported afterwards.

(c) Characteristics of the test rubrics

Students' knowledge *about* language was measured by means of a pre-test, which served as a preliminary diagnosis of the students' starting-points of language awareness. The pre-test was administered one week before intervention, and the post-test, 12 weeks after intervention, with a gap of 11 weeks between the two tests. The contents of each of the two tests contained

exactly the same text and test tasks, but students were not informed that they would be doing a test after the instructional programme, nor did they know the test would be the same.

Prior to the pre-test, participants are offered necessary information as to what the test will look like: what the test is aimed at (in vague term), what content is to be covered, what the methods will be, how long it will be, and any other neutral information that ensures familiarisation with the test prior to taking it. In so doing, students are provided enough information and psychological readiness for the test so that they can perform the test to the best of their capacity (Alderson, Clapham & Wall, 1995).

The instructions were conveyed in Chinese, as this is students' first language in order to ensure their understanding of how the tasks were to be completed. During the test, students were asked to read the text silently and attentively. Access to bilingual dictionaries was allowed, as this would normally be available to readers under natural study conditions. Students were given about an hour to respond to the test sheets (Appendix 4) containing the tasks to be carried out.

The first task aims to probe students' affective responses to the text. A semantic differential, as now used, is a device for exhibiting the meaning of something (word, picture, gesture, etc.) by indicating its position on each of a number of bipolar, seven-interval adjectives scales ('hot-cold',

'pleasant-unpleasant', etc.).

In this test, students were asked to indicate, as intuitively as possible, their reception of the Terrano text by given ratings on bipolar scales defined with contrasting adjectives at each end. For example:

The text is:

Sample response
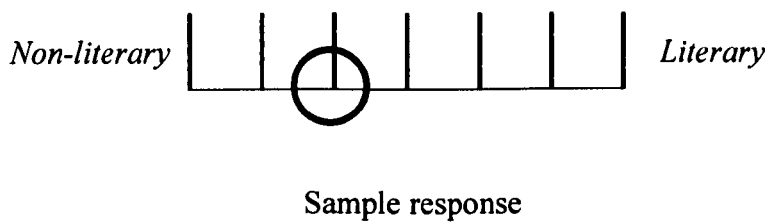
Figure 5.1

A scale like this measures directionality of a reaction (e.g. good versus bad) and also intensity (slight through extreme). Thus a number from 1 to 7 can be obtained for the Terrano text, and these differentials are taken as indices of the meaning of the text. Ratings are combined in various ways to describe and analyse the person's feelings, making it possible to study changes of meaning in both individuals and groups.

In the present study, scales are constructed by inspecting Snider and Osgood's (1969: 47-49) sourcebook for adjectives which could tap informants' affective reactions to the text. Simultaneously earlier study in this field, van Peer (1990) in particular, was drawn into consideration.

To allow students to decide about the nature of the text and their evaluation of literary reading or non-literary reading, caution was made to avoid guiding their attitudes and thus produce results by a tendentious presentation of the context and the perspective of the text. Prior to the reading, some brief, neutral information was given: 'Read the text, see what impression it makes on you, and then rate the scale'. Neither the purpose nor the rationale was given for doing this.

When subjects had completed the semantic scales, they were given the awareness tasks to accomplish. Three consecutive tasks were set. First of all, students were asked to do a 'detection' task, i.e. to observe carefully whether certain stylistic features (presented with a list) are absent in the text. The recognition of these linguistic forms is made via ticking 12 boxes provided for this purpose, each box representing one particular textual feature that testers might choose from.

Next, for each of the features ticked, students were asked to support their judgment by indicating where in the text these features may occur. In other words, response type requires the actual location of a stylistic feature among a wider range of alternatives in the given text. This is intended to confirm students' ability in *noticing* and *identifying* a particular linguistic feature in the text, and reduce the effect of guessing. This identification task offers a basis for further interpretations to be made by the students.

After the identification task took place, students were asked to give their interpretation — in short answer form — as to what might be the stylistic function(s) of each feature they had identified. In this section, therefore, the testers are responsible for the wording of the answer. This has the advantage of not constraining the candidate to the same degree.

Besides, as McNamara (2000: 30) points out, 'The candidate assumes greater responsibility for the response, and this may be perceived as in some ways more demanding and more authentic'. In effect, the length of the response may be found in a few words or as extended discourse. Students are reminded, in particular, to provide concise and cogent response as it is emphasised that it is the quality of not the quantity of response that counts.

(d) Characteristics of the expected responses

As this test is aimed to measure language awareness, not intended to test grammatical knowledge or language proficiency, students are freely allowed to respond to the test items in their first language (i.e. Chinese) or in English as they may prefer. This freedom assumes that we do not want the respondents' writing ability to inhibit the demonstration of their LA. In this way, a candidate will not be penalised in such a test for weakness in personal writing skills. This is also related to an important issue of validity in scoring.

It should be noted that if the scoring of the written responses takes into account spelling and grammar, it makes the measurement of LA less accurate, because we will then set tasks which measure more than one ability. In other words, if writing ability were taken into account, LA would be assessed through the medium of advanced writing skills. It follows then that writing skills should not be considered as a variable in a test like the case in point (see Spiro, 1991; Hughes, 2003, for a detailed account of this issue). By way of a summary, these categories of test method facet is presented in the following table:

Table 5.3

Task characteristics (based on the framework of Bachman & Palmer, 1996)

Characteristics	Test tasks
TESTING ENVIRONMENT	
Setting	Typical classroom (a familiar place for test takers)
Participants	22 Taiwanese Univ. students of English as a foreign language (EFL)
Time of testing	13:00-14:10
TEST RUBRICS	
Test organisation	
Salience of parts	Different parts are not explicitly marked
Sequence of parts	The parts are ordered from easy to difficult
Relative importance of parts	Equally weighted
Instructions	
Language	English and Chinese
Channel	Aural & visual
Structure	
Number of parts/tasks	3
Sequence of parts	Part I Semantic Differential
	Part II Identifying stylistic features
	Part III Significance of features

Number of tasks/items	Part I (7 items)
per part	Part II (12 items)
	Part III (number of items varies according to the previous items identified)
Time allotment	70 minutes
Scoring methods	
Criteria for correctness	Test takers are not given information about the evaluation criteria.
Scoring procedure	Independent double scoring. Scorers are told to ignore inaccuracy (e.g. spelling, grammar) in responses.

<u>Note</u>: The scoring methods will be discussed in Chapter 7, where the pre- and post-test results are analysed and compared.

5.3 Learner diaries

One of the major difficulties confronting the present study is that studying the process of consciousness-raising is inaccessible to direct observation. This is because, according to Alderson (2000: 4), 'The process [of reading] is normally silent, internal, private'. Since a great deal of the cognitive and affective process involved in language use and development is invisible, going on in the brain of the learner, a test, which is product-oriented, is generally insufficient to make valid determinations.

Therefore, to derive insights into students' mental processes, we need introspective methods to capture the mental events, or the 'hidden affective variables that greatly influence the way teachers teach and students learn' (Brock, Yu & Wong, 1992; quoted in Wallace, 1998: 63).

5.3.1 A definition of diary

Introspective observation is defined by James (1980: 185) as 'looking into our own minds and reporting what we there discover'. Ericsson and Simon (1993) distinguish three levels of introspective verbal report: talk-alouds, think-alouds, and introspective studies. Within each approach several methods are available for data collection and analysis.

As one type of introspective method, the use of diaries as a source of data is a well-established procedure used to investigate the teaching/learning process and language development in naturalistic enquiry (Long, 1980; Bailey, 1980, 1990; Porter et al. 1990; Nunan, 1992; Carroll, 1994; McDonough & McDonough, 1997; Halbach, 2000). Therefore, course diaries kept by learners can be used as one means of introspective verbalisation.

As LA is an ongoing process for noticing the language around us and examining how it works, the way to do this is by keeping a diary, in which pieces of findings on language can be noted down as a basis for 'the tentative, exploratory nature of critical reading' and 'the development of a critical voice' (Protherough, 1986: 50). In the present study, I will use Bailey's (1990: 215) definition of diary and use the terms 'diary' and 'journal' interchangeably.

> A diary ... is a first-person account of a language learning or teaching experience, documented through regular, candid entries in a personal journal and then analyzed for recurring patterns or salient events.

From the perspective of a language classroom, the use of diary not only opens up fields that are normally inaccessible to the teacher but also heightens learners' awareness of their own learning in and outside the classroom. As Staton and Peyton's (1988) study reveals, journal writing provides a window into students' cognitive processes, thereby allowing the teacher to plan lessons more effectively. With data generated by the learners themselves, diaries provide us with views from 'inside the black box', to use Long's (1980: 33) metaphor.

5.3.2 Procedure of implementation

At the beginning of the term, students were asked to keep weekly course diaries, and the weekly collection process, which lasted 10 weeks, ensured that feedback could be provided to students. This procedural step was taken in an effort to strengthen the research design by minimising variability in feedback quality (for a study of the impact of feedback on student revision, see Ferris, 1997).

Following the practice described by Staton et al. (1988), I did not grade students' diaries, but extensive feedback was provided. Commentary included my agreement, disagreement, questions about the meaning or implication of an idea, or suggestions about how to look at an issue differently or more critically.

There is fairly general agreement on the point that diary instruction needs to be

explicit (e.g. Bell, 1993; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; McDonough & McDonough, 1997). For this reason, participants are referred to the formula advanced by and adapted from Porter et al. (1990: 228-29):

- Describe class discussions.

- React to class discussions.

- Describe something that you read.

- React to something that you read.

- Ask questions about reading both in and outside the classroom.

- Make connections between course content and outside reading.

- Provide further comments as needed.

These guidelines are not given for students to follow slavishly. They are given because these pointers have the advantage of giving learners a sense of direction (see Appendix 6: 'How to keep a diary' handout, distributed in the first week of the course). This revolves around my concern to allow the students to display their own ways of keeping the diary rather than to impose my personal style on their performance, and in order to ensure that my teacher role did not overwhelm my researcher-role as a consequence.

Having fulfilled the preliminary foci of the diary entries, students were encouraged to share and express their own findings in their diaries. In particular, they were reminded to note down interesting language phenomenon they found in advertisements, newspaper, magazines, radios, or songs, anywhere they could find a link with anything they have already read and seen,

or whatever strikes them with new and creative expressions. As such this will lead them to pay more attention to every language analysis activity, to notice similar examples from what they read, and to process the input more analytically. Students were also encouraged to be totally honest and forthright in their commentary.

Sometimes, recent examples were read out anonymously to share insights with the class (see some of these examples in Chapter 6). At the end of the course, students compiled all journals into a file, which they turned in as part of their final grade.

5.4 Questionnaires

Another contribution to a more adequate picture of the LA development is the use of questionnaires. Various forms of questionnaires were extensively employed for the collection of field data. They were used particularly as back-up data since questionnaires, as Gillham (2000: 81) cautions against, are 'rarely adequate as a research method on their own'. Piloted and validated with interviews, three different forms of questionnaires were systematically used to collect learner responses (see Table 5.4). These questionnaires were completed anonymously so as to enhance learner truthfulness. Questionnaire response rate was 100 percent, as learners filled them out in class very week. A total of 264 questionnaires were collected over the 10-week period of intervention.

Table 5.4

Forms of questionnaire

Questionnaire	Time of implementation	Data collected
Questionnaire A (Appendix 1)	Pre-course & post-course	Reading strategy use
Questionnaire B (Appendix 2)	After each lesson	Efficacy of the unit
Questionnaire C (Appendix 3)	Post-course	Most/least favourable style feature

Questionnaire A was developed primarily for assessing the level of reading strategy learners habitually use, where diagnostic information is sought. It outlines all the stylistic features to be covered in the instructional content. By using frequency categories, as in Oxford's (1990) 'Strategy Inventory in Language Learning', respondents are required to indicate the extent to which they pay attention to the linguistic features by marking one of the responses 'Never true of me' to 'Always true of me'.

Questionnaire B was administered immediately after each class because it was targeted at students' perception of each unit (i.e. linguistic feature). Standard Likert scales are used. As such, respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with items by making one of the responses ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. By aggregating results of these numbers it could also be used as a course evaluation to

determine whether a style feature promotes language awareness. One question, in particular, is semi-open, as it does not provide a pre-determined choice of answer.

Questionnaire C was administered after the intervention, in which the participants were asked to evaluate the efficacy of each stylistic feature they learned by means of ranking each feature numbered from 1 to 8, with '1' being the most useful and '8' the least useful. As they rank these eight features in terms of its usefulness by a numerical order, they are to provide some explanatory accounts for the one being ranked as '*the most useful*' and the one being ranked as '*the least useful*'.

It is noteworthy that these questionnaires are kept to be reasonably short so that class time was not taken away for its completion. As Dörnyei (2000: 199) notes, questionnaires need to be short 'in order not to interrupt the process too much'.

Problems of motivating respondents

Another caveat needs to be pointed out here is the issue of arousing respondents' interests in filling out the questionnaires. As Gillham deftly observes, 'Few people are strongly motivated by questionnaire unless they can see it as having personal relevance' (2000: 10). For this reason, students are made clear initially why the information is being collected and what use it will be put to, as this will make the completion of questionnaire intrinsically

rewarding. However, participants were not informed about the detailed nature of the present research because it is purported to avoid the Hawthorne effect[3] and subject expectancy[4] in the study. The abiding concern is related to the internal validity of the study, which will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

As a consequence, participants were told that for each questionnaire they fill in, the learning process is aimed at documenting their learning contour. And the results would be compiled and analysed to form a representative picture of each student's learning process and learning outcome as well. Of course, it was intended for students to be willing and to give a serious, considered response. Space forbids a more thorough discussion; references may be made to Gillham (2000) and Dörnyei (2003) for more in-depth guidelines as to the development of a questionnaire and the problems and pitfalls that hamper its use.

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discuss three methods of enquiry utilised in the present research to gather data and augment reliability and validity. I also highlight the value of each method and reasons for its inclusion. By way of a summary, the research tools adopted here are:

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[3] *Hawthorn effect* refers to the likelihood that participants may be 'pleased at being included in a study that the results of the investigation are more closely related to this pleasure than to anything that actually occurs in the research' (Brown, 1988: 32).

[4] *Subject expectancy* occurs when the participants think they have figured out what a study is about and try to help the researcher to achieve the apparent aims.

- The researcher-developed LA test (empirical data)

- Learner diary (introspective data)

- Questionnaires (empirical data)

Collectively, the main focus of these techniques is to afford insights not only into the *product* but also the *process* of learning. This makes triangulation a crucial element of the design.

CHAPTER 6
WORKING WITH LITERARY FEATURES:
CLASSROOM EXPLORATION

6.0 Introduction

Based on theoretical insights developed in previous chapters, this chapter seeks to translate these insights into practicum for the classroom. First, the general structure of the overall pedagogical programme is laid out. Following this, the main body of each unit of study (eight in total) is framed and organised in such a way as to establish a working model. On that basis each stylistic feature is then exploited respectively in a self-contained unit. The instructional programme concludes with an extended work-out devoted to reviewing all the stylistic features learned by the students. To grant students their own voices throughout the study, I have, wherever possible, reproduced their responses taken from classroom activities and given as opinions about the texts.[1]

6.1 Blueprint for the instructional programme

The design of the scheme is grounded in Scholes' view that the teacher's job is 'not to produce readings for our students but to give them the tools for producing their own' (1985: 24). For learners to find stylistic approaches genuinely as useful tools for analysing literary texts, the lesson progresses

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[1] I have given students in the class pseudonyms, and their 'voices' are cited in their original forms, despite some obvious errors in spelling and grammar.

through the systemicists' 'level of language'. It was decided that the teaching should begin with the micro-elements and then move on to the macro-elements of a text. To put it another way, the pedagogical programme will begin with the role of phonology and then proceed to the formal structures of syntax and discourse, and subsequently end with an analysis of genre.

The method of reading is thus structured in terms of certain kind of bottom-up progressions — from smaller features of texts (e.g. sound) to larger features (e.g. discourse). Each unit is considered as a small step taken in the direction of raising consciousness about language in general. In the study, each linguistic feature was taught in the following sequence:

Table 6.1
A Summary of instructional programme

Level of language	Schedule	Focus of unit
Sound	Week 1	Rhythm & metre
	Week 2	Alliteration, assonance & rhyme
Semantics	Week 3	Binary
	Week 4	Repetition
	Week 5	Metaphor & imagery
Syntax	Week 6	Antithesis
Context	Week 7	Voice
	Week 8	Genre: verse/prose
	Week 9	Bring together all the threads

The whole framework consists of eight self-contained, but interrelated units. Each unit builds upon the knowledge gained thus far, introducing a new step and concept in the stylistic understanding of Shakespearean language. The final unit weaves together all the threads that have been spun during previous units. In this extended unit several levels of language are simultaneously explored.

The focus of each unit represents one textual feature for the understanding of Shakespeare's language. In sum, these features are some of the rhetorical methods Shakespeare constantly employed to achieve particular literary or stylistic effects. Therefore they can be regarded as the building blocks of Shakespeare's dramatic expressiveness. Also, these stylistic features are often seen as recurring linguistic patterns common to literary texts and discourse of 'literariness'.

As was pointed out in 3.3.3, all these textual features are illustrated extensively and substantially in many stylistic textbooks or in discussions related to stylistic analysis. The implication is that these features may be claimed justifiably to be the most useful and effective tools in putting students on the inside of the given text. For this reason, these poetic devices are chosen to fit within the framework.

Once again, it should be stressed that the list is representative rather than exhaustive. The overall aim is to present texts that would enable students to see and appreciate these literary features which they would otherwise have

overlooked. It is of equal importance to also achieve an aim that enables students to explain explicitly their intuitive responses which they had been unable to do for others except in the most general and impressionistic of terms.

6.2 Organisation of each unit

Each unit presented in the study is structured in the following sequence (see below). There are seven main parts and these include:

I. Aim(s)

This section states the purpose(s) and objective(s) of the unit, thus providing the learner with a focus. In general, it focuses on one feature of Shakespearean language in order to generate an appreciation of the rhetoric, style, and effects of the style feature being explored therein.

II. Material selection

This contains the list of play extracts (key texts) used in the unit. Sometimes a text will be re-cycled but maintaining a different focus. On the other end of continuum are texts drawn from various works of literature with a small 'l' (McRae, 1991). To allow for focus to be concentrated on the texts themselves, titles and authors are sometimes not revealed to students until some linguistic operations have been done.

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

This section essentially offers practical suggestions on how the prepared text(s) can be studied by means of the approach best suited to it. The approach may involve various methods, such as filling cloze-text, answering multiple choice questions, ranking, paraphrasing, etc. Some approaches are of my own invention; some are well-tried and widely-practised techniques adopted from various resources. Wherever appropriate, I capitalise on these techniques and adapt them to suit my teaching situations.

IV. Rationale

It explains why the stylistic feature should be taught and learned. More specifically, it points out the 'significance', or the functional nature of the linguistic feature in question.

V. Guiding questions

This section lists some representative rather than exhaustive questions which guide students toward making their own judgments about a text. To answer these questions requires differential attention in terms of both time and effort. Following the guidance specified in 3.2.5, these questions are generally formulated to get students back into the text in a search for textual clues. Basically, they serve the purpose of increasing learner involvement in the critical and evaluative reasoning process.

VI. Extension (post-reading)

This part is the application of what has already been introduced in the first half of each lesson. Additional resources, either literary or non-literary, are provided here for students to experiment with and think about by themselves, with the teacher only offering limited suggestions or hints whenever necessary. Further exercises allow more aspects of a stylistic feature to be discovered. This consists of tasks that are more open-ended, some of which may further involve mini-projects. These resources may include extracts from political speeches, advertisements, newspapers, songs, etc. They aim to (1) extend observations and descriptions made in the relevant unit, (2) offer further examples for exploration, and (3) provide follow-up tasks for students to internalise the concepts as well as the skills acquired.

VII. Commentary

The section summarises the final main points that have emerged in the unit. Textual commentary is provided in an attempt to answer some guiding questions being brought up. In addition, as far as possible, I complement my discussion with some task fulfilment data collected in the classroom — especially concerned with student writing and the results of task performance — as they offer opportunities to present empirical evidence of learning attainment.

6.3 Teaching programme

6.3.1 Unit 1 — Metre and Rhythm

I. Aims

This unit is designed (a) to introduce the concept of iambic pentametre and iambic tetrametre and (b) to enhance understanding of how metre that creates rhythm which reinforces or affects the sound and meaning of different verses.

II. Material selection

1. 'Sonnet 18'

2. *Macbeth*, V.iii.25-6

3. *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii.2-3

4. *Macbeth*, I.iii. 32-7

5. Extract from *Green Eggs and Ham* (by Dr. Seuss)

6. Extract from 'This Be the Verse' (by Philip Larkin)

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

It is commonly known that the words of a play or a poem need to be spoken in order to create rhythm to be considered as more alive. To respond to the sound and beat of Shakespearean poetics, students are asked to place their hand over their hearts and feel the beat of their own heart. Learners will soon realise how alive the poetry is: a light stress, followed by a heavy stress — da-DUM, da-DUM, da-DUM — a pattern from which most of Shakespeare's lines get their pulse. What is usually burdened with the name 'iambic' is here presented

as the 'heartbeat of the poem'.

A teacher can use an overhead transparency of the sonnet and orally scan each line, marking the stressed and unstressed syllables in order to help the students 'see' as well as hear the rhythm created by the metre. Learners need to have the basic idea that words are built out of syllables, the basic element of rhythm in English language. Two basic measures are then introduced: four-beats-per-line (tetrametre), and five-beats-per-line (pentametre) — though some other metres do exist. To analyse a poem's metre, students are guided to (a) count the total number of syllables-per-line; (b) mark and count number of stresses-per-line; (c) check whether the lines follow a four-beat or five-beat rhythmic pattern.

Because of some difficulties in articulation, or some reluctance for students to read aloud in front of their peers, listening to a recorded reading, which can greatly enhance students' understanding of how the lines are spoken, should be prior to some 'read-aloud' activities. While listening to the recording, stomping feet rhythmically, or drumming hands can be an exercise in which students practice beating out the rhythmic pattern under or on top of their desks.

IV. Rationale

While Shakespeare wrote most of his poetry and much of his dramatic verse in the form of iambic pentametre, a lot of the songs and supernatural characters portrayed in the plays are presented variously in the form of iambic tetrametre. In the process of introducing Shakespeare to EFL/ESL beginners, it is vitally

important that they be made to feel both of these rhythmic properties and appreciate the aural design so inherent in the works.

V. Guiding questions

- What is the difference, specific to form, between iambic pentametre and iambic tetrametre?

- Metre creates the rhythm of a text. In comparing iambic pentametre with iambic tetrameter, which kind of rhythm sounds more 'serious' and which one more 'light' in tone?

Text 1.1 (*Sonnet 18*)

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;
  So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
  So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

- How many lines are there in a sonnet? Try to number the syllables of the first line from 1 to 10, as the following example shows.

Example:

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
  1 2   3 - 4   5 6 7 8 - 9   10

- Where are the stresses in these lines? Even member? Or odd number?

- Try to number (from 1 to 10) the syllables of some other lines. How many syllables are there in each line? Do they all fall into the same pattern? (a typical line strings five of unstressed-STRESSED patterns)

- Read the sonnet again to a partner, this time paying close attention to the stress you have marked. Does it make a difference? How is it different from the first time you read it?

    Text 1.2 (*Mac, I.iii.32-7*)

    The weird sisters, hand in hand,
    Posters of the sea and land,
    Thus do go about, about:
    Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
    And thrice again, to make up nine.
    Peace! the charm's wound up.

- Read text 1.2 with the help of the recording, stomping or beating with the flow of the rhythmic pattern.

- How is this text different from Text 1.1? Is the rhythm more chant-like? More funny, spooky, or what?

- Who might the speaker be? Are they human? Or, are they supernatural characters in the play itself?

- Discuss reasons why Shakespeare might have used a different metre in his

depiction of supernatural characters.

VI. Extension

● Below are four short extracts. Which ones are written in iambic pentametre? Which ones are in iambic tetrametre? Try to judge the tone of each text. Is it light or serious?

● Which of these four texts sounds more 'poetic' to you? Which one sounds more like a song? Which one sounds like a children's poetry?

● Discuss in a group the contrasting effects of these two styles of metre. What adjectives or expressions may describe tetrametre and pentametre respectively?

Box 6.1

> **Text 1.3** (*RJ, II.ii.2-3*)
> But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
> It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
>
> **Text 1.4** (*Mac, V.iii.25-6*)
> I have lived long enough. My way of life
> Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf.
>
> **Text 1.5** (*Green Eggs and Ham*)
> I do not like green eggs and ham
> I do not like them, Sam I am.
>
> **Text 1.6** (*'This Be the Verse'*)
> They fuck you up, your mom and dad
> They may not mean to, but they do.

VII. Commentary

Many critics (e.g. Linklater, 1992) have argued that the first step in introducing Shakespeare is to help students feel the rhythm and tap out the stresses whenever conducting a reading. We see Shakespeare's art of language nowhere more clearly than in his handling of metre. As Wright (1983: 157) puts it:

> At the heart of this design is the metre, which has enabled the whole complex artifice to work so effectively...It helps the sentences and clauses to take their natural courses through the lines; it allows the rhetorical itemizing that goes on so prominently here; and, aided by euphonious sound devices (alliteration, assonance, and so on) and by metrical variations and segmentation that have emotional significance, it permits the passage to build and to resolve it syntactical and argumentative tension.

Since Shakespeare's lines are most often composed with a specific rhythmic pattern in mind, it is more advantageous for students to first learn to read the lines according to the rhythmic pattern. Failure to understand how the breath works through metre would reduce the comprehension and enjoyment of the text (Tassel, 2000).

Because of its structure, brevity, and entirety, a sonnet makes it an easy job to lead students into the background of regularity from which Shakespeare's verse emerges. It is within the consistent ten-syllable, five-stress lines of blank verse that students, like an Elizabethan audience who might have listened, began to respond to the pulse, the rhythms, and sounds released shortly after the moment of speech. As Wormser and Cappella (2000: 1) point out, 'Rhythm is the key physical basis of poetry. It is what gets a poem into us; it is visceral. Since

English is an accentual-syllabic language, the play of those accents among the words that make up a poem's lines is a main determiner of rhythm'. Nonetheless, it must be noted that the purpose of 'checking the rhythm' is not to regularise the verse, but to recognise it, to feel it, to have at least an intuitive, if not a fully intellectual appreciation of this metrical form.

While iambic tetrametre tends to be the dominant form in Shakespeare's poetical works, the departures and deviations from iambic pentametre (e.g. tetrametre) are also to be found in the plays. According to Wright (1992: 147), 'These deviations are often notably expressive'. What must be attended to is that whenever this metrical norm is broken, as is often done intentionally, it means that something exciting or dramatic is happening or about to happen — the action of the play or the emotions or behaviour of the character changes.

The metre is there to help students find the impulse of the character and the tone of the scene. This account obtains confirmation from McRae (1998: 9) when he states that 'it is always worth checking the syllable count—shorter or longer lines may create different effects'. With the help of such an activity, students get a sense of how rhythms can reinforce or affect sound and meaning within different types of verse.

Surprisingly, my students successfully captured the nuance of the rhythms without even having to look closely into the meanings of the texts. The differences between iambic tetrametre and pentametre led students to different

sets of associations, which are presented in Table 6.2. In general, this table indicates that students reached a unanimous conclusion on how iambic pentametre tends to be used in poetry in which the content is complex, demanding, and serious. Tetrametre, on the other hand, tends to be well-suited for nonsense verse, comic verse, light verse, and poetry that is associated with childhood, song, dance, and general playfulness.

Table 6.2 Students' perception differences between iambic pentametre and iambic tetrameter.

Groups	× 4 (tetrametre)	× 5 (pentametre)
Group 1	*Light, new poem, fun, for chidren*	*Serious, heavy, old poem, can be sung*
Group 2	*Vivid, colloquial, attractive, powerful*	*Ordinary, lyric*
Group 3	*Shorter, popualr, strong tempo, interesting*	*Longer, poetic, normal, boring*
Group 4	*Popular, song, dance, informal, nursey rhyme*	*Soft, high art, formal, Speech*

This very first lesson had been an awakening experience for both my students and myself. After a scansion guide, students acquired a feeling for the pattern of stress along the line in verse, which is evident in one student's diary entry:

Diary excerpt 1
Although I didn't know the reason why you want us to read the poems; however, I think this is a good activity to me because before this class I really have no idea about the poem. For example, I don't

know how to put the right accent when reading the poem but I got some hit after this class. So I like the activity you gave us today.

Another student, who was at first unable to tell the difference between iambic pentametre and iambic tetrametre, began to see the subtle variation between metrical patterns after a group discussion:

> *Dairy excerpt 2*
> At first, I wasn't sensitive enough that I couldn't tell the difference tone of 'pentameter' and 'tetrameter'. Then through the class discussion, I cleared up the confusion. I think this kind of class activity is very good to us.

One student expressed personal delight in gaining a new perspective on poetry:

> *Diary excerpt 3*
> [W]e learned some sonnet and iambic things. It's quite interesting because I never learn that before. It's like to see the poem with different points of view.

Amazed at the overall achievement of the class, one student remarked:

> *Diary excerpt 4*
> It was amazing that everyone could have such a clear picture about the difference between iambic pentameter and iambic tetrameter by how they sound differently. This gave me an idea that literature is not that difficult and far away from our daily life ... We really enjoyed our discussion.

Based on the past experience of learning Chinese poetry, one student related the evidence of strong beats of the rhythm to that of the more conventional art form of reciting Chinese poetry for its mnemonic effects:

> *Diary excerpt 5*
> When I was a kid, I need to use "數來寶"[2] to help me learn English. That's a very interesting and useful way in teaching English, especially for the young English learners. Therefore, I am very fond of rhythm . . . Though I like rhythm, I never pay attention to it when I was reading. I always believe rhythm only exist in certain texts.

Likewise, one student pointed out the mnemonic potential of metre:

> *Diary excerpt 6*
> Comparing iambic pentameter with iambic tetrameter, I think it's pretty fun to read iambic tetrameter because its rhythm is very cute, short, and easy to remember.

The effectiveness of a lively pulsing rhythm reflects Maley and Duff's (1990: 11) contention that 'the relatively easy retention of poetry is its rhythmic appeal'. As a poetic device, metre alone is helpful in the comprehension of a (literary) text. As students reported above, metrical variation provides them with extra dimensions of textual experience. Not only does it add some kind of *pleasure* quality to the text (Diary excerpt 1, 3, 4, and 5) but it also facilitates the *memorisation* of language (Diary excerpt 5 and 6).

Van Peer's (1990: 270) empirical study of the effect of metrical structure upon the reading act lends powerful support to such an argument:

Metre, then, functions on at least two levels. On the one hand, it

---

[2] 數來寶 (Shu-lia-bao), a traditional way of reciting Chinese poetry or prose accompanied by a pair of wooden clappers in the hand of the speaker to physically reinforce the beats of its rhythm.

contributes to its memorability — and hence indirectly to the structuring of its meaning. On the other hand, it offers the reader a surplus of aesthetic experience.

Such functional qualities, cognitively and affectively, help make it abundantly clear to students the dual power of iambic metres. In addition, the variation surely increases the expressiveness of the texts.

6.3.2 Unit 2 — Sound Patterning

I. Aims

This lesson complements the previous unit and aims to encourage sensitivity to the way writers use sound devices (i.e. rhyme, alliteration, and assonance) to add extra meaning to their texts.

II. Material selection

1. 'Sonnet 18' (recycled)

2. *Romeo and Juliet*, I.v.89-92

3. Newspaper headlines (*various - with content*)

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

The teacher can do an experiment by drawing two abstract figures (see Figure 6.1) on the board. Students are then asked to assign the nonsense words *takete* and *maluma* to the two amorphous shapes as follows:
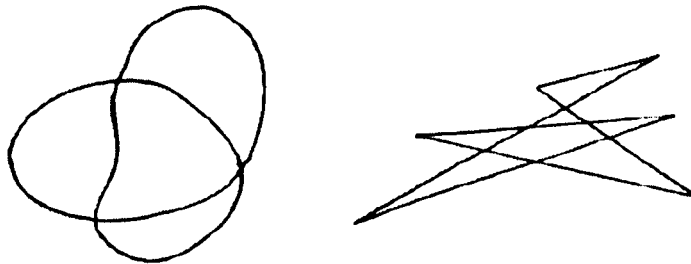
Figure 6.1[1]

---

[1] This figure is a classic illustration of the phonesthetic principle found in Wolfgang Köhler's (1949) famous experiment on shape-sound symbolism.

In this case, all students invariably paired *maluma* with the curvilinear figure made with free-flowing circular lines while the sharp angular figure was paired with the term *takete*. In doing so, students immediately notice a sound-symbolic connection between a word's meaning and its phonetic characteristics.

For class activities, or as an extension, students can collect newspaper materials, or advertisements for a variety of products before they come to the class. Since newspaper headlines abound in alliteration and assonance, students can identify these sound devices and then try to comment on the effects achieved in the particular context. However, not all texts are suitably for this exercise. Sometimes the sound devices are obvious, sometimes less so. The teacher should choose texts whose sound effect(s) are perceptively salient.

IV. Rationale

Students in Taiwan are accustomed to paying attention only to the lexical or syntactical problems apparent in the usage of written texts. Sound patterning, which enriches a text and helps reinforce meaning, is a dimension that many learners are likely to dismiss, at first glance.

V. Guiding Questions

- Do the sounds of words convey meaning? Or is it arbitrary?

- Why particular kinds of sound pattern are used? Are the sounds heavy, foreboding, bright, or soothing? Do they suggest the feelings that are

intended by the author?

- When reading, pay attention to alliteration or other repeated sounds. What do they tell us about the speaker's mood or purpose?

Rhyme

Rhyme refers to the repetition of the final syllables of different lines of poetry.

> **Example** (*Mac, III.ii.57-8*)
> Good things of day begin to droop and drow<u>se</u>,
> Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rou<u>se</u>.

In a sonnet, these sounds are repeated to form a pattern, called rhyme scheme. The first end rhyme is represented by a lower case '*a*', the next variation by a '*b*', the third variation by a '*c*', and so on.

> **Example**
>
> | Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? | **a** |
> | Thou art more lovely and more temperate: | **b** |
> | Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May, | **a** |
> | And summer's lease hath all too short a date: | **b** |

- Write out the rhyme schemes of 'Sonnet 18'. Is it a fourteen-line poem with a carefully patterned rhyme scheme?

- Find two other sonnets by Shakespeare. Compare the rhyme patterns: Are they the same or different? Indicate pattern in the spaces available.

Text 2.1 (*'Sonnet 18'*)

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?	**a**
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:	**b**
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,	**a**
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:	**b**
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,	_____
And often is his gold complexion dimmed,	_____
And every fair from fair sometime declines,	_____
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimmed:	_____
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,	_____
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,	_____
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,	_____
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st,	_____
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,	_____
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.	_____

Alliteration

The word 'alliteration' means the repetition of initial or beginning consonants.
Used effectively, alliteration should create a connection or contrast between or among ideas.

Examples

(1) By <u>ch</u>ance, or nature's <u>ch</u>anging course, untrimm'd (*'Sonnet 18'*)

(2) For the <u>b</u>lood-<u>b</u>olter'd <u>B</u>anquo smiles upon us (*Mac, IV.i.133*)

(3) Parting is <u>s</u>uch a <u>s</u>weet <u>s</u>orrow (*RJ, II.ii.201*)

Assonance

Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in the middle of a run of words to achieve partial rhyme.

Examples

(1) Shall I c**om**pare thee to a s**um**mer's day? ('*Sonnet 18*')

(2) M**y** grave is l**i**ke to be m**y** w**e**dding b**e**d (*RJ, I.v.138*)

- Go back to 'Sonnet 18'. Try to pick out more examples of alliteration and assonance. Does any particular sound contribute to its meaning to you?

- Read Text 2.2, which is uttered by a man of hot temper (Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*). What sounds stand out? What impression does the sound create? How does sound influence meaning in the text?

Text 2.2   (*RJ, I.v.89-92*)
Patience perforce with wilful choler meeting
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.
I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall
Now seeming sweet convert to bitter gall.

VI. Extension

Task 1 — In groups of 3 or 4 students, find examples of alliteration and assonance in newspaper headlines. Find out, if at all, how sound devices are used deliberately to achieve some effects.

Task 2 — Imagine you are the editor of a local newspaper which specialises in alliterative headlines. Invent one or two headlines for reporting a recent, big event.

VII. Commentary

As long ago as the 18th century, Alexander Pope provided in 'Essay on Criticism' the principle of sound artistic practice: 'The sound must seem an echo to the sense' (quoted in Adams, 1992: 278). Similarly, Northrop Frye (1957: xxv-xxvii) struck a similar chord when he argued for greater attention to the 'complex sound-patterns' of poetry. He cautions against a concentration on meaning alone, because it would cause poetry to be robbed of 'its primitive gift of charm'. In terms of pedagogy, Short (1996: 107) has also shown that 'A knowledge of English sound structure and metrics is also important in analysing poetry'.

However, the general knowledge students normally possess of phonetics subject matter is small. It is therefore helpful to encourage learners to pay attention to the aural effects (rhyme, alliteration, etc.) in poetry, because sound structure helps motivate meaning especially when found in a literary text.

Obviously, such a notion goes against the Saussurian arbitrariness of the linguistic sign, but this is the spirit of this unit. Contrary to de Saussure's famous principle of arbitrariness, the sounds of words, their physical manifestations, tend to reflect, to some extent and more often than not, what rationalists would expect, associated connotations (phonetic symbolism).

I find Wolfgang Köhler's classical matching experiment ('Which of the figures represents MALUMA, which TAKETE?') an effective way to raise issues

about why particular kinds of sound pattern are used in the first place. In the

matching experiment, a near total consistency was found in students' judgment.

One student, for instance, pointed out that the class' unanimity in their

judgment filled her with wonder:

> *Diary entry, 01 Oct 2003*
>
> It was very incredible for the whole class can guess the pictures right
> by only listening to the sounds of words. Isn't that amazing? I never
> discover that human has this kind of 'potential'. I want to say WOW.
> (Sheena)

This activity proves to be a quick way to pique students' interest in the

presence of sound devices within a text. Capitalising on students' amazement

and curiosity, I reminded them that the sound of poetry is often held to be

expressive. Shakespeare uses various techniques to intensify the dramatic

nature of his verse. For example, in 'Sonnet 18' the liquid sound [l] and vowel

sound [i] in the couplet are salient and may be taken in this context as to

suggest an ongoing sense of the ever-lasting beauty of his love:

<div align="center">

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
[l]   [i]   [i]
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.
[l] [l]   [l]   [i]

</div>

To investigate more about the effects of sound patterning, students carried out a

task in an extension session, where they were provided with some newspaper

headlines to work from. One of the aims of this activity was to show students

that literature is not necessarily apart from the prosaic aspect of writing. Plain

prose, such as a newspaper headline, may have its own inherent poetry. The following headlines are some of students' choices, each of which is commented upon regarding its potential effects:

Table 6.3

Headlines	Sound devices	Students' interpretation
Lawsuit over drowning death divides close friends	Alliteration	*So many [d] sounds feel heavy, and reflects the sad story*
Chu bribery conviction is confirmed	Alliteration	*'con-' draws our attention to the similarity and makes the two words closely related, as if the sentence can't never be changed*
Taiwan quick Take	Alliteration	*[t], [k] sounds are short; it quickens the tempo; it tells people information in brief*
Former legislator sentenced to Four years	alliteration assonance	*No particular effect, just a demonstration of the skills*

(The above headlines were taken directly from the *Taipei Times* newspaper.)

Although this unit is designed to establish a link between a word's meaning and its phonetic make-up, one caveat needs to be pointed out regarding what Short (1996: 114) calls 'a tendency to "over–milk" the significance of phonetic pattern'. While Short does not deny the existence of the sound-symbolic

connection, he does stress that the sounds of most words remain arbitrary. Except for onomatopoeia, no intrinsic relation can be found between words' meaning and their phonetic make-up in most cases.

It should be borne in mind, therefore, that the reader should not fall into the trap of 'assuming that all sound patterns will be significant in terms of interpretation' (ibid, 116). Moreover, it is worth stressing that there is no right or wrong in terms of interpretation. Its aim is 'to enjoy the sounds [of the text], and notice what feelings and moods they suggest', as well noted by Spiro (2004: 24).

In conclusion to this unit I would like to list some journal entries that show how students are made aware of the contribution of sound to its meaning after this lesson:

> *Diary entry, 1 Oct 2003*
> Before having the class, I never realised that his 'method' (can I call this a method) are used in the headlines, newspaper and magazines. Or I realise it, yet I never pay attention to it. I only consider it as a skill that authors want to manipulate. The liquid 'L' is like a 'magic word' for me, and also the 'magic D'. (Sheena)

> *Diary entry, 1 Oct 2003*
> After I analyzing this poem, I can fully understand why this poem is so fluent, beautiful, rhythmic, and lovely. (Zen)

Diary entry, 1 Oct 2003

I did not care about how they [headlines] sounded. After, I took this class, I realized that there is power in sounds. (Pamela)

Diary entry, 2 Oct 2003

I think it is quite funny to discover the connection between sound and words. I seldom notice that sound has associations with words before this activity, because I don't know different sounds have potential meanings. (Joy)

Diary entry, 2 Oct 2003

I know why Shakespeare can be the greatest writer in the world. He uses the sound to express the feeling of the actors. (Shirley)

6.3.3 Unit 3 — Binary[3]

I. Aim

To show how the words of a text move between binaries of positive/negative, inward/outward, present/future, etc. to convey its movement or progress.

II. Material selection

1. 'Sonnet 144'

2. 'Sonnet 138'

3. *Romeo and Juliet*, I.i.130-6

4. 'Puff the Magic Dragon' (an American folk song)

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

As an icebreaker, the teacher plays the song 'Puff the Magic Dragon' popularised by Peter Yarrow, Noel Paul Stookey, and Mary Travers in the 1960s. While listening to the song, students read its lyrics silently to themselves. At this time, the teacher refrains from telling students that the lyrics are to be analysed later in class.

Following this song, the teacher presents Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 144', in which certain words have been purposefully left out. In this case, I leave out *four sets*

---

[3] Binaries here refer to 'oppositeness' in language which embraces at least three distinct types of semantic opposition: complementary opposition (e.g. present/absent), gradable antonyms (old/young), and relational opposition (adult/child).

of binaries for which there are specific clues within the text. Then students try to fill in the blanks on their own. When they have done as much as they can possibly do, they compare their versions with those of other classmates. After comparison, the words of the original are then revealed. However, the reading of the poem is not 'finished' when the exercise is done, because the teacher will ask students to call out any features of language which give a clue to the source. Then more binaries can be pointed out for further plenary classroom discussion.

Looking back at 'Puff', students start to work on its binaries. The teacher collates the binaries on the blackboard and asks the class to pick one that strikes them most profoundly by a show of hands, and then ask some students to justify their choice. By working on the text in this way, students would build up a new sense of the text. The song is then re-played.

IV. Rationale

Binaries are often a vital tool in sensing the workings of a literary text. Examining binaries can be a useful way to begin thinking about meaning within a given text.

V. Guiding questions

> **Text 3.1** (*RJ, I.i.163-9*)
> Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:
> Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!

O any thing! of nothing first create.

O heavy lightness! serious vanity!

Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!

Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!

- What binaries do you find in Text 3.1?

- Whether, overall, the text is positive or negative in tone?

- Are there any other binaries apart from those which are positive and negative?

- How do they relate to the overall ideas of the play?

Read the following poem; select one of the alternatives based on textual clues.

Text 3.2[4] ('*Sonnet 144*')

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,

Which like two spirits do suggest me still:

The better angel is a *1*...........(man/ woman) right fair,

The worser spirit a *2*...........(man/woman) coloured ill.

To win me soon to hell, my female evil,

Tempteth my better angel from my side,

And would corrupt my *3*..........(saint/devil) to be a *4*.......(saint/devil)

Wooing *5*..........(his/her) purity with *6*........(his/her) foul pride.

And whether that my angel be turned fiend,

Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;

But being both from me, both to each friend,

I guess one angel in another's hell:

Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,

Till my *7*.....(good angel/bad angel) fire my *8*.....(good one/bad one) out.

---

[4] Original wording: 1. man; 2. woman; 3. saint; 4. devil; 5. his; 6. her; 7. bad; 8. good

- Do binaries and contrast emerge easily? List some.

- Whether, overall, the text is positive or negative in tone?

- Is its paradoxes (love/hate, etc.) simple or complex?

- What specific binaries strike you most? Why?

- Read Text 3.3 too, and find specific binaries that strike you most.

Text 3.3 (*'Sonnet 138'*)
When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutored youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppressed:
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O! love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love, loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

VI. Extension

Listen to the song and answer the following questions:

Text 3.4 (*'Puff, The Magic Dragon'*)
Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee,
Little Jackie Paper loved that rascal Puff,
And brought him strings and sealing wax and other fancy stuff.

Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea

And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee,
Puff, the magic dragon lived by the sea
And frolicked in the autumn mist in a land called Honah Lee.

Together they would travel on a boat with billowed sail
Jackie kept a lookout perched on Puff's gigantic tail,
Noble kings and princes would bow whene'er they came,
Pirate ships would lower their flag when Puff roared out his name.

A dragon lives forever but not so little boys
Painted wings and giant rings make way for other toys.
One grey night it happened, Jackie Paper came no more
And Puff that mighty dragon, he ceased his fearless roar.

His head was bent in sorrow, green scales fell like rain,
Puff no longer went to play along the cherry lane.
Without his life-long friend, Puff could not be brave,
So Puff that mighty dragon sadly slipped into his cave.

- Which do you think are the 'happy' words in the text? Make a list, and then list the 'sad' words. Compare with others.

- Whether, overall, the song is happy or sad?

- Is there any change of tone or mood in the text? If so, where does it occur?

- What specific binaries strike you most, why?

VII. Commentary

In the previous units students looked at texts from the medium of sound. In this unit students look at texts from the standpoint of their lexical semantics. At this

stage, students are not yet directly concerned with the meaning of the given texts. They do not need to interpret, merely to note.

As Maley and Duff (1989: 70) remark: 'a poem contains many thoughts, many suggestions, not all of which can be "grasped" at once. Understanding comes gradually. And often we understand best when we are not making a deliberate effort to understand'. Focusing on binaries is revealing in this sense. According to McRae (1998: 17), 'The use of binaries as a starting point for examining the themes and contrasts in any text give us a clear basis for any discussion, without the risk of becoming too abstract or abstruse'.

The very act of obliging students to note binaries involves a much deeper process of understanding than a mere comprehension of the surface meaning. For example, Romeo's response to the feud between his family's and Juliet's (Text 3.1) is one vivid illustration of how this technique is employed. In this extract, contradiction is strung together—lightness that is heavy, health that is sick, fire that is cold, and sleep that is waking.

One significance the speech might have is to draw attention to the duality or ambivalence that is at once striking and memorable. Such a combination of contradictory words activates a sense of paradox and dilemma in the speaker. Furthermore, it builds up the full tragic energy for release in the catastrophe, as Black (1975: 248) suggests:

The 'mighty opposites' of the play's languge—love-hate, youth-age, light-darkness—can easily be thought of as contributing nearly all the play's energy, with the tragedy impelled more by its verbal kinetics than by its stagecraft.

As such, binaries enable the investigation of semantic relationships from a perspective that is not otherwise possible.

Another related example of the linguistic-aesthetic effect of binaries is Carter's analysis devoted to an extract from *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* by Muriel Spark. Carter (1987: 201) points out that opposing lexical patterns are employed in the passage in order to create a 'dual voice' and thereby lead to an implicitly ironic tone:

> The duality or ambivalence of her response is reinforced by opposing lexical pattern ... The lexical contrasts mirror across the whole passage the dislocation of Sandy's view of things and thus prevent us from taking what she says at face value.

This dual voice is also found in Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 138' (Text 3.3), where it hinges on various binaries. A deliberate play with these binary contrasts yields equivocation that is intended for the reader to discover. In particular, the dual meanings of 'lie' in line 13, a bitterly witty pun, could also be regarded as a binary, whereupon 'lie' refers to *telling lies* and cunningly *lying down*. This plurality of meaning potential is, according to Refern (1982), one of the joys of writing and reading.

In a research into semantic relations between words and their collocations

(including antonym and synonymy), Stubbs (2001) concludes that the presence of semantic opposition creates lexical cohesion over a large proportion of text. In a global perspective, binary also establishes connectivity in texts. At any rate, it can be said that binary can bring out its own kind of effect in the reading of a literary text. As Cruse (1976: 282) has also observed, 'Although antonym is frequently spoken of, for convenience, as a relation between words, strictly speaking, it is a relation between senses'. One of the advantages of catching these senses will, in line with the aforementioned statement by Maley and Duff (1989), gradually lead the reader to a different understanding of the studied text.

What effects did binary exert on the perception of the learners? The following two students acknowledged it to be an effective way of understadning a text:

> *Diary entry, 8 Oct 2003*
> It's a new discovery for me and it [binary] makes reading not that boring anymore! (Veronica)

> *Diary entry, 9 Oct 2003*
> I cannot remember the melody now, but I can still remember the binary in the song, such as kings-princes, sea-land, boy-dragon, Puff-Jackie, etc. actually, I feel finding out the binary in the song makes me understand the meaning of it much easier and quicker. (Gina)

One student suggested that binary is not an exclusively literary phenomenon and that it can be found in a wide range of discourse types. She pointed out binaries from a song by the noted Canadian singer Celine Dion:

Diary entry, 8 Oct 2003

I found that binary is used frequently on many texts. Before I learned binary, I didn't notice the lyrics of the song especially. Now I am listening to the song 'Because you loved me' by Celion Dion. I pay attention to its lyric and found that there are many binaries in it, such as 'For all the **wrong** that you made me **right**', you were my **strength** when I was **weak**', You are the one who held me **up** never let me **fall**' and so on. (Grace Huang, emphasis original)

Based on the information obtained from diary entries, studetns generally considered binary a means of bringing them to a faster and fuller understanding of the working of language and thus to a firm and clearly principled basis of interpretation of a text.

6.3.4 Unit 4 — Repetition

I. Aim

To see how lexical repetition conveys emphasis and heightens emotion within a text.

II. Material selection

1. *Romeo and Juliet*, III.ii.19-27

2. *Macbeth,* V.v. 21-30

3. *Hamlet,* I.v.111-5

4. Proverbs

5. Ecclesiastes 3: 1-4

6. Extract from 'I Have a Dream'

7. Extract from *Waiting for Godot*

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

Repetition can be the duplication, exact or approximate, of any element of language such as sound, word, phrase, sentence, and grammatical pattern. It can also be either at the formal (where words are repeated) or semantic level (where a synonym provides the repetition). In this unit particular attention is directed to lexical repetition within the text.

In many cases, repetition allows for implicit representations of various emotions: anger, contempt, sarcasm, mockery, or emptiness, etc. In presenting texts which highlight this feature, the teacher may write up a few adjectives for

students to match with the texts to stimulate discussion. Learners should be encouraged to substantiate it with a formula such as: 'I suggested ... because it says ... in line ...'

To add appreciation of the literary effects produced through repetition, students are asked to collect and search for examples, especially those found as proverbs and political speeches, to exploit repetition for its impact.

IV. Rationale

Students tend to regard repetition as a redundancy or even as a detraction in the writing process. This notion may be reformulated after studying this omnipresent linguistic phenomenon, often complex in its usage, for producing emphasis, clarity, amplification, or emotional effect.

V. Guiding Questions

- Are there any features particularly distinctive?

- Do any of the following words apply to your first impression of these texts?

  Cynical   *ambitious*   *routine*   *peculiar*

  timid   *naïve*   *anxious*   *indifferent*

- What, in general terms, do you think is the intended impact of the feature in each text on its audience?

- Read Text 4.2 out loud. Does the repetitive word 'tomorrow' slow down the pace? What might it suggest to you?

- Why does a poet repeat words and phrases in this way: why not just say something once and be done with it?

Text 4.1 (*RJ, III.ii.19-27*)
Come, night! come, Romeo! come, thou day in night!
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night,
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd night,
Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the garish sun.

Text 4.2 (*Mac, V.v. 21-30*)
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Text 4.3 (*Ham, I.v.111-5*)
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables, my tables,—meet it is I set it down!
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain!
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.

VI. Extended Reading: application

- The following texts (Table 6.2: Text 4.4 to Text 4.7) are drawn from proverbs, speeches, drama, and the *Bible*. Can you distinguish among them? Comment on how the elements of each text sticks together to become cohesive.

- Notice how the main point of the sentence becomes immediately clear through the repetition of the same word twice in close succession.

Table 6.4

Genre	*Text*
Text 4.4 (A Proverb)	Men in great place are thrice servants: servants of the sovereign or state; servants of fame; and servants of business. — Francis Bacon
Text 4.5 (Ecclesiastes 3: 1-4)	To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the heavens. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to reap; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance.
Text 4.6 (A Speech) (Martin Luther King Jr.)	I say to you today, my friends, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal". I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today. (August 28, 1963)

Text 4.7	POZZO: I must go.	[Silence]
(A Drama)	ESTRAGON: And your half-hunter?	POZZO: And thank you.
		VLADIMIR: Thank *you*.
	POZZO: I must have left it at the manor.	POZZO: Not at all.
		ESTRAGON: Yes yes.
	[Silence]	POZZO: No no.
	ESTRAGON: Then adieu.	VLADIMIR: Yes yes.
	POZZO: Adieu.	ESTRAGON: No no.
	VLADIMIR: Adieu.	[Silence]
	POZZO: Adieu.	POZZO: I don't seem to be
	[Silence. No one moves]	able . . . (*long hesitation*) . . .
	VLADIMIR: Adieu.	to depart.
	POZZO: Adieu.	ESTRAGON: Such is life.
	ESTRAGON: Adieu.	

(The genre is not revealed to the readers)

VII. Commentary

A number of textual devices can be used to link one paragraph or sentence to another so as to give a sense of coherence, to reinforce a point, or to smooth the reader's path through the text. Repetition is one of these rhetorical devices. The discussion concerning the contribution of lexical repetition to text coherence was first proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976). They argue that repetitions of the text provide for a specific type of textual cohesion.

In addition to its unifying function, lexical repetition in literary discourse, as Verdonk (1995: 8) claims, 'may intensify the overall thematic or symbolic structure of the work'. For example, 'love' and 'death' are frequently conjoined and repeated in *Romeo and Juliet*. Their presence clearly signals two of the

major concerns or themes within the play. Such repetitions are multiplied by the recurrence of words related to 'time', thereby creating and reinforcing the theme and leitmotif: 'day', 'night', 'today', 'tomorrow', etc.

These repeated lexical sets further intensify the gathering pace of the play, signifying the rush and press of events that overwhelm the two star-crossed lovers. In a similar vein, Text 4.1, in which Juliet eagerly awaits Romeo, is marked by repeated use of the words 'come' and 'night' that serve to reveal the anxious quality of Juliet's consciousness of her romantic plight.

Shakespeare made use of this device to profound effect. For instance, verbal repetition frequently marks moments when language has been emptied of emotional meaning. It signals the tendency for minds to behave increasingly like machines. As suggested by Cummings and Simmons (1983: 213), the effect of repeated structure is 'monotonous, hypnotic, incantatory, ritualistic'. In this line of thought, Macbeth's 'To-morrow, to-morrow, and to-morrow' soliloquy (Text 4.2), which reeks of hopelessness, despair, and nihilism, fortifies the final situation where Macbeth is in a state of emptiness, the deadening of affect, and an abstraction from his life.

One further example included in the extension section of this unit is an extract from Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (Text 4.7), in which the two tramps — Vladimir and Estragon — are bidding farewell to Pozzo. The endless repetition lays down a strong pattern and helps to establish a monotonous

rhythm that involves a form of the repetitive behaviour that defines the characters' eccentric individuality. This style feature appeals to quite a few students. As some remarked in their diary entries regarding this text:

> *Diary entry, 16 Oct 2003*
>
> There are three people in the scrip, and they keep repeating the same words in the dialogue such as 'adieu', 'thank you', 'yes' and 'no'. I felt confused at first. After the teacher explained this script for us, I finally realised it. It is really interesting, and we even plan to have a role-play of this drama in the future! (Peggy)

> *Diary entry, 21 Oct 2003*
>
> I love the repetition in *Waiting for Godot*. It is simple but meaningful. (Joy)

One further example discussed was Martin Luther King, Junior's famous speech (Text 4.5). The repetitive use of the phrase 'I have a dream' in the speech is best illustrated by Tyler's formulation of repetition principle based on the work of Halliday and Hasan (1976, 1985).

Tyler puts forward a position by arguing that 'lexical repetition makes an independent contribution to discourse comprehensibility' (1994: 674). This greatly supports the reason why so many famous political speeches retain their fame. In other words, Dr. King's repetitive clause elements (i.e. 'I have a dream') not only create a linking chain within the speech but also contribute to its overall comprehensibility. One student reported that:

Even though I don't know how important it was, I do feel the emotions which he showed and the strength which he used. Great Martin Luther King! (Carol)

A list of all the different effects yielded by lexical repetition is vast. It can be found in poetry, quite as much as in music and advertisement[5], as the following entries will show. One student related this literary device directly to song lyrics and argued that repetition makes it possible for the listener to remember a song for much easier and much longer:

Diary entry, 15 Oct 2003

I found that the songwriters usually apply this skill into the lyrics and that always make the song more impressive to the audience. For instance, they would put the repetition in the chorus part. I think this might be the reason why the audience would remember the chorus part more than other sections in a song ... Do you remember the song 'Let it be' by Beetles? The phrase 'let it be' from the chorus part expresses the main idea of the song, whether we meet troubles in our life, just let it be and don't be back-strapped into the miserable things. I heard this when I was a kid and I still remember it now. I see how repetition work so effective. (Sally)

Another student, who made an attempt to respond to the use of repetition in Kate Chopin's 'Story of An Hour', commented on the protagonist, Mrs. Mallard's reaction to the news of her husband's supposed death:

---

[5] Cook (2001) offers some excellent examples of how repetition is used in advertisements. He argues that repetition of lexical items is one of the cohesive devices in advertisement discourse.

Diary entry, 22 Sept 2003

Now, I seemed to hear someone yelling out 'free, free, free!' on my brain. The repetition shows how perfectly happy she is to regain her freedom and recognize the strongest impulse of her being after hearing about his husband's death. (Margaret)

Virtually no political speech, advertisement, children's poems or popular songs today is seen without some of these verbal devices of repetition, because they work to make things memorable. As soon as any chance arises, students try to justify the concept to which this stylistic feature applies. These entries show that the unit has helped quite a few students to see beyond the exemplary texts explored in the class.

6.3.5 Unit 5 — Metaphor and simile

I. Aims

To help learners (a) go beyond denotative aspects of language, (b) to see the 'word pictures' a poet 'paints', and (c) to recognise how metaphors/similes stir imagination, provide insights into character, and intensify meaning and emotional force within a text.

II. Material selection

1. *Romeo & Juliet*, III.ii.19-27 (recycled)

2. *Macbeth*, I.v.57-60; II.iii.132-3; III.ii.40; V.ii.21-2

3. 'Sonnet 130'

4. Commonly Used Idiomatic Speech

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

To convince students that poets or novelists do not have the monopoly of metaphor, the teacher may ask each student to brainstorm two noun phrases (NP's): one abstract (as the subject in a sentence) and the other one concrete (as the complementary in a sentence). For example, one could write 'Life is...' on one slip of paper and 'a beautiful dream' on the other. These ideas are then collected respectively. A random combination of these NP's would produce many hybrid sentences that are essentially metaphoric and interestingly bizarre. As a springboard for exploring metaphors, this activity can engender the interests of many students.

'Sonnet 130' lends itself to interpretation better than others by use of a drawing or a collage. To begin with, students can be told that they are going to 'paint' a sonnet that features Shakespeare's 'girlfriend'. Working in small groups, students are asked to sketch a detailed picture of Shakespeare's unnamed muse or mistress as they go line-by-line throughout the poem.[6] It requires visualisation techniques, and can only be done, of course, with close examination of the text itself for possible clues.

IV. Rationale

Part of Shakespeare's mastery of language is exemplified through his use of similes and metaphors. These literary devices make it possible for learners to see images which would not normally emerge from a cold, fast reading of the text.

V. Guiding questions

Read through the following texts, making notes on any interesting images you find in each text. With a partner, discuss these questions:

- What is being compared? To what?

- What kind of images are used? Highlight the places where imagery is used.

- Which one of the images do you think will turn out to be memorable? Is it because of the words themselves, or something about the images?

---

[6] Some of students' drawings are appended to this unit.

- How is imagery used, words that appeal to the five senses? Identify the type of imagery used and the words that are being described. Use the following items to identify the type of imagery[7]. (Use Table 6.5 to complete the task)

  a. Visual - something seen in the mind's eye
  b. Auditory - sound
  c. Olfactory - smell
  d. Gustatory - taste
  e. Tactile - touch
  f. Organic - an internal sensation, such as hunger
  g. Kinesthetic - movement or tension in the muscles or joints

Table 6.5

Sample worksheet

Text *(Macbeth,* V. v.26-9)	'Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more'.
Image (metaphor)	(a) Life is compared to a 'walking shadow' (b) People are likened to actors on a stage.
Sense(s)	Visual, Kinesthetic
Meaning	Our lives aren't real, and don't have any lasting meaning. We are acting out a part, 'strutting' and worrying until it is all over, and then death silences us.

---

[7] The terminology for the senses (e.g. olfactory, gustatory, kinesthetic) is not introduced to the students. To suit their vocabulary knowledge, the question only uses the more vernacular words (e.g. sight, sound, touch).

Text 5.1 (*RJ, III.ii. 19-27*, recycled)

Come, night! come, Romeo! come, thou day in night!

For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night,

Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.

Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd night,

Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,

Take him and cut him out in little stars,

And he will make the face of heaven so fine

That all the world will be in love with night,

And pay no worship to the garish sun.

Text 5.2 (*Mac, I.v.57-60*)

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men

May read strange matters. To beguile the time,

Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,

Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower,

But be the serpent under't.

Text 5.3 *(Mac, II.iii.132-3)*

There's dagger in men's smiles: the near in blood,

The nearer bloody.

Text 5.4 (*Mac, III.ii.40*)

Full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!

Text 5.5 (*Mac,* V.ii. 21-2)

Those he commands move only in command,

Nothing in love: now does he feel his title

Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe

Upon a dwarfish thief.

Text 5. 6 (*Mac, V.v.21-30*, recycled)

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day

To the last syllable of recorded time;

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

VI. Extension

Task 1 — Sketch a detailed picture of the addressor's mistress as you go line-by-line throughout the poem. Make the imagery as clear as possible to an audience. Next, compare the drawings, defending the accuracy of your pictures through a continual reference to the text.

Text 5.8 (*'Sonnet 18'*)

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red, than her lips red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damasked, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
And yet by heaven, I think my love as rare,
As any she belied with false compare.

Task 2 — Idiomatic expressions are quite common in English and they account for many uses of figurative language. List some, either metaphors or similes

that you come across in the texts:

Table 6.6

Sample worksheet

Metaphor	*Simile*
Ex. - Aunt Sophie kicked the bucket.	*Ex. - He is as timid as a mouse.*

VII. Commentary

There has often been in EFL language classes an insistence on the denotative aspects of language, much to the detriment of the issue of the figurative, or representational concept to be found (McRae, 1996). Although EFL students have probably been taught metaphors in an introductory literature course, they tend to divorce this feature completely from language in use and hardly even notice it (Ponterotto, 1994; Lakoff & Turner, 1989).

Metaphor, as claimed by cognitive linguists, plays a fundamental role in everyday thought and language. It reflects shared cultural values and beliefs. The idea of metaphor as pervasive, as an integral part of the way we view the world and of the human thought process, was expounded abundantly clear in Lakoff and Johnson's pioneering work *Metaphors We Live by.* Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 3) postulate that metaphor is integral, not peripheral to

language and understanding. Metaphor is:

> pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.

Kreuz and Roberts (1993: 155) are unanimous on this point: 'By allowing the unfamiliar to be partially understood in terms of the familiar, metaphors provide a powerful conceptual tool for understanding the world'. This is because figurative language is more picturesque. It enables writers to indicate layers of meaning. It provides ways to perceive and experience much of the world.

The pedagogic consideration in this unit is therefore to provide students an opportunity to create their own metaphors, which few students felt confident of prior to the exercise. Furthermore, students need to go on to ponder: 'Why writers choose to express their thoughts in a non-literary way?'

According to Kreuz and Roberts (ibid: 164), the use of trope helps an author to 'satisfy particular discourse goals'. Some of these goals may be to clarify, to emphasise, to express hostility, or to provoke thought. In essence, the use of figurative language allows the message to be conveyed in a more compelling way.

Towards this goal, the first exercise in this unit offers learners general orientation metaphors around which literature and life are linked. More importantly, they learned to evaluate and justify metaphors they collaboratively created, as one student reported:

> *Diary entry, 31 Oct 2003*
>
> In class each of us combines two things as a metaphor. Mine was 'Time is fruit', which did not make sense to me. But you try to infer to us that time may be a kernel. I came up with another idea later by the sentence 'Only time can tell'. Time is like a fruit; it has it [sic] 'season' and deadline. If you can make most use of time and be in time to do things, no matter it (the result) is sour or sweet, it benefits you. One the other hand, if you do not eat it (fruit) in its time (use your time well), it would be rotten and you got noting from it. (Grace)

One student pointed out that figurative language makes unfamiliar concepts familiar and thus impresses the reader with its utility:

> *Diary entry, 29 Oct 2003*
>
> I would say that using similes and metaphors to be an auxiliary of your explanation is quite impressive and meaningful if you use them successfully. For example, I like these sentences that are made in class:
> 'Marriage is a road not taken'.
> 'Youth is pearl'.
> 'Jealousy is ocean'.
> These sentences impress me a lot. Good metaphors are just to the point and give people a shock. (Shirley)

The following extracts echoed the sentiments of many students:

Diary entry, 30 Oct 2003

I was so surprised at those sentences that everyone partially made in the class. How come almost every sentence sounds reasonable? It is amazing and fun! This is really an interesting way to create any metaphorical sentences. (Bianca)

Diary entry, 29 Oct 2003

The teacher used a good way to teach us to create a simile. Although we created some strange sentence, *Life is drug; Love is a toy; Life is fruit, Jealousy is ocean,* we still learn a lot from that activity. (Shirley Chang)

Diary entry, 29 Oct 2003

I never know [sic] that it could be easy to create a metaphor by myself. Writing metaphors sounds and seems like something particular, or only for poets to do. And so, students like me who may not be 'excellent' in English proficiency might not do it well. But after the class, now I see how it could be easily created . . . This is a surprising discovery for me. I used to think it's impossible. (Grace)

While many were attracted by the sentences they constructed in class, one remarked that she had begun to read the *Harry Potter* book series from a fresh perspective, so that when she read it, vivid images seemed to pop out of every page:

Diary entry, 30 Oct 2003

When I read *Harry Potter*, the author uses simile to describe the new character in the story. When I read the story, I will start to picture the person that the author describes. Reading starts to become interesting to me and I love it a lot. (Shirley Wu)

In their journal entries, as seen above, most students reported that they had enjoyed the exercise and that metaphorical concepts give pleasure as they could conjure up emotionally-charged pictures in the imagination. This can be further illustrated in learners' artistic interpretation of Shakespeare's mistress. They have exercised enough dexterity of imagination to enliven the sonnet. Let me then conclude this commentary with some students' creative works.

Figure 6.2
Shakespeare's Mistress #1

Shakespeare's Mistress
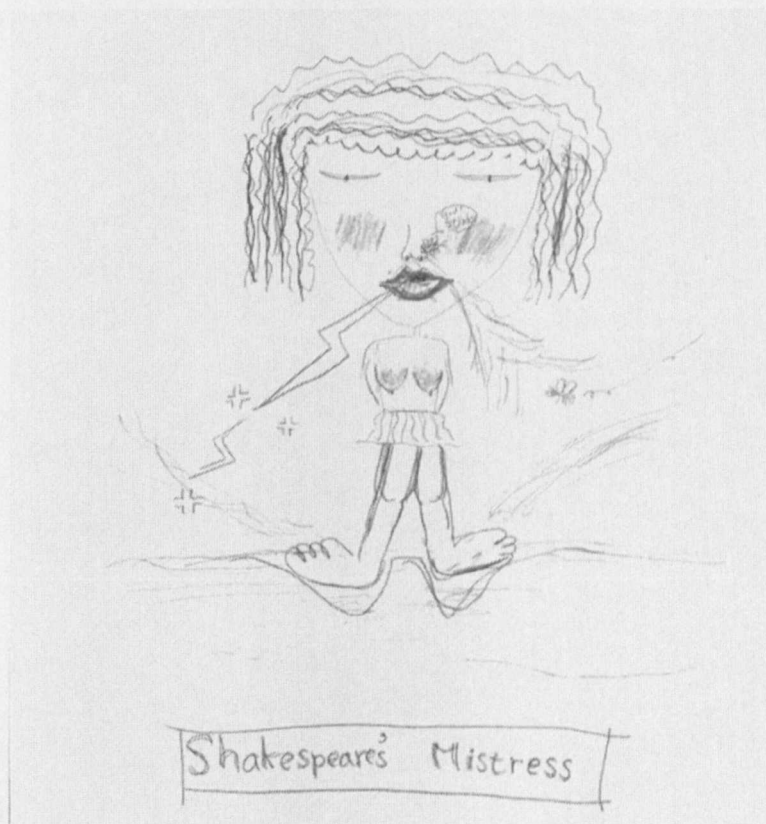
Figure 6.3

Shakespeare's Mistress #2

Figure 6.4

Shakespeare's Mistress #3
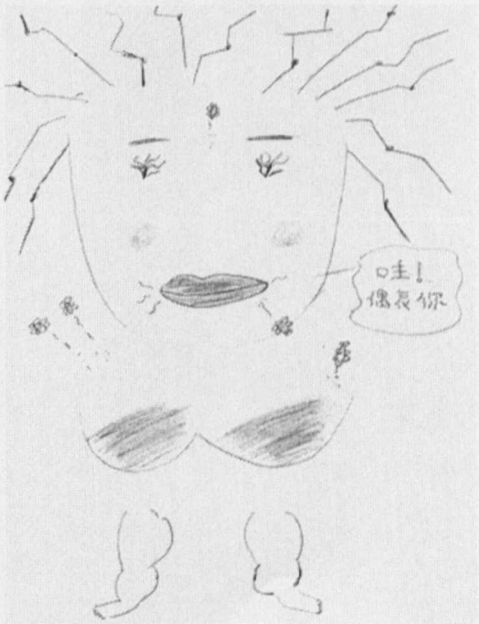
6.3.6 Unit 6 — Antithesis

I. Aims

To discover how textual antitheses give language a 'see-sawing', to and fro, of opposing movement.

II. Material selection

1. *Hamlet*, I.ii.10-3; III.iv.12-6

2. *Romeo and Juliet*, III.v. 3-13

3. Extract from President Abraham Lincoln's 'Gettysburg Address'

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

'Antithesis' refers to a contrast between two ideas, usually emphasised through the use of structural parallelism. Shakespeare makes frequent uses of antithesis in his work. In Unit 3 students learned the concept of binaries. Capitalising on this acquisition, this unit introduces binary opposites that are incorporated into a phrase or a sentence, in the hope of fostering sensitivity to higher discoursal levels of patterning.

By illustration of how antithesis is created within a text, the teacher may facilitate identification of the feature by asking students to place words which occupy the same slot within the frame provided. Take U.S. Astronaut Neil Armstrong's famous lunar landing quote for example:

That's

	Adj.	NP	PP	NP
(1)	[one (small)	step	for	(a man)]
(2)	[one (giant)	leap	for	(mankind)]

Phrase (1) can be acted as a basis, or thesis. Phrase (2), or the antithesis, can be blanked-out for students so that they may predict what words might occupy the slot provided. This technique also aids in the recognition of structural patterns made through the use of grammatical and semantic words when taken in text. As language 'explorers', students are likely to be systematisers and categorisers, so the mind has a natural love for antithesis which in turn creates a definite and systematic relationship between ideas.

IV. Rationale

Juxtaposition, or contrast of ideas or words in a balanced or parallel construction, often reveals the essence of drama for the reader or attentive audience member. Learners can see how Shakespeare intensifies conflict by use of antithesis in his works.

V. Guiding questions

- Which lines are particularly balanced in the following texts?

- What could be the function of the structural pairings in the texts (6.1-6.3)?

- Do they create a sense of harmony, antagonism, or what?

Text 6.1 (*Ham, I.ii.10-14*)

Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—
With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—

Text 6.2 (*Ham, III.iv.12-16*)

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?
Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.
Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.
Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Text 6.3 (*RJ, III.v.3-13*)

Jul. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;
Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.
Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops:
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

VI. Extension

Task—Read Abraham Lincoln's 'Gettysburg Address' (1863). In this moving speech, notice the opposition between the verbs *remember* and *forget* and in the use of the phrases *what we say* and *what they did*. What other forms of antithesis can you find?

Text 6.4 (*The Gettysburg Address*)

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

VII. Commentary

The use of antithesis results in two statements that show a contrast through the balancing of two opposing ideas. In a discussion of Shakespeare's basic plotting situation, Williams (1951) points out that antithesis is typical of the Shakespearean mould. All Shakespeare's tragedies, as Williams (ibid: 314) puts it, are 'built upon this dominant plot situation of abnormal or unnatural

division'. Furthermore, Williams points out:

> This pattern of unnatural and abnormal division appears over and over in that elaborate system of parallels, repetition, and reversed symmetries that occur in the different plays. (ibid: 315)

By way of specific example, in the opening scene of *Macbeth*, Shakespeare reveals one of the major themes enmeshed within the play. The following sentence relies upon structural contrast for impact:

Fair is foul and foul is fair. (*Mac*, I.i.11)

It might be said that the above line is used in stating the general Renaissance concept of a tragic division between the natural good and the natural evil inherent in man. The concept it implies is allied to the character of Macbeth. This paradox is dramatised in a way in which Macbeth is 'strongly pulled in one direction by his ambition and in another by his conscience' (Hirsh, 1990: 222). We can therefore justifiably see antithesis as a dramatic device that comes into play quite often during the height of a conflict. Seldom can it be divorced from the extremes of emotion or feeling.

In Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, a classic case is found in Hamlet's confrontation with his mother Gertrude (Text 6.2). Another example of antithesis and parallelism is Claudius' speech to the court (Text 7.1), a speech that glows with a pretentious sort of polish. Here grief and happiness are formally balanced, with a series of beautifully poised binaries: 'a defeated joy ... an auspicious and a dropping eye ... mirth in funeral ... dirge in marriage'. The language

brings out perfectly the mixture of flattery, vanity and ruthlessness found in the character of Claudius.

The famous verse duet between Romeo and Juliet at the opening of the Third Act of *Romeo and Juliet* (Text 6.3) is structured in such a way that the reader may experience a sensation of a momentary harmony as a respite from the constant discord evident throughout the whole play.

The syntactic structures of Juliet's utterances are echoed by Romeo's repetitive parallels. In the exchange, the presence of such balance helps to create a surer foundation, a frame upon which the lovers can count on momentary stability, so that the tragic seriousness is temporarily cast aside, if only for the moment.

Cook (1996: 119) offers an excellent illustrative comparison of the exchange of this pair of star-crossed lovers:

Character	S/NP	P/VP	C/NP
Juliet:	(it)	(was)	(the nightingale)
Romeo:	(it)	(was)	(the lark)

Character			C/NP
Juliet:	and	(not)	(the lark)
Romeo:		(no	(nightingale)

Character	P/IMPERATIVE VP	Od/NP	VOC NP
Juliet:	(Believe)	(me)	(love)
Romeo:	(Look),	(was)	(love)

Character	P/VP	Od/NP	PP	C/NP
Juliet:	(pierced)	(the fearful hollow	(of	(thine ear))
Romeo:	(do lace)	(the severing clouds	(in	(yonder east))

In order to encourage students to find antitheses and then to think for themselves, I presented the above comparison as a gap-filling exercise, inviting students to write down the appropriate counterpart. With such practice, they would develop a clearer understanding of how this text is to be systematically patterned. In response to this symmetry, one student said:

Diary entry, 1 Dec 2003

I find binary and antithesis are wonderful skills. It would be very clear for emphasizing the idea. It would be very easy for reader to catch the difference when you use binary and antithesis and think it more deeply to find out what is the thought behind the words. (Phoebe)

The memorability of words arranged in antithetical relationship can also be buttressed by proof of success existing in lines from famous speeches. One student, who recalled Dr. King's 'I have a Dream' speech, pointed out its figure of balance:

Diary entry, 26 Nov 2003

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will <u>not be judged by the color of their skin</u> but <u>by the content of their character</u>. (Bianca, emphasis original)

However, while some students were stimulated by this linguistic feature, some expressed a sense of the difficulty in the face of antithesis:

> *Diary entry, 26 Nov 2003*
>
> This week the teacher taught us about antithesis which is similar to the binaries but bigger than the later. Originally, I thought it is not very hard but it does not seem so. After class, I tried to look for any antithesis on the newspaper and articles from *Readers' Digest*, but I can't find them at all. I think that antithesis is hard because it does not only concern about the structure but also concern the meaning of words. (Shirley Chang)

> *Diary entry, 26 Nov 2003*
>
> I think this time (antithesis) is more challenging for us. Seems that the whole class was having difficulties finding out where they are. (Sheena)

Why does it seem difficult? One student provided one possible reason:

> *Diary entry, 29 Nov 2003*
>
> It is really hard. The binary is only a word; you only need to find the opposite meaning of the two words. However, you can find antithesis in noun phrases, or sentences in different lines. (Webb)

As this student indicates, antithesis is a more sophisticated patterning than binaries mainly because it is highly complex in nature of application. In this light, this unit serves to enlarge students' perspective of pairing, making the class a more invigorating challenge.

6.3.7 Unit 7 — Voice

I. Aims

In this lesson, students will (a) analyse what qualities make a text's 'voice' forceful, distinctive, and memorable, and (b) emulate a portion of the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy in order to develop their own voices as writers.

II. Material selection

1. 'Sonnet 138' (recycled)

2. *Hamlet*, III.i.66-97

3. 'This is Just to Say' (by William Carlos Williams, 1934)

4. An encyclopaedia entry (plum)

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

To introduce the concept of 'voice', it may be instructive to compare both the language of literary and non-literary discourse. A strong contrast helps make the point. This could be done by reading a passage from an encyclopaedia and a passage from a poem, and feeling how they differ in terms of the 'addressor' found in the text.

As Hamlet's extended soliloquy seems too much of a cognitive load for students to handle, it is advisable to approach it in several manageable sections. This can be done by giving students each class period a small segment (I divided it into 6 sections) so that they can tackle it with more confidence.

After reading the soliloquy provided, students engage in *mimetic paraphrase* (Carter & Long, 1991: 88) in which their versions of the 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy are produced. In this case, opportunities can be found for students to reveal their own voices. Learners may be asked to read each other's version and discuss their reactions to them.

IV. Rationale

Literary texts achieve a certain kind of popular acclaim especially when they express clear and widely shared emotions with a forceful, distinctive, and memorable voice. They resonate with their readership.

V. Guiding questions:

- What qualities have made the voice of a text so distinctive or unique?

- Compare Text 8.1 and Text 8.2. Who is speaking? To whom?

- What can you tell about the speaker in each text?

- What do you get from the tone of each text?

Text 7.1 *(From Wikipedia encyclopedia)*

Plums. Fruit of the genus *Prunus* of the rose family (Rosaceae). Like the peach and cherry, it is a stone, or drupe, fruit. Trees of some plum species reach a height from 6 to 10 metres (20 to 33 feet), while others are much smaller; some species are small shrubs with drooping branches. The flower buds on most varieties are borne on short spurs or along the terminal shoots of the main branches.

Text 7.2[8] (*'This Is Just to Say'*)

I have eaten the plums that were in the icebox and which you were probably saving for breakfast. Forgive me they were delicious so sweet and so cold.

- According to Hamlet in Text 8.3, what calamity do we have in life?

- What images do you find?

- What can you tell about the character of Hamlet? What words bring out his character?

- Does Hamlet seem to be speaking as one person or as many? How can you tell? If he is speaking for many people, why would he choose to say 'I' instead of 'we'?

---

[8] Initially presented in a prose form for ease of comparison, the original graphology is revealed after a discussion.

This is Just to Say
I have eaten
the plums
that were in
the icebox

and which
you were probably
saving
for breakfast

Forgive me
they were delicious
so sweet
and so cold

Text 7.3[9] *(Ham, III.i.66-97)*

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? / To die: to sleep;
No more; and, by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. / To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life; /
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? / who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of? /
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.

---

[9] This text is presented in 6 small segments ('/' indicates where the text is cut). Each segment
is accompanied by a number of guiding questions. For the sake of brevity, only questions
that focus on the broader aspect of the entire text are listed here.

VI. Extension

Task 1 — Find voices in the soliloquy. Convert the soliloquy into an argument with contrasting voices. Work with a partner and speak the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy in turn as an agonised conversation. You may present it as a speech for many voices. You could begin thus:

> **A:** To be, or not to be: that is the question:
> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
> The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> **B:** Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
> And by opposing end them?

<u>Hint</u>: The next antithesis (where two voices occur) has to do with sleeping versus dreaming. There are several more in the passage.

Task 2 — Stylistic Imitation of 'To Be or Not to Be'. Step into role of Hamlet and write your own soliloquy, sharing with the audience a dilemma that you are presently facing.

VII. Commentary

What is meant by voice in a text, and what qualities have made the voice of a poetic text so unique? Helping students to answer this question is the primary purpose of this unit. There are many qualities that make the voices of Shakespearean characters so memorable. The aptness of this observation is readily verified by Bloom (1998: xvii):

> [N]o other writer, before or since Shakespeare, has accomplished so

well the virtual miracle of creating utterly different yet self-consistent voices for his more than on hundred characters and many hundreds of highly distinctive minor personages.

In the soliloquy (Text 8.3), where the main concern is to take up the voices within Hamlet himself, the arguments for and against suicide creates two oscillatory voices that give expression to the hero's introspective dilemma. As Fortin (1982: 80) deftly argues, Shakespeare's tragedy, *Hamlet* in particular, is 'characterised by the interplay of antiphonal voices, each posing a possible response to the tragic conflict'. What Fortin has propounded here may serve as one plausible answer to explain why the voice can be made distinctive, forceful, and memorable. As one student described, it is not hard to hear a dissenting voice in Hamlet's speech:

> *Diary entry, 3 Dec 2003*
>
> If the feature voice combines with antithesis, there is a better sound in the article. It is just like people are talking, and debating to each other, even there is only one person talking. For example, the soliloquy of Hamlet we study in class. He is talking to himself, but I feel that there are two voices inside his mind. One is coward and the other is brave. Both of them entice him to do something. One gives an idea, and the other retorts immediately. (Pamela)

It should be noted that this soliloquy is much less accessible when compared with many other texts previously presented. One caveat is that 'a difficult text may cause some students to become confused by the text and to switch off— particularly if it is a long text' (Carter & Long, 1991: 82). For this reason, access to this text is done via a series of small segments with closed questions,

each leading on to another, for which there is a definable link. A diary entry verifies the beneficial effect of breaking Hamlet's soliloquy into manageable pieces:

> *Diary entry, 3 Dec 2003*
>
> It is too difficult to read *Hamlet* by myself at one time. There are so many words that I don't understand and I certainly become impatient to read it. I think you use a very good way to get us understand the play [soliloquy] by dividing it into 6 parts. It is easier for us to understand it. (Bianca)

Another language-based activity based on this text is mimetic paraphrase. Again the aim is to involve students directly with the text and to reinforce their perception of the tonal qualities embedded within the text. Furthermore, it helps students to create their own voices, as some kind of personal agenda will normally be shared with others in the process. In presenting their dilemma as a Hamlet figure in the modern world, students draw on life's experiences: love, food, marriage, pressure, and their jobs in order to rewrite the soliloquy. Upon completion, votes were taken by secret ballot to decide on which student's own 'To be, or not to be' stood out. The following are some top ranking versions (no correction was attempted):

> **Student # 1**
> To leave or not to leave — that is the contradiction
> Whether 'tis wiser in the mind to cut
> The strings and lines of complicated marriage,
> Or to shut eyes on a cluster of chaos,
> And, by ignoring, keep them. (5 VOTES, out of 17)

Student # 2

To cry or not to cry — that is the question:
Whether 'tis braver on the face to swallow
The pain and sorrow of apart love
Or to open arms embracing the forgivable sin
And, by generous, end the tear. (5 VOTES out of 17)

Student # 3

To let or not to let go — that is the question:
Whether in the mind to suffer the loneliness without you,
Or to keep you in my heart with a bunch of memory
And, by continually thinking of you. (4 VOTES out of 17)

The exploitation of syntactic patterns has in fact promoted, as it was intended to do so, a higher level of consciousness of the interconnection between form and meaning. This is because the formal pattern (i)*'To VP, or not to VP,...'* and (ii)*'Whether NP/S VP... or...NP/S VP...'* can draw attention to the self-realised dilemma in the original text and to the consequent emphasis on patterning-meaning interrelationship determined by the students.

This activity made a favourable impression on many students. They reported that rewriting Hamlet's soliloquy had assisted them to achieve a greater appreciation of Shakespeare's exemplary use of language:

> *Diary entry, 8 Dec 2003*
>
> I think in this technique, we can learn how to take a close look at the structure itself and to see how we can shape the context into an antithesis [sic] form. This not only turns the sentences into a more coordinate feeling, but also helps the readers to understand it quickly. (Michelle)

Diary entry, 10 Dec 2003

You collect our 'To be's or not to be's' and give us a chance to read it. I think it is good to imitate a masterpiece. Although we cannot write as good as the masterpiece, through imitating, we learn the structure of the paragraph and know that we can use it in other writings. (Pamela)

Diary entry, 16 Dec 2003

I did feel enjoyable of reading other classmates' talented work. I was surprised that many of us actually have potentials. (Shirley)

Diary entry, 11 Dec 2003

To be honest, I am surprised and astonished by my classmates' works. They made these good poems in a short time and with abundant creativity. I think this is a very good experience for me to learn not only writing poems but how to convey ideas. (Grace Chen)

6.3.8 Unit 8 — Genre: verse/prose

I. Aims

To distinguish the use of prose from that of verse in the plays and to explore how these styles may vary from place-to-place in order to convey ideas and feelings.

II. Material selection

1. *Hamlet*, III.i.66-74

2. *Macbeth*, II.iii.4-13

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

In Unit 1, students had learnt that Shakespeare's verse establishes and confirms an aural pattern based on rhythmic beats. While free verse predominates, prose language also contributes to its dramatic power no less than verse (McEvoy, 2000).

However, having learnt some stylistic features so far, students may not be immediately aware that Shakespeare may switch from verse to prose at any point in the text. It helps then for students to observe closely how these two modes of language differ in graphology when on the same page.

Learners may be able to gain a clearer view of why Shakespeare mixes verse and prose in a play by a working through a worksheet (see Table 6.5) that requires them to make a prediction. This gives the possibility of a *True/False*

question as a starting point. This resembles a test, but no measurement is to be aimed at. It is intended to involve the learner more fully, for this cannot be done entirely by simple reference to the plays; in other words learners must use their inferential skills to complete the task.

IV. Rationale

As Shakespeare basically uses the two kinds of genres – prose and verse, the ability to identify the moment when a character lurches back and forth between prose and verse aids the understanding of character, mood, and tone. Furthermore, exposure to such a combination sensitises students to the fact that a switch in style might imply a change in tone or mood, or both.

V. Guiding questions

- Why does Shakespeare alternate between verse and prose?

- What kinds of character often speak in verse? And, what in prose?

- Why does a character speak in verse in one moment and in prose another? The following questions supply pointer towards discussion.

Table 6.7

Worksheet on verse/prose

Questions	*True*	*False*
1. Prose tends to be used by upper class characters?		
2. Upper class characters only speak in verse?		
3. We tend to find some more prose in comedies than in tragedies		

4. In times of extreme of emotion, verse is more likely to be used than prose?		
5. Is verse often used for witty, cynical commentary?		
6. Prose is frequently used in the speeches of characters actually or pretending to be mad?		
7. Prose can be used by as a contrast to verse?		

- Use the visual clue (graphology) as a support to point out the difference between the two texts.

Text 8.1 (*Mac, II.iii.4-13*)

Macd. What three things does drink especially provoke?
Port. Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance; therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery: it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.
Macd. I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.
Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me. But I requited him for his lie; and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Text 8.2 (*Ham, III.i.66-74,* recycled)

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks

That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd.

- Text 8.3 is followed immediately after Hamlet's 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy. Why do you think Hamlet change his style of verse to prose when he knows Ophelia is approaching to him?

- When would Hamlet use verse and when would he use prose? For what purposes?

- Check through the play that we have just studied. Find out who uses verse and who uses prose within the text. Suggest some possible reasons for the differences.

Text 8.3 (*Ham, III.i.98-108*)

Ham. ... Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.
Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?
Ham. I humbly thank you; well, well, well.
Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.
Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

VI. Extension

Task—Check Lady Macbeth's style of speech before and after Act 5, Scene 1. Check, in particular, the style she uses in the 'sleepwalking' scene. What might this suggest to you?

VII. Commentary

Stylistic variation can be observed in all languages. From a sociolinguistic perspective, language variation 'reflects changes in situational factors, such as addressee, setting, task or topic' (Holmes, 1992: 276). Such variation in the form of linguistic expressions according to the formality of the social context of use is interestingly manifested in Shakespeare's dramatic use of contrast between levels of style.

Shakespeare sometimes writes in verse, sometimes in prose, and without seeming effort. They are easily distinguishable: verse is distinguished from prose by the relative regularity of its rhythm. The rhythm of a line is determined by the alternation of stressed and unstressed (*accented or unaccented*) syllables. Prose, on the other hand, refers to ordinary conversation with no regular pattern of accentual rhythm. Lines of text do not all contain the same number of syllables nor is there any discernible pattern of stresses. Wright (1992: 168) suggests that we may deem 'the two languages or modes as exhibiting what is in Shakespeare's time a mixed situation, reflecting differences in status, occasion, function, style, and perspective'.

As the stylistic conventions of the plays have shown, the prose tends to be spoken by characters of an 'inferior' class, and the verse to their 'betters'. Also, prose is often reserved for letters and proclamations, courtly characters in a certain mood or posture, or in comedy as a humorous device. In *Macbeth*, for example, Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, and other members of Scotland's ruling

class nearly always are heard to speak in verse. Their speeches reflect their social status and give them both authority and passion. By contrast, characters of lower status tend to speak in ordinary prose. This contrast is especially marked in Text 8.1. However, this division is by no means clear (Gibson, 1997).

As Shakespeare switches from prose to verse or back to prose, the dramatic situation is in some way informed by that switch, but that each instance demands its own analysis by the reader. In *Hamlet*, for example, Hamlet speaks in prose to Polonius, to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to the Players, to Osric, to Claudius, and to Ophelia. In Act 3, Scene 1, Hamlet changes from the verse of his 'To be, or not to be' speech to that of prose when he talks to Ophelia. For Hamlet, this is typical of his 'play acting'. Such an abrupt change from verse to prose in a scene sets the speech 'apart from what came before' and the reader is likely to recognise instinctively such a verse/prose shift, thus gaining important insights into what is happening to the characters dramatically at that moment (Epstein, 1993: 218).

Still another interesting example of this verse/prose shift is in *Hamlet* Act 2, Scene 2, in which Hamlet deliberately diverts the conversation from Polonius' probing by calling him a 'fishmonger'. Hamlet disagrees with Polonius' sentiments and has no desire to accommodate him in his speech. By diverting downwards from his usual verse style to prose style, Hamlet shows his negative attitudes towards the addressee. An understanding of this stylistic shift

gives insight into the nature of the relationship between the interlocutors. As Montgomery et al. (200: 69) claim, 'difference in the text will result from whether the relationships between participants are informal or formal, familiar or polite, personal or impersonal'.

An enquiry into the classification between verse and prose helps students to recognise a signal being sent to them about the effects evoked within the text. In addition, the distinction between the two realms directs learners' attention to a more 'macro-level' investigation of register. It is at this macrocosmic perspective that students begin to formally realise the fact that the style of language we use is affected by the context.

6.3.9 Bringing it all together

I. Aim

To encourage learners to study texts by using a stylistic checklist in order to arrive at a more comprehensive textual analysis.

II. Material selection

As You Like It, II.vii.147-74

III. Teaching Strategies (The Approach)

It is delightful when a text can be read in combination with an illustration that serves as a guide towards fuller understanding. Many paintings can be highly effective representations that illustrate a key scene of a play. In this case, students were presented with the visual illustration of '*Seven Ages of Man*' by William Mulready, without its title being revealed (see Figure 6.5). Students speculate 'what it is about' and create their own title for the picture. If time allows, students can write a short paragraph on their own interpretation of the picture.

The teacher scrambles Jacques's speech into eight parts. Working in pairs, students try to put the lines back into their original order. Then in the round-up session, the class as a whole builds up the speech, fragment-by-fragment. During the discussion to follow, any disagreement should be duly noted. Finally, the original version is read out and then the class moves on to a

discussion of the text based on its metre, sound patterning, binary, repetition, metaphor, antithesis, voice, and genre. Some of features may be absent in the text, but students have to make their own judgments.

IV. Rationale

A review of various style features provides students an opportunity to organise and shape a stylistic analysis on their own, through several distinct levels of language.

V. Guiding questions

- What are *exits* and *entrances*, *parts* and *acts* in the theatre? What are they in a person's life?

- What images do you get of each stage?

- Do sound devices (e.g. alliteration, assonance, etc.) contribute to any meaning here?

- In the last line, the French word 'sans' is used four times, what effect does it have, and why do you think it has such an effect?

- Is the tone of depicting the seven ages of man cynical? Or what?

Figure 6.5[10]

Text 9.1[11] (*As, II.vii.147-74*)

1 All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances;
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. / *2* At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms. /
3 And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. / *4* And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. / *5* Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. / *6* And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,

---

[10] *The Seven Ages of Man* by William Mulready (1838). Retrieved December 16, 2003 from
   http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/classes/Shakespeare_Illustrated/Shakespeare.html
[11] The text is divided into eight fragments and then presented to students in eight slips of paper
   with its order mixed; '/' indicates where the text is cut.

With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,

Full of wise saws and modern instances;

And so he plays his part. / [7] The sixth age shifts

Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,

With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,

His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide

For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,

Turning again toward childish treble, pipes

And whistles in his sound. / [8] Last scene of all,

That ends this strange eventful history,

Is second childishness and mere oblivion,

Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

VI. Commentary

As a result of the cumulative work, students have become better prepared to engage in more rigorous analysis of a text on their own. In this review unit, several levels of language are explored simultaneously. The motive is to combine the approaches students have been experimenting with so far. In short, learners are asked here to think 'to what extent *are these formal features artistically significant*' rather than 'to what extent *is this formal feature artistically significant*'.

Working in pair, students examined the applicability of each textual feature they had learned to the interpretation of Text 9.1. A stylistic analysis was preceded with a visual pointer for speculation, an effective technique endorsed by Duff and Maley (1990) and Carter and Long (1987) to spark off discussion. The students are free to defend their own interpretations of the picture provided. In response to the questions, 'What is this picture about?' students enumerated

a variety of possible titles: 'A noble family', 'Life of upper class', Family of poker faces', 'Who's baby?' and an almost hit-on-the-target attempt 'A man's growth'.

To restore the original text, students need to base on textual evidence, especially discourse markers such as 'at first', 'and then' and 'last'. In the ensuing discussion, students are paired to pick one feature in the text and explain the relation between linguistic form and literary function. This seminar format not only ensured a less dominant role of the teacher but also provided an evaluative opportunity for me to see how students have developed the ability to reflect on language with sensitivity. By course end, I found students had the active capacity to read and respond with a degree of sophistication to Shakespeare's text. Like one student confidently points out:

> *Diary entry, 17 Dec 2003*
>
> Today we review the nine linguistic features. Though the text that you gave us today is a bit difficult, when we tried out to find out all the linguistic features that Shakespeare used to express the tone, we find it much easier to understand. I felt a little bit surprised because we had answers when you asked several questions that were about the complicated text. Also I found that we learned it under no pressure! We are not stressed and we did learn something. (Veronica)

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have exemplified a range of practical activities, showing how the selected texts can be approached stylistically and handled in a learner-centred way. An inventory of stylistic devices allows participants to explore how linguistic operations may be performed on play extracts and other (non-literary) texts. However, I am perfectly aware of the fact that I have touched upon only a few of the manifold linguistic forms and their resultant meanings within this research. It must be stressed again that there can be no one-to-one relation between literary functions and the language performing them. Nevertheless, it has been shown that form and meaning are interdependent. Both my students and I have found this interplay to be quite revealing and fruitful.

CHAPTER 7

INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA
AND LEARNERS' ATTAINMENT

7.0 Introduction

In this chapter, some claims are being made with data used as supportive
evidence of learners' attainment, especially in terms of language awareness. In
order to establish a basis for making such claims, a report of findings is
presented in three parts: (1) pre- and post LA Test results are compared and
analysed according to coding conventions specified in Spada and Frohlich
(1995); (2) diary data is examined for emergent patterns and themes; (3)
questionnaire data is analysed for the purpose of describing what appear to be
developmental tendencies among the participants. As analysis occurred in
several overlapping stages, a separate explanation of these components reflects
organisational convenience rather than a linear and divided approach to that
data analysis.

7.1 Product data: pre- and post-test results

As with any performance-based language assessment, the LA test constructed in
this study faces a challenging conundrum — the establishment of procedures
which will quantify a more objective observation of testers' performance. As
explained earlier (Chapter 5), measuring mental constructs is unlike measuring

physical characteristics that can be observed directly with established standard scales. In measuring a psychological construct such as language awareness, our observations remain indirect, so it is essential to establish a standard for defining units of measurement. Therefore, before presentation of test results, I would like to discuss both design and application of the scoring procedure used herein.

7.1.1 Construction of a rating scale

Because the LA Test includes some open-ended questions — questions to which there are no fixed or absolute answers given, the assessment procedure is bound to be more complicated than a mere calculation of a tally of correct or incorrect answers. For this obvious reason, most performance-based language assessment, such as the Speaking and Writing modules in the IELTS test, typically requires examiners to judge the quality of examinees' written/spoken language in relation to a rating scale. According to Gannon and Ostrom (1996: 337), such an attempt to define the construct of language proficiency by devising a rating scale can 'often minimise difficulties associated with the coding and quantifying a respondent's answers'.

For similar reasons, I devised a structured scoring guideline for making the criteria for success in the LA test more explicit, more systematic, and more objective. By dint of this procedure, the examiners can identify and mark the important characteristics of the response and thereby making more valid

measurements of testers' performance.

In addition, an associated goal is set in order to ground discussion of doing language awareness assessment, an issue proposed by McCarthy and Carter (1994: 169) and which bears further investigation.

> Should learning *about* language be assessed? Can it be effectively measured? If so, how is this best done? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

In the process of presenting the data, I shall answer these questions in due course.

Following the EBB[1] scale development procedure proposed by Turner and Upshur (1995, 2002), an eight-point rating scale is devised to suit the purpose of the present study (for more detailed discussion of the development of rating scales, see also Alderson et al. 1995, Chapter 5; Bachman & Palmer 1996, Chapter 11; McNamara 1996, Chapter 7; Hughes, 2003).

This eight-point rating scale represents eight levels of language awareness. The basis of evaluation is grounded firstly in the number of stylistic features to be identified. Secondly, a further evaluation takes place by examining how those identified features are interpreted for their representational effect(s). Criteria for 'correctness' in the test will be rated on a scale of 1-8 (from 1=Very limited Awareness to 8=Very Good Awareness).

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[1] EBB refers to the fact that a scale is Empirically derived, require Binary choices by raters, and defines the Boundaries between score levels. See Figure 7.1, for how the scale is constructed in the present study.

Figure 7.1 Empirically-based Rating Scales

Band score	Descriptor of LA level
8	**Very Good Awareness**
7	**Good Awareness**
6	**Clear Competent Awareness**
5	**Competent Awareness**
4	**Modest Awareness**
3	**Minimal Awareness**
2	**Limited Awareness**
1	**Extremely Limited Awareness**

Identify > 4 SFs?

— YES → Identify > 7 SFs & explain most of the stylistic effects?
— NO → Identify > 3 SFs & provide most of the stylistic effects?

Identify > 7 SFs & explain most of the stylistic effects?
— YES → Identify > 7 SFs & provide most of the stylistic effects? → YES = 8, NO = 7
— NO → Identify > 5 SFs & provide most of the stylistic effects? → YES = 6, NO = 5

Identify > 3 SFs & provide most of the stylistic effects?
— YES → Identify > 3 SFs & provide most of the stylistic effects? → YES = 4, NO = 3
— NO → Identify > 1 SF & provide most of the stylistic effects? → YES = 2, NO = 1

SF= stylistic features

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It is vital to note that linguistic forms may be pragmatically, as well as semantically ambiguous, so there is not an invariable relationship between form and function. Carter (2003: 65) highlights this point when he notes, 'Appropriate assessment of language awareness is less likely to involve correct production than to elicit the learner's ability to explain how particular forms function'. Because of the noted lack of co-variation of linguistic forms and functions, a reader cannot just recognise a particular stylistic feature and assign a significance to it without referring to the unified whole of text and context. This also accords with van Peer's postulations that any stylistic devices 'simultaneously fulfil different functions' and therefore must be 'understood as multi-dimensional' (van Peer, 1990: 262).

The understanding that a stylistic device may carry different representations in different contexts requires that we take into account these variations as an important determinant of students' testing performance. On the basis of these considerations, difference among test performance is analysed and assigned to different levels on the EBB scale.

Accompanied by the EBB scale is a descriptive scale (see Table 7.1) for raters to reach a final score report. Each band corresponds to a descriptive statement giving a summary of a candidate's awareness classified at that level. According to this scale, raters are able to follow the same criteria to locate each candidate's performance and to arrive at a more objective rating. Each level of awareness is described as follows:

Table 7.1 Interpretations of Benchmarks

Levels of Achievement	Band Descriptors
8 = Very Good Awareness	Candidates in this category: — Show strong sensitivity to and understanding of the given text. — Fully identify stylistic features, along with provision of convincing and creative responses to how each feature is employed for representational effect(s). — Use clearly appropriate details to support arguments.
7 = Good Awareness	Candidates in this category: — Show good sensitivity to and understanding of the given text. — Identify nearly all of the stylistic features, along with provision of convincing responses as to how each feature is employed for representational effect(s). — Use appropriate details to support arguments
6 = Clear Competent Awareness	Candidates in this category: — Locate and identify at least 6 features in the given text. — Explain how stylistic features are used to convey a non-literal message in a sensible way.
5 = Competent Awareness	Candidates in this category: — Locate and identify at least 5 stylistic features in the given text. — Explain how stylistic features are used to convey a message, while providing a few general comments.
4 = Modest Awareness	Candidates in this category: — Able to recognise and to identify at least 4 stylistic features. — Attempt some justification for the features being identified.
3 = Minimal Awareness	Candidates in this category: — Able to recognise at least 3 stylistic features. — Attempt some descriptions of the features being

	identified, though candidate is likely to make some general remarks.
2 = Limited Awareness	Candidates in this category: —Correctly identify at least two formal features. —Attempt responses to the feature identified, though only to provide a general commentary.
1 = Extremely Limited Awareness	Candidates in this category: —Identify less than two stylistic features. —Provide few comments on the stylistic effects. —Essentially has no ability to justify the use of any language feature.

<u>Note</u>: These categories are best viewed as tendencies rather than as absolutes.

7.1.2 The rating procedure

As a degree of judgment is called for on the part of the scorer in scoring open-ended responses in this test, a perfectly consistent scoring pattern is not to be expected. Therefore, the following procedures are taken to finalise the marking scheme and to ensure greater scorer reliability.

Initially, each test by a candidate will be scored independently by two examiners[2] using consultation with the aforementioned scale. Then the two ratings will be averaged. If these two raters score more than 2 points apart, the test will in turn be scored by a third examiner, and the two closest total scores

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[2] Research literature has quite consistently shown higher scorer reliability when writing is scored four times. Yet, there has to be a balance between what is desired and what is practical. Therefore, it was decided that an independent double scoring method would be adopted here. Two raters are experienced teachers who hold masters degree in English language teaching. The third rater is the author of this thesis.

averaged to arrive at the final test score (See Appendix 5, Rater Evaluation Form).

In addition to this procedure, a detailed scoring key is provided that specifies possible answers and assigns points for valid responses given. If the scorers should face difficulties in the assignment of points (the key is unlikely to have anticipated every relevant response to be given), they are asked to bring these to the attention of the researcher (myself) for a consistent decision to be made.

Finally, all candidates are to be identified by number, not name, to ensure that the gender and name of the candidate will not influence the scorer into making predictions which may affect the score given.

7.1.3 A comparison of the test results: cognitive attainments

This LA test was administered as a pre- and post-test, so that comparisons could be made to see whether there was any difference between the two tests given. Overall, the results indicate improvements in all students at the end of instruction. While most of them (i.e. 86%) typically fell below Level 3 (Minimal Awareness) in the pretest, posttest results showed that their level of awareness was markedly enhanced. Of the 22 candidates, results were as follows:

0 are of Very good Awareness on the pre-test.

0 are of Good Awareness on the pre-test.

0 are of Clear Competent Awareness on the pre-test.

0 are of Competent Awareness on the pre-test.

3 are of Modest Awareness on the pre-test.

2 are of Minimal Awareness on the pre-test.

11 are of Limited Awareness on the pre-test.

6 are of Extremely Limited Awareness on the pre-test.

This can be compared with the post-test results, where of the 22 students, results were as follows:

0 are of Very good Awareness on the post-test.

4 are of Good Awareness on the post-test.

3 are of Clear Competent Awareness on the post-test.

10 are of Competent Awareness on the post-test.

5 are of Modest Awareness on the post-test.

0 are of Minimal Awareness on the post-test.

0 are of Limited Awareness on the post-test.

0 are of Extremely Limited Awareness on the post-test.

For ease of reference, a frequency table is constructed below, comparing the level of awareness as shown in the pre- and post-test.

Table 7.2

Level of awareness in the pre- and post- test taken by the 22 students.

Level of LA	Pre-test	Post-test
8		
7		4 (18%)
6		3 (14%)
5		10 (45%)
4	3 (14%)	5 (23%)
3	2 (9%)	
2	11(50%)	
1	6 (3%)	

As can be seen in Table 7.2, all participants were re-allocated within Level 4 to 7 of awareness (Modest to Good), with four students (i.e. 18%) achieving Level 7 and the five weakest students (i.e. 23%) achieving Level 4. This can be compared with the original distribution of awareness level from 1 to 4 (Extremely Limited to Modest) in the pre-test.

By and large, the overall test performance advanced from an average of Level 2 in the pre-test to Level 5 in the post-test. A substantial difference between tests and re-test reveals a solid progression — from Limited Awareness to Competent Awareness. To gain additional insight into students' performance on the awareness test, results at two different measurement times were displayed in the form of a histogram. They can be plotted as follows:

Figure 7.2

Students' Awareness Improvement

Awareness Enhancement
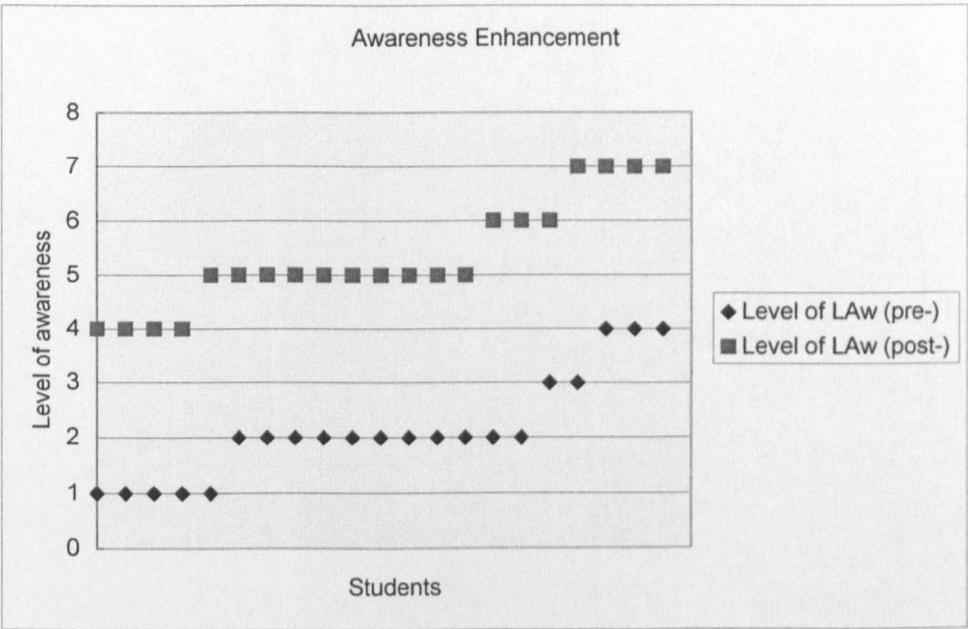
A visual presentation of this kind clearly demonstrates an upward trend in language awareness after pedagogical intervention. A comparison of the pre-active phase (before lessons) and post-active phase (after lessons) shows that students become more able to recognise and identify different stylistic features in a text and thus provide explanation as to how these features are patterned in a way contributory to extra meaning in the text.

Perhaps it is even more worthwhile to stress the fact that a good proportion of students, who in the pre-test identified no stylistic features at all, were then able to identify some and provide quite a few insightful comments. Some sample test item responses are provided here to show the qualitative changes in students' responses towards the stylistic features in the Terrano text.

Table 7.3

Samples of extended responses in pre- and post-responses towards
the Terrano text

Stylistic Features (Student)	Limited production responses provided	
	Pre-test	Post-test
Metaphor		
(Zen)	(Not identified)	'Power is aphrodisiac'. Cars are like women. Driving the Terrano is like having the power to control women, have the 'extraordinary' ability to enjoy a sexual relationship with a woman.
(Webb)	I think the purpose of it is to imply buyers to buy the car.	It implies readers if you want more power you may consider buying the new Terrano II.
Sound Patterning		
(Sally)	(Not identified)	The sentence 'Its smooth as a satin sheet ride' abounds the sound of 's' feel very smooth, which reflects actually the ride of the car.
Binary		
(Pamela)	(Not identified)	Stream and mountain are totally different. It gives the readers that the car can run on any terrains.
(Veronica)	Compare two opposite aspects, make the text stronger	'...that rocky gorge; something more gentle. Like tarmac'. 'up...and down': emphasize the car can go anywhere.
Antithesis		
(Grace Chen)	(Identified but no	'...more or less', like binary's

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	comment provided)	*function, shows the differences and flexibility the car has.*
Voice		
(Shirley Wu)	*It can persuade the reader.*	*There are many 'you' in the article. It is like there is a person talking to you like a speech in front of the audience. That can shorten the distance between the author and the reader.*
(Phoebe)	*Let readers get into the article easily and it seems like in the same situation with the speaker.*	*Promote the product and feel there is a sales person telling us the wonderful product.*

Table 7.3 presents the extended verbal responses based on five different stylistic features, comparing the pre- and post-test comments written by eight different students. We can clearly see awareness development as evidenced by these samples.

For example, Student 1, named Zen, failed to identify the metaphor — 'Power is aphrodisiac' — in the pre-test. As a corollary from his inability to detect this specific feature, no explanation as to the significance of the feature was provided. In other words, this feature was remained without analysis, as such, not directly accessible to the student. After all, only linguistic information that is detected could undergo further processing (Schmidt, 2001).

Reading the same text in the post-test, Zen, along with other students, not only selected and detected special stylistic devices from a vast variety of potential

information within the text, but also described his experience of the stimuli. He linked this stylistic device to the theme of sexual power implied within the text, claiming that '*Cars are like women. Driving the Terrano is like having the power to control women, have the "extraordinary" ability to enjoy a sexual relationship with a woman*'.

In the words of Hanauer (1999: 21), this language awareness development can be manifested in 'an increase in a literary student's ability to selectively focus on, use and explicitly discuss specific aspects of a literary text for interpretation purposes' (see Hanauer for a more detailed discussion on the development of literary awareness in cognitive terms).

As reported in Graves (1996) and in Bortolussi and Dixon (1996), the ability to discuss the way in which specific linguistic structures are used to produce particular effect is what distinguishes expert readers from novices. Alternatively it may be said that once students find more instances of creative language in use, they are more likely to have a higher level of text processing and the ability to produce a richer interpretation of the text.

It is perhaps important at this point to note that students were not instructed on any items that were clearly part of the Terrano text. Nor any exercise was done pertaining to this text since it would be impossible to isolate the effects of the 'treatment'. Given these results, this research may constitute an endorsement of a stylistic approach to Shakespeare's language for promoting language

awareness, because in the process of working with the words of Shakespeare, learners also demonstrated awareness of the attributes of language in other texts.

Hence, the answer to the first research question — 'Does literariness in Shakespeare's language enhance learners' ability to identify linguistic patterns in non-Shakespearean texts and to provide cogent interpretation of how they mean?' — is found to be in the direct affirmative. The content of the instruction is found to be effective, in that students are then found to have the ability to process different texts beyond those that were studied during course activity.

Of course, there are many factors remaining uncontrolled within the scope of this study, particularly in regards to other sources of input, and any of these might in fact contribute to the enhancement of students' language awareness. Yet, the strong trend recognised in the data seems to demand some further explanation other than seeming chance.

7.1.4 Affective gain: interpretation of semantic differential scale

With respect to the first task that aims to tap into students' perceptions of the content of the Terrano text, I use Osgood's (1952) measurement technique in an attempt to assess attitude change as a result of the treatment. Twelve bipolar

adjective pairs[3] are provided for the respondents to rate each scale. Then the ratings were averaged on each dimension. In this manner, the profile of ratings is obtained by summating the ratings on the twelve scales used.

Figure 7.3 graphically represents the affective response to the stimulus (i.e. the Terrano text). Here, the scales have been rearranged directionally, so that adjectives representing negative values are situated systematically on the left hand side, whereas those representing positive values are on the right hand side.

As can be seen in the figure, the two response profiles from a test and re-test spaced 11 weeks apart are somewhat deviant in terms of both shape and elevation. More specifically, this indicates that the Terrano text is evaluated more positively by students on all scales. It was judged as more *literary*, *comprehensive*, *exciting*, etc. than it was originally perceived it was in the pre-test. This is presumably because that attention to textual features, owing to students' enhanced awareness of their existence, influences information processing results.

These features not only enhanced students' insight into textual comprehension — i.e. scale 2 ('comprehensible') but also offered students a surplus of aesthetic pleasure — i.e. scale 3 ('pleasant') and scale 8 ('attractive') — experienced in

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[3] These bipolar adjective pairs are listed here: (1) Nonliterary-literary; (2) Incomprehensible-Comprehensible; (3) Unpleasant-Pleasant; (4). Worthless-Valuable; (5) Ordinary-unique; (6) Simple-Complex; (7) Prosaic-Poetic; (8) Unattractive-Attractive; (9) Banal-Original; (10) Monotonous-Varying; (11) Weak-Strong; (12) Bad-Good

reading the text.

Figure 7.3

A comparison of affective reactions on Terrano text

Pre-test ————————

Post-test -------------------

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (1-7 Ratings) |

Non-literary — Literary
Incomprehensible — Comprehensible
Unpleasant — Pleasant
Worthless — Valuable
Ordinary — Unique
Simple — Complex
Prosaic — Poetic
Unattractive — Attractive
Banal — Original
Monotonous — Varying
Weak — Strong
Bad — Good
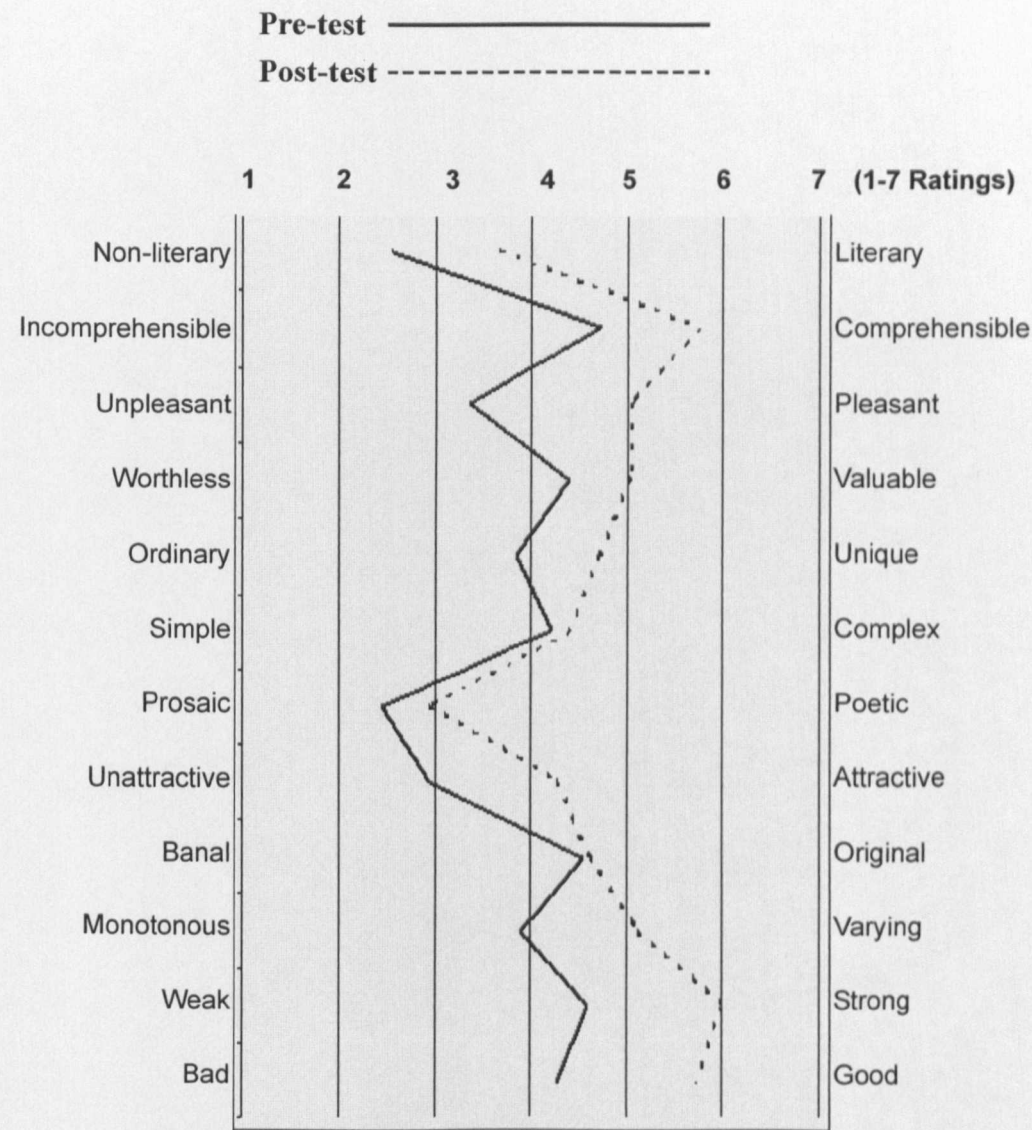
<u>Note</u>: A seven-point scale is used for rating the Terrano text. The number '1' is considered the lowest value, and '7' is the highest value on the scale.

In view of the overall pattern displayed by figure 7.3, the total difference of all responses shows a marked difference between the pre- and post-test, thus

further strengthening the claim that students' language awareness has increased. Because of this shift in attitude, we are permitted a glimpse here of the special force that stylistic features bring to the reading act. It guides us towards the important recognition that the interpretation of a text is both (or at least) an interplay of text characteristics and the reader's psychological/cognitive/affective construction, a point well discussed by van Peer (1990) and Miall and Kuiken (1998).

7.2 Process Data: students' diaries

This section discusses inductively-derived themes evolving from students' diaries. As this introspective data was dominant components of the course, it constituted a substantial part of the dataset. Over a ten-week course, students were asked to turn in one diary (an A4 page containing at least 3 entries) per week. The twenty-two students involved handed in a total of 223 instalments during the 10-week time-span involved.

Although students were well advised to reflect and discuss in their diaries the texts they explored in class in a way that deepened their understanding of the stylistic features, some diaries still contained a large number of entries that fell outside the intended responses possible for analysis. These entries often included descriptions of personal anecdotes, school events, and learning experiences that were not directly related to this course.

With the aim of isolating comments pertinent to participants' experiences with the lesson, selected excerpts of diary entries were chosen for inclusion based on their relevance to the point made under discussion. My choices were intended to represent various kinds of participants involved, such as those who talked voluntarily and those who remained silent, and those whom I perceived as 'strong' as well as those perceived as 'not so strong'. In other words, the diary entries were intended to represent a 'maximum variation sample' (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993: 381).

7.2.1 Data coding

Data analysis in this part was conducted in view of one research question serving to guide the present study: 'What kind of language awareness do students develop as a result of experiencing a stylistic reading of Shakespeare's texts?'

Because diary analysis relies on 'identifying key features and relationship in the data', some degree of systematic order needs to be imposed to make it an easier task (Richards, 2002: 273). Furthermore, due to the potentially subjective nature of the diary data, a serious effort was made to distance myself from subjective impressions. Systematic data analysis began early in the investigation and continued throughout the study. Using the constant comparative method of data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992), I searched for trends in the texts of students' journals. This search proceeded in three stages.

The first stage was a holistic reading of the diaries each week. Because there were no preconceived categories, I read each diary entry to get a general idea of what the students were saying and writing. At the same time, I made 'theoretical notes'[4] about students' attitudes towards their reading, themselves as stylistic readers, and towards the journal process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

During the second stage, the data were repeatedly read and annotated in the margins (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Passages that contained semantically related ideas were highlighted. This process is akin to what Constas (1992) described as the comparison and contrast of discrete parts of the data. Preliminary identifying labels or codes were noted in the margins. In order to facilitate sorting and grouping, all data sources were colour coded. The choice of codes was informed by key words to be found in their comments. Chunks of data with same codes were then grouped and examined for incidence of patterns and emergent themes.

To avoid any bias, the third stage involved a 'collaborative' process 'to negotiate agreement' (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993: 241). This process contributed to inter-rater reliability though no formal measures were computed. That is, together with another researcher we shared the initial codes, modifying them as needed in order to build a single 'classificatory scheme' (ibid: 242).

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[4] Theoretical notes, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998: 197), are memos containing 'the products of inductive or deductive thinking about relevant and potentially relevant categories, their properties, dimensions, relationships, variations, and processes' stemming from the data.

Based on this scheme, a set of themes evolving from the data emerged. It was during this analysis that six of the eight categories central to the concern of the present study began to clearly separate from the corpus of the data. A tabulation of these recurring themes is shown in Table 7.4. Each category is briefly defined and two examples provided for each.

7.2.2 Increased sensitivity as revealed by diary data

The first three categories were broadly labelled 'Cognitive', as diary entries on these categories reflected the idea that reading literary texts is instrumental in obtaining intellectual enrichment. The other three categories were labelled 'Affective', as diary entries on these categories all stressed the affective and experiential aspects related to the consumption of reading literary texts.

As these categorised data have shown, students become more 'aware' readers through their experience and systematic discussions regarding the eight textualised features covered in the instructional content. Many students commented that they had learned something new about language as well as about *how* it works. It thus seemed worthwhile to look at the diaries in an effort to see what students have learned about language and how they had learned it.

The patterns arising in my analysis are identified herein under six main categories: (1) automatic transfer to different L2 texts, (2) automatic transfer to L1 phenomena, (3) self-reported gain of language awareness, (4) the delight in the pedagogy and activities involved therein, (5) an appreciation of the craft of

Shakespeare's language, and (6) an attitudinal change towards the reading of literature.

These themes are considered hereto as a strong indication of students' progress towards achieving language awareness. In the following, I shall specify these emergent categories in terms of the research questions guiding the present study.

Table 7.4

Indices of LA development in course diaries

Categories (Cognitive)	Extracts from Student Diaries
Diary entries that Relate stylistic feature to novel texts (e.g. newspaper, adverts, lyrics, etc.).	• *I found an interesting thing that many popular songs are really formed with iambic pentameter. Sometimes it is not applied to the whole song but just some of the stanza.* • *When I read Harry Porter [sic], the author uses similes to describe the new actor in the story. When I read the story, I start to use picture the person that the author describes. Reading starts to become more interesting to me and I love it a lot.*
Diary entries that Relate stylistic feature(s) to L1 phenomenon.	• *Chinese newspaper tends to play with words. They use puns or homophones. For example, use* 只醉晶迷 *to replace* 紙醉金迷[6]. • *Some twisters which also illustrate alliteration… in Chinese, we also have the twisters and it's also very funny.* 山前有個嚴圓眼山後有個圓眼嚴兩人上山來比眼 不知是嚴圓眼的眼圓？還是圓眼嚴的眼圓？

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[5] 紙醉金迷.[zhi³] [zui⁴] [jin¹] [mi²] (A life of luxury and dissipation; extravagant and loose life); 只醉晶迷 [zhi³] [zui⁴] [jing¹] [mi²] (Only intoxicated and bewildered by crystals).

Note: The number indicates the tone of Chinese.

Diary entries that Report how a stylistic feature learned enhances his/her language awareness.	• *Although we do write any article in the class, I find out that the teacher increase my sensibility of the literary works and the writing ability.* • *After I looked through my paper again, I found that my awareness of literature has a great improvement from 'finishing' this task.*
Diary entries that Show the development of the liking of reading/literature.	• *Language is so magic when we find their different meanings especially in the literary works. Shakespeare used a lot of features of the words to make his works much more interesting and attractive.* • *I really think it's interesting that the headlines or topics of every article have their own tone ... It's a new discovery for me and it makes reading not that boring anymore.*
Diary entries that Admire and appreciate Shakespeare's language.	• *Language is so magic when we find their different meanings especially in the literary works. Shakespeare used a lot of features of the words to make his works much more interesting and attractive.* • *In fact, I know why Shakespeare can be the greatest writer in the world. He uses the sound to express the actors feeling. I think this skill is very wonderful and useful in writing because you can hide your feeling in these words.*
Diary entries that Show interest and enjoyment in pedagogies, lessons and exercises involved.	• *Ah ha! It was a happy day today and a happy class, too. I learned binary ... the teacher let us listen to a song which I like very much first in order to get into the lesson today. Quite fun and interesting today. I am looking forward to the next class.* • *Just like learning from the microcosm to the macrocosm, we learn these ways of reading from sound patterns, binary, repetition to antithesis. And what's next before we reach to the macrocosm? Actually, I can't wait to know!*

Note: Data are labelled in these six major categories. Student comments are recorded in their original form, albeit not grammatically correct.

7.2.3 The cognitive sides of the diary data

1. *Awareness gains as shown by diary entries that relate stylistic features to novel texts (e.g. newspapers, advertisements, songs, etc.).*

One of the research questions posed in Chapter 4 is to find out whether students may become more sensitive to literariness that goes beyond specific texts studied only in the classroom. To track development of student awareness, I found one obvious indicator of such progress: students' ability to relate these stylistic features to novel texts in the course of their personal reading. Otherwise stated, students' language awareness successfully extends beyond Shakespearean texts that were purported to be the foundation of such a transfer to take place originally. The following diary excerpts typify this type of cognitive gain:

Margaret, an enthusiastic student who loves literature, expresses herself by an observation, the connection between the rhythmic pattern found in Shakespeare's sonnets and those found in popular contemporary songs:

> *Diary entry, 9 Sept 2003*
> I found an interesting thing that many popular songs are really formed with iambic pentameter. Sometimes it is not applied to the whole song but just some of the stanza. (Margaret, Week 1)

Another entry from Dorothy's offered a further demonstration of this concept when she said that the stylistic feature introduced in the first week developed in her a new taste for literature:

Diary entry, 25 Sept 2003

The teacher taught us the two features of literature and we also related them to the literary works. That make [sic] me to find out the book out. Its content is poems. I chose the English poems course before ... At that period of time, I really do not like poems. And now, as I opened the book again, read the poems which were taught before, I find out that poems do really have their own rhythms and some of their rhythms seem to like the iambic pentameter. Compare to those new poems, epics' rhythms seem to like iambic pentameter. Moreover, I find out that iambic pentameter is used most often in nursery rhymes or songs for children. Unbelievable! (Dorothy, Week 1)

Trying to make sense of the meaning created by sound, another student by the name of Shirley began to pay closer attention to the aural effects of newspaper headlines. Her entry is as follows:

Diary entry, 7 Oct 2003

After learning the possible sound's meanings, I do pay some attention to my newspaper reading. It seemed that every title may have one of the characteristics, such as alliteration or assonance. Sometimes it is hard to tell what the sounds' meaning may be, but having the alliteration or assonance, etc. in sentences do [sic] help reading more fluently. (Shirley Chang, Week 2)

Another student took a more proactive role in reading a magazine, by pointing out the binaries that appealed to her:

Diary entry, 08 Oct 2003

I found binary are used in a lot of headline or the cover the magazine to not only attract readers' eyes but also emphasize the sentence, I read the Newsweek today and its headline of the cover is "Boy, Girls, and Autism." I consider it's a kind of binary and I am allured by its headline ... in addition, in the article, it also uses a lot of binary to

describe the boys and girls which make the article more interesting. (Grace Huang, Week 3)

This cognitive process took place surprisingly earlier than was originally assumed, answering one burning question that haunted the researcher from the outset: 'During what period of time can we expect LA to develop in the learner?' From these entries, it is reasonable to assume that awareness can take place in a period of as little as one to two weeks after an explicit instruction, though it was not clear how profound the change may be. However, this change appears to be associated with a key developmental milestone. As I look back at the very germination of their awareness, it reminds me of Capossela's (1992) discussion of the first stage of 'cognitive maturity', a developmental stage when students tend to synthesise and make connections.

As the respective course continued to unfold, students continued to provide a partial picture of 'improvement' in the absence of testing. Going beyond the confines of the particular genre of poetry discussed in class, one student articulated her view about how alliteration is deployed by the writer of *The Yellow Wallpaper* to facilitate the reader's process of finding meaning and culminating emotions:

> *Diary entry, 1 Oct 2003*
> The alliteration also takes part in a short story or novel; however, it is not as obvious as its position in a poem. In Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wall Paper [sic]', I found one sentence containing this sound pattern. '**I am glad my case is not serious! But these nervous troubles are dreadfully depressing**.' This is about the

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protagonist's frame of mind. This is used to describe the scene. **'Moonbeams splash and spill wildly in the rain'**. I discover that the alliteration is usually used to describe things or emotions in a text. This makes the structure of the story not baldness. (Sally, Week 2, *bold face original*)

Students' language development is not confined solely to the aspect of reading. Actually it interacts with their writing too, as one student illustrated how the stylistic feature, repetition, empowered her writing:

Diary entry, 22 Oct 2003
It's a coincident that I used repetition in my Western Culture journal. To my surprise, teacher likes it a lot. Maybe it's the context or something else, but I would like to show you anyway. Here it goes: We all know that racial discrimination is one of the biggest problems in the USA ... It is said that we can all have wise saying but we are clapping on our faces while we do so. It is said that we always consider ourselves as generous races but sometimes we are just mean to another. It is said that sometimes dreams are nothing more than dreams. It is not impossible that we can share the American pie, but still we have to put more effort on it. (Veronica, Week 5, *emphasis original*)

Here Veronica used *repetition* in her writing to highlight the contradictory dichotomy of saying one thing and yet doing another. Besides, she demonstrated an increased metacognition when she pointed out the possible reason why the piece of writing received a favourable response from her teacher of Western Culture. As regards to reading, Veronica also reported a greater increase in her enjoyment of the novels:

> *Diary entry, 28 Oct 2003*
> We have some practice of translating *The Lord of the Ring* [sic] and
> *Harry Potter.* The authors used an amount of metaphor and simile in
> these two works. I have various kinds of fancy and great imagination
> whenever I read them. No wonder they are so popular in the whole
> world. (Veronica, Week 6)

Another student echoed a similar idea and reported that the stylistic feature,
simile makes *Harry Potter* more reader-friendly. In specific, it helped her
visualise various mystic characters found in the text:

> *Diary entry, 30 Oct 2003*
> When I read *Harry Potter*, the author uses similes to describe the new
> actor in the story. When I read the story, I will start to picture the
> person that the author describes. Reading starts to become more
> interesting to me and I love it a lot (Shirley Wu, Week 6).

Such increased consciousness allows students to see how a formal feature
intended by the writer typically makes a text more accessible to the reader.

2. Awareness gains as shown by diary entries that relate stylistic feature(s) to

L1 phenomena.

In their evolving awareness as analytical readers, three students (Pamela, Grace
Huang, Peggy) began to notice the linguistic phenomenon across L1 and L2
contexts. Their comments pointed to L1 texts (Chinese) which bear the stylistic
features explored in L2 texts. As one of them wrote:

Diary entry, 22 Oct 2003

Some (tongue) twisters which also illustrate alliteration, such as:

Angela Abigail Applewhite ate anchovies and artichokes.

Clever Clifford Cutter clumsily closed the closet clasps.

Elmer Elwood eluded eleven elderly elephants.

Floyd Flingle flipped flat flapjacks...

It's very funny and cute while reading it. It's very amazing that can create the meaningful sentences with the same capital letters.

(Grace Huang, Week 4)

Having pointed out her aural recognition of alliteration in the twister, Grace continued in the same entry to relate this feature to two Chinese tongue twisters:

Diary entry, 22 Oct 2003

In Chinese, we also have the twisters and it's also very funny.

山前有個嚴圓眼，山後有個圓眼嚴兩人上山來比眼，不知是嚴圓眼的眼圓？還是圓眼嚴的眼圓？[6](Grace Huang, Week 4)

The above entry shows that Grace found herself observing language that she had not been conscious of attending to previously, and she has started to accept the textual pleasure proffered by the patterning of sound.

---

[6]山前有個嚴圓眼 [shan^1] [qian^2] [you^3] [ge^4] [yan^2] [yuan^2] [yuan^3]

(Before the hill is a man called round-eyed Yan, Yuan-yuan.)

山後有個圓眼嚴 [shan 1] [hou^4] [you^3] [ge^4] [yuan^2] [yan^3] [yan^2]

(Behind the hill is a man called round-eyed Yuan, Yan-yan.)

兩人上山來比眼 [liang^3] [ren^2] [shang^4] [shan^1] [lai^2] [bi^3] [yan^3]

(These two come uphill to compete their eyes.)

不知是嚴圓眼的眼圓？ [bu^4] [zhi^1] [shi^4] [yan^2] [yuan^2] [yan^3] [de5] [yan^3] [yuan^2]

(Whether it is Yan, Yuan-yuan's eyes rounder)

還是圓眼嚴的眼圓？ [hai^2] [shi^4] [yuan^2] [yan^3] [yan^2] [de5] [yan^3] [yuan^2]

(Or Yuan, Yan-yan's eyes rounder?)

Note: the number indicates the intensity of Chinese tone.

Another example of this cross-illumination is found in Pamela's diary entry, where she notes that wordplay pervades newspapers.

> *Diary entry, 04 Oct 2003*
> Chinese newspaper tends [sic] to play with words. They use puns or homophones, for example, use 只醉晶迷 to replace 紙醉金迷. Are there similar situations in English? How do they do if they want to play with words? (Pamela, Week 2)

This consciousness-raising process gives students a mental appetite for understanding *how* language works. Basically, this is, as Labercan, Griffith and Feurverger (1998: 91) note, the philosophy underlying the teaching of LA: 'to challenge students to ask questions about language'.

What seems evident in the above examples is that the developmental process of LA includes students' increased understanding as to how the ways of a mother tongue can work. Learners begin to monitor their own language, which makes them aware of the language around them. Furthermore, the process enables students to become both curious and reflective in terms of L1.

This process makes explicit the contribution of Language Awareness towards the teaching and learning of language. As Labercane, Griffith, and Tulsiewicz (1998: 3) have theorised, 'language education can be acquired in L1, as well as, L2'. The linguistic sensitivity can be extended to include a sensitivity to other languages. Similarly, Hawkins (quoted in Labercane et al., 1998: 4) also contends that LA can bring about a recursive and mutually informing

relationship: 'I would see the subject [i.e. the study of language] as linking the two supporting studies of mother tongue and foreign language'.

The present study lends credibility to this argument. In other words, the learner's growing (emerging) competence to explore and observe within an L1 context is a concomitant by-product of an edited exposure to Shakespeare's language. It is believed that this cross-fertilisation between the first language and a foreign language is what van Lier (1996: 19) has in mind when he remarks that 'innovative ways can be found of playing L1 and L2 off against one another productively'.

3. Awareness gains as shown by self-reports of how a stylistic feature enhances LA.

Students' self-perceptions of increased knowledge *about* language as a result of the pedagogy add a dimension to the empirical data that is both enriching and rewarding for the teacher. In them I read students' systematic records of what has been taught and how they acquire awareness in their language learning. Although these perceptions seem individual and subjective, students indicated that they felt the overall impact of stylistic approaches to studying texts. They felt that they have become more effective and more informed readers as a result of this experience. The following comments are typical:

> *Diary entry, 1 Oct 2003*
> I did not care about how they [headlines] sounded. After I took the course, I realized that there is power in sounds. (Pamela, Week 2)

Diary entry, 10 Dec 2003
Although we do not write any article in the class, I find out that the teacher increase my sensibility of the literary works and the writing ability. It is very useful in writing. (Shirley Wu, Week 9)

Diary entry, 22 Oct 2003
After today's lesson, I think I can be more aware of this language phenomenon, probably. (Margaret, Week 5)

Diary entry, 8 Oct 2003
After the class, I realized that binary is almost everywhere in our life, not only in Chinese, but also in English. (Pamela, Week 3)

Diary entry, 4 Dec 2003
I found that my awareness of literature has a great improvement from finishing this 'task'. (Grace Chen, Week 8)

Another student said that knowing how *metre* works 'lubricated' her reading of Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 18'. Compared with the first reading, a second reading seemed to produce amazingly a different result:

Diary entry, 24 Sept 2003
I found the marking stresses and syllables for each sentence makes me feel [sic] read much easier and colloquial because of the rhyming...In the group practice, we spoke twice for the same script [i.e. Sonnet 18]. It showed different results. (Gina, Week 1)

In another diary entry, Gina also expressed how 'binary' deepened her understanding of a well-known folksong without need of closely examining its meaning:

Diary entry, 09 Oct 2003
I feel finding out the binary in the song makes me understand the

meaning of it much easier and quick ... Although I am not familiar with literary writing I think I have more senses about it'. (Gina, Week 3)

In response to the reading tasks, as illustrated in the above excerpts, learners were assessing their own performance during the process of learning. In some respect, these entries suggested that course diaries became a tool for self-assessment, in which students evaluated how a stylistic feature had helped them react to different texts in a more sensible way.

It is also important to note that a related assumption behind such self-assessment, in terms of philosophical basis, has its affinity with self-reflection in ESL/EFL contexts (Luoma & Tarnanen, 2003). As a corollary of this assumption, the present study supports findings from previous research in the usage of written journals as an effective tool for self-reflection (Staton & Peyton, 1988; Dantas-Whitney, 2002; Burton & Caroll, 2001).

Representing an opportunity for self-evaluation and reflection, the diaries kept by the learners provided a window into the development of their cognitive processes. When students made explicit connections between their own construction process and course content, it may be perceived as an indication of their confidence gain about themselves as readers. It can be inferred that their confidence is the result of greater levels of awareness of *how* language works.

Having discussed the cognitive aspects of the learning process, we now turn to

focus on the emotional aspects of learning. Some reactions in the diaries offered clues to some patterns of affective development (e.g. feeling of knowing). As *affect* plays an indispensable part in a Language Awareness approach (James & Garrett, 1991) and language learning in general (Horwitz, 1995; Arnold, 1999; Oxford, 1999a, 1999b), it is regarded in this context as a further sign attaining the more fulfilling goal of language awareness. Such an integrative approach is congruent with cognitive psychologists' view that 'purely cognitive theories of learning will be rejected unless a role is assigned to affectivity' (Hilgard, 1967: 267).

7.2.4 The affective sides of the diary data

There is some positive attitude change accrued from constant exposure to various stylistic features. Evidence from diary entries indicated that students became more 'affectively' sensitive. These aptitudes can be found in three main aspects of the students' approach to literature: forming attitudes towards reading (literature), towards Shakespeare's language itself, and towards pedagogy overall. They are categorised and discussed below:

4. Awareness gains as shown by diary entries that signal changing attitudes

   towards reading (literature).

On several occasions, a number of students claimed that they have made a 'discovery' in the process of getting to know the stylistic features to be found in

different texts. One important implication of this positive attitude towards reading is that once students believe they are more competent and more efficacious at reading, they become more likely to engage in reading (Miesen, 2003).

Certain relationships between reading and attitude are known from other studies. For example, Van Schooten and de Glopper (2002) and Krashen (1988) believe that a positive attitude toward reading is not only a valuable education goal in and of itself, but that it also influences reading behaviour and reading proficiency to some extent.

Some attitude change can be seen in examples such as 'Reading starts to become interesting to me and I love it a lot' (Diary entry, Shirley Wu, Week 7). Similarly, another student, who at first exhibited a lackadaisical attitude towards the course, wrote: 'It's a new discovery for me and it makes reading not boring anymore' (Diary entry, Veronica, Week 3). In her final journal entry, she said:

> *Diary entry, 17 Dec 2003*
> Frankly speaking, I felt no rules to follow and panic in the beginning of this class, but later I found the way you've been trying to lead us and it's not that difficult and quite interesting for all of us. I kind of enjoy it. (Veronica, Week 10)

Still another student offered reasons for the personal shift of attitude towards literature to be found between the beginning and the end of the course:

Diary entry, 30 Oct 2003
I have reverse thinking about literature comparing to the beginning of the class because it's pretty good that you teach us these special terms in the alternative way, especially the song. (Grace Huang, week 6)

A third valued what she had learned and expressed how stylistic devices contributed to her growing sense of what to look for in a text:

Diary entry, 30 Oct 2003
I think it's interesting to spend time and energy finding out all the linguistic techniques you taught us! It is very worthy to learn these skills, because now when I read an article, a song lyric, or an ad, and so on, I will naturally pay attention to the linguistic skills used. (Joy, Week 6)

The same point is made by yet another student:

Diary entry, 8 Oct 2003
Now no matter I'm reading the poem, short story or even the title of English news article, I would have an instinct to look for those literary features. Isn't that interesting? (Sally, Week 3)

The above examples show how consciousness (seen as awareness) enters into students' language learning at numerous points in the learning process. According to Schmidt (1995), learning is only possible if there is intention (willingness to learn), attention (to different features of the same linguistic input), noticing (detection and perception), and understanding (recognition).

Parallel to this concept, van Lier (1996: 71) argues that when consciousness comes into play during language learning, 'it allows for increasing self-regulation, for deeper processing, for more efficient learning actions, and

for feelings of knowing, unknowing, and appropriate levels of confidence in one's own ability'. Thus seen, one of the practical implications for teachers in the language classroom is that teachers should seek to 'stimulate, and guide natural attention-focusing tendencies in the students, since they are likely to be in the ZPD' (ibid: 72, reference to ZPD stands for 'Zone of Proximal Development').

After an initial confusion over my methodology, students were able to enjoy both the analysis and abstraction process; they started to see the opaque use of language in texts; they became more aware of the aesthetic power of language; their literary competence was much improved; they began to realise the significance of different stylistic features in English, and between English and Chinese.

As one student (Sheena) recapped in her diary, she once had the experience of teaching English via rhythm in an elementary school. Based on her previous teaching experience and what she had learned from the course, she recognised that it was the stylistic feature (metre) that made her teaching more accessible and in fact more enjoyable to the children. This recognition rekindles her interest in studying literature. This sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in life is exactly how Donmall (1985) characterises language awareness.

5. Awareness gains as shown by diary entries that admire and appreciate

Shakespeare's language.

When it comes to learning material, we may be somewhat reminded of Chomsky's (1988: 181) response to its significance in language learning:

> The truth of the matter is that about 99 percent of teaching is making the students feel interested in the material. Then the other 1 percent has to do with your method. And that's not just true of language. It's true of every subject.

Because the texts used in this project are bits and parts taken from the works of Shakespeare, learners' attitudes towards the Bard can reflect their engagement with language issues. Positive perceptions of Shakespeare and his language, therefore, have a developmental aspect. The degree of positive affectivity assigned to the material can thus be seen as essentially related to the awareness-raising parameter. In this regard, it serves as one index of LA development.

How would students, as language learners, react when they read Shakespeare? Ideally, a literature/language teacher would like to see students with varying interests and backgrounds able to be 'struck with wonder' when reading Shakespeare, just as D. H. Lawrence (1929: 84) did, as related in his poem:

> When I Read Shakespeare
>
> When I read Shakespeare I am struck with wonder
> that such trivial people should muse and thunder

in such lovely language.
Lear, the old buffer, you wonder his daughters
didn't treat him rougher,
the old chough, the old chuffer!

And Hamlet, how boring, how boring to live with,
so mean and self-conscious, blowing and snoring
his wonderful speeches, full of other folks' whoring!

And Macbeth and his Lady, who should have been choring,
such suburban ambition, so messily goring
old Duncan with daggers!
How boring, how small Shakespeare's people are!
Yet the language so lovely! like the dyes from gas-tar.

D. H. Lawrence described the reading of Shakespeare as a wonderful experience, in which the characters, though 'small', 'thunder' when they speak. As seen in progression, some of the learners started to make similar claims, albeit not so grandiloquent as Lawrence's. To give one representative example, Joy wrote:

> *Diary entry, 2 Oct 2003*
> I think Shakespeare is really the top language player from ancient times to now. He uses words and sounds so skilfully that no one can compare with him. (Joy, Week 2)

And there were entries which show appreciation and enjoyment in seeing the (literary) quality of words subtly employed by Shakespeare:

> *Diary entry, 24 Oct 2003*
> Language is so magic when we find their different meanings especially in the literary works. Shakespeare used lots of features of the words to make his works much more interesting and attractive.

(Gina, Week 5)

> *Diary entry, 4 Oct 2003*
> I've never discovered that a single line of the poem can imply so many purposes, every plot that we thought simple has such complicated meanings, and all scenes of a play or a poem especially designed by great writers or poets. I admire those giants of the literature all the more for their breathtaking masterpieces. (Lily, Week 3)

An empirically derived conclusion can be drawn is that stylistic approaches have changed students' opinion of Shakespeare, who has become more interesting and more accessible, reflecting what Ewbank (2003: 391) has assured: 'close reading can 'turn fear [of Shakespeare] into familiarity, and strangeness into wonder'.

As stated earlier, there is some indirect evidence suggesting that ESL/EFL learners do not like or want to read literature (Hanauer, 2001). This claim also holds true, at the outset, for many of the participants in the present study. However, students' introspective accounts gradually reveal that such exposure increases knowledge and understanding of *how* language works, making Shakespeare less remote, less alien, and less frightening as the name initially may evoke. This ability to 'appreciate', if not enjoy, the linguistic variety and creativity of literary texts is considered one of the hallmarks of enhanced awareness in students.

It is conceivable that a reader who is likely to be 'pleased' by such an art form

is one who also tends to appreciate the beauty of the language and one who is more apt to relate what they have learned to other texts in a meaningful way. Literature, after all, is meant to please and to be enjoyed (Cummings & Simmons, 1983). Otherwise, the aesthetic difference between a poem and a textbook would be seen as nil.

6. Awareness gains as shown by diary entries that express interest and enjoyment in classroom pedagogy and activities.

To hook students into stylistic features and to nurture what Eskey (1997) refers to as *engagement*, language-based activities play an important role. They motivate students to read a literary text more carefully and creatively. In the process of working with texts, the degree of learners' involvement represents the motivation to learn. Accordingly, it is assumed that the more students are engaged in carrying out a task in the classroom, the more it reflects the amount of their attention paid to textual features found in a text.

In response to various language-based activities carried out in the classroom, students share their personal insights and critical incidents ('Now I got it') about their own growing sensitivity towards stylistic features. The following diary entry discusses how an exercise related to the feeling of poetic rhythm helps a student realise how a poem is sounded:

> *Diary entry, 24 Sept 2003*
> Although I didn't know the reason why you want us to read the poem, however, I think this is a good activity because before this class I

really have no idea about the poem. For example, I don't know how to put the right accent when reading the poem but I got some hit after this class. (Bianca, Week 1)

In the following excerpt, another student is reacting to an activity based on the creation of metaphor:

> *Diary entry, 30 Oct 2003*
> I love today's metaphor and simile especially the way you asked us to write down two words with concrete and abstract meaning. And then we exchanged the words, put them together by adding is in the middle; thus we created so many inventive and poetic sentences, for instances, marriage is a road not taken, life is drug, beauty is skin, jealousy is ocean and so on. (Margaret, Week 6)

The next student advocates the use of cut-up texts when reading a long text such as Hamlet's famous soliloquy, one that requires both high and sustained cognitive effort:

> *Diary entry, 6 Dec 2003*
> I like the way you presented in the class. You divided this paragraph into small sectors. All of the class can have clear and coherent ideas throughout the paragraph. (Sheena, Week 8)

One of the most popular classroom activities well received by students was the 'mimetic paraphrase' (Carter & Long, 1991) of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be'. Surprisingly, almost all students reported in their diaries that they enjoyed not only writing their own versions of 'To be or not to be' but also appreciating other classmates' creative efforts. As stated by one student:

Diary entry, 10 Dec 2003

You collect our 'To be's or not to be's' and give us a chance to read it. I think it good to imitate a masterpiece. Although we cannot write as well as the masterpiece, through imitating, we learn the structure of the paragraph and know that we can use it in other writings. It is also good to read other's writings. (Pamela, Week 9)

Like many other students who have made a similar claim, this student embraces the idea of their stylistic imitation of the poetic text. Because it requires a close examination of textual pattern to mimic the original text, students who work carefully through the text could produce immediately noticeable improvements in their writing, providing an experience of success upon which to build further. The student also adds that she likes to read other creative pieces of 'To be or not to be' composed by the class.

Another student expressed candidly (Grace Chen, Week 9) that she was 'surprised and astonished' when reading theses works as seen by her own classmates, for these pieces are written with 'abundant creativity' and within a short period of time. It is as if they all now possess the power of creating their own literature. One student said that she would 'keep the handout', because 'it's a wonderful memory for us' (Bianca, Week 9).

There are also entries that show strong motivation and enthusiasm towards the course content; one student, echoing the sentiments of many, wrote:

Diary entry, 28 Nov 2003

Just like learning from the microcosm to the macrocosm, we learn these ways of reading from sound patterns, binary, repetition,

metaphor to antithesis. And what's next before we reach to the macrocosm? Actually, I can't wait to know! (Peggy, Week 9)

This entry serves as a backdrop for the many complimentary remarks students made about the way the course was structured and how activities were designed. Viewed as a whole, the pedagogy and its relevant activities, in accordance with the findings based on questionnaire data (to be discussed later in this chapter), were largely favourable among the involved participants.

7.2.5 A word on negative feedback

Contrary to the generally positive remarks made by students, there is an observable level of criticism. Some students voiced their dissatisfaction with the method of how they were being taught. Although they did not write strong negative feedback, the most frequent complaints pertained to the use of literary texts needed for the completion of required language-based activities. A few students even showed some resistance to what had been presented in the course, hoping for a greater use of a standardised course book, fewer literary texts, and 'easier' learning materials. For example, at the very beginning of the course, one student said:

> *Diary entry, 9 Sept 2003*
> It seems the teacher's teaching method is more literary and I am sort of literary idiot. Moreover, I really don't like literature except some children literature. I think we must have distinct learning from you because your teaching goal and style is utterly different from Dr Liang, our ex-writing teacher. I am a little bit confused about copying the Shakespeare. (Grace Huang, Week 1)

Grace's anxiety was shared by many other students at the outset. In simple terms, literature is not a 'terrain' where they would find confidence and pleasure in the learning of English. The inclusion of sonnets and excerpts from various works of Shakespeare raises uncertainties among students over some matters of course content. From a similar perspective, another student revealed in her diary that 'I don't really like to the [sic] literature because it is hard for me to understand them easily. Gradually, I don't contact the [sic] literature' (diary entry, Phoebe, Week 2).

Initially, these students were not enthusiastic about the course; they felt the content of the course was irrelevant and the language of the course materials too difficult. Yet, in the follow-up diary entries, most of these students acknowledged that what they have read and explored was actually more interesting and intellectually stimulating than they had initially assumed.

A second pertinent issue is that the quality of student diary entries varies from a rich account to a sketchy report. While most students submitted quite substantial work in both quantity and quality, with thoughtful analyses and attempted applications of the course material, a few students supplied diary entries with no obvious evidence of engagement with tasks of any kind. Understandably from the standpoint of the instructor, these were the students who often skipped classes and failed to fully participate during the course of this study.

7.2.6 Category summary table

As a way of summarising the diary data, the frequency of distribution based on these six categories was calculated. Table 7.5 lists those diary entries which have been reviewed so far.

The table represents a grid that assigns the diary entries to different categories. Since numerous entries typically address several issues, complete thoughts are selected as one unit of information, and each unit is assigned to one particular category. In this regard, to the extent that a complete thought mentioned in a student's diary related to a particular theme, it is counted only once.

Table 7.5

Number and percentages of occurrence of each category in the diary entries

Domain	Cognitive			Affective		
Category	1	2	3	4	5	6
Content of diary entries	Apply stylistic features to outside readings (e.g. newspaper, songs, and other literary works)	Relate stylistic features to L1 phenomenon	Self-report how a stylistic feature learned enhances language awareness	Show changing attitudes towards literature	Admire and appreciate Shakespeare's language	Show interest and enjoyment in pedagogy and exercises
Students	72%(16)	13%(3)	72%(16)	72%(16)	31%(7)	77%(17)
Entries	21%(48)	1.8%(4)	14%(32)	15%(33)	4%(8)	22%(49)

n=22; total diary entries=223; expressed in percentage and (frequency tallies)

The diary entries tabulated herein provide more specific information about the types of LA that students develop. As Table 7.5 shows, the collective entries demonstrate equal development of LA in both domains. The most recurrent themes in the diaries are related to positive feedback on the instructional content (Category 6), with 17 out of the total 22 students (i.e. 77%) making specific positive mentions (49 entries).

Coincidentally, the other three prevalent categories are 1, 3, and 4, each of which can be found in 16 students' diaries (i.e. 72%), but in terms of the number of entries, Category 1 appears more frequently than the other two. Category 2 — entries that relate stylistic features to L1 phenomena — is the least mentioned overall, comprising only 13% of the students, and only 1.8% of the total diary entries.

Of the six categories, seen in a summative manner, three of them are associated with the functioning of cognitive (Category 1-3) and three of them (Category 4-6) are connected with the affective factors. The frequency of these categories affords a balanced coverage of both domains of LA development. This equilibrium is strengthened further by the fact that the development of LA in students, as the number of occurrence in each domain shows, fell equally into two areas. Both of them are mentioned in about the same frequency, with cognitive domain 84 times, and affective domain 90 times. The results point towards the fact that there is a reciprocal relationship between the development of the cognitive and the affective domains of language awareness.

To put it another way, a positive attitude towards literary reading is supposed to lead to cognitive growth, which in turn enables more efficient reading. By efficient reading I mean that learners are more capable of tackling a text via its stylistic features and explaining why a text is a fine piece of writing and how they can account for it.

Although the second category (i.e. Relate stylistic features to L1 phenomena) is characterised by relatively low frequencies of occurrence, it nevertheless captures the process in which certain participants can go beyond the analysis of prepared texts and continue to consider and propose additional understandings. From a language-learning viewpoint, this is the process of extending the way a linguistic structure can be used and understood. Students' language resources are stretched and applied to the understanding of L1 context.

While keeping diaries demands time, the quality of feedback for teacher and learner, and the level of dialogue about all aspects of the course, justifies the hard work. As I watched students no longer fear and dislike literature, their diaries were more reflectively and insightfully written.

7.3 Perception data: questionnaires

To supplement the aforementioned data, all 22 students completed three types of evaluation questionnaires throughout the course. These questionnaires serve

the overall purpose of finding out students' views about the teaching and learning of the stylistic features. Areas of concern are:

- perceived gain of awareness between pre- and post-course

- task acceptability and task effects

- stylistic preference among participants

Each of these issues is discussed below:

Questionnaire A

The first type of Questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was designed and used as a pre- and post-course evaluation to measure the subject's level of attention paid to different stylistic devices. The questions concern how often the subjects attend these particular stylistic features while they approach the task of reading. The results were taken as an indicator of whether respondents have a propensity to 'notice' the language around them. To find out this propensity is important, because Lier (1995: 10) makes the point that 'Language awareness work relies on *noticing* the language around us and examining it in a critical manner' (emphasis original). Schmidt (2001: 30), for instance, has argued that 'more attention [to form] results in more learning'. As noticing is a prerequisite of bringing language into focal awareness, it acts as a basis upon which a higher level of text comprehension/appreciation can be achieved.

In this questionnaire, respondents were asked with respect to 10 factors,

whether a certain factor was true for them (for example, 'I read for its rhythm': Always true—Never true). For the purpose of this study, only the data from questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13 were used, all the rest being irrelevant or distracting items. Responses to each question were scored from 1 (Never true of me) to 5 (Always true of me). Responses to this set of items were then averaged to provide a measure of reading behaviour. Thus, the higher the number, the higher the level of attention is paid to the stylistic feature. Table 7.6 summarises the means and standard deviations of scores for these items.

Table 7.6

Level of attention to textual patterning while performing a reading activity

Questionnaire items	Before instruction (n=22)		After instruction (n=22)	
	M	S.D.	M.	S.D.
1. Find special linguistic patterns	2.3	0.96	3.6	0.83
2. Consider significance of linguistic patterns	2.1	1.01	3.7	0.86
Specific features				
3. Read for rhythm (metre)	2.7	1.16	3.9	0.86
4. Read for sound patterns (sound patterning)	2.3	1.18	3.7	0.97
5. Look for repeated words	3.4	1.14	4.4	0.7
6. Notice binaries	3.0	1.06	4.2	0.78
7. How things are metaphorically compared	2.9	1.03	3.9	0.81
8. Structural balance (antithesis)	2.4	0.7	3.5	0.59
9. Consider who is speaking (voice)	3.9	0.9	3.7	1.27
10. Distinguish verse/prose usage	3.0	0.78	3.3	0.7

Never=1; Usually not=2; Somewhat=3; Usually=4; Always=5

Overall, the initial scores (before instruction) indicate that when performing a reading activity students tend to prioritise meaning over form. This claim is confirmed by the moderate low scores obtained both from Item 1 ('I find special linguistic patterns'; mean value=2.3) and Item 2 ('I consider significance of linguistic pattern'; mean value=2.1) in the pre-course evaluation. Responses to these two items reveal a generally low level of consciousness of the existence of textual features in a text.

Only 3 students (less than 14%) indicate that they 'usually' pay attention to these features. The majority, 12, indicate that they 'seldom' do so, with 3 students 'never' considering these features at all. This suggests that students tend not to focus systematically on language itself and language patterns. It follows then that students are unlikely to examine language in a critical manner. It can therefore be inferred that most of them are aware of language merely in a *subsidiary* sense.

Post-course scores, on the other hand, were substantially higher, suggesting that students are more inclined to be on the lookout for linguistic patterning (Item 1; $M=3.6$) and how texts come to mean (Item 2; $M=3.7$). In view of this result, it may be inferred that students have acquired the conceptual tools and reading strategies necessary for bring language into *focal* awareness and understanding it more fully. A reflection of the improvement students made is in interpreting the Terrano text at the post-test.

In order to give a more complete picture of the data and to provide a direct comparison between initial baseline and post-treatment measure, I transform this table into a bar graph. This allows us to see easily the difference by the bar heights.

Figure 7.4

Comparison of attention to eight stylistic features
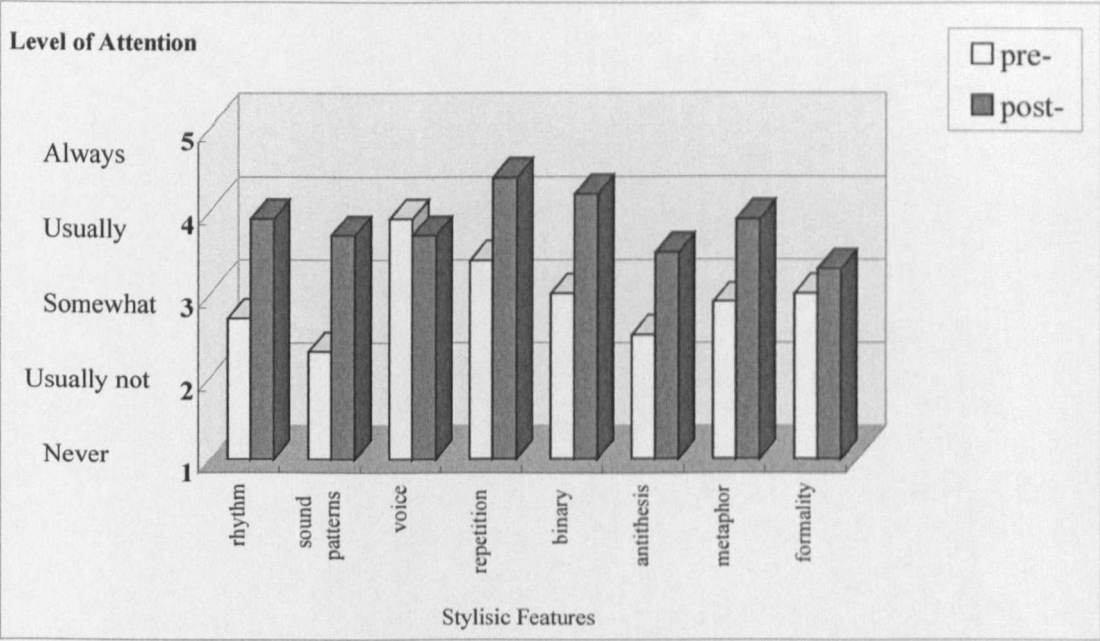
A few observations concerning the bar graph can be made. First of all, according to the results of the baseline assessment, the resulting means for each item were generally low. Except item 'voice' and 'repetition', their scores do not exceed 3.0, reflecting the fact that, on the whole, students do not have a strong propensity for these stylistic features.

The post-treatment assessment, on the other hand, shows an overall gain of attention directed at each feature, as revealed by the bar height. As we can see,

all post-treatment bars are higher than pre-treatment bars. The only one exception is item 'voice', which decreases by 0.2 points. Why this occurred is unclear and in need of further investigation. Follow-up interviews or discussion groups would be necessary to elucidate the basis for the judgements here.

However, one possible explanation is that 'voice' remains a fuzzy and difficult concept for students to understand, presumably because of the ineffable and abstract qualities attributed to it. Elbow (1999: 336) offers an argument that 'the inherent meaning of voice ... foregrounds a dimension of the text that is rhetorically powerful but hard to focus on: the implied and unspoken meanings that are carried in the text but are different from the clear and overt meaning of the words'. This makes *voice* less salient than other more readily palpable features such as *repetition* and *metaphor*. Therefore, students may be less cognizant of this feature.

Secondly, the display of the graph shows clearly an increased propensity among students to interact with these features. From an individual-differences perspective, the 'sound patterns' item stands out conspicuously in terms of its increase, where it started from a mean attention level of 2.3 to 3.7 in the post-measurement, with an increase of 1.4. It is followed by the 'rhythm' item, with a mean increase of 1.2.

Similarly, three items (i.e. repetition, metaphor, antithesis) also increased by one level of attention. Although the item 'genre' increased too, there was only a

slight increase. This may be attributed, similar to the properties of *voice* just mentioned above, to its higher discoursal level. Presumably, students appeared less confident or committed in their judgment of this item, thereby creating more uncertainty in the process of attending and responding to this feature during reading. One implication from this result suggests that this feature, among many textual properties which potentially contribute to a poetic processing, elicits a less immediate, vivid, and personal response from a reader.

Questionnaire B: task engagement and acceptability

While Questionnaire A follows a before-after design, Questionnaire B was administered immediately after each class across a period of eight weeks, intended to examine students' attitudes toward language-based exercises. This questionnaire also took the form of a five point Likert-type attitudinal scaling, where students were asked to indicate their agreement with the following four statements:

> Statement 1 — I have been actively involved in today's discussion.
>
> Statement 2 — The activity is useful for learning the stylistic feature.
>
> Statement 3 — I am able to relate this feature to other texts.
>
> Statement 4 — This unit helps promote my awareness of language.

These Likert scales run from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with a neutral stance represented by the value 3. That is, the numerical values were obtained from a maximum of five points per item whereby 'no opinion'

equalled three points, four and five points presented a favourable attitude, and one and two an unfavourable attitude. Figure 7.5 shows students' attitudes toward the pedagogical value of each unit.

Figure 7. 5 Student overall evaluation of each unit (n=22)
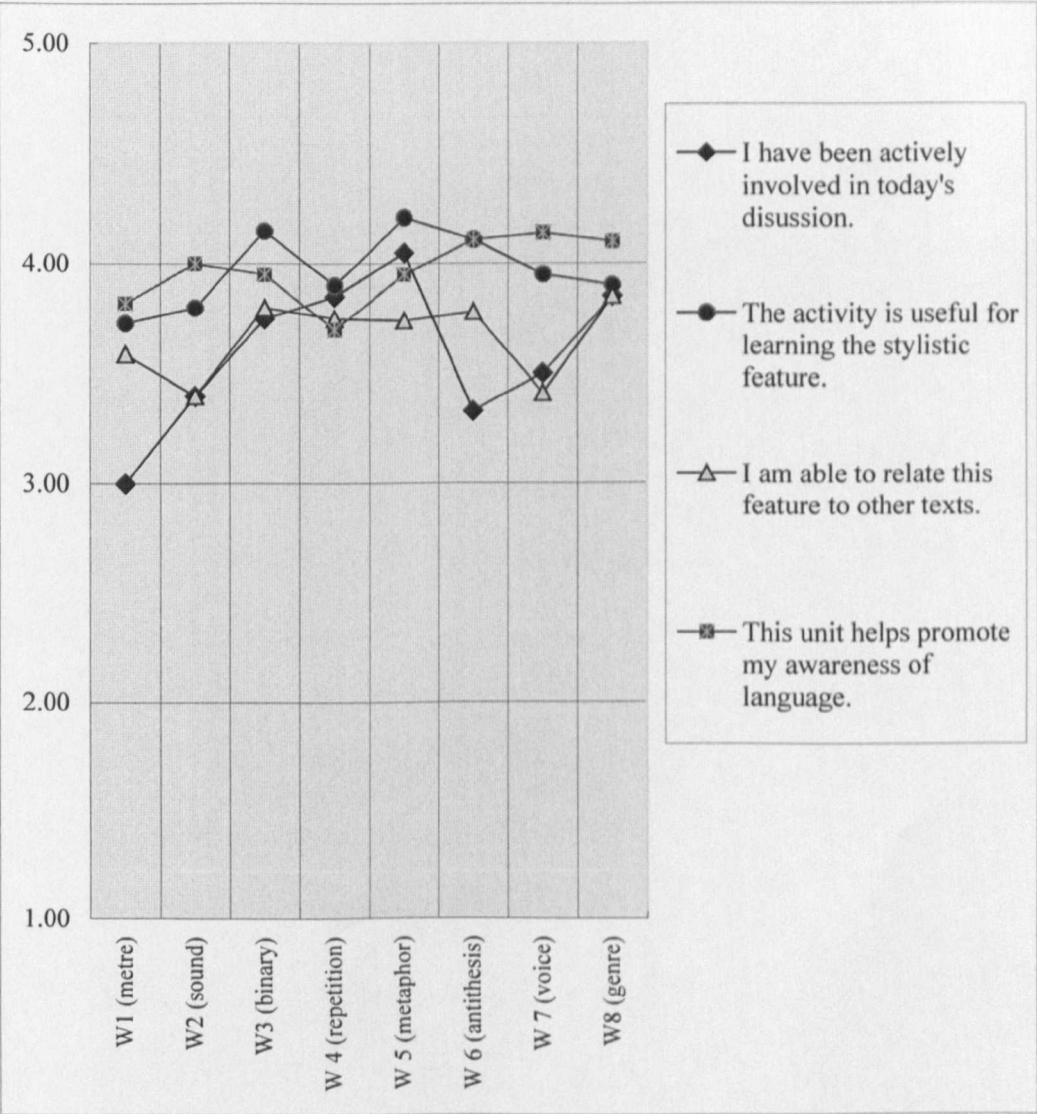
1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: no option, 4: agree, 5: strongly agree

What is graphically constructed here is a multi-level measurement of the level of agreement for these four statements (For the sake of convenience, I will treat them as Line 1, 2, 3, and 4, corresponding to the given statements using the same numerical nomenclature).

The mean for each statement fell in the favourable interval (3-5), suggesting the students perceived each unit as pedagogically beneficial for the development of their language awareness.

Line 1 is, in fact, highly irregular, with a slightly low degree of agreement in Week 1 (metre) and Week 6 (antithesis). Inference may be made that Taiwanese students were generally not used to being 'pushed to define, connect, apply, analyse, compare, synthesize, create, or evaluate' (Penzenstadler, 1999: 37). With a few exceptions, many of them seldom considered the role textual features could play in texts.

Accordingly, certain students may find it 'strange' to discuss how 'metre' can contribute to any meaning implied in a representational text. This hypothesis obtains some confirmation from diary data discussed earlier in this chapter, where many a student reported that they had never thought that this stylistic device could be a significant part of literary reading.

As courses went on, class discussion seemed went well, as indicated by the upward trend of the line. However, a sudden drop occurred in Week 6 when the

stylistic feature 'antithesis' was introduced. This result reinforces the introspective accounts in students' diaries, where they regard this feature difficult, thereby impeding class discussion. This observation also lends support to the hypothesis made earlier (i.e. students appear less sensitive and less interactive to macro-level features that go beyond sentence level).

In terms of Line 2 and Line 4, they remain fairly consistent, showing broad agreement among the students with the statements. Generally, it is accepted that language-based activities did play a part in promoting sensitivity to the patterning of language.

Compared with the other three, Line 3 is slightly lower, though still showing a positive value. In fact, a number of diary entries validated students' ability to relate a stylistic feature to different texts. So the positive value here is in compatibles with diary data (see Table 7.5, in particular, for diary entries that relate stylistic feature(s) to novel texts).

Questionnaire C: stylistic preference

As students' language awareness is fostered in this study by exposure to eight stylistic features, the potential usefulness of each feature considered by participants, as far as instruction is concerned, may shed light on the *nature of their interaction* with literariness.

By presenting another new questionnaire data, my purpose is to analyse learners' perception of the eight different stylistic features and determine which ones seem to be more effective for this group of learners, as to the amount and nature of attention to form generated. This point also leads to discussion of a third research question: 'What student views of the teaching and learning of literariness are held at the end of the study?' And, 'What attitude and perceptions have students developed towards reading literary texts?'

In Questionnaire C, all students were given the task of ordering the style features they learned in accordance with their preference, from the most useful '1' to the least useful '8' (see Appendix 3). Furthermore, they were asked to provide a justification for their choice, especially for the most useful and the least useful feature.

With respect to the most favourable features, it was found that *metaphor* (33%) and *binary* (20%) were the features that generated the highest percentage of choices. Figure 7.6 features the most favoured stylistic devices reported by students.

Figure 7. 6

Percentage of students: Most useful feature

voice 15% — sound patterning 10% — binary 20% — repetition 15% — pun 5% — metaphor 35%
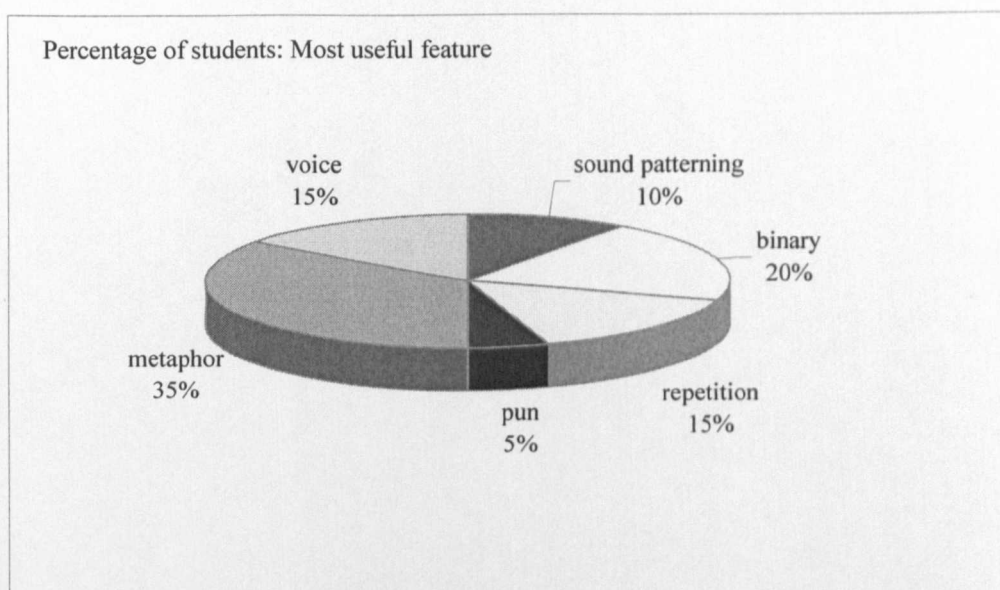
(N=21; Pun: an anomalous case)[7]

As one student noted:

> Metaphor is a technique that can help you grasp the whole idea of the whole text. Through metaphor, you can draw your picture of the context in your brain. What's more, due to the different conception, the picture everyone draws would be different. When an author uses metaphor, it's easier to let his or her readers to melt themselves into the world the author creates, and to feel the circumstance much more than just read the lines. (Michelle)

According to another student, metaphors are a vehicle for expression and symbolism both in reading and writing.

> Metaphor is the most useful for me, no matter in writing or in reading. Using metaphor can help me express my idea and thoughts in a more clear way. An object or an abstract thing might symbolize various

---

[7] In Unit 3, where 'binary' was introduced, 'pun' came up as an issue. It was therefore discussed and elaborated. As a consequence, some students consider 'pun' as one of the stylistic features included in the instructional content.

ideas or things. It all depends on how a writer applies it and how a reader interprets it. According to its variety, I regard it as a very useful and helpful tool. (Sally)

The understanding of metaphors is always a creative endeavour, and metaphors can be both facilitators of learning and the tangible manifestation of something learnt (Jakoff & Johnson, 1980). Like the above two students, Michelle and Sally (among others) mentioned, metaphors allow them to entre into the world the writers create. The simultaneous existence of 'similarity' and 'dissimilarity' in the reader's awareness quite accounts for the feelings of fascination, interest, or intrigue when engaged in metaphor comprehension (Benari, 2004).

Binary was also claimed to be quite useful. It is a feature considered by many to be the most 'visible' and detectable feature, particularly salient for a quick investigation into a text. As one student pointed out:

> I think that using binary in a text is the most powerful way to catch my eyes, especially complementary binary. Moreover, by judging from binaries in a text, I could guess if the text is positive or negative. It's an essential point to understand an unfamiliar text. It's just like getting the main idea when people listen to other's talks. So, binary is the most useful one. (Shirley)

This echoes the idea of McRae (1998: 17), who, in providing hands-on practical experience of textual analysis, postulates that binaries can be used as a 'starting point for examining the themes and contrasts in any text' and this preliminary examination can provide students 'a clear basis for any discussion, without the risk of becoming too abstract or abstruse'. Indeed, some stylistic features of

concern appear to be abstract and abstruse for students, causing difficulties in establishing the relationship between textual patterns and their representation. This leads us to the discussion of the least useful features reported by students.

Least favourable features: metre

With regard to the least favourable features, it was interesting to find that *metre,* introduced in the first week, was to be the least useful one. This is followed only by *genre (verse/prose)*, introduced in the last week. In fact, there was a broad coverage of features in this respect. Most of the features appear on this negative list, expect *metaphor* and *binary*, lending support to the above discussion. The following pie chart presents the percentage of the stylistic features appearing on the 'least useful' list, based on the number of students selecting the feature:

Figure 7.7

N=21 (Pun: an anomalous case)

296
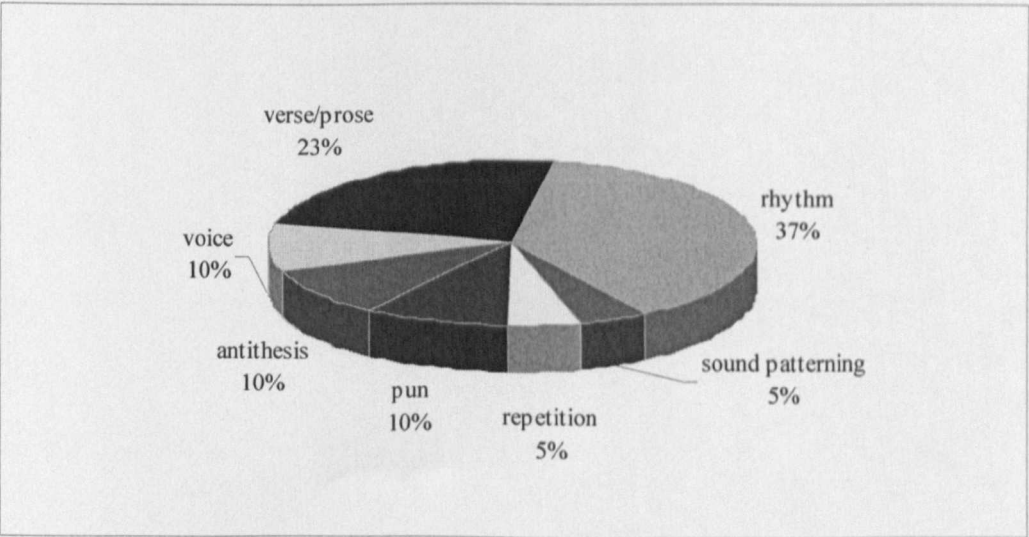
As can be seen clearly from the chart, over one third of students (37%) consider *metre* to be the least useful feature. Most are in broad agreement that this feature is alien, not as practical as other style features when it comes to analysing a text. The argument they advance rests on the following premises:

> I choose meter because it is the feature which I am less familiar with. I seldom pay attention to it, even after the class. In addition, comparing to other features, meter is less practical. It is used in poems, mostly (Pamela).

> I select 'meter' as 8, the least useful linguistic feature mainly because it seems to be less useful when I read articles and paragraphs. And I rarely notice this feature when I read. Most important of all, I think this feature is quite difficult for me to employ in reading. Maybe I am just not familiar with this skill of the reading feature (Webb).

> I think that after learning it, meter is still very strange to me. I still can't know it very well. So, I have little feelings about it. Also, I think this literary characteristic is only useful when people want to create poems (Shirley).

For students, *metre* is a stylistic feature widely employed in poetry, but not so in 'ordinary' texts they might normally encounter (Although rhythm can be perceived in any stretch of language). This makes the study of rhythm less attractive to this group of learners. Perhaps, the ability to conceptualise the minimal unit of phonological encoding will remain as a hard endeavour for most EFL learners to achieve.

Why? Any answer to this absorbing question must remain speculative. Yet, one

possible explanation of this is that all too many learners are usually too busy interpreting the meaning of what they read at the expense of feeling the rhythmic patterns presented in speech, prose, and poetry.

Another reason may be that many EFL learners find it extremely difficult to deal with the notion of English *stress*. The fact that stress is a notorious difficult area to teach and to learn is supported by some studies. For example, in a discussion of learning English stress for Chinese speakers, Boyle (1987: 189) argues that 'speakers of syllable-timed or tone languages will have particular difficulty with stress and intonation patterns in English'. Short (1996: 128) similarly observed:

> Many of my students find metrics tedious to study. This is probably because metrical structure is the level of poetic organisation which is least directly connected with meaning, and because the study of metre is a complicated, and at times difficult, matter.

Of course, this is not to diminish in any way the usefulness of such a style feature and nor am I suggesting that we remove this style feature from the 'stylistician's tool-kit'. The major point to note is that the knowledge of metre and how it works remains a part to be further strengthened in L2 students, especially those who are new to the filed of stylistic analysis.

In the case of *genre*, with 23% of the participants choosing it as the least useful feature, similar comments were found. In particular, its limited application

reduces its appeals to students. This feature, said one student, is only applicable to studying plays by Shakespeare. In alignment with this view, another student added:

> I find verse and prose less important because of their finite function. While we are reading a play, verse and prose may be a good clue for us to define each character. However, it is not certainly necessary. We can still differentiate characters by their tone or intonation (Lena).

Judging by students' stated preferences, it is observable that the opposite ends of linguistic levels, which can be characterised on a continuum stretching from *the minimum rhythmic structuring* at one end, to the *extended span of discourse* at the other end, tend to be what I call 'unmarked' features.

On the other hand, the various style features in between the opposite ends of linguistic levels can be termed 'marked' features. The point here, then, is that the difference between marked and unmarked features foregrounds the 'conditions' for noticing. Ellis, Basturkmen, and Loewen (2002: 424) remind us, salience is one of the key elements that 'constitute[s] the ideal conditions for noticing and acquisition to take place'. The salience of a feature, then, is an issue that a teacher should upfront when guiding students practicing stylistic approaches to texts.

There are concerns that students' self-confirmation of increased LA cannot be taken as hard evidence, since they may hold incorrect views of their knowledge *about* language. That is, their actual knowledge may be higher or

lower than what was reported. Even so, their responses allow the possibilities of yielding some insights into their apparent difficulties over and fascination with style features at different levels of language.

More importantly, students are psychologically positive to experiencing the workings of these features. Such a positive rigour is what cannot be simply forgotten in the process of accruing knowledge *about* language. As Mantle-Bromley (1995: 383) says, the need of both the congitive and affective components of language pedagogy can best facilitate language learning:

> If we attend to the affective and cognitive components of students'
> attitudes as well as develop defendable pedagogical techniques, we
> may be able to increase both the length of time students commit to
> language study and their chances of success in it.

7.4 Generalisability

A major methodological issue that has been constantly raised is how the findings of an introspective study can be generalised (van Lier, 1988; Bailey, 1991; Nunan, 1992; Halbach, 2000; Carson, 2002). The idiosyncracies of individual learners, limited applicability to specific cultures or learning contexts, and the subjectivity of the researcher are all factors that have led researchers to question the validity of diary studies, as currently practiced in the present study.

Bailey (1991: 83) highlights an important concern when she notes that introspective studies are 'to understand language learning phenomena and related variables from the learners' point of view'. This echoes one of the fundamental principles of naturalistic research in which 'there is a concern for processes rather than simply with outcomes' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 106). Therefore, it is important to stress that generalisability is not the main objective of the present research. Rather, the value of the present study resides in its potential for revealing insights into the relationships between classroom process and the cognitive and affective development of language awareness of a group of EFL learners.

The position taken here is that, as van Lier (1988: 2-3) makes it clear:

> There has been almost unanimous pressure to choose topics for research that can be readily generalized to larger population . . . We are all agreed that greater understanding of language learners is also a legitimate activity.

On further reflection, and after a browse through students' diaries, it soon became evident that they constituted valuable source of information about the processes that go on inside the minds — the student's odyssey into literature. Arguably, then, the present study tends to focus on opening up fields that are normally not accessible to researchers, not on generalisability.

7.5 Reliability and validity

For issues concerning validity, particular attention has been paid throughout the present study to minimise invalidity. Based on Brown (1988), a discussion of validity can be approached from four perspectives: (1) environmental issue, (2) grouping issues, (3) people issues, and (4) measurement issues. All these issues are taken into careful consideration throughout to attenuate threats to validity. As a check on validity, they are discussed below.

(a) Environmental issue

In the classroom learning process, the natural variables are well controlled. The study was conducted in a quiet, well-lit classroom made available to all participants. In addition, no 'artificial' equipment or intrusions such as camera and recording devices were used since their appearance in a classroom would bear no resemblance to reality and be considered as disruptive to the study.

(b) Grouping issues

The way in which participants were grouped in the present study was selected and assigned on a random basis by the school. All participants were the remaining half of a regular class of approximately 40 or so. They were grouped in this class because each of their school numbers was given as an odd number. With this randomised selection, which is representative, the study has greatly minimised 'selection effects', a possible threat to external validity (Cohen,

Manion & Morrison, 2000: 109).

(c) People issues

From the very beginning, attempts have been made to reveal the nature of research behind the course. I have also attempted to minimise the obviousness of the aims of the research by including elements that have no actual purpose other than to distract the students from the real aims of the investigation. As explained in 5.4, this is purported to avoid the *Hawthorne effect* and *subject expectancy*. In addition, the whole project does not last long enough to engender the problem of maturation. However, it must be acknowledged that occasionally a few students were absent from classes, which may affect the integrity of the training they were to receive.

(d) Measurement issues

To counter *practice effect*[8] which helps students learn from their mistakes or clear up problems which they had with the first LA test, I have allowed for sufficient time between pre- and post-tests. During this period, the first LA test results remained untouched. Nor has any discussion related to the LA test been mentioned. The purpose of this procedure is to make it 'bland' after the first test.

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[8] This preparation was considered important as a way to partially offset the 'practice effect', whereby students generally score higher on second and successive administrations of a test merely due to greater familiarity with the test itself.

More importantly, since students do not know that they will do the same test again, it may be argued that they will forget what was on the test. In addition, to avoid bias or distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality being investigated, I have tried to avoid an exclusive reliance on one method of enquiry. According to the extensive literature on research in education, this triangulation can be another powerful way of demonstrating the concurrent validity in the present research (Schostak, 2002).

Reliability

Simply stated, for research to be reliable, it must demonstrate that if carried out in a similar context, similar results would be obtained. However, the premises of naturalistic studies—to which the present study is prone—include the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of situations, such that the study may not be readily replicated.

Within the paradigm of naturalistic enquiry, the notion of reliability should be seen as 'a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, i.e. a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage' (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 119). Therefore, the concept of reliability is better constructed as 'dependability', which involves member checks, triangulation, prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observations, and reflexive journals (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 108-9). By an eclectic use of research instruments, additional raters, and

perspectives and interpretations, this study has demonstrated its reliability.

7.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown — via *product, process*, and *perception* data — how LA is cognitively and affectively developed in the students during the course of this study. First, the development of LA implies an ability to approach a text from a more systematic and more analytic posture. This ability has been illustrated by students' increased level of awareness in the post-test results. Second, six recurrent themes emerged from the diary entries that are related to LA development. I have showcased the voices of the students themselves. By doing this, I have established a series of signposts pointing out students' progress along the way. Finally, the findings obtained from questionnaires illuminate issues of learners' perceived experience of instructional content and their preference of stylistic features.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSIONS & IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Summary of findings

To review, this chapter returns to the four research questions listed earlier in Chapter 4, summarising the findings of the present study. This is followed by a reckoning with limitations and possible lines of future research.

Research question 1:

Does Shakespeare's language enhance learners' ability to identify linguistic patterns in non-Shakespearean texts and to provide cogent interpretation of *how* they mean? i.e. Are students, after the pedagogic intervention, able to transfer the analytical strategies to similar tasks in other reading contexts?

As a result of the findings gathered from this study, insights were gained as to the educational possibilities of Shakespeare, whose language has proved to be ideal examples for the study of literary discourse. Because many prototypical stylistic features in his language have been employed by both literary and non-literary discourses, their analysis forms the building blocks that pave the way for the learner to bring (literary) texts to life.

By bringing literary texts to life I mean students' language competence needed for understanding literary texts has gone beyond what is conventionally defined as literature and extended both to literary texts and non-literary texts (e.g. proverbs, lyrics, newspaper headlines, advertisements) which rely on similar linguistic devices. This implies a broader view of literature and greater functional relation of English literature to the life of these EFL students.

More pointedly, as recorded in their course diaries, students attempt to establish intensive relationships with various texts, whether it is a poem or a one-liner from an advertisement. In their acts of meaning creation, they seek opportunities to explain what a text means to them. Since students always go beyond the texts in the classroom and explore other literary texts through an aesthetic text-approach (Delanoy, 2005), it is indicative of their initiative to communicate with a (literary) text without being helped by the teacher.

Apart from diary data, the LA Test has also shown that students were initially almost blind to the stylistic patternings in the Terrano text, let alone reading between the lines of the text. However, when it was read again in the post-test, its consciously patterned devices were identified and rendered interpretations. It even led to an increase in reader motivation as indicated by the Semantic Differential Scale.

With a systematic development of linguistic and critical skills for encounters with texts, this study has stretched learners' cognitive ability and affective

capacity. In particular, involvement in a textual world of Shakespeare, as a site of initiation, helps students concern new possibilities of language use, language play, and the construction of alternative ways of thinking *how* language works. In short, the role Shakespeare could play in raising language awareness and assuring solid linguistic and literary preparation is positively confirmed.

Research question 2:

How language awareness is developed in a group of L2 tertiary students?

By adopting a systematic analysis of the diary data, I have found six major trends of language awareness development among students. Broadly categorised, they fall into cognitive and affective dimensions, where the cognitive development includes:

- students' ability to relate stylistic features to new texts in other reading contexts
- students' ability to relate stylistic features to L1 (i.e. Chinese) phenomena
- students' recognition of how a stylistic feature enhances their language awareness

And the affective development involves:

- the pleasure of reading (literature)
- evaluation and appreciation of Shakespeare's language

- interest and enjoyment in language-based exercises designed for the programme

In diaries were these recurring themes, taken as indices of language awareness advancement (see Table 7.3, for a summary of LA development in learners' diaries).

Research question 3:

What are students' views of the teaching and learning of stylistic features at the end of the study? What attitudes and perceptions do students develop towards reading literary texts?

Because all reading tasks in this study were complemented by activities with a sharp focus on the linguistic devices used in literature to increase learners' sensitivity to such language, most participants, as a reaction to this teaching programme, find it becomes easier to keep up the level of concentration needed to remain involved in a literary text. The relationship between literature and language learning has undergone significant changes by means of such stylistic approaches. These changes are discussed with reference to three major observations.

First, as a result of the teaching/learning of stylistic features, students have experienced useful concepts of the potential interconnectedness between

language and literature studies. The implication is that 'literature' becomes an integral component of their language learning, not at all far removed from the practical needs of the learners.

Second, as a result of the teaching/learning of stylistic features, students are marching towards what Rosenblatt (1978: 11) calls a stage of 'self-corrective process', in which the meaning created are verified textually and, if necessary, modified in the reading process. That is, in order to check the text-relatedness of their reactions, students' attention is constantly redirected to the text to validate an interpretation. Trained in close textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to *language*, students develop the habit of paying attention to the potential meanings inscribed into a text. With this has come an awareness of *how* meaning is arrived at, rather than simply looking at *what* it means.

Third, as a result of the teaching/learning of stylistic features, students begin to read various literary texts they had previously little interest in. Literature — with both a large and a small 'l' — turns out to be valuable language learning resources which the learners can experience as emotionally engaging and intellectually stimulating.

With regard to the stylistic features included in the teaching progamme, 'binary' and 'metaphor' are given a clear preference, but features such as 'metre', 'genre (verse/prose)' may not appeal to some. They are notwithstanding part of the

process of interpreting literary systems, part of a critical apparatus for reading and evaluating texts.

Research question 4:

Should learning *about* language be assessed? Can it be effectively measured? If so, how is this best done? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

Teaching for testing is an inevitable reality in many classrooms. If we want to increase students' knowledge *about* language (i.e. language awareness) so that they 'receive benefits that we feel we have received from our reading of literary texts', we need to bear with it being tested. The obvious reason is that students need to 'know how they are progressing', and teachers have to know whether 'learners are receiving worthwhile instruction' (Brumfit, 1991: 1).

To ensure what is being measured bears relationship to what teaching aims to achieve, McCarthy and Carter (1994: 169) remind us how forms of assessment need to keep pace with awareness developments in reading. Surveys of related literature, however, revealed virtually no papers in the past decades that were concerned with the assessment of language awareness. To resolve this discrepancy between theoretical claims and actual classroom practice, this study collects different types of empirical data so as to provide three different angles from which to look at how learning *about* language is done.

After all, a one-sided assessment of language awareness would not do justice to this complex construct. Another benefit of implementing these methods also means that we can have the chance to examine respectively how each type of data helps the teacher think through the process of assessment, and how effective each type of data might be.

The data is gleaned from three sources: learner diaries, the LA test, and questionnaires. A summary of their advantages and disadvantages based on this study is discussed below:

Data 1: Lerner diaries

To use diary data as a measurement tool has several advantages: 1) it can be traced for subtle developments in how students read a text, and as such, captures very well such an elusive construct as language awareness; 2) it is an excellent extension of interactions between the students and the teacher within the limited teaching hours each week, provided that the instructor clarifies issues of concern and encourages further linguistic exploration by constant feedback; 3) it may serve as, if read as a unified whole, a genuine record of learners' development of perceptive abilities in the pedagogical process. One important problem, however, is that the reading load placed on the teacher is beyond what practical and daily pedagogy would usually demand.

It is unfortunate that the growth of Language Awareness over the past several decades has not been accompanied by a strong and productive interest in issues of its assessment. For this reason, tailor-made tests for language awareness are much desirable and necessary in accord with what we are teaching.

One of the most obvious gains of having constructed such a test is that it allows the teacher to use it repeatedly on different groups of students and save hours of time reading students' introspective accounts. Most important of all, the test results enable fine distinctions to be made quantitatively in the levels of testees' performance. Another benefit is that the test is expandable by integrating more text types, test items, and test methods, so as to evolve gradually into a more comprehensive assessment to accommodate different dimensions of language awareness. Thus, a Language-Awareness Inventory could be aimed for, as is the case with the development of learning style inventory, which is readily available in the filed of applied linguistics.

One caveat to be stressed is that the teacher, to be more objective in scoring, needs to find a second, or a third examiner to offer fair judgments about verbal responses elicited from open-ended questions when there seems to be no 'right' answers. The other is that it may take a lot of time, as is the case in this study, to devise a test, pilot it, refine it, and set it out in the classroom.

Indeed it would be almost impossible, as well as unnecessary, to try to process vast quantities of word-data in a short time frame. For this reason, a researcher can select highly structured questionnaire to obtain numerical data that is straightforward to analyse (Wilson & McLean, 1994). In this study, I found it particularly useful to use questionnaires to ask students to identify priorities and rate scales. This enables a *relative* degree of (stylistic) preference and (language awareness) intensity to be charted. Likewise, the semantic differential technique, as a variation of rating scale, effectively distinguishes the intensity of feeling towards the Terrano text (see Chapter 7, Figure 7. 3).

Although questionnaires make it easier to convert students' attitudes, perceptions, and opinions to numerical data for ease of analysis, there are cautionary remarks to be made. In this study, the purpose of questionnaires is clearly explained, confidentiality guaranteed, but some students still expressed the feeling of resistance. As Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000: 245) assert, 'the questionnaire will always be an intrusion into the life of the respondent', so an overuse of questionnaires makes a real classroom unnatural. Most importantly, since we are unable to check on whether respondents may be deliberately falsifying their replies, it is perhaps better to use questionnaires as part of a larger study involving other approaches (Gorard, 2001).

Taking the issues discussed so far, a comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of these assessment devices used in this study can be highlighted in Table 8.1

Table 8.1

Strengths and weakness of different types of assessment tool

Type of data	Advantages	Disadvantages
Learner diaries	• produce rich and depth of data • avoid the limitations of pre-set categories of response • easy to implement in the classroom (quicker to commence and gather data) • record rigorous thoughts and progress • encourage more interactions between students and the teacher outside the classroom	• data organisation and analysis can be quite difficult • the teacher needs to read a large amount of data and provide feedback
Researcher-developed LA test	• easily distinguish pre- and post-test performance • the established model could be expanded to an inventory	• difficult to construct • require detailed procedures • certain parameters must be decided in advance
Questionnaire	• generate frequencies of response amendable to statistical treatment and anaylysis • an economy of time to obtain survey information • complement qualitative data	• some respondents may not tell the truth • make the learning context 'unnatural' • may intervene instructions and incur student resistance • require a pilot to try out the material and refine it

What mode of research tool might be the most useful and positive data? If I had to have an overall preference, it would be for learner diaries because it yields more rigorous, richer data that is more line with the subtle development of language awareness. It is these descriptive accounts that contain the gems of information that otherwise might not have been picked up in a questionnaire or a test. Further, it puts the responsibility for and ownership of the data much more firmly into the students' hand. That said, I would like to stress that each tool is appropriate in a given situation, depending on purpose of enquiry. Each means of assessing language awareness has its own particular bias and merit. A combination of methods, Gorard (2001: 86) suggests, 'can maximize the advantages' to a researcher.

8.2 Limitations of the present study

There are specific weaknesses to which this study might be prone, of which the following are identifiable.

Limitation 1, with regard to generalisability

The convergence of data from various sources provides ample evidence of the treatment effects on students' language awareness. However, there are some things to be kept in mind when interpreting these findings. As is the case with most process studies in the field, it is difficult to draw strong generalisations of the results due to the limited size of the research sample. Because of the relatively small sample in the study, individual differences among participating

students may have obscured some effects of the intervention. Sources of individual differences that may have influenced our ability to detect the effects of treatment include: prior knowledge of, and interest in, the text content (Afflerbach, 1990; Bügel & Buunk, 1996), vocabulary knowledge (Anderson & Freebody, 1981) and motivation (Guthrie & Wigfield, 1997).

Still, it is believed that there is some interpretative value in the results beyond this particular research site, though of course any larger conclusions can only be extremely tentative in nature and should be used only for the purpose of stimulating further discussion about the potential value of the pedagogy adopted by this study.

Limitation 2, with regard to data collection

In a study that uses pre- and post-course data collection procedures to investigate the effect of the course on strategy use, the most important factor that might jeopardise the whole study is the students' lack of assiduousness or regularity in attending all of the course sessions and the pre- and post-course tests. This was particularly true of this study, which was carried out in a real-life context, where students have other classes to attend, term papers to write, and semester exams to take. The researcher had to check the regular attendance of students, and for data analysis made use of only those students who attended all the sessions and both pre- and post-course tests.

Limitation 3, with regard to pedagogy

Another issue of concern is that the training programme focused on certain stylistic features I identify as those that underline an active capacity to read and respond with sophistication to Shakespeare's texts. This was done to limit the scope of the study, but it would be an oversimplification to assume that these are the only recommended channels of access to a (literary) text. Similarly, linguistic activities used to build toward the text are, of course, provisional, and, as already noted, they are closely linked to my personal teaching experiences as well as my pedagogical interests in literature. Thus, their relevance to other teaching situations and pedagogical practices remains to be explored.

Limitation 4, with regard to follow-up

After the intervention, there was not a follow-up to assess the maintenance of treatment effects. It is not known whether students will still pay attention to the stylistic features learned in the programme and relate it to texts they read.

Limitation 5, with regard to assessment issues

In this study, primary data (i.e. reflective journals) was qualitative in nature. Although this data provided valuable insights into the effects of stylistic approaches upon language awareness development, the acquisition of data and the process of analysis required time commitments beyond that normally

available for routine curriculum evaluation.

As for the LA test designed for this project, owing to the scope of the study, it did not involve the assessment of global ability. Since the target and focus of Language Awareness is broad, encompassing not only linguistic domains but also sociolinguistic and cultural domains, some interesting dimensions are left unexplored and could have called for a new study.

Despite theses limitations, which are among the hindsight I have gained from this project, they provide a wide range of possibilities for future researches. As a result, these limitations lead to my suggestions.

8.3 Suggestions for future research

There are many further research questions that could be profitably explored, emerging from the current project. Future researchers would benefit from the informed incorporation of the following points into their designs and the execution of their studies.

Suggestion 1, with regard to test development and refinement

A growing body of recent research (e.g. Bachman 1990; Alderson, 2000) has demonstrated that the test methods we use to measure language ability influence

performance on language test. From the standpoint of content validity[1], an ideal test would be one which selects a representative set of tasks. By doing this, we can avoid the chance of choosing the task(s) that a candidate is particularly good (or bad) at. Bachman (1990: 111), for example, explains thus:

> Some test takers find a cloze test intimidating, and do poorly, while at the same time performing well on a test consisting of the completion of individual sentences, or a multiple-choice test based on a reading passage.

The implication for designing an LA test, either for diagnostic or achievement purpose, is that we need to include more distinct elicitation procedures (e.g. filling in the blanks, matching, sentence completion, multiple-choice, a comparison and contrast essay) because 'the more tasks that we set, the more representative of an examinee's ability will be the totality of the samples we obtain' (Hughes, 2003: 86). Clearly, a number of test methods have gone unexplored in this project. Interested readers can find thorough discussions in the works noted above.

The other suggestion to be made for future consideration is the use of a parallel text in the LA test. Ideally, it is more desirable to use two different texts of equal

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[1] Content validity refers to the content of the test that 'constitutes a representative sample of the language skills and, structures, etc' (Hugh, 2003: 26). Said differently, the knowledge and skills covered by the test items should be representative to the larger domain of knowledge and skills. To safeguard this form of validity, the test constructor must, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000: 109) ensure that 'the elements of the main issue to be covered in the research are both a fair representation of the wider issue under investigation'.

complexity and difficulty in the pre- and post-test respectively. By doing this, it will avoid the practice effects and enhance test reliability. Another method of doing this is to administer to a control group a test which is essentially two tests, where each question on the one has a parallel question on the other. When the test is scored, the results of both halves can be compared. If the results attained by each student on each half of the test are acceptably similar, the test can be said to be reliable.

For this reason, the teachers, along with 'instructor judgment' (Schulz, 1981: 43), need a procedure which permits them to make reasonably objective predictions about the difficulty of their students will encounter when reading a specific text. To obtain a rough predictor of readability of a text, the use of a statistical device such as a readability formula may be helpful.

Suggestion 2, with regard to methods of teaching literature

A pursuit of pedagogical possibilities in working with texts is as much for the teacher and as for the students. We must, in this context, recall what Santoni (1972: 435) has reminded us: that the pedagogy of teaching literature 'may appear ridiculously elementary to specialists of literature. But practical and daily pedagogy at introductory levels forces us to simplify if we want to fill the enormous gap between foreign language classes and literature classes'. There has fortunately been some concerted effort to stimulate in students and assure solid linguistic or literary preparation. The several method-oriented textbooks

currently on the market indicate an awakening interest in the art of teaching.

For exercises to be more serviceable in the instructional pattern, researchers/teachers are referred especially to Carter and Long (1991), McRae (1998); Carter et al. (2001), Spiro (2004), and Simpson (2004) for making students' exposure to literary texts a more enriching experience. Teachers of literature could learn from techniques these books present and by extension, develop their own approaches appropriately for their own students according to their level of linguistic and literary competence.

This line of research will promulgate good practice among literature teachers, fulfilling one important aspect of Boyer's (1990) and Rice's (1991) notion of the 'scholarship of teaching': that making an important contribution to our understanding of teaching effectiveness and help faculty develop their practice (see also Kreber & Cranton, 2000; Atkinson, 2001, for a more-detailed discussion of the conceptualisation of scholarship of teaching).

Spinning from the scholarship of teaching is a recommendation that teacher training programmes begin to consider the training of literature teachers as equally important to the training of language teachers. As a corollary of this concern, future researches could expand issues of pedagogy from the perspective of teacher preparation, which may include:

- What type of training may better prepare prospective teachers present

their texts in the language classroom?

- In what ways can we increase the confidence of new teachers and lessen 'the fear of pedagogy' (Tompkins, 1990: 655)?

- What methodology could be offered to the teachers? Will this kind of training incur teacher resistance? If so, what are the causes?

Grading, evaluating, and testing would compromise another unit of the methods of teaching literature courses, which, I believe, should promote a realisation of the questions to which literature teachers ultimately must respond.

Suggestion 3, with regard to follow-up

Although the long-term effects of the course are not easily quantifiable, what still could be done may involve follow-up interviews with participants to obtain more supportive data to verify the effects. As Tuckman (1972) describes it, 'By providing access to what is "inside a person's head," an interview makes it possible to 'measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (value and preference), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)' (quoted in Cohen, Manion & Morrion, 2000: 268). As an alternative to other data-gathering devices, interviews enable participants to discuss *orally* their interpretations of the learning experience they have and express how they regard situations from their own point of view.

Suggestion 4, with regard to text selection and presentation

Shakespeare's texts predominate the teaching materials of this project. This is because his verbal facility is considered a favoured means of making students aware of *how* language can be used flexibly, creatively, and aesthetically. Future instructors, of course, could expand on what other literary texts to teach and how to teach them successfully. Can other genres, canonical or non-canonical writing, justifiably be used as a teaching device or tool to enhance students' language awareness? What are their advantages and disadvantages? By choosing relevant reading selections, literary analysis can be heightened. Clearly, more research in the areas of text variables needs to be done.

Suggestion 5, with r egard to research objectives

The teaching of literature is indissoluble from other relevant aspects of language study, in particular the teaching of writing (Kramsch, 1998). One variation might be tried on the basis of what this research has shown is: to examine the extent to which a study of Shakespeare's language can be an inducement to creative writing, a relatively new phenomenon which has proliferated worldwide (Sedgwick, 1999; Ritter, 2001; Hazel, 2005).

This idea sprang from many of students' creative and poetic products collected from mimetic paraphrase exercises. Since the teaching of EFL in Taiwan is heavy with a utilitarian logic, a functional goal of 'standard' writing has tended

to lead students to concern primarily with 'correctness'. What have been missing in most of students' written works are elements of creativity and passion that give writing the transforming vitality. Donoghue (1999: 13-4) addresses the ingredients of a life in a composition:

> Standard language is good enough if we are content with standard feelings. More complex feelings, those which are adequate to a more comprehensive sense of the issues at hand, require for expression — though expression cannot be separated from discovery and invention — the full resources of a language as capable as English.

As Donoghue points out, for a writing to be alive and creative to carry more complex feelings, it needs linguistic elements for dramatic expressiveness. In this project, I find it helpful for students to explore what writers do with words when they strive towards an ideal form. Thus seen, the teaching of writing through the lenses of literature may give a writing classroom a fresh profile, a concept rooted in Tate's (1993: 321) 'A place for literature in freshman composition':

> If I want my students to think and talk and write like about human lives outside the academy—'Writing Beyond the Disciplines'—then I certainly do not want to deny them the resources found in literary works.

The merits of the position are clearly in evidence in the examples discussed in Sedgwick (1999), who encourages children to learn Shakespeare's poetry and prose 'via the technique of writing in the grip of Shakespeare's words' (ibid: 20).

In his creative writing classroom, Sedgwick shows how careful selection of scenes, lines and images from the plays and sonnets — in their original language — can be used to great effect as the starting point for writing. Equally inspiringly, Spiro (2004) also offers a wealth of creative methods to build EFL students' confidence with language in a pleasurable learning context, where representational uses of language are given a priority.

In an article written in the wake of this project, Lin (2005) used Shakespeare's language in a composition classroom, where students were drawn to look at Shakespeare's ways of rhetoric which make writing especially effective and powerful. In this context, Shakespeare's language becomes a literary medium that is used to build up a source of poetic imagination from which the student can move. In examining students' final products, it was found that the impact of style analysis helped students compose qualitatively better essays that were infused with more elements of imagination and formally patterned language (e.g. the use of tropes, repetition, and antithesis, etc.) than their previous 'bland' drafts.

Calling for a reconstructed English apparatus, Scholes (1985: 16) points out, 'Our rebuilt apparatus must be devoted to textual studies, with the consumption and *productions* of texts thoroughly intermingled' (emphasis added). What Scholes stresses here is that writing is a complementary act of reading, and the relationship between reading and writing remains to be further strengthened in the language classroom. Operationally, more writing-based exercises need to be

integrated to help students make the transition from reading between the lines to writing beyond the correct lines.

Apropos of these suggestions, similar research conducted in a language classroom context would be an interesting topic for future research to pursue and would be the basis of a valuable comparison.

8.4 Conclusion

This classroom enquiry began with a pedagogical quest for the teaching of Shakespeare and how his language may be brought to bear on language awareness — operationally defined here in terms of a number of stylistic features. Having made my explorative voyages and discovered in the process of this empirical project that Shakespeare helps students develop a full range of linguistic, cognitive and affective awareness, I, as a language teacher who believed intuitively in the power of literature to influence language learning, have evolved this intuition into a strong faith in the power of literature.

By means of pedagogical stylistics, I have transformed the classroom to a productive rather than a reproductive environment, where students can leave with a gift from their teacher, a gift of increased awareness of language. This increased language awareness is regarded by Gewehr *et al.* (1998: 9) the most precious asset a teacher can give: 'It is a truism that one of the most valuable gifts an EL teacher can give to his/her students is the *awareness*, the certainty

that being able to speak, write and generally function in another language is much more than just having an adequate command of a specific inventory of expressions and structures' (my italics).

For language teachers anxious to use literary texts in their classes, the vast field of stylistics offers a wealth of insights on the acquisition of the representational, poetic functions of language. Many possibilities of bridging the gap between language and literature are waiting to be explored and implemented in the classroom.

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Appendix 1   Questionnaire A

INSTRUCTION

I would like to ask you to help me by answering the following questions concerning your reading and learning habits. This is not a test, so there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. And you don't have to write your name on it. I am interested in your personal opinion Please give your answers sincerely as only this will guarantee the success of this investigation. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Code (Please write in): _____

2. Gender (please circle):   **F   M**

3. How old are you? (Please write in) _____

4. How many years have you been studying English? (Please write in) _____

5. Did you attend a course in literature?   **Y   N**

    If yes, what is/are the title(s) of the course? (Please write in)_____

6. Are you now taking any course relevant to literature?   **Y   N**

    If yes, what is/are the title(s) of the course? (Please write in)_____

7. Did you attend a course on linguistics?   **Y   N**

8. Did you study Shakespeare before? (Please circle)   **Y   N**

II. READING DIAGNOSIS

In this part, you will find statements that center around issues related to your reading strategy. Read each statement and circle the number indicating **how true of you the statement is.**

1. <u>Never</u> or <u>almost never</u> true of me
2. <u>Usually not</u> true of me (less than half of the time)
3. <u>Somewhat</u> true of me (about half of the time)
4. <u>Usually</u> true of me (more than half of the time)
5. <u>Always</u> or <u>almost always</u> true of me

Example:

	1	2	3	4	5
I take notes while listening to lectures in class. If you take notes all the time, or almost always, circle **5**	1	2	3	4	(5)

1=**Never**; 2=**Usually not**; 3=**Somewhat**; 4=**Usually**; 5=**Always true**

Please <u>circle</u> the appropriate number which describes you best.

1. I enjoy studying English language	1	2	3	4	5
2. I enjoy studying literature of English	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am motivated to study English	1	2	3	4	5
4. I speak up or give opinions in class	1	2	3	4	5
5. I review English lessons often	1	2	3	4	5
6. I reflect on what has been learned from a text	1	2	3	4	5
7. I use strategies to process a challenging text	1	2	3	4	5
8. I look for opportunities to read in English	1	2	3	4	5

Please <u>circle</u> the appropriate number based on your reading experience

While I read...

1. I try to find special linguistic patterns	1	2	3	4	5
2. I consider the functions, or significance of a linguistic pattern	1	2	3	4	5
3. I examine the look (i.e. shape, layout) of the text	1	2	3	4	5
4. I read for its rhythm	1	2	3	4	5
5. I read for its sound patterns (i.e. alliteration, assonance)	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel the speed (fast/slow) the sentences create	1	2	3	4	5
7. I imagine who is speaking to whom in the text	1	2	3	4	5
8. I look for repeated words	1	2	3	4	5
9. I notice binaries (i.e. male/female, absent/present, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
10. I create mental images via imagery in the text	1	2	3	4	5
11. I notice structural balance	1	2	3	4	5
12. I make sense of how two things are metaphorically compared	1	2	3	4	5
13. I distinguish formal use of language from informal usage	1	2	3	4	5
14. I examine how atmosphere is created by the language	1	2	3	4	5
15. I divide words into parts I understand	1	2	3	4	5

16. I try to translate English into Chinese	1	2	3	4	5
17. I guess what will be said next	1	2	3	4	5
18. I make summaries	1	2	3	4	5
19. I skim read then read carefully	1	2	3	4	5
20. I use a dictionary to understand unfamiliar words	1	2	3	4	5
21. I guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from context	1	2	3	4	5
22. I read all the way through (from the first word to the last word)	1	2	3	4	5

1 = **Never**; 2 = **Usually not**; 3 = **Somewhat**; 4 = **Usually**; 5 = **Always true**

Thank you very much for your time and effort in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix 2   Questionnaire B

		1	2	3	4	5	
1. I tend to pay attention to this formal feature when I am reading (before the class)	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
2. I can explain why this linguistic feature is employed (during the class)	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
3. I am actively involved in today's discussion	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
4. The session I learn today is useful in reading other literary texts	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
5. I think I am able to relate this skill to reading other literary texts	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
6. I feel frustrated in carrying out the tasks	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
7. I know how the texts work/mean without the help of the teacher	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

		1	2	3	4	5	
8. This unit is helpful in promoting my awareness of language	Strongly disagree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Strongly agree

9. I think the lesson would be better if ...

....

....

....

Appendix 3 Questionnaire C

In the course, you have learned some linguistic features relating to literary expressions.

- metre
- sound patterning
- binary
- repetition
- metaphor/simile
- antithesis
- voice
- genre (verse/prose)

Try to reflect on what you have learnt and answer the following questions:

1. Rank these features in terms of their usefulness by putting 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 in the blank provided (**1** being the **most useful** and **8** the **least useful**).

_____ metre

_____ sound patterning

_____ binary

_____ repetition

_____ metaphor

_____ antithesis

_____ voice

_____ genre

2. Explain why you select the feature as '1' (i.e. the most useful).

....
....
....

3. Explain why you select the feature as '8' (i.e. the least useful).

....
....
....

4. How would you read a text, compared with when you first started the course?

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5. Have these lessons on 'linguistic features' helped you become a more aware reader? In what ways? Please explain.

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Appendix 4   Language Awareness Test

Name: _____

Read the following text and answer the following questions:
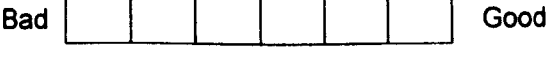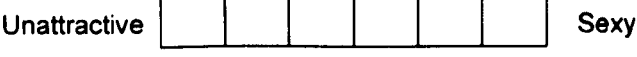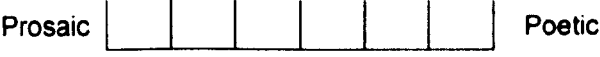

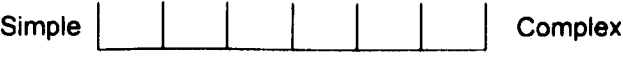### *More Pulling Power*
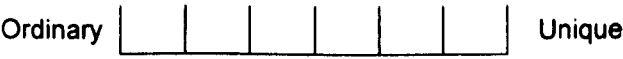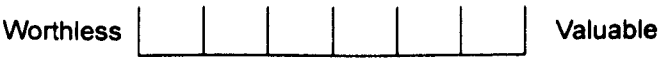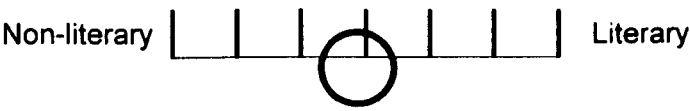－The New Terrano II

Power, so they say, is an aphrodisiac.   And you can't get much more powerful than the new Terrano II.   Beneath that raunchy new exterior lies a 2.7 litre turbo diesel intercooler engine that delivers extra horsepower at low revs, just when you need it. Switch to 4 wheel drive and you'll be down that rocky gorge (a doddle with the limited slip differential), through that stream (up to 450mm deep) and up that mountain (up to 39 degrees) with something close to wanton abandon.   But perhaps you should begin with something more gentle.   Like tarmac.   For it's here that you'll appreciate the Terrano's more sensitive qualities.   Its responsive handling.   Its smooth as a satin sheet ride. (Thanks to anti-roll bars).   The ease with which it will tow a trailer, pull a caravan, and more or less anything else you fancy.   Add ABS and driver's airbag and you have a 4×4 that's too desirable for words.   Which is exactly why it comes with engine immobiliser and an ultrasonic and perimetric alarm.

YOU CAN WITH A NISSAN

Task 1

How do you feel about this text after you read it? Circle one of the seven-point scales. Do this as intuitively as you can.

Sample response:

Non-literary | | | | ⊘ | | | | Literary

Non-literary | | | | | | | | Literary

Incomprehensible | | | | | | | | Comprehensible

Boring | | | | | | | | Exciting

Worthless | | | | | | | | Valuable

Ordinary | | | | | | | | Unique

Simple | | | | | | | | Complex

Prosaic | | | | | | | | Poetic

Unattractive | | | | | | | | Sexy

Banal | | | | | | | | Original

Monotonous | | | | | | | | Varied

Weak | | | | | | | | Strong

Bad | | | | | | | | Good

Task 2

2.1 Which of the following linguistic features did you find in the above text?

— Tick (∨) the box if you think it is **present** in the text

— cross (x) the box if you think it is **absent** in the text

☐ irony   ☐ repetition   ☐ rhythm

☐ alliteration   ☐ assonance   ☐ consonance

☐ binary   ☐ (syntactical) parallel   ☐ simile

☐ metaphor   ☐ voice   ☐ genre shift (verse/prose)

2.2 Based on what you have just ticked, indicate <u>where</u> in the text the features occur. (Use the symbol provided to mark the text; provide those that you have ticked only)

☐ rhythm   ∿∿∿

☐ alliteration   **( )**

☐ assonance   **[ ]**

☐ consonance   √

☐ repetition   ○

☐ parallel   _____

☐ voice   < >

☐ irony   (write out)

☐ binary   (write out)

☐ simile   (write out)

☐ metaphor   (write out)

☐ genre shift (verse/prose) (write out)

Task 3

What, in your opinion, might be the stylistic function(s) of the linguistic features in the text? (First, list the linguistic features you have ticked in Task 2, and then comment on its function or effect on the right column; you may provide more than one possible functions or effects a linguistic feature brings about; your answer can be in Chinese).

Stylistic features	How does this feature contribute its significance to the text? (Please provide your answers below)

Appendix 5   Rater Evaluation Form

Candidate Code   _____   Date _____

Rater   _____

This student has completed an awareness test. I would appreciate your help in the rating process. Please rank the candidate in each category, and feel free to add comments.

Candidate's ability to	Level of awareness
identify stylistic features (based on how many features correctly marked)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
describe the effects of the stylistic features (based on comments provided)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Note: Check with the benchmark scheme provided

The candidate's overall level of language awareness in your judgement (please circle one number):	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Comments:

Please do not write on this box

1st rater: 2nd rate: **Average**	1st rater: 2nd rate: 3rd rater: **Average**

                                       FINAL SCORE _____

Appendix 6   Keeping Course Diaries (Handout)

I. Why should I keep a diary?

The purpose of the journal is threefold: (1) it encourages you to write in English every day, so that you will develop your productive skills in English, (2) It makes you think about your language learning experience, and (3) It helps you express your feelings about these experiences and records your progress in this course

II. What should I write in my diaries?

At the end of each session, write on your thoughts and feelings about what you did in the classroom. Describe you thoughts and feelings about how you spent time in the classroom discussion and exploration. You might want to ask yourself the following questions:

- Did I learn something new? Was it helpful? In what way was it useful or not useful?
- How do I feel about today's session? Do I feel positive or negative about the class today?
- How did I perform classroom tasks? Did I do it well? Were the tasks too difficult? Too easy?
- Did I try out any new reading strategies? Were they helpful?
- Did I get new insights that I was unable to comment in the class discussion?
- Did I find any written texts (e g newspapers, novels, advertisements) that strike me?

III. Some more general guidance

1 Sometimes you may find it difficult to express what you mean You can write some of it in Chinese if you prefer to
2. Whenever possible, it is important to support reflective comments with examples from class sessions or actual language data
3 Be honest and true in your own voice There is no penalty in whatever and however you say.
4 Take notes in class But do not let the note-taking process interfere your actual language learning.
5. Do not worry about making grammar and spelling mistakes The diary is not intended to be polished pieces of writing Concentrate on putting your ideas on paper The goal is to get complete and accurate data while the recollection is still fresh
6 Start a collection from advertisements, newspapers, magazines, TV, and radios,

songs, anywhere you can find a link with any we have already read, or whatever strike you with new, and unexpected expressions.

IV. A sample diary

NAME: _____

Entry 1

Date: 2003/9/9

Ha, school finally begins. The writing course might be the toughest one, I think. The teacher gave us a battery of sheets of papers: syllabus, tasksheets, questionnaires, and some guideline. There is even a test next week! I'd better start to improve my English.

Summarise the session learned today

Entry 2

Date: 2003/9/9

I was successful today because I contributed a lot of my ideas to group discussion. I was really happy because my suggestions were accepted by my groupmates. Besides, I also got the chance to present what was discussed. Did not feel as afraid as last time. I was more confident with myself in analysing a text (explain in what ways). I no longer sit quietly when people were discussing something. I did involve myself a lot during the discussions.

Describe how you feel for this session

Entry 3

Date: 2003/9/12

Read the China post today. I found an interesting headline. Its linguistic patterning is similar to what we discussed in unit 4. I tried to analyse it, and I found that . . .(explain)

Relate course materials to everyday reading experience

Entry 4

Date: 2003/9/12

I think that if I had more time to think on the task, I will be able to come up with

some sense making points. Some people are just speaking for speaking's sake, not proving any insightful opinions! For example, text (A) may make better sense if we see it from ... (your further explanation)

<div align="right">comment on classroom discussions</div>

Entry 5

2003/9/15

I wonder if the teacher can explain what distinguish top-down and bottom-up reading. I am totally confused.

<div align="right">asking a question to the teacher</div>

NOTE:

I will grade diaries based on four criteria: sincerity, completeness, creativity, and variety.