

## Responding to Understand: At the Crossroads of Reader Response and Perceptions of Text Comprehension

الاستجابة للفهم: على مفترق طرق استجابة القارئ وتصورات فهم النص

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### **Abstract:**

*The current work reports about the findings of a study around the practicality of reader response technique in enabling students to get the most of the literary text. It is set in an Algerian context and concentrates much more on EFL students' perceptiveness towards the putting into practice of a paradigm that allows no borders for interpretation throughout the way of comprehension. The paper sheds light as well on students' opinions with reference to the teachers' routines in dealing with the text in hand. For the sake of investigations, the study relies on a Likert scale questionnaire that was distributed to 50 students with the aim of cross checking their perceptions towards the incorporation of reception theory in literature classes. The results of the investigation give concrete proofs for the need of setting students loose to rethink the content of the text while they build their own text comprehension. The findings hint as well to the positive attitudes that FL students maintain concerning the efficacy of response theories as a facilitating factor of text comprehension. The study results prove that FL students are aware of the need of responding to what they read and they consider this step as a part of active learning and a preliminary one for further text understanding.*

**Keywords:** Reception theory, reader response method, literary competence, text comprehension, students' perceptiveness.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literature or the literary aspect of the foreign language (FL) had for long enjoyed an unsettled posture within the syllabus. This state of affairs ascribed it a latent trait. During the heyday of the grammar translation method, literary texts fashioned a fertile material to preach students at once about grammar rules and aesthetic productions (Simon, 2006; Larsen- Freeman, 2000; Llach, 2015; Parra et.al, 2003). There is often a general consensus among FL teachers that teaching language through reading texts guarantees an overall mastery on the part of students. However since the introduction and application of the grammar method, the resort to literature as an academic tool and source to ameliorate students' overall achievement was questionable. This set of circumstances does not persist for long as a new surge of theorists call attention to reintegrating literary texts for the perceptible benefits they might bring to the FL class in relation to lexis, syntax, savvy and reading ability (Lazar, 1994; Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Tompkins, 1980; Fenner, 2001; Pterson, 2012). The disposal of an estimable body of in print literary resources and the presence of an unlimited number of worldwide themes common to people issuing from differing sociocultural backgrounds portray a ready-made stimulus for FL students and instructors to reflect upon, contemplate and think over. The vibrant illustration of ways of life and daily comportments; the authentic representation of sociocultural grounding of the FL community, the real exemplification of the native speakers' attitudes and perceptions; all of these are but a few proofs of the relevance of integrating literature in the FL class.

One of the difficulties that students face when encountering a FL literary production is the fear to get the most of the text, or the dread not to be able to draw the general idea being discussed (Kramersch, 2004; Carroli, 2008). This state of affairs is due to the aforementioned thoughts concerning the plausibility of cultural clashes which might culminate in confusion and loss of the path of thought. It is probable for comprehension to occur if students combine their own personal experiences, their view points of their previous readings and aspects of their sociocultural features to attach meaning to the text; to import sense to their reading; and to free themselves from the dread of the opacity of the intended author's meaning. Recently, the advent of competency based approaches to FL teaching favours swinging the pendulum to the side of students in that they offer them pace to create their stance with respect to the text content (Pérez Canado, 2012; Hall, 2016).

### 1. Literature review

The idea that reading and responding to the text are complementary processes has been valued in the FL class both for reasons of instruction and assessment. Webster (2002) maintains that readers; in general; are at the pole position when it comes to the process of interpreting. Advocates of the reception theory confess about the benefits it might bring to the dynamics of the literature sessions where students are most exposed to bits of alien cultural facts. Response theories proclaim the effective role of readers in the creation and recreation of



meaning within the wider context of the literary text (Holub, 2003). Through the line of constructing comprehension, the focus has been shifted away from the author and the text to the text and the reader with all the range of possibilities that readers might bring to the text. Davies et.al content that: “*literary texts, demand for their appreciation, techniques of reading that allow the texts to articulate their content in particular ways [.....] we are intended to take account of much fuller range of properties of the words used-their cultural resonance, their associations, their sounds.*” (2009:87). Hence, it is argued that while readers are immersed in a thorough, critical and methodical reading, they convey their own personal experience; sociocultural features and prior reading that all together gradually construct the overall text comprehension.

Above all, students’ perceptiveness towards the integration of their viewpoints regarding text’s meaning is a crucial point in the success of dealing with literature. One cannot escape the fact that negative attitudes might spur failure; paradoxically adopting the right classroom strategy that suits students’ needs might alter negative attitudes. Sanayei and Shafeai view an attitude as “*how positive or negative, favourable or unfavourable, or pro or con a person feels toward an object*” (2009:64). Thus, the text’s structure and literary style proffer a difficulty in the way of comprehension. Namely, FL students need to be mindful about the text’s cultural manifestations in such a way as to be able to link them to their native one’s and be able to recreate meaning and facilitate their own understanding.

Reader response theory has been regarded as an effectual class stratagem to absorb FL students fully in the act of reading and reflecting upon the content of substance. Traditionally held literature teaching archetypes rely extensively on the teacher, as a sole guide to the understanding of the text; and on the text itself, as unadulterated reference for meaning. Following this scheme, students are attached the role of passive receivers whose role is to grasp the teacher’s explanation without looking for further construal of the text. The active role of the reader is wiped out and room for creation is blocked. The idea that teachers’ should not leave the boundaries of the text and that all the meaning is contained within the text boundaries was favoured by advocates of new criticism; they guarantee that comprehension is facilitated when readers rely on the text *per se* to build the overall understanding. Jancovich states that: “*the New Critics, it is claimed, disconnected the literary text from its social and historical context and were solely concerned with the practice of close reading*” (2000:200). However, making connections with the immediate environment and referring to personal schemata lend a hand to the building of general ideas about what is being read. While reading, it is presumed that the text information together with the reader’s background experience collaborate to shape conceptual propositions and stylized structures. According to Paivio, these representations are slots to be filled with types of information in the course of comprehension (2007).

Obviously, the off-product of the reading act is comprehension which might be facilitated or otherwise hindered depending on the method being followed both by teachers and students. Besides understanding the graphic representations on the paper, FL students are supposed to decrypt the social and

cultural context being described in the text. Schumm, in this context, considers that *“the comprehension process involves an understanding of words and how those words are used to create meaning. It involves contextualizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating [.....]. Comprehension involves; as well; integrating prior knowledge and knowledge of the world to construct meaning”* (2006:223). It can be deduced that the process of text comprehension involves a multiplicity of contexts and their interaction; amid which the reader and the situation are crucial factors. Recent studies around the issue of text comprehension revolve around the idea that meaning is a cooperative process ensued from interaction between the reader and the text. Hence, comprehension is not considered: *“a static process that resides exclusively within the reader, but rather is a complex process that involves a reciprocal interchange of ideas between the reader and the message in a particular text”* (Cohen & Cowen, 2008:178). Understanding procedures start promptly when the text’s title meets the eye for a first contact; it continues throughout the contact with the text’s content where the students process the graphic representation, and it culminates with after reading reflections that are traced back to the students’ prior knowledge repertoire.

One of the literary theories that have attracted massive attention for quite a long period is the reader response theory. The ideology behind this literary model is the focus on the reader as an active agent during the course of constructing his own comprehension of the text. Part of the immense attention it gains is traced back to its appeal for active learning and higher order skills that most modern approaches urge to plant (Wooley,2011).

In their study, Garzon and Castaneda-Pena (2015) conclude that the application of tasks that are traced back to the theoretical base of reader response theory give for the encouragement of meaning seeking procedures and the incarnation of higher order thinking skills that intervenes within comprehension processes. Another investigation carried out by Sahragard and Rasti (2013), demonstrated some positive and practical applications of the use of reader response theory as a classroom technique either with literary or (non) literary texts.

In another study conducted by Khatib (2011) revealed that the reference to reader response approach to teach English short stories can culminate in an aesthetic reading that would never create but rather enhances text comprehension.

## **2. Research question**

Given the bulk of research that has started during the 1970’s around the usefulness of reception theories and its relation with the current competency teaching approaches, the current work intends to focus on one layer the one that links response theories to layers of comprehension. It gives due attention to the bearings of the response method on the Algerian students’ rate of comprehension of the texts they are exposed to during the study cycle or outside the borders of the academic setting. For reasons of time constraints, the study primarily focused on the example of the literary texts. This survey aims at answering the following questions:



- what perceptions do students' hold in respect of the literary text instruction within FL classes?
- what are the different ways through which they realize text comprehension and are they enough aware of?
- what are students' perceptions about the efficacy of reader response theory in easing text's comprehension?.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Context**

The study is conducted at the university centre Abd Al Hafid Boussouf-Mila. Students are supposed to go through a three year phase of studies that end with a MA degree in English. The study relied on a sample of third year students who enjoy a relatively acceptable level of proficiency in reading. It is important to mention the fact that the LMD system in Algeria to teach English as a foreign language does not devote a special course to teach reading techniques or any related strategies in relation to text comprehension. In contradiction, it is worth mentioning that students have other courses where they are exposed to different types of texts and that they feel a need to refer to comprehension strategies or to construct their own responses in relation to the text content. The civilization course is one example that cause students to undergo the experience of reading texts related to the history of certain groups, by contrast; it does not incite the use of certain techniques or strategies to create comprehension lines with the text. It is taught in a desiccated manner. The module of literature, for instance; exposes students to obligatory reading of extracts of literary productions before tackling the issues and ideas present within the lines of the text, but again without a clear strategy to train students to do this in their own ways. With a special focus on the literature module, it was noticed that three hours are devoted to set students read selected extracts of literary texts that belong to different literary schools, genres and periods, however; it is observed that most of the teachers orient students to view the text from a unique angle the one that the teacher or the work of the critics intend. The interest of the course is rather cast on the construction of the global text theme with a special focus on the figurative language of the text and its role in giving the one way explanation or exactly the author's intention. In accordance with the objectives of the study, the research decided about preaching students on the strategy of text response for a period of four sessions, and then let them use their own reflections on the way they are being taught to approach literary texts. Students were given handouts about the different theories of response, their points of convergence and divergence. This was done with the aim of raising their consciousness about the importance of text response during the course of text comprehension. The whole number of participants was enlightened about reader response theory, reception theory, transactional theory, and dialogic thought hand in hand with text comprehension. This was done before the start of the inquiry for the sake of preventing potential confusions during data collection.

### 3.2. Participants

The total number of participants included 50 undergraduate third year students majoring in English as a foreign language. Their native tongue is Arabic. The students were of varying levels of proficiency and the two randomly selected classes out of three were mixed ability classes.

### 3.3. Data Collection Tools

The current study takes advantage of the use of an interview and a Likert scale questionnaire since the core aim is to measure students' perception about the use of response strategy to build up the text comprehension.

#### 3.3.1. The Questionnaire

The present inquiry plumps for a five point Likert scale because it primarily intends to scrutinize students' perceptions in relation to the significance of reader response instruction, the stratagems they opt for to nurture their confidence in creating personal lines with the text that would later on foster their literary text comprehension. The scale comprises three parts: part (1) discloses students' perceptiveness of the literary text instruction with regard to the experience they have in their academic milieu. Part (2) uncovers the degree to which students are aware about the methods they refer to in order to fully absorb a text, and part (3) is actually concerned with the core variable of the research, that is the bearing of reader response theories on text comprehension. Ten Likert type items were used within each part with five point levels of agreement range from: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree and 5= strongly agree in part (1) and (3) while part (2) which is chiefly concerned with students' stratagems to realize efficient ways of text comprehension includes 5 point multiple choice answers that vary between: 1= never, 2= rarely, 3= sometimes, 4=often and 5=very often. Some model items include: *I appeal to processes of decoding as part of reading comprehension, I analyze the text's textual structures in the course of constructing understanding, and I call for the activation of my background knowledge to ease comprehension.*

The data gathered from the scale were grouped then statistically analyzed for further analysis. For the interest of the study's principal aim, the scale was broken up into three variables. The first independent variable is the students' opinions about the literary text instruction *per se*, the second independent variable is the rate of students' awareness of the stratagems to realize text comprehension and the dependent variable is students' perceptions of the relevance of reader response theory in facilitating text comprehension.

### 3.4. Results and Discussion

The statistical data collected from the scale are exposed below. Part (1) of the scale is concerned with students' views of the literary text instruction; it is taken as the first independent variable that either hinders or urges comprehension.

The Std for the ten items in part (1) varies from 0,83 to 1 which indicates a general homogeneousness in students' selections of the agreement level. Except for some statements in the example of item (1), (3) and (7) in part (1), with an Std that exceeds the 1 value, participants share the same view points. Almost all

participants were in favour of the idea that students are able to rely on themselves to reach an optimal level of text understanding. The mean for part one ranges as well between 3 and 4, 06; it stands generally for a high value. The general statistical analysis implies a total positive perception about the response method as a core technique to teach literature sessions. Overall, students seem in agreement with the teaching instruction that would incite for group discussions, literature circles, reading diaries and puzzle solving as classroom strategies for general instruction.

		Reading texts are best taught via group discussion	Literature circles are beneficial	The teacher is the sole reference for explanation	The use of reading diaries is helpful for comprehension	The response method as a technique to teach texts
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	3,76	3,96	3,02	3,96	3,60
	Median	4,00	4,00	2,50	4,00	4,00
	Std. Deviation	1,153	,832	1,436	,856	,881

**Statistical analysis of items (1) to (5) in part (1)**

The data gathered from part (1) of the questionnaire gives for a general revision of the classroom methods used to teach FL texts in general and literary texts in particular. It seems that students agree for the idea of taking the lion's share in the course through expressing their viewpoints in relation to some corners of the literary text. As well, they link the pleasurable of the literature sessions to the sense of freedom they might get if they are set loose to consider the content from their own views.

		Reading journals enhances the quality of reading sessions	Students are apt to deal with literary texts	Literature sessions are pleasurable	Instructions should be based on solving puzzles	Literary text's instruction entails active reaction
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	4,06	3,00	4,08	3,94	3,90
	Median	4,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
	Std. Deviation	,843	1,245	,877	,978	,814

**Statistical analysis of items (6) to (10) in part (1)**

The following frequency tables are chosen as selected samples of students' levels of agreement with specific items in part (1).

**Reading texts are best taught via group discussion**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	2	4,0	4,0	4,0
disagree	9	18,0	18,0	22,0
neither agree nor disagree	1	2,0	2,0	24,0
agree	25	50,0	50,0	74,0
strongly agree	13	26,0	26,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (1) in part (1)**

The above table reflects the positive attitude students’ hold about group discussion in the literature course. Beach et.al (2016) further strengthen the use of this technique in the sense that inspecting the author’s language would open new interpretative horizons.

**Literature circles are beneficial**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	1	2,0	2,0	2,0
disagree	2	4,0	4,0	6,0
neither agree nor disagree	6	12,0	12,0	18,0
agree	30	60,0	60,0	78,0
strongly agree	11	22,0	22,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (2) in part (1)**

The above table represents the frequencies of item (2) concerning the efficiency of literature circles in making the most of the literary text and the relevance of the former in text comprehension. 30 students agree upon the idea while 11 strongly agree which invites a revision of the current policies in teaching reading.

The following table is selected as a sample representing the level of students’ agreement with item (9) in part (1).

**Instructions should be based on solving puzzles**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid disagree	6	12,0	12,0	12,0
neither agree nor disagree	7	14,0	14,0	26,0
agree	21	42,0	42,0	68,0
strogly agree	16	32,0	32,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (9) in part (1)**



The above statistical descriptions show that 37 out of 50 participants are in favour of the idea that teaching literary text should be based on the technique of solving the puzzles of meaning present within the text. In line with this Beach et.al (2016) claim that the first reading of any text will appear later misdirected only if supplemented by posing questions and problem solving techniques.

The forthcoming table speaks for the statistical frequencies of item (10) in the first part. It shows that 38 out of 50 participants consider that the response to the text is a part of active reaction; an idea that coincides with one of the objectives of the current competency approaches in FL teaching. Degen (2004) declares that tasks that would stimulate students' active responses are relevant in developing critical thinking skills, deducting conclusions and organizing one's understanding of the reading material.

**Literary text's instruction entails active reaction**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	1	2,0	2,0	2,0
disagree	1	2,0	2,0	4,0
neither agree nor disagree	10	20,0	20,0	24,0
agree	28	56,0	56,0	80,0
strongly agree	10	20,0	20,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (10) in part (1)**

The two tables below represent the statistical analysis of the ten items of part (2).

The second part of the questionnaire is a composition of statements that are meant to check students' awareness of the methods they resort to in order to achieve text comprehension. This part is taken as the second independent variable. If students arrive to develop pertinent strategies to deal with the text, they will wind up boosting their text comprehension.

The Std for the items ranges between 0,89 and 1,53. Overall, most of the Std values turn around 1 (Std=1) and this indicates a bid disparity in terms of students' levels of agreements with each statement. 50% of participants often refer to interpretational processes as a first step for text comprehension while 10% of them do not rely on the textual structure as a helpful factor to develop comprehension. This can be explained by the difficulty of the literary style in which the wording often hides more than it literally shows.

The mean for this part varies between 2,30 and 4,36, again and relatively to the whole range of items it has a high value. Though there a great incongruity has been observed in students' levels of agreement, 36% of them resort very often to activating their background knowledge to ease the rate of text comprehension. In their explanations, they state that most of the time they feel influenced by what they have read before. This was further strengthened in item (10) where 58% of them state that they very often create links between personal mental and visual images and text's content for optimal understanding.

		Interpretational processes to understand the text	Processes of decoding as used for comprehension	Focus on text's textual structure to increase rate of comprehension	Activation of background knowledge to ease comprehension	Reference to mental schemes for text comprehension
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,50	3,46	2,30	3,84	3,66
Median		4,00	4,00	2,00	4,00	4,00
Std. Deviation		1,074	1,054	1,199	1,113	,895

**Statistical analysis of item (1) to (5) in part (2)**

		Focusing on the text's line of thought to achieve understading	Reference to metacognitive strategies to reach comprehension	Retrieving individual word meaning as a step towards comprehension	Knowledge of literary genre is necessary for further understading	Creating links between mental-visual images and text's content for optimal understading
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3,96	3,24	3,58	3,02	4,36
Median		4,00	3,00	4,00	4,00	5,00
Std. Deviation		1,029	1,061	1,214	1,532	,898

**Statistical analysis of items (6) to (10) in part (2)**

The following tables are representatives of some reactions towards specific items.

The table shows that 32% of participants never resort to a focus on the structure of the text to comprehend it while 24% of them sometimes refer to analyzing the structure of the text.

**Focus on text's textual structure to increase rate of comprehension**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	never	16	32,0	32,0	32,0
	rarely	14	28,0	28,0	60,0
	sometimes	12	24,0	24,0	84,0
	often	5	10,0	10,0	94,0
	very often	3	6,0	6,0	100,0
	Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (3) in part (2)**

**Reference to mental schemes for text comprehension**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid rarely	7	14,0	14,0	14,0
sometimes	10	20,0	20,0	34,0
often	26	52,0	52,0	86,0
very often	7	14,0	14,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (5) in part (2)**

The above table shows that 66% of the participants very often use their mental schemes for text comprehension. This can be explained by the nature of the human brain which is a complex of relationships between the nerves that would allow for the schemes to function properly and so be used automatically.

The forthcoming tables are selected as pertinent instances of students' choice.

The table below shows that 42% often refer to creating mental links throughout the way of comprehension. In this context, Woolley states that: "when readers construct mental images during reading it enables them to form strong links with personal meanings and develop deeper levels of reading engagement" (2011:87).

**Creating links between mental-visual images and text's content for optimal understanding**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid rarely	3	6,0	6,0	6,0
sometimes	5	10,0	10,0	16,0
often	13	26,0	26,0	42,0
very often	29	58,0	58,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (10) in part (2)**

The following two tables represent the statistical analysis of the ten items in part (3).

A perfect homogeneity is reflected upon students' responses with the values of the Std that vary between 0, 60 and 1, 25. The mean values range between 1, 96 and 4, 28, overall the mean value is fluctuated between a low and a high rate.

This part of the questionnaire deals with the essential idea of the study which is the relevance of reader response theory in smoothing text comprehension. This part is taken as the dependent variable. The extent to which students can absorb the uses of reader response theory rely on their perceptions of literary text instruction but also on the degrees of their awareness of the ways

through the realization of text comprehension. Most of the selections were homogenous which means that students in this part almost possess the same opinions. They seem to agree upon the idea that response theories are psychologically helpful in raising students' sense of self confident. The fact that students can share ideas further than the ones expressed in the text will install in students' spirits a sense of autonomy and confidence.

		Response theories enable students to be self- confident and ready to share their ideas	Incorporating elements of readers' identity aids text comprehension	Written summaries optimize good responses	Activating ad questioning prior knowledge is relevant in text comprehension	Retelling the text's content from one's point of view accelerates comprehension
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4,28	3,58	4,28	4,18	3,94
Median		4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Std. Deviation		,757	,950	,701	,661	,740

**Statistical analysis of items (1) to (5) in part (3)**

		Readers are are replication of authors	Texts need readers to fill in the lacking ideas	The interpretative side of the text is present from day one	Interpretation is the semantic actualization of text comprehension	Without a response the text remains inert
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1,96	3,66	3,50	3,06	4,06
Median		2,00	4,00	3,00	4,00	4,00
Std. Deviation		,925	,917	,678	1,252	,913

**Statistical analysis for items (6) to (10) in part (3)**

The following frequencies tables are selected as instances of students' reactions towards certain items from part (3).

**Retelling the text's content from one's point of view accelerates comprehension**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid disagree	1	2,0	2,0	2,0
neither agree nor disagree	12	24,0	24,0	26,0
agree	26	52,0	52,0	78,0
strongly agree	11	22,0	22,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies table for item (5) in part (3)**

The above table indicates an overall agreement that retelling the text's content from one's point of view speeds up the rate of comprehension. 74% of participants are in favour of this thought. This can be linked to other parts of the questionnaire, it can be said that students have linked the content of this item to the use of diaries and reading journals in part (1) because it is the only way through which they are set free to produce new meanings and understandings other than the ones mentioned in the text.

**Texts need readers to fill in the lacking ideas**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	2	4,0	4,0	4,0
disagree	4	8,0	8,0	12,0
neither agree or disagree	8	16,0	16,0	28,0
agree	31	62,0	62,0	90,0
strongly agree	5	10,0	10,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies of item (7) in part (3)**

72% of participants agree that most of the texts are full of gaps that need to be filled with the readers' thoughts. According to Wood and Lodge (1988), the literary text is filled with unpredicted twists and unforeseen expectations, thus; it is for the readers to employ their own abilities fill out the gaps and missing spots in the text.

**Without a response the text remains inert**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly disagree	1	2,0	2,0	2,0
disagree	2	4,0	4,0	6,0
neither agree nor disagree	7	14,0	14,0	20,0
agree	23	46,0	46,0	66,0
strongly agree	17	34,0	34,0	100,0
Total	50	100,0	100,0	

**Frequencies of item (10) in part (3)**

The last item in the questionnaire summarizes perfectly its idea. The text’s meaning and by definition its reception by the community are two closely related thoughts. The text reception by readers renders it a vivid object; a process without which the text remains still and by definition comprehension stays put in the sense that when there is no response comprehension horizons are so limited.

**Correlations**

	perception of the instruction	perceptions of response theory
Kendall's tau_b	Correlation Coefficient	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,016
	N	,879
		50
perceptions of response theory	Correlation Coefficient	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,016
	N	,879
		50

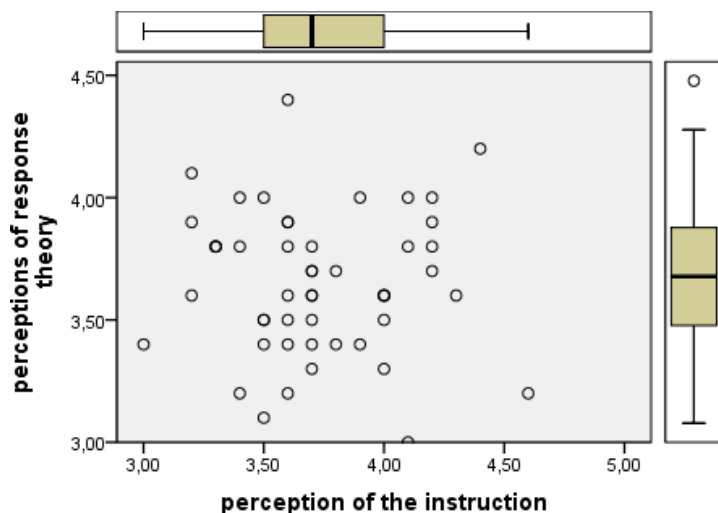
**The correlation between variable (1) and variable (3) in the questionnaire**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3,744	,455		8,226	,000
perception of the instruction	-,025	,122	-,030	-,208	,836

a. Dependent Variable: perceptions of response theory

**Regression results for variable (1) and variable (3) in the questionnaire**

The above tables show a negative correlation between literary text instruction and response method as a facilitator of text comprehension. The value of  $\alpha$  is more than 0,05 ( $\alpha=0,879$ ) which indicates that the current method being followed to teach the literary text is not that helpful to enable students to reach advanced levels of text comprehension. The regression results reinforce this conclusion ( $t= -,20$  and  $\alpha= 0,836$ ). The table results ensure that the present teaching methods being implemented to train students to understand the text are not that efficient and they do not affect text comprehension.



**Regression chart for variable (1) and variable (3)**

		degrees of awareness	perceptions of response theory
Kendall's tau_b	degrees of awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,966
		N	50
perceptions of response theory	degrees of awareness	Correlation Coefficient	-,004
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,966
		N	50

**The correlation between variable (2) and variable (3) in the questionnaire**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

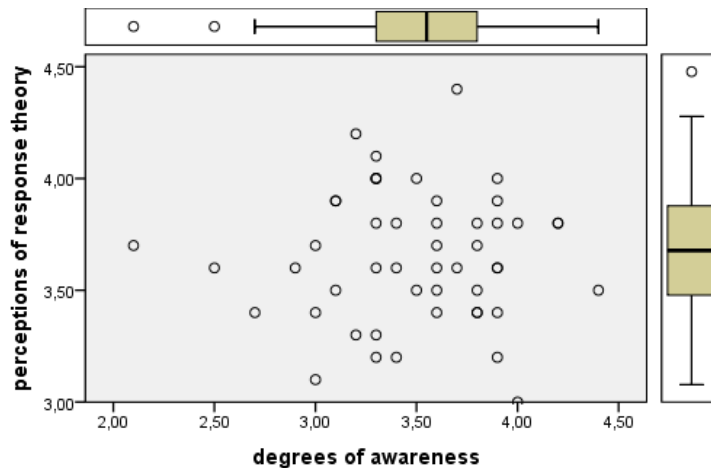
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3,625	,334		10,847	,000
	degrees of awareness	,007	,095	,011	,076	,940

a. Dependent Variable: perceptions of response theory

**Regression results for variable (2) and variable (3) in the questionnaire**

The results of the correlation and regression indicate a loose relationship between students' awareness of the methods they use to deal with the text and their overall text comprehension. The correlation table results in a high  $\alpha$  level ( $\alpha=0,96$ ).

The regression results further accentuate that loose link between variable (2) and variable (3). This signposts that students own efforts towards developing text comprehension are weak or at least not that efficient ( $t=0,076$ ,  $\alpha=0,940$ ). Still the table signals that students' methods throughout the way of building text understanding affects with 1% the rate of their comprehension.



### Regression table for variable (2) and variable (3)

The data gathered from the statistical analysis indicate that FL students hold negative perceptions towards the way they are being instructed to build up their text comprehension. They articulate their negative perceptions towards the sole reliance on the teacher to comprehend the text content. On the other hand, the results show that even the methods being followed by students for the sake of understanding are not really that efficient and consequently they do not help optimizing an acceptable level of comprehension.

## 4. Conclusion

The findings of the current study disclose the fact that opening new horizons other than the ones being currently followed by the bulk of the teachers to teach the reading skill can better submerge students in the process of text comprehension. The first part of scale clearly signals to the deficiencies of the methods that teachers use to explain or deal with the literary text. Students are enough conscious of the import of debates, literature circles, diaries and journals to set them free to orchestrate their use of their mental schemes, previous experiences and linguistic faculties to piece together an overall comprehension of the text. It is clear as well that the mission of discussing the content of the text does not only rely on the teacher as a domineering factor in this process. Actually, students as potential skillful readers can be dependent on themselves to rethink the different option of dealing with the text content. Courses of reading are supposed to be congenial and delightful if and only if students are set loose to question then build up their text understanding.

It is worth mentioning that students are aware of the importance of developing reliable methods to discuss the text and approach its comprehensions; however, the results of part (2) urge for a need to orient them while they try their own styles to realize the goal of understanding. The majority of participants agree that the use of interpretational processes is relevant for text comprehension. Indeed, the core of response theories calls for the execution of mental representations and schemes for text comprehension. The latter stimulate the creation of links between the content of the text and the different personal





experiences and background knowledge which enlarges the plausible comprehension prospects.

Reader response as a classroom and reading technique can help install in students a sense of self-confidence to spell out their thoughts. In accordance with the findings of the second parts of the questionnaire, if students deal with the reading text with an incorporation of their background knowledge and personal experience, their comprehension will be massively influenced. One way of realizing the objectives of reader response theory is through the journal writing; it enables students to move further than the text literal meaning and set lose their thinking to what suits comprehension aims. This leads directly to better transaction with the text and better comprehension gains. Thus, it is amid the teacher's duty to find suitable ways as to how to free students' minds from the one and unique view of the reading text and to put an end to the fear from the process of reading in the FL. If well applied, reader response would ease the tasks both of teacher and learners. In conclusion, the study results hint to the import of training students on the choice of the perfect response method that would accelerate the rate of processing and understanding the reading

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