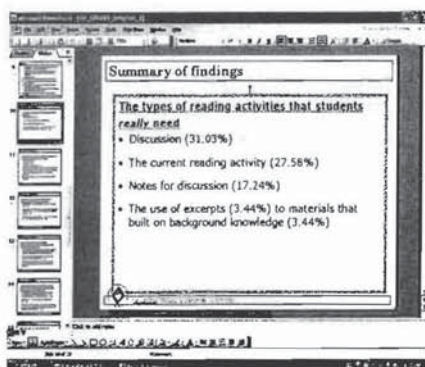
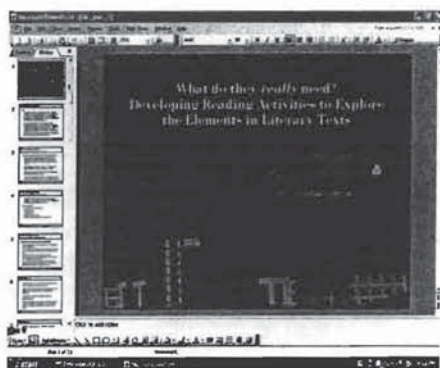


WHAT DO THEY *REALLY* NEED? DEVELOPING READING ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE THE ELEMENTS IN LITERARY TEXTS

Reading literary texts can be a daunting task for students. They may easily get frustrated by the difficult language used, not to mention the elements in the texts. The reading activities carried out in the classroom are intended to help students, but do they *really* help the students? The study sought to examine: (1) the students' evaluation of the usefulness of the 'worksheet' used in the literature course in helping them to explore and understand the elements; (2) the aspects that students think should be taken into account in developing these activities; and (3) the types of reading activities that the students *really* need to explore and understand the elements in literary texts. Questionnaire data from 29 TESL and ESL undergraduates in the Comparative Literature course showed that discussion and the current 'worksheet' are the preferred reading activities. The study highlights the strengths and weaknesses of worksheets used in terms of the levels of difficulty (question items and tasks), allocation of time for activity, and, most importantly, adequacy of knowledge of subject matter or content. Students also reported preferring more pair and/or group discussions in class. The findings point to the importance of taking into account learners' learning styles, affective attitudes, relevance, usefulness and impact of materials (Tomlinson, 2004) and question types and questioning strategies (Carter & Long, 1996) in developing reading activities not only in the Comparative Literature course but also in the teaching of literary texts at the tertiary level.



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