

A New Interpretation of English Reading Activities: The Implementation of the Principles of Deep Knowledge

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Abstract

*Reading is the main method to learn and novel reading not only helps language learning and knowledge expansion but also increases fun and thus encourages motivation. Many have reported on the theoretical and practical prospects of novel reading in ELT, but rarely did they discuss the issue from an interdisciplinary viewpoint. This pioneer study aimed to explore novel reading activities from a newly developed theory, the Principles of Deep Knowledge (PDK), in addition to 154 college students' fondness level of language activities via the novel *The Five People You Meet In Heaven*. The results of this study generate various effective and fun activities that could enhance learners' reading ability of longer text, increase reading interest, change and expand their habitual domains based on the PDK characteristics and encourage life-long reading habit.*

Keywords: English novel reading, reading activities, ELT, Habitual Domains, Principles of Deep Knowledge, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*.

1. Introduction

English novel reading means fun for some, but challenge for others. Many college students, despite the long history of learning English over a decade, have never finished reading an English novel. It is every teacher's hope to design activities that will meet the students' needs and likes. As a teacher and researcher, the author, having the goal of helping learners learn and enjoying reading simultaneously, developed a variety of activities based on the world famous novel *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. These activities brought together the cross-disciplinary elements to expand perspectives of reading methods, stimulate reading interest, enhance reading motivation and hopefully would eventually lead to reading habit.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Importance of novel reading

Many Taiwanese college students do not have an English reading habit and lack opportunities to practice English reading outside of class; as a result, their extra-curricular target language input in the EFL context is insufficient thus causes ineffective learning outcome. Therefore, the author has been searching for a way to help students enjoy reading and encourage reading habit to cultivate life-long readers, for learning is more likely to continue when learners enjoy the process. Among different reading methods, the Extensive Reading (ER) approach suits the need for extra-curricular reading the best for it provides affluent, appropriate and meaningful target language (English in this case) input in quantity and quality, without viewing language as only vocabulary and grammatical exercises. Its aim is to let a language learner read in the new language while enjoying it. ER can be adapted into any language program or curriculum, and it can also be adjusted to the learner's age and level because it provides a learner-centered, personal, and pleasurable learning experience to avoid stress or competition (Bamford & Day, 2004, p.1). In ER, learners read easy books on their own in their interest areas and at their levels in large amount in the target language, and gradually progress into more challenging materials as their skills of reading improve. They read for gist, fun and confidence (Bamford & Day, 2004, p.1). ER improves affective factors as well as language ability (Day & Bamford, 1998, pp.21-31).

Successful ER programs have been reported all over the world and many of them took place in Asia, such as HKERS (Hong Kong Extensive Reading Scheme) in Hong Kong (Green, 2005; Yu, 1999), SSS (Start with Simple Stories) in Japan (Furukawa, 2006) and many programs in Taiwan (e.g. Cheng, 2003, Chi, 2004; Chiang, 2009; Sheu, 2004). Unfortunately, problems often hold back the popularity of ER in practice. Obstacles raised in the literature included the difficult of motivating learners to read extensively for a longer period of time, the unfamiliarity with the autonomous learning style and value in ER, the low priority of practice reading in learners' life compared to their other class, work or social life (Kirchhoff, 2013; Shen, 2008), students' attitude (Wang, 2011) and so on. To overcome these problems, the author started looking for solutions to the above problems and methods to encourage reading habit, and encountered the theory of "Habitual Domains".

2.2. Habitual Domains (HD) and the Nine Principles of Deep Knowledge (PDK)

According to HD, each person accumulates ways of thinking, judging, responding and handling problems from experience and knowledge, and forms a certain set of thoughts and behaviors. This set of thoughts and behaviors will eventually stabilize without much expansion or change, and become one's habit. The collection of the thoughts and behaviors, which dictate our habit, is called the habitual domain (HD) (Yu, 1995, p.2). HD consists of four sub-domains. First, the Potential Domain refers to our brain potential and all the possible ideas in it. In theory, it's limitless. Second, the Actual Domain is the existing ideas that we possess in our brain. We use it regularly because we extract ideas from it all the time. Additionally, our Actual Domain includes a part that underlines our behavior, the Observable Domain. Next, new ideas are often derived from the existing ideas. The Reachable Domain is the new ideas that are the results of the expansion of the Actual Domain. Finally, the Activation Probability refers to the chance that a certain idea catches your attention (Yu, 1995, p.27). Figure 1 illustrates the hierarchy of these sub-domains (Chiang, 2012). In other words, our HD includes the enormous yet still expandable potential domain, which contains the reachable domain and actual domain. The purpose of understanding our habitual domain is to "pull more potential into our actual domain, to be able to use more of what is really available in our virtually limitless power" (Yu, 1995, p.28). The theory claims that unless something extraordinary happens, our HDs would somehow stabilize and make us predictable and uninventive (Yu, 1995, p.3).

HD theory considers "circuit patterns" in the brain as the key to change and expand HDs. If the circuit patterns are exercised repeatedly and thus strengthened, they will help us make "intuitive" decisions (Yu, 2009, p.72). Similar to the brain cells, the circuit patterns have the "use it or lose it" feature and memory could be strengthened through elaborative encoding (Chiang, 2012; Medina, 2008). That being the case, information should be presented repeatedly, through elaborative encoding and deeper thinking, for longer retention and better effect. To apply this in English reading, learners are suggested to read as often and much as possible to strengthen the circuit patterns to expand their HD.

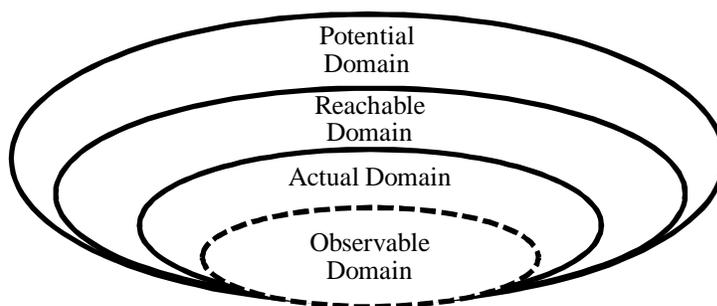


Figure 1 Four elements of HD

Yu (1995) proposed the Nine Principles of Deep Knowledge as tools for HD expansion (Yu, 1995, p.47; 2002), which are "deep and down", "alternating", "contrasting and complementing", "revolving and cycling", "inner connection", "changing and transforming", "contradiction", "cracking and ripple", and "void". The following summarizes the principles (Yu, 1995, pp.49-63; Yu & Chen, 2012, pp.34-35).

1. Deep and down principle: There are two underlying meanings in this, lowering stress level and staying humble. Lowering stress would allow us to become attentive to covert thoughts and enlarge our actual domain. Dropping our attitude could help us become open and willing to absorb new information and accept new possibility.

2. Alternating principle: Omitting or changing combined assumptions could help generate numerous new ideas and possibilities.
3. Contrasting and complementing principle: Contrasting ideas may also be complementary and therefore we should always think more deeply beyond the literal meaning.
4. Revolving and cycling principle: Many things go through a cycle of establishing, prospering, stabilizing and finally decreasing, or even unpredictable ups and downs. We should beware, prepare and try to solve the problems in advance.
5. Inner connection principle: Building and exercising connections strengthens our circuit patterns and expands the HD. Connecting and associating old and new knowledge is the most effective learning method.
6. Changing and transforming principle: We change when new things happen to us, and so does our HD. People who are more adaptable to change have better chance to survive, evolve and succeed.
7. Contradiction principle: Looking at things from a different angle can help us revise our assumptions or change our conclusions. Contradiction is not necessarily bad, for it provides a chance for improvement.
8. Cracking and ripple principle: When there are subsystems, it is inevitable that conflicts and inconsistencies exist. In our HD, these could be the negative influences from the past and inflexible modes of thinking. It is important to discover and mend them.
9. Void principle: Outside our HDs exist many things we do not think or beware of. We tend to think based on the easiest and most convenient solution and reject other possibilities. Therefore, it is important to free some of our own HDs and make room for new information outside our HDs regularly to expand our HDs continuously.

HD and PDK have been applied to various academic fields. Regarding language teaching and learning, Huang (1999) has used HD in analyzing and teaching “Hamlet”, exploring his thinking and behavior, to explain the value and importance of literary classics. Lin (2013) researched how PDK can generate benefits in teaching College Chinese courses. Chiang (2011) elaborated on the importance of PDK in language learning and how PDK could improve language teaching and learning. She concluded that students with better learning achievement possessed all nine principles, suggesting the close connection of the learning achievement and PDK (2011). Therefore, to increase students’ willingness to read, for example, teachers can apply the “changing and transforming principle” and choose materials with more up-to-date topics to raise students’ curiosity in learning. Teachers can also occasionally use easier text to lower the learners’ anxiety (deep and down principle) based on the spirit of the ER, or decide materials based on the learners’ interest and level (the alternating principle). Additionally, repeated reading and narrow reading (for instance of the same author or series) can help build new knowledge on the existing knowledge based on the “inter connection principle” (Chiang, 2012).

HD and ER are similar in spirit. For example, ER requires a more relaxing reading environment, just like the “deep and down principle” suggests. Low anxiety is likely to help students change their viewpoint of English reading from high to low competition, which means that the students would accept change and expand their HD and strengthen the circuit patterns. On teaching, the “revolving and cycling principle” helps teachers take the unstable learning stages into consideration and anticipate problems beforehand; teachers could prepare a variety of activities, responding to students’ learning emotion or characteristics before the learning interest evaporates. Both ER and HD are of life-long benefit to the learners, and they both take the positive experience in the learning itself to feed back to the later learning repeatedly, create a virtuous circle to maximize learning, enlarge HD and develop lasting learning habit.

Based on the above literature, the purpose of this paper is to enunciate a pioneer attempt on exploring how PDK can be applied in English novel reading activities because the theory of habitual domain educates us about how take up a good habit and maintain it. To meet students’ interest and needs, the author designed a number of activities based on a survey result of students’ favorite classroom activities and the novel *The Five People You Meet In Heaven*, and hoped to encourage English novel reading through implementing PDK in reading activities.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

Five classes of students registered in College English courses at a national university in northern Taiwan participated in the study. These five classes consisted of three compulsory basic College English classes and two elective advanced College English classes; as a result, the participants varied in grades and majors (excluding English majors). Among the one 154 participants, 67 (43.5%) were male and 87 (56.5%) were female.

The students were mixed in English level, ranging from pre-intermediate to proficient, but on average approximated B1-C1 (Council of Europe, 2001) according to the Common European Framework. In general, students who are in the advance classes have higher proficiency than that of basic classes. The proficiency level is provided only to serve as reference because the fondness of activities does not appear to direct contradict or correlate with proficiency level.

3.2. Course design

In the author's College English courses, the students are asked to read at least a total of three novels or graded readers in groups each semester, in addition to the textbook-unit-based supplementary materials. The novels and the supplementary materials were extra-curricular readings, following the extensive reading approach. The three novels or readers were chosen by the groups, recommended or approved by the author based on the relevance to the textbook topics. Nonetheless, one of the three novels would be selected to be a class reader and the author would schedule discussion hours for deeper studying while planning the syllabus. In other words, the class would read one class novel and two other self-chosen novels/readers in a semester. In the current study, the novel *The Five People You Meet In Heaven* is selected as the class reader.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Questionnaire and consent

With students' agreement, the author explained the purpose of the research and asked the students who were willing to participate in the study to fill in a questionnaire. 154 students out of 169 students agreed. The questionnaire asked the students to grade each of the 30 language activities based on their level of fondness towards the activity on the scale of 1 to 10 (1 being the least favorite), which had been incorporated in the class throughout the course (Table 1).

Table 1: Fondness of activities

Activity	Score	Activity	Score	Activity	Score	Activity	Score
Lecture		Debate		Translation		Outlining	
Film watching		Q & A		Oral report		Song listening	
Summarizing		Rewriting stories		Role play (on book)		Original story writing	
Discussing culture issues		Reading diary		Crossword puzzles		Play creating and performing	
Extended reading		Essay writing		Word-bit puzzles		Textbook exercises	
Vocabulary checking		Group discussion		Feedback writing		Silent reading in class	
Reading aloud		Group competition		Listening exercise		Comparing & contrasting	
Sentence / content restructuring				Personal experience sharing			

3.3.2. Novel

To encourage novel reading in the college English course, the author has been including novel reading in College English courses for several years. Among the many used novels, *The Five People You Meet In Heaven* (Albom, 2003) was chosen for this paper. The main character, Eddie, was a maintenance man at an amusement park called Ruby Pier. The leg injury he received as a soldier during World War II made him give up his dream and lived an uninteresting life. On his 83th birthday, an accident happened in the park and he died saving a little girl, which surprisingly began the real story of the book. Eddie woke up in heaven and encountered five people who had significantly impacted his life when he was alive. Eddie learned a lesson from each of them and finally the meaning of life and obtained his inner happiness.

The novel was chosen for several reasons. First of all, the length of the book is appropriate and manageable. The book is 196 pages long and approximately 200 words per page. Second, this novel has meaningful themes in the book. These themes resonance with students' daily life, and encourage discussion and inner reflection after reading. The unexpected characters and how their lives intertwined with Eddie's life lure and educate readers to progress and cleanse their minds with Eddie's lessons.

In addition, the language was not abstruse and unfathomable. The contrast between the light language and the heavy themes show the readers how powerful and witty language can be. Last but not least, the book's worldwide popularity indicates the high acceptance of the book by most people. Therefore, the author considered the novel a good start and important asset to the current study.

3.3.3. Data collection and analysis

The data were collected in May 2013. The participants spent around five minutes filling in the questionnaire during the break. The answers were entered into statistical analyses with SPSS to obtain descriptive statistics.

4. Findings

First, the means and standard deviations (S.D.) are listed from high to low in Table 2. The means of all the activities scored higher than five and showed the feature of normal distribution. Students' favorite activities included film watching, song listening, group competition, lecture and role-play.

Although comparing means is an easy way to rank the activities, its drawback is the impact of the extreme values. To avoid such impact, the author included mode, which is the number that appears most often in a set of data, for analysis. Four activities were scored 8, including group discussion, Q & A, crossword puzzles and word-bit puzzles (finding two parts of a word from a randomly ordered table) (Day, Bassett, Bowler et al., 2011, p.47), and the modes of 7 included personal experience sharing, lecture, listening exercise, role-play, discussion culture issues, feedback writing, extended reading, original story writing, rewriting stories, play creating and performing, oral report, and comparing and contrasting.

Table 2 Fondness level of activities (from high to low)

Activity	Mean	S.D.	Mode
Film watching	9.10	1.225	10
Song listening	7.99	1.726	8
Group competition	7.24	1.920	8
Personal experience sharing	6.92	1.882	7
Lecture	6.91	1.867	7*
Group discussion	6.84	1.643	8
Listening exercise	6.78	1.891	7
Role play (based on textbook)	6.78	1.921	7
Discussing culture issues	6.76	1.766	7*
Q & A	6.68	2.051	8
Feedback writing	6.68	1.861	7
Extended reading	6.62	1.787	8
Original story writing	6.55	2.102	7
Crossword puzzles	6.53	2.071	8
Word-bit puzzles	6.51	2.024	8
Reading aloud	6.47	2.043	6*
Silent reading in class	6.45	2.030	6
Rewriting stories	6.45	2.042	7
Play creating and performing	6.38	2.099	7
Oral report	6.37	2.144	7
Comparing and contrasting	6.26	1.869	7
Translation	6.18	1.884	5*
Sentence / content restructuring	5.86	1.820	6
Textbook exercises	5.79	1.944	5
Essay writing	5.68	1.913	6
Reading diary	5.66	2.020	6
Outlining	5.35	1.905	6
Vocabulary checking	5.21	2.108	5
Summarizing	5.15	1.892	6
Debate	5.11	2.443	5

* There are several modes, and the listed is the lowest.

5. Discussion

Experienced language teachers make use of different activities to interest learners, raise enjoyment and enforce input. The ultimate goal is to ‘learn while having fun’, before learners’ initial short interest evaporates. Additionally, while planning the lessons, teachers should develop activities based on the learners’ needs and learning status, examine what benefits the activities would bring and ensure that entertainment does not outweigh learning. The author chose the activities based on the survey and furthermore combined them with the PDK. Although the activities were not new per se, the author wanted to offer a new inter-disciplinary angle and added values to these activities and hopefully provide teachers who are interested in asking learners to read novels some ideas to commence. In the following, the activities for each principle of the PDK will be listed and elaborated, preceding a table that summarizes the PDK, suggested activities and survey outcomes.

Deep and down principle: In order to lower the stress caused by the first or early encounter with novel reading, teachers should remind learners about the correct attitude of extra-curricular novel reading, constantly and repeatedly. Extra-curricular novel reading is different from reading for tests, i.e., extensive reading vs. intensive reading. Reading for tests places great importance on details, while novel reading in the current study focuses on the general understanding of the story. Constant stopping and looking up words in the dictionary will slow down the reading speed and fluency, which is more likely to decrease the reading fun. In addition, most novels have themes or messages that the authors want to convey. Through stories, the themes or messages could be delivered with dramatically lower level of seriousness and become more approachable. For example, in the novel, Eddie had to learn a lesson from each of the five people, which are “interconnectedness”, “sacrifice”, “forgiveness”, “love” and “meaning of life”. If the teachers lectured about these themes, e.g. through defining each of them, the learners would probably lose their interest after a very short time. On the contrary, using a novel to guide and learn these valuable lessons not only lets the readers empathize with the character but also releases the stress in learning such serious topics. Also, to lower the pressure in learning, teachers could use short warm-up activities to calm the students and get ready for the class. For instance, the teachers could read aloud some meaningful or important passages from each lesson, prepare review vocabulary exercises of different facilities in a theme park, or play songs from the novel (e.g. Eddie and Marguerite’s song *You made me love you* (Garland, 1951)) or songs that fit the novel, like *100 years* by Five for Fighting (2003) or *A place in this world* by Taylor Swift (1996).

Alternating principle: Albon used three different intertwining timelines and different points of views (first and third person) to tell the story. This writing technique allows the reader to become Eddie, experience in person, step out of the story and become an objective reader again. The story itself has provided the alternating principle on the reader’s roles. To further extend or explore this feature, teachers could ask students to rewrite the story between different points of view, for instance, changing a section from first person point of view writing into the third person point of view summary, or vice versa. Or, teachers could ask students to change elements of the story and discuss or report on how this change will influence the story. For example, the first person Eddie met after his death was the Blue Man, a stranger to Eddie even though they had both been in the theme park around the same time. Their first meeting was in the Blue Man’s heaven – the Ruby Pier when Eddie was eight years old. Even though Eddie did not know the Blue Man when he was little, he accidentally caused a car crash by playing balls on the street, which led to the heart failure and death of the Blue Man. During the discussion, students could try to change elements, e.g. the place they met from Ruby Pier to the car scene and discuss the influences. Another change could be the order of these five people, add or remove one person, or add another chapter at the end of the story, even rewrite the story based on the new change and see how it develops.

Contrasting and complementing principle: The point of this principle is to emphasize the contrast/opposite and complementary features. One common activity to look at two sides of an issue is debate. Because debate scored relatively low (mean: 5.11, mode: 5), teachers could use compare-and-contrast to find out the similarities and differences in group discussions, reports or writing. In this novel, Eddie’s brother is very different from Eddie in terms of living style and personality traits; students could compare these two characters and say whom they would like to befriend more. Or, we can enlarge the scope to compare cultures and religions, e.g. our native culture and the American culture. Then we can discuss about what we can learn from their culture and vice versa. Wedding is another interesting topic for students to research and discuss. Taiwanese weddings and American weddings are so different from the preparation, required items at the wedding, present registry, paying expenses, wedding dress, seating arrangement and so on. If students had enough preparation time, this topic would make a great success.

Revolving and cycling principle: Experienced teachers know about the unstable learning status of the students; the status is changeable. Therefore, before the class, teachers are suggested to anticipate and prepare several activities ready for use and search for relevant information, to quickly respond to the students' learning mood. For instance, on story comprehension, teachers could lecture or let students do some group work while the concentration is getting thin. Teachers could let students take turns to complete a summary of the story, or even let them question each other through group competitions. Students could form their own groups and ask really difficult questions to other groups in order to win. This usually heats up the classroom atmosphere, keeps the concentration to a high level, and creates an interactive and highly energetic classroom. Nevertheless, the author suggests that teachers could talk about cultural and conceptual issues directly because students may not have enough experience to comprehend certain issues. That being the case, a teacher's experience sharing could make the course more effective and efficient.

Inner connection principle: This principle addresses the establishing and strengthening of the connections between any two things and the more connections the better, so that our HD can expand to benefit learning. A novel contains hundred thousands of words, but not every word should be memorized. Only the key or meaningful words would appear repeatedly and are worth learning. Many vocabulary exercises could replace boring vocabulary list and translation and increase the fun in learning. For example, crossword puzzles, based on the plot clues, are interesting exercises. For lower level learners, word-bit puzzle is an alternative. Word-bit puzzle (Day, Bassett, Bowler et al., 2011, p.47) means that students choose meaningful words from the story, for instance twenty words, and then split them into two parts, resulting in forty word-bits, and place the bits randomly in a table. Students test each other for word review. This way, the vocabulary is strongly connected to the story, rather than simply words on the vocabulary list. To strengthen and exercise connection, the most important is the building of new knowledge on what we already know, and establishing the channels between the new knowledge and personal experience. Through this, our circuit patterns are strengthened, memory is finely encoded and HD is expanded. Therefore, the design of activities should make use of students' existing knowledge, with their personal experience, to initiate readers' response for deeper encoding and thinking, which will lead to longer memory detention and better learning effect. Several writing activities are suggested. First, students could write down how the story is connected to the real life in terms of 'fate' and 'parenting'. Although these two themes are not the most important five themes from the story, they are somehow crucial to our life. Students could also choose their favorite sentences or passages from the story and elaborate their reasons, or write down their feedback, together with their own past personal experiences or future expectations to relate the story to their life for memory enhancement.

Changing and transforming principle: Readers are often filled with thoughts and feelings after reading a good story. Besides sharing the ideas and feelings, trying to write stories of one's own is creativity. Everyone has the ability of storytelling, although not as good as Albom, students can write their own short stories (1-2 pages) based on the five lessons (interconnectedness, sacrifice, forgiveness, love and meaning of life). Upon completion, students could share, proofread and revise by themselves and finally the whole class could vote for the best three. Sometimes, the author asked the students to add simple sketch to the short stories, if the students seemed artistic. Regarding the speaking exercises, students could rewrite a certain scene from the novel and act out in groups; this exercises writing, speaking and listening skills simultaneously. More advanced could accept more challenging tasks. For instance, by giving students a title similarly to the book (e.g. *The _____ (how many people or who) _____ (someone) meet _____ (place or time)*), they were able to create their own short play in small groups and perform with multimedia aids. From the author's experience, teachers were very likely to be amazed by the students' creativity.

Contradiction principle: As mentioned earlier, Albom used different timelines and point of views in the story to describe Eddie's life and character. This sometimes creates confusion. Therefore, the author suggests that teachers could ask grouped students to work out Eddie's life chronologically, i.e. what happened to Eddie at what age; for example, Eddie received the baseball on his 7th birthday, attended Blue Man's funeral on his 8th birthday, met Marguerite on his 16th birthday and then joined the army, etc. Additionally, the fifth person Eddie met was a little girl he accidentally killed, who could not speak English. When she met Eddie, she said, "You burn me. You make me fire." (p.199) Students could discuss how they feel about this non-standard English and why it is important to use this form here. If this had been a standard accurate English sentence, would they have felt differently? With reverse thinking or thinking outside the box, students would understand the power of words and the work in more depth.

Cracking and ripping principle: The novel had been adapted into a film, but details were inconsistent in the novel and the film, e.g. color of clothes, the name of the diner, names of facilities in the park, appearance order of events, dialogues, etc. Students can find the differences between the novel and the film, or try to find the illogical connections in the film. These are the implementation of the cracking and ripping principle, to find the inconsistencies in the subsystems. Moreover, teachers could introduce or encourage other novels that have similar themes in class, to discuss or elaborate the themes in different works. This works well with the principle of contrasting and complementary, because readers can think about one theme from different angles and compare the works. Take this novel as an example, the final and most important lesson of the novel is to learn ‘the meaning of life’; therefore, students can read Albom’s other novels (e.g. *Tuesdays with Morrie* (1997), *For one more day* (2006), *The time keeper* (2012)) and find out if the same philosophy stands. *My sister’s keeper* by Picoult (2004) also discussed the meaning of life but from an entirely different angle, which the author also recommends.

Void principle: No matter how good we think we are, there is always someone who is better. Discussing and exchanging what we have learned from the reading with others expands our HD. Follow-up reading on literature reviews or critiques helps absorb knowledge from experts, which equals the spirit of staying humble from the deep and down principle, about how to analyze and evaluate literary works. This again enhances deeper thinking, refines encoding and expands our potential domain (our schema), which in time will lead to better reading fluency and comprehension.

Finally, the nine principles of PDK, the above activities and the students’ survey results are summarized in table 3 for readers’ convenience.

Table 3 PDK, suggested activities and students’ favorite activities

PDK		Suggested activities	Students’ favorite activities
Principle	Feature		
Deep & down	Relaxing, staying humble	Reading out passages, song listening	Song listening Lecture
Alternating	Removing assumption, creating new combinations	Writing from different point of views, discussing the influences of changing elements in the story, writing a new ending	Group discussion Oral report Rewriting stories
Contrasting & complementing	Considering the opposite	Comparing and contrasting characters, religions, ceremony	Group discussion Discussing cultural issues Comparing & contrasting
Revolving & cycling	Understanding the circle, following the flow	Observing class and adopting different activities to change class atmosphere when needed	Lecture Group competition Q & A
Inner connection	Establishing strong channels	Preparing vocabulary review activities, connecting old & new knowledge, connecting with personal experience	Crossword puzzles Word-bit puzzles Personal experience sharing Feedback writing
Changing & transforming	Being flexible, adopting to changes	Writing original stories based on the novel themes, play creating & performing	Group discussion Original story writing Play creating and performing Role-play Listening exercise
Contradiction	New perspectives & solutions	Working out order of event, spotting illogical connections, thinking about word usage	Group discussion Comparing & contrasting
Cracking & ripping	Breaking conflicts, inconsistencies, rebuilding	Finding out differences between novel & film, comparing and contrasting novels with the same theme	Film watching Extended reading Comparing & contrasting
Void	Emptying mind for new information	Writing personal reflection, learning from others, reading follow-up reviews	Personal experience sharing Feedback writing Extended reading

Brain research shows that regular and repeated information, multiple examples, deeper thinking like analyzing and comparison can elaborate the encoding process and improve memory retention. As a result, regarding contrasting and complementing principle, contradiction principle, cracking and ripping principle, the author planned the activities through deeper thinking for refined encoding. Moreover, the author included personal experience reflection and emotional memory, through discussing and sharing, to re-encode and strengthen the circuit pattern, i.e. the HD, in activities for revolving and cycling principle, inner connection principle and void principle.

Chiang's (2011) survey of 132 freshmen showed that among the nine principles of deep knowledge, students of higher performance all possessed the nine principles and the 'inner connection principle' scored the highest. In language learning, the connection between old and new knowledge and frequent extraction and exercise of the circuit pattern play an important role. Nevertheless, Chiang (2012; 2014) pointed out that Taiwanese college students lacked extra-curricular English exposure and English leisure reading habit. That is, the students were not active in developing their learning habit, which impeded the regular and repeated exercise of the circuit pattern. This lack of target language input for acquisition to take place, which is a key factor to language learning, would obstruct and decrease learning efficiency. In the EFL context of learning, Taiwanese learners should actively take up a reading habit to receive input in large amount, in order to increase learning efficiency. This is why the author has been feeling the need to encourage English novel reading in her teaching. Through novel reading in a lower anxiety context, the author wants to reactivate the learners' weaker circuit pattern and expand their habitual domains.

As a matter of fact, the author has used the novel and experimented the above activities for two years, hoping to encourage reading habit and motivate extra-curricular reading. Due to the limited course hours, a short four-week course for this novel is formulated. The same activities have also been applied to different titles, for instance, *The Giver* (Lowry, 1993), *The report card* (Clements, 2006), *Dragon's eggs* (Newsome, 2010), and several others. These activities were easy, workable, enjoyable and inspiring. Despite the intricate nature, the readers would still enjoy the book with a little time and effort. As long as they decide to commence reading, they are expanding their HD. With the help of the activities, their HDs will become even stronger and they better learners.

6. Conclusion

Compared to many reading texts in EFL textbooks, English novel is much longer, more difficult, and thus more challenging and even scary. There could be teachers who are afraid to include novel reading in their courses because they are uncertain about what activities they should adopt after reading. The purpose and value of this paper is to use popular activities among students in activity design, while incorporating, for the first time as far as the author's awareness, the principles of deep knowledge from habitual domains in EFL teaching. This cross-disciplinary attempt provides new perspectives and interpretations to reading activities. With the novel *The Five People You Meet In Heaven*, the author hopes to present comprehensive and practical examples to language teachers, in the hope that we can help the Taiwanese learners enjoy reading, encourage English novel reading habit, whether in-class or out of class, and expand their habitual domains for better learning results.

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