

Reading comprehensively using an *interactive-reflective writing* technique: From theory to implementation

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Received:
23 January 2025

Revised:
20 January 2026

Accepted:
13 February 2026

Published:
18 February 2026

Abstract

*Reading and reflecting on an English literacy book with hundreds of pages, advanced vocabulary, and complex literacy theories might be daunting tasks for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. In response, this basic qualitative study aims to illustrate the implementation of the Interactive-Reflective Writing (IRW) technique for reading and reflecting on the textbook entitled *Remixing Multiliteracies: Theory and Practice* from New London to New Times, edited by Frank Serafini and Elisabeth Gee in 2017. To achieve that goal, the author collected supporting data, including the author's reflection submitted to a literacy content course, the transcripts of his asynchronous written interactions with three graduate students, and the course instructor's written feedback. The author then analyzed the data qualitatively and presented them to illustrate better how the IRW technique was implemented. In the results section, the author presented his reflections under five main themes: redefining teachers' roles, using his blog to spread optimism, communicating in the real world, understanding the meaning of digital touch, and connecting classroom learning to students' real life. With that, this paper provided some evidence on how the technique might help the author grasp and make personal connections to the ideas conveyed in the literacy book, explain the meanings of literacy in the twenty-first century, and identify areas for his future improvement as a person and an English teacher. It is hoped that the IRW technique will interest EFL lecturers worldwide seeking novel and creative ways to help their students comprehend a textbook with characteristics similar to those discussed in this study. In the end, the author acknowledged the study's limitations and outlined directions for further research.*

Keywords: language task; literacy; reading; reflection; reflective writing

INTRODUCTION

In the Spring 2019 semester, I took an English literacy course at a public research university in the United States. One of the challenging tasks in this course was reading three books in a semester and writing a reflection on what I read. These books have hundreds of pages, use an advanced English vocabulary level, and discuss complex literacy theories. In writing the reflection, my professor instructed us not to copy and paste sentences from the books. Yet, we should respond to the ideas that interest us in each chapter

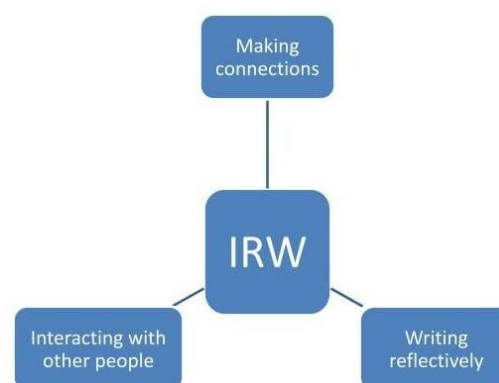
How to Cite (APA Style):

Mali, YCG. (2026). Reading comprehensively using an interactive-reflective writing technique: From theory to implementation. *EduLite: Journal of English Education, Literature, and Culture*, 11 (1), 49-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.30659/e.11.1.49-66>

of the book, make personal connections to the readings, question what we learn and how we act as people, and identify gaps in our knowledge.

As a student whose first language is not English and who was raised in Indonesia, where English is considered a foreign language, I once struggled to write my first reflection and ask myself, “*How can I complete the task?*” After submitting my first written reflection and reflecting on my writing experiences, I am interested in theorizing a technique to reflect on my readings more efficiently. I name it the *interactive-reflective writing* (hereafter, the IRW technique), as shown in Figure 1.

To the best of my knowledge, this IRW technique has not been discussed in the literature (e.g., see Hazaymeh & Khalaf, 2023; Maisaroh et al., 2023) that discussed various reading techniques in EFL classrooms other than the IRW. Thus, the description of this IRW technique hopes to contribute novelty to the discourse in EFL reading and literacy-related literature, especially about possible techniques to help students read a reading text more comprehensively (see Aini et al., 2023; Wafa’ A & Moath Khalaf, 2023) than just answering multiple-choice questions about a reading text or summarizing a reading text where students often write down everything they read and copy words and information without fully understanding what they read (e.g., Chuenchaichon, 2022; Mali, 2021). That said, this study hopes to inform EFL school teachers and university lecturers worldwide about the IRW technique they can introduce and try with their students in an EFL reading or literacy class. I also hope this paper will interest EFL graduate students or qualitative researchers who wish to learn about various forms of data representation and ways of knowing. With that background in mind, the primary purpose of this study is to describe and illustrate how the IRW technique was carried out and to inform global readers and EFL students about the IRW technique they can apply when reading books with characteristics similar to those described above.



Note. The blue lines mean *include*; therefore, I will read that the IRW activities *include*: (1) making connections, (2) writing reflectively, and (3) interacting with other people.

Figure 1. Interactive-reflective writing (IRW) technique

I now proceed to a brief literature review discussing the principles of making connections, writing reflectively, and interacting with others as theoretical bases for the IRW technique, which leads to the formulation of the study's

purposes and the statement of this study's contributions to the discourse in EFL reading and literacy-related literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Making Connections

In my readings of literature, the IRW technique follows these principles. The first one is making text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections (L'Allier & Elish-Piper, 2007; Mali, 2024), which might help activate readers' background knowledge (see Neufeld, 2005; Pardo, 2004). What readers already know and experience will significantly influence their ability to comprehend a text they read (Hattan, 2019). In connecting text to self, readers can ask: *how do what they have already known, their personal experiences, feelings, and thoughts relate to what they read?* (L'Allier & Elish-Piper, 2007). They may also make personal connections that challenge their expectations or attitudes about what they read. When connecting texts to other texts, readers can reflect on how the books relate to the different sources they have read, such as journal articles, newspapers, magazines, online articles, or webpages (L'Allier & Elish-Piper, 2007). Then, in connecting text to the world, readers can ask if the readings remind them of families, some famous people, (historical) events in their lives, and what is happening outside of school (L'Allier & Elish-Piper, 2007). Besides, making this text-to-world connection can encourage students to use the target language to practice vocabulary and develop their sensibilities, explore a different world from various perspectives, and relate that world to their thinking (Kern, 2008).

Writing Reflectively

The second principle is writing reflectively. It shows students' ability to react to what they read; it goes beyond the descriptions of experiences, allows them to "make sense of their past experiences, and gives deeper insights into the meaning of those experiences" (Farrell, 2004). Following Mali (2021, 2022, 2023) and Thompson and Moody (2015), readers may write their reflections in informal language (e.g., using the first person to discuss personal experiences). Their writing should also include specific examples from their language learning experiences and classroom discussions. In the graduate-level course in Thompson and Moody's (2015) study, the technique helps the students engage more closely with second language acquisition (SLA) theories, better comprehend content in their assigned readings, relate SLA theories to their actual (life, teaching) situations, and reconceptualize their ideas about language teaching and learning. As evidence, see excerpts 1-24 presented in their research results (see Thompson & Moody, 2015).

Interacting with Other People

The last principle is interacting with other people. The interaction was asynchronous: classmates read one another's written reflections, gave written, constructive, and non-judgmental feedback, and responded to that feedback. The feedback might also be from the student's course instructor, who read, highlighted, and commented on the reflection. This interaction was based on a view that knowledge growth might result from interacting with one another (Mali & Salsbury, 2022; Tracey & Morrow, 2017; Vygotsky, 1986) and reading

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comprehension might be achieved by “the process of simultaneously constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (cited in Pardo, 2004).

Interested in discussing the IRW technique with the previously discussed principles of making connections, writing reflectively, and interacting with others, this paper aims to (a) *describe how I used the technique* to (b) *reflect on the contents discussed in one of my English literacy textbooks*. More specifically, my reflection aims to answer a question posed by my professor: *If you could sum up your definition of literacy now (after reading this book), what do you think it would be?* The following section describes the study’s method and details how the IRW technique was carried out.

METHOD

This study used a basic qualitative approach to describe a process and provide rich descriptive accounts based on experiences (Ary et al., 2019). In the Spring semester (January-May) 2019, I was assigned to read three English literacy textbooks. One of them is *Remixing Multiliteracies: Theory and Practice from New London to New Times* (see Frank & Gee, 2017). The book (214 pages) has 12 chapters, two additional sections (i.e., an introduction and an epilogue), advanced academic vocabulary, and complex literacy concepts.

My task was to complete reading this book in the first month of the course. In that case, I used the IRW technique (see Figure 1). Fortnightly, I had to read and reflect on six to seven chapters, type my reflection on the readings, and submit the task to the university learning management system (LMS), *Blackboard*. My professor (i.e., the supporting participant in this study) then set up an asynchronous online discussion forum (lasting one week) on the LMS, where my three doctoral classmates (i.e., the other supporting participants in this study) could read and respond to my reflection. They might agree with or challenge specific ideas that I wrote, ask me for clarifications, or say what they could learn from my reflection. I also did the same procedures for their reflections. I was allowed to use their reflections in this study because no harm was caused to the participants, and their identities were not disclosed.

After completing the asynchronous written dialogue with my classmates, I received written feedback from my professor, who underlined some sentences in my written reflection submitted to Blackboard and handwrote notes on the underlined sentences (see Figure 2). Similar to Adie et al. (2018), the feedback indicated the next steps I needed to take (e.g., *keep thinking about how you could do this in your future classroom*) and empowered my teaching-related plans (e.g., *you can do these C!*). My professor then scanned the feedback and sent it to my email. Responding to students’ writing is central to pedagogy (Filius et al., 2018).

Following the dialogue-based data representation of Lloyd-Parkes et al. (2021), I will present my reflection on all chapters in the book (see Frank & Gee, 2017) and display my professor’s responses to some of my thoughts. Then, I will present the asynchronously written dialogues with my classmates in the discussion section.

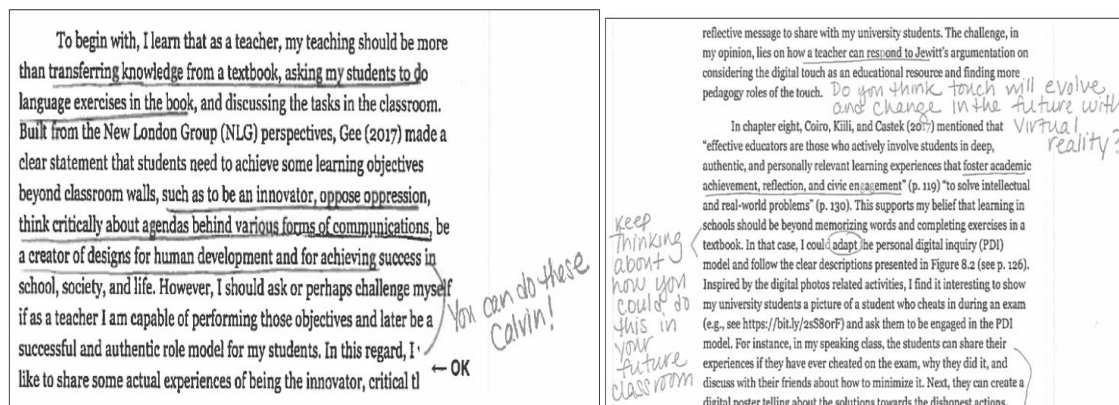


Figure 2. A snapshot of my professor's feedback

I intentionally shortened or deleted some phrases and sentences in the original version of my reflection and written dialogue to meet the word limitations of this journal. For anonymity reasons, I used an initial *Prof* to refer to my professor and *CIs* [1-3] to refer to my classmates. Meanwhile, I used *C* to present myself in the dialogues. These written data were read several times to explain the meanings of literacy based on what I reflected in the book. In reading the reflection, my readers can reflect on my words and reveal what was in my mind. I also let my readers see the reflection from their point of view (as inspired by Anttila, 2007) or learn from mine. I also welcome readers of this paper to judge the depth of my reflection presented in the following sections.

RESULTS

This results section consists of three parts. The first part presents my written reflections (i.e., on chapters 1 to 6 of the book) that I wrote for weeks one to two. The second part is my written reflections (i.e., on chapters seven to twelve) for weeks three to four. The themes under those two parts were generated based on my reflections. Meanwhile, the third part presents the asynchronous dialogues with my classmates about my reflections presented in the first and second parts.

Part 1: C's reflections (weeks one to two)

Redefining teachers' roles

"Students need to know how to redesign, transform conventions, and create new designs in the name of human development" (Gee, 2017, p. 29). As an English language teacher, I learned that my job should be more than transferring knowledge from a textbook, asking my students to do language exercises in the book, and discussing classroom tasks. Drawing on the New London Group (NLG) perspectives, Gee (2017) stated clearly that students need to achieve learning objectives beyond classroom walls. The objectives included being an innovator, opposing oppression, thinking critically about the agendas behind various forms of communication, and creating designs for human development and achieving success in school, society, and life.

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However, I should ask myself whether, as a teacher, I can achieve those objectives and later be a successful and authentic role model for my students.

Prof: *You can do these, C!*

In this regard, I would like to share some actual experiences as an innovator, critical thinker, and creator that can provide learning opportunities for my Indonesian students soon after I complete my Ph.D. As an innovator, in 2016, I integrated technology to address my students' learning problems in an academic writing class at a private university in Indonesia. For instance, my students still had difficulty writing references for their academic essays in APA 6th edition format, even after I explained the rules and gave classroom exercises on writing references several times. Then, I decided to record my explanation using the *Screencast-o-Matic application* (<https://screencast-o-matic.com/>), save the recording as an MP4, and upload it to Edmodo (<https://www.edmodo.com/>), a learning management system I used in the classroom at the time. With this practice, my students could download the video and watch my talk repeatedly whenever and wherever they were.

Prof: *Wonderful C; you are already integrating technology into your teaching. I have never used a screen tool to teach, but I want to. Love Edmodo.*

As a critical thinker, I have been more careful about publishing my article in an academic journal. For instance, on January 18, 2019, I received an email about a publication opportunity in a journal. In the email, an assistant editor of the journal praised my article, entitled "Motivational Teaching Strategies in Indonesian EFL Writing Classrooms" (see Mali, 2017), and warmly invited me to submit an unpublished article to the journal. After carefully reviewing all the information in the journal, I discovered that I would have to pay a large sum to publish my article. Also, to the best of my knowledge, none of the editorial boards has a "big name" in the field of English language teaching. Is it a reputable journal? I soon remembered what Renandya (2014) said about the dangers of publishing in a bogus journal.

Prof: *Glad you read up on the journal. Too bad. This isn't peer-reviewed, then. Do not waste your money or time.*

Using my blog to spread optimism

As the creator, my experiences studying for my Ph.D. at the university have inspired me to redesign my blog (<https://calvinio.blogspot.com/>) and fill it with more empowering stories on winning a scholarship to study in the United States. In addition to sharing meaningful messages to the multimodal world (see Cowan & Kress, 2017) and combating self-pessimism, I plan to use my blog to encourage more Indonesian fellow students and teachers, including those in faraway, forgotten areas. They should believe that studying abroad is an achievable, life-transforming experience and a golden ticket to see the world and meet people from diverse cultures, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. The experience later should help them grow as a person and an academic.

Prof: *I am going to check out your blog.*

Considering the multimodal representation, as discussed by Cope et al. (2017) and being a designer of meaning and knowledge (see Park et al., 2017), perhaps I should challenge myself to use a digital video (as discussed in Corcoran & Ahrens, 2018) in sharing further stories about my doctoral study and showing the video on my blog.

Communicating in a real-world

Further, I am also interested in reflecting on new forms of texts and communications that students experience outside their classrooms. Cope et al. (2017) cited the case of Twitter with a 140-character maximum. In that case, I must teach my Indonesian students to communicate effectively across different and emerging digital communication platforms. For instance, in my classroom syllabus, I can explain how to email (or interact with) a university professor, including writing a subject line that starts with a formal greeting, states the purpose of the email, and ends with a salutation. This netiquette is essential because some of my students sometimes send me an email with an attachment, but without a subject or any sentences to indicate the email's purpose.

The other idea I learned from the chapter is using a (body map) drawing, discussed by Rowsell and Burgess (2017), to represent a student's life and visualize it creatively. For instance, a drawing activity can be an exciting idea to teach descriptive text in an EFL writing classroom in Indonesia. To visualize where my students were born, they can draw key characteristics of the area and use their drawings to guide their writing. In my blog, I also suggest displaying my drawing to present other empowering stories of my doctoral studies in the United States.

Prof: *This body map reminds me of cultural x-rays; you can search and find them on the Internet.*

The critical discourse analysis and learning perspectives discussed by Rogers and Carrillo (2017) encourage me to reflect on my past teaching experiences and see how I communicate ideas in my classrooms. Did my decision to use English all the time in the classroom help or oppress my students with less proficient English skills in understanding learning concepts (see Mambu, 2011)? Did my students respond positively to any written feedback I gave them online through *Edmodo*? Did my teaching successfully promote equality in my classrooms? I may ask my students to help me answer these questions and use their responses as a guideline to enhance my teaching practices.

Prof: *Yes, check in with them as you are teaching, too, so that you can adjust as necessary.*

The following section presents my reflections from chapter seven to the end of the book.

Part 2: C's reflections (weeks three to four)

Understanding the meaning of digital touch

The discussions in chapter seven give me new perspectives on the meaning of touch. Before reading the chapter, I believed touch was limited to physical gestures. For example, my mother usually touched my forehead when I was sick and checked my body temperature. In the chapter, Jewitt (2017) stated

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that touch could also refer to an act of communication and contact between humans and objects/digital media, which reminds me of the “touch” based digital communication I use with my *Google Assistant* available on my Android smartphone. For instance, I touch the “home” and then the “microphone” symbol on my smartphone to ask my assistant to set the alarm to wake me up in the morning. At this point, Jewitt (2017) believed that the way people understand any capabilities that a device can/ cannot do and the purpose, interests, and contexts of using a touch device can be essential for communication. Therefore, I should be more aware and careful when liking a Facebook status, sending a WhatsApp message, or sending an email to my university professors. I should reflectively ask myself: have I used this digital touch for positive purposes? It is the same question that my university students should answer. The challenge, in my opinion, lies in how a teacher can respond to Jewitt’s (2017) argument for considering the digital touch as an educational resource and for exploring its pedagogical roles.

Prof: *Do you think touch will evolve and change in the future with virtual reality?*

Connecting classroom learning to students’ real life

In chapter eight, Coiro et al. (2017) mentioned that “effective educators are those who actively involve students in deep, authentic, and personally relevant learning experiences that foster academic achievement, reflection, and civic engagement” (p. 119) “to solve intellectual and real-world problems” (p. 130). This view supports my belief that learning in schools should be beyond memorizing words and completing exercises in a textbook (Mali, 2021).

Prof: *Keep thinking about how you could do this in your future classroom.*

In that case, I could adapt the personal digital inquiry (PDI) model and follow the clear descriptions presented in Figure 8.2 (see Coiro et al., 2017, p. 126). Inspired by the digital photo-related activities, I find it interesting to show my university students a picture of a student who cheats during an exam (e.g., see <https://bit.ly/2sS80rF>) and ask them to engage with the PDI model. For instance, in my speaking class, students can share their experiences with exam cheating, why they did it, and discuss with their friends how to minimize it. Next, they can create a digital poster that explains the solutions to that dishonest action. After having an oral classroom presentation to clarify the ideas they visualize in the poster, they can continue to share the poster on their social media. This activity will enable students to run a digital campaign on the essence of academic honesty in schools, reach more audiences beyond classroom walls, and hear their voices. In the end, they can reflect on whether they have successfully communicated the messages they have in their poster.

Prof: *Nice example, C!*

Personally, I like the PDI model because it empowers all students to be more confident in voicing their ideas and taking action to solve real-world problems. In other words, the model seems to transform a student from a passive recipient of knowledge into a more active individual who applies that knowledge in real life.

Prof: *That’s the key. How could your students choose their “own” problem within your class and solve it? This is a true inquiry.*

I highlight some ideas in chapter nine that teaching can happen outside traditional educational institutions, and many different people and tools can teach. Although I am not a proponent of using a video game for teaching and learning, as my students can be distracted by its visuals, I am interested in some features of Dota 2 introduced in the chapter. For instance, in “coach mode” (see Holmes, 2017, p. 141), the game enables students to engage in authentic synchronous communication with real people outside the classroom through voice- and text-based channels. In that mode, everybody can be a teacher in the game. I also love the availability of online forums where people can communicate and share thoughts about the game. The challenge is to spot other digital tools and avenues that provide teaching and learning opportunities beyond classroom walls. Another challenge is to ensure that parents positively view games to enhance their children’s learning practices.

Prof: *We may have to teach parents the pros/cons.*

Chapter ten provides a new perspective that my brain, body, and senses should work in harmony (also called the embodiment theory) to succeed in my learning. Reflecting on Figure 10.3 (see McVee et al., 2017, p. 154), I should implement ideas I learn from what I have read or other learning resources I have accessed. The activities should enable me to share the thoughts I have in mind and interact socially and culturally with the real world. When applying the concept to my role as a researcher, I should perhaps do more than write a research paper and publish it in an academic journal. Instead, I should also disseminate the ideas, for instance, through a conference, a faculty meeting, or a workshop, to interact with more people, stimulate discussion, and engage in other activities that can share the research ideas with the real world.

Prof: *Only academics read academic articles, so finding other ways to share/ discuss will expand who learns/ gains information.*

In harmony with the previous chapter, literacy practices should not be static as they can create meanings through various modes involving bodies, places, and things. According to Wohlgend (2017), these practices can be carried out through play. Although the play is a time-, energy-, and emotion-consuming activity, I have a beautiful memory of the play I performed during my undergraduate studies back in 2009. At that time, the play performance was one of the courses I took in the fifth semester of my study. During the semester, I practiced my literacy by listening to my lecturer explain drama theories, reading the scripts of my play, and practicing my character’s voice inflection and gestures. I also practiced pronouncing certain words in my script. My social literacy was also developed when I had to discuss fundraising activities to support our play and work together to execute them. I still remember when my friends and I had to sell local Indonesian snacks to people after a Sunday mass in some churches in our hometown, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. I affirm Wohlgend’s (2017) argument about the need to carry out literacy research to understand the role of play as a critical meaning-making practice.

Prof: *Thanks for sharing this story. Was your play/drama in English or your native language?*

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In the last chapter, I support the creative idea of seeing a school as an innovation room where students can play with their imagination as a basis for framing, designing, redesigning, and transforming themselves. For instance, I like the part where Hassett and Wood (2017) present Tyrone's story; he constructs a boat from a cardboard box based on his lived experiences during hurricane floods. This lived experience enabled Tyrone to give his boat special meaning, which helped him innovate in creating boats as tools to protect the land from similar natural disasters. This story provides me with insights to reflect on my teaching practices. Have I provided enough space for my students to do their "new creation, innovation, and transformative practices" (Hassett & Wood, 2017, p. 185)?

Finally, I want to thank my professor for introducing the book. The discussions in the chapters opened my mind to new paradigms for reflecting on my teaching. Have I promoted multiliteracies in my classrooms creatively and supported my students who live in this multimodal world in becoming successful in their classes, society, and life? Besides, I should thank PROF for introducing me to technology applications, such as *Zoom*, *Flipgrid*, and *Voice Threat* and various classroom activities, such as creating a digital video and doing a classroom group discussion in *Blackboard*, which, in my opinion, can demonstrate the real practice of multiliteracies in a classroom setting.

Prof: *Glad you are seeing why we're using all of these. I also liked how you compared the readings to your teaching and life. Great job!*

The following section presents the asynchronous dialogues with my classmates about my reflections presented in the first and second parts of this section.

Part 3: A dialogue about C's reflections

As a warm reminder, *Cls* [1-3] refers to my classmates, while *C* refers to the author of this paper.

Cls1: *Hi, C, I appreciate your points about what learning should be. I understand that authentic learning can be helpful to students beyond the classroom. Learning should go beyond rules to skills that empower students for work and social life.*

C: Thank you for your responses, and I agree with you, *Cls1*. Reading the chapters reminds me of my school system. In 2004, I still remember that my high school learning primarily focused on discussing the textbooks and completing exercises in them. For as long as I can remember, some of my teachers have seldom brought real-world realities into their lessons or classroom discussions. Therefore, I hope to make a small difference in the way my students learn in class. I should also encourage them to take real action and share empowering stories or peaceful messages on their social media.

Cls1: *Your point about learning with new forms of texts and communications that students are likely to use outside the classroom contexts connects with authentic learning and how we can use technology to present information in different forms.*

C: Practicing the new forms of texts and communications will surely be a teaching plan in my classrooms soon after completing my studies and going back to Indonesia.

Cls2: *I loved your point about using direct instruction to tell your students how to write a professional email. Millennials seem to be less skilled at professional communication rules (because of Twitter and other social media), but not having those professional skills will put them at a disadvantage in the workplace. It is important to remember that just because these students are great at Facebook and video games does not mean they are digital natives. They still need to be taught the proper manners of professional communication. Thanks for making that point, C.*

C: Actually, I wonder if discussing the proper manners of professional communication (e.g., email communication) was a part of the learning curriculum when you were in your junior or high school. We can discuss it further in the classroom.

Cls3: *I liked it when you shared the PDI activity you could use to engage your students. So, you have been practicing this model intuitively before. You know what? By doing this, you gave them a space to express themselves well, even if they were going to reveal why they cheated. What is more important than what they are posting is the positive experience itself, which will definitely help them improve other skills beyond English performance skills. Keep going, sharing these excellent teaching tips with us.*

Moreover, when it comes to using games for educational purposes, why not? Although I am not a game addict, I still support the use of carefully chosen games that align with my students' or my beloved children's current needs. I should tell you something. When my kids were toddlers, I didn't pay much attention to them, but now they badly want to play games, and I am starting to look for good ones. By allowing this, I recommend they not spend much time on it. Outdoor learning is worth trying, too.

C: Thanks for your responses to the PDI activity I proposed. I understand the importance of bringing real-world, authentic issues into my classrooms so that, as you mentioned, my students can improve skills beyond English. I am also looking forward to talking with you about the educational games we use for teaching and learning. Cls3, if you have free time, you may watch this video by Alex Gendler (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yDmGnA8Hw0>). The YouTube video might help us practice our critical thinking. I got the video from a friend in another class who facilitated the classroom during the technology course.

DISCUSSION

The previous sections illustrated how I used the IRW technique (i.e., the principles of making connections, writing reflectively, and interacting with others) to reflect on and comprehend the English literacy book. While the results can communicate many insights, I would like to discuss some important ones and relate them to the relevant literature. First, the IRW technique enables me to present my reflective thoughts in response to information that interests me, encouraging me not to copy and paste words and information from the book into my work. That said, I allow readers to judge whether my reflections (see parts 1-3 in the results sections) looked like copy-paste work from the book or reflected my deeper thoughts on the ideas presented in it. Yet, I am confident that the IRW technique might be a solution to what previous researchers (e.g., Chuenchaichon, 2022; Mali, 2021) have found: that students often write down everything they read and copy words and information without fully understanding what they read.

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Second, the personal-reflective thought I shared was generated from my personal experiences (i.e., *text-to-self*), some journal articles I have read (i.e., *text-to-text*), and life experiences beyond classroom walls (i.e., *text-to-world*). For example, I observed that when I related the book to my role as a lecturer, I reflected on whether I had to use English all the time in my classrooms (*text-to-self*). I also remembered a journal article (i.e., Renandya, 2014) about the dangers of publishing in a bogus journal, which the book discusses as the essence of being a critical thinker (*text-to-text*). As I have written in my reflection, being a critical thinker also raised my awareness of the importance of being very careful about what I share on my social media (*text-to-world*), ensuring it would not harm anyone.

Third, the written interaction I had with my classmates (see part 3 of the results section) and my professor (see parts 1 and 2 of the results section) confirmed the view that knowledge growth might result from interacting with one another, in this case with classmates (see Mali & Salsbury, 2022; Tracey & Morrow, 2017) and reading comprehension might be achieved by “the process of simultaneously constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (cited in Pardo, 2004). For example, I learned from my classmate (Cls2) about a very strong point. It says just because students are great at Facebook does not mean they are digital natives. They still need to be taught proper professional communication etiquette.

Besides my classmates, my professor also interacted with me by responding to some ideas I wrote in my reflection. For example, she supported my efforts to communicate my research beyond journal articles, since she believed only academics read them. With that comment, I felt more confident that disseminating research ideas through a conference, a faculty meeting, or a workshop to interact with and stimulate discussions with others beyond classroom walls might be a good strategy. My professor also responded to the ideas of body-mapping discussed in the book. In short, the body map is a technique to visualize students’ backgrounds and identities. My professor then responded to it by suggesting *cultural x-ray* (e.g., see https://coe.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/short-cultural_xrays.pdf) that I might use in my classroom to know more about who my students are. Indeed, all of these insights presented previously might not have been obtained if each student had reflected individually, without communicating with others, such as classmates and the lecturer. That can be a real illustration of Vygotsky’s (1986) social constructivist theory, which holds that knowledge grows through interaction with others.

The IRW technique presented in this article, its underlying theories, and a practical demonstration of how I used the technique, as explained in the previous sections (see parts 1 to 3 in the results section), should contribute to the literature. In that case, this study adds a novel alternative reading technique to help students read and comprehend texts more effectively, in addition to various strategies discussed in the literature, such as using smart card media (Maisaroh et al., 2023) and the visual mapping strategy (Hazaymeh & Khalaf, 2023). I am fully aware that the reading strategies discussed in the literature and the IRW technique presented in this article may not address all students’ diverse learning needs. Therefore, I allow readers of this article to

adapt or modify the IRW strategies to suit students in their classrooms with various learning styles and cognitive levels.

Methodologically speaking, this article also presents knowledge in a novel way, demonstrating how a reading technique was applied (see the results' sections) to inform readers who wish to follow the same technique when reading an English literacy book (i.e., with hundreds of pages and advanced vocabulary). The knowledge presentation in this article should go beyond the common practices used in previous studies, such as presenting questionnaire results (Caldwell, 2020; Mali, 2022, 2023; Muslem et al., 2018; Pham et al., 2019) and interview excerpts of the research participants (Lokollo & Mali, 2024; Mali et al., 2022; Wardani & Mali, 2023) in their findings sections. Readers who wish to share reading techniques or techniques for various EFL teaching and learning purposes in an academic journal might use the same method used in this article.

CONCLUSION

This paper has illustrated how the IRW technique was implemented in my English literacy content course (i.e., see the method and results sections above). I will now come to the following concluding points. Although not without weaknesses, this IRW technique has helped me reflect on the book and identify areas for self-improvement as a person and as an English teacher. Second, after using the IRW technique, my written reflection on the first book received positive responses from my course instructor (see Prof) and my classmates (see Cls1-3). Third, my professor's constructive feedback and the asynchronous dialogue with my classmates helped me progress what I wrote in my reflection. Fourth, this paper highlights the importance of collaboration among classmates and course instructors to comprehend a textbook with hundreds of pages, advanced academic vocabulary, and complex (English literacy) concepts. Fifth, after reading the book and based on my reflection, professor's feedback, and interaction with classmates, I would conclude that literacy in this twenty-first century would be about abilities to: 1) know the right purposes of using technology for teachers themselves and their students, 2) select the right technology to achieve classroom learning and real-life goals, 3) identify pedagogical problems (e.g., related to what teachers did in their class, 4) maximize the potential of technology to solve pedagogical problems, 5) present multimodal forms of learning (e.g., where students can listen, read, write, speak, design, post, and share their voices with the world). Moreover, literacy includes the abilities to: 6) evaluate sources of information critically, 7) use technology to serve positive purposes in life, 8) communicate properly using various technology communication platforms, 9) bring real-world issues to classrooms, 10) solve real-world problems, 11) reflect on what has been done to find ways for future improvement, and 12) share empowering stories to the world.

Some limitations of this paper in its discussion of the IRW technique should be noted. For instance, my discussion was limited to using written, asynchronous forms of feedback and interaction. There were no further face-to-face discussions, either in or out of the classroom, with my classmates about the reflection I wrote. Secondly, I did not have a chance to respond to

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the instructor's feedback (see Figure 2) given on my reflection. Therefore, my professor may not have known how I felt about the written feedback. I also received no feedback on my dialogue with my classmates, so I was unsure if what we discussed met my professor's expectations. Lastly, the IRW technique presented in this paper was used in a doctoral-level course in which most students were already proficient in English. Therefore, until this IRW technique can be successfully implemented in other contexts, readers should interpret what I present in this paper cautiously. To address these limitations, I recommend the following research ideas. For example, further studies need to examine whether combining written and oral forms of interactive feedback may deepen understanding of texts with characteristics similar to those I read in the literacy class. Additionally, further research might be advisable to determine whether a similar IRW technique can be successfully implemented at the undergraduate or master's level with students with lower English proficiency. It might also be interesting to research undergraduate and master's students' voices towards implementing the IRW technique to reflect on shorter texts, such as a report, a poem, an academic article, or a research paper. Future researchers might then examine students' levels of reflection on the texts they wrote using the IRW technique. They can also explore if the IRW technique helps students with various learning styles reflect on and comprehend their reading texts.

AUTHOR STATEMENTS

Yustinus Calvin Gai Mali collected and analyzed the data and wrote the article.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank all the following parties: the research participants for their collaboration, the journal reviewer(s) for their constructive feedback that can enhance this paper substantially, and the Faculty of Language and Arts, Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana (UKSW), and the Directorate of Research and Community Service at UKSW (DRPM-UKSW) for their institutional support for this study.

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Conflict of Interest Statement: The author declares that the research was conducted without any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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