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讀者劇場在小學英語課堂上的應用

The Effects of Readers' Theatre on EFL Fourth Graders' Foreign Language Anxiety and Oral Reading Fluency

研究生：張怡芳 撰

Graduate Student: Yi-Fang, Chang

指導教授：何德華 博士

Advisor: Der-Hwa Victoria Rau, Ph.D.

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論文名稱：讀者劇場在小學英語課堂上的應用

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研究生：張怡芳

指導教授：何德華教授

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中文摘要 (Chinese Abstract)

近年來，許多教育部門及學習機構積極的倡導兒童閱讀活動，期望在閱讀活動中能帶給學生更多元化的學習環境，因此，多元創新的教學方法在英語課室裡已經成為教學的設計重點。而許多國內外的研究更提出，讀者劇場是一具備方便性、動機性的閱讀活動，更有許多研究發現，讀者劇場能增進學生的口語閱讀流利度及降低外語學習焦慮感；然而，在文獻回顧中發現，鮮少研究是針對英語為外語環境 EFL(English as a foreign language) 來作深入的探討。因此，本研究採用質化分析法，進行六週的行動研究，以四年級國小學童為研究對象，透過教室觀察、訪談紀錄及教師省思等，來做質性資料之探討，並以量化資料為輔，透過外語學習焦慮問卷及口語閱讀流利度考試，了解學生在接受讀者劇場前後不同的閱讀能力及焦慮的表現，以達到三角驗證的佐證。而本文針對以下六點提出探討：一 、小學生在學習英語時是否感到焦慮， 二、讀者劇場是否能促進學生口語閱讀流利度，三、讀者劇場如何應用至 EFL 課室中，四、讀者劇場如何幫助學生降低焦慮感 ，五、學生對讀者劇場的看法，六、教師在讀者劇場所扮演的角色。主要結果顯示如下：

一、學生在學習外語時會有學習外語的焦慮感產生。

二、讀者劇場中最關鍵的練習，即是藉由反覆練習(repeated reading)和大聲朗誦(reading aloud) 來達到學生的口語閱讀流利度，在經過六週的行動研究之後， 學生在閱讀的表現上皆呈現顯著的進步。

三、根據讀者劇場的活動流程，在本研究依序進行了教師範讀(teacher modeled-reading)、 角色分配 (role assignment) 、反覆練習(repeated reading)和大聲朗誦(read aloud)、 小組練習和排練 (group practice and rehearsal)、 上台表演 (performance)及回饋時間(feedback)。

四、藉由小組合作、熟練的練習、增加語言的使用機會，學生在六週的讀者劇場活動之後，外語學習的焦慮感有顯著的降低。

五、國小學生認為讀者劇場增加了他們上台的表現機會，他們的英語能力也有明顯的進步，而小組合作的經驗也讓他們在閱讀活動中建立了自信心及學習動機。

六、有別於傳統的教師角色，教師在讀者劇場的角色是多元化的，包含了支持輔佐者(facilitator)、引導者(coach)、回饋者(feedback provider)等等。

綜合以上結論，本文針對在英語閱讀活動上 、學生的口語閱讀流利度表現及外語學習焦慮等問題提出相關的建議及教學分享，期盼能在英語教學的閱讀學習領域加入多元化的語言學習機會，以加深、加廣學生的學習視野。

Thesis Title: The Effects of Readers' Theatre on Fourth Graders' Foreign Language Anxiety and Oral Reading Fluency

Graduate: Yi-Fang Chang

Advisor: Professor Der-Hwa. V. Rau.

The Graduate Program of Department of Literature and Linguistic

Providence University

96th School Year

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this 6-week action research was to explore the effects of Readers' Theatre (RT) on fourth graders' foreign language anxiety and oral reading fluency abilities in an elementary school EFL classroom. Six research questions are presented as follows:

1. Do EFL learners feel anxious in learning foreign language? If so, is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' foreign language anxiety before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?
2. Is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' oral reading fluency before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?
3. How is the implementation of Readers' Theatre applied into an EFL classroom?
4. How does Readers' Theatre help anxious students overcome anxiety?
5. What are participants' perceptions toward Readers' Theatre instructions?
6. What are the teacher's roles in the implementation of Readers' Theatre?

Thirty-one students were invited to participate in this study. Four kinds of instruments were used, including FLCAS (Foreign Language Communication Anxiety Scale) questionnaire, oral reading fluency test (ORFT), classroom observations and field notes. Before giving Readers' Theatre instructions, the pre-FLCAS questionnaire and pre-ORFT were administrated to measure students' previous anxiety and oral reading abilities. The teacher's classroom observations and field notes were recorded to triangulate the statistical results from FLCAS and ORFT. Consequently, after Readers' Theatre instructions, post-FLCAS and post-ORFT were used to compare and explain how students' oral reading abilities improved and how they reduced their anxiety significantly. Furthermore, informal interviews were conducted to understand students' perceptions toward RT.

Based on the findings, RT has successfully created an interesting and non-threatening environment for EFL learners to use the language. That is, students always need to be encouraged and provided with opportunities as much as possible. The major results are summarized as follows:

1. EFL learners felt anxious in a language classroom. However, after 6-week RT instructions, their anxiety lessened significantly.
2. With sufficient practice and opportunity in reading, students' oral reading fluency improved significantly.
3. Followed by the RT procedures, the teacher's modeled-reading, role assignment, repeated reading, reading aloud, rehearsal, performance and feedback time were applied to a fourth-grade elementary school EFL classroom.
4. Anxious learners gained more opportunity to use the language, which built up their sense of achievement and self-confidence.
5. From students' responses of feedback sheets, they agreed that they have

6. Teacher’s roles are multiple. Depending on different learning situations, a teacher can be a facilitator, a coach or a feedback provider.

Finally, it is hoped that this study will provide more insightful ideas for educators and teachers. Regarding anxious learners, they especially need more encouragement and opportunity to use the language.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

With the great amount of attention given to English teaching in Taiwan, both the latest education policy and scholars have advocated the importance of hands-on approaches and real-world knowledge. According to Grade One-to-Nine curriculum guidelines set up by the Ministry of Education (1998), three major goals of English teaching are covered (i.e., cultivating student's interests toward the language, developing student's basic communicative abilities in English and understanding local and foreign cultures.) Enjoyable and meaningful teaching materials are indispensable for learners to learn new language skills. Thus, it is hoped that teachers are capable of having the ability to deliver English knowledge easily and effectively. Moreover, learners should become accustomed to using language in everyday situations and further interacting with other people fluently.

In elementary school environments, students are required to attend English courses twice per week in grades three and above. More and more innovative methodologies have come to English-as-foreign language (EFL) classrooms and have provided more insights and alternative ideas for EFL teachers and learners. It is valuable to apply additional techniques into EFL classrooms, which are helpful for learner's learning process. Readers' Theatre (RT) has been promoted especially by many educators and researchers who had introduced RT as a motivational and strategic tool in language learning field (Annarella, 1999; Casey& Chamberlain, 2006; Flynn, 2004; Martinez, Roser & Strecker, 1999; Rinehart, 1999; Worthy & Prater, 2002). Benefits of RT encompass such skills as oral reading fluency, creative imagination, and intrinsic motivation. In Rinehart's action research (1999), he described how RT was used for some learners who had reading problems. In his tutorial course, various

instructions were used such as phonemic awareness, sight word, and reading strategies. However, only RT held a stable status in nature over time which enhanced the interests on fluency levels of struggling students. Moreover, Worthy & Prater (2002) noted that, “Reader theatre made an amazing difference in that students were motivated to read on their own, at comfort level in the classroom, and ultimately in their reading proficiency”. Importantly, RT not only enhanced students’ oral reading fluency but also met their levels and interests. Knowing that RT is an easily prepared technique may save teachers’ time and energy and produce the best learning effects.

Furthermore, RT is categorized as a kind of drama activity. Students read stories or scripts in front of the class using their voices to perform the texts. There are some key elements of drama engaged in RT performance such as role-play, gesture, voice, and imagination. Hoyt (1992) found that teachers could use RT to close the gap between student’s real word and word of print. It would elicit student’s creativity and emotions when using scripts to speak. Through dialogue practice and voice performance, students have a way of showing their comprehension and knowledge orally.

1.2 Purpose of the study

Even though RT has shown positive influences on students’ reading abilities and affective attitude, there were few relevant studies that discussed this field. In fact, there are many EFL teachers in Taiwan who are devoted to applying RT in their classrooms. Therefore, the researcher aims to investigate the implementation of RT on students’ oral reading fluency and students’ anxiety toward reading in an academic perspective. Combining theories and practical teaching experience, the researcher has decided to investigate how RT improves students’ oral reading fluency. In

addition, in order to understand whether and to what extent students feel anxious, questionnaires and informal interviews were used. The research questions are stated to achieve the purpose of this study as follows:

1. Do EFL learners feel anxious in learning foreign language? If so, is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' foreign language anxiety before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?
2. Is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' oral reading fluency before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?
3. How is the implementation of Readers' Theatre applied into an EFL classroom?
4. How does Readers' Theatre help anxious students overcome anxiety?
5. What are participants' perceptions toward Readers' Theatre instructions?
6. What are the teacher's roles in the implementation of Readers' Theatre?

1.3 Significance of the study

Since this study is an action research, the researcher integrates theories, personal experience and authentic practice to explore the benefits of RT for students' oral reading fluency and in decreasing language anxiety. Hopefully, this study could provide some implications for EFL teachers to introduce alternative activities such as Readers Theatre into the classroom. By implementing RT in the reading classroom, teachers not only can help students to achieve oral reading fluency but also lessen their foreign language anxiety through the teacher's support, group collaboration and self identification.

1.4 Definitions of Terms

It is important to note several important terms will be discussed in this study. Here, in order to aid the understanding of the contents, brief definitions of key terms are given as follows:

Oral Reading Fluency

Zutell & Rasinski (2001) suggest three major points of fluent oral reading. That is (a) effortless and automatic reading, (b) grouping or chunking words into meaningful sentences, and (c) conveying meanings and emotions with appropriate pitch and intonation and stress. In order to achieve reading fluency, the ability of decoding words automatically and reading rates are also necessary.

Read Aloud

It refers to the process for the learners to speak the sentences or texts out. They can hear what they have said and other people can also hear their voices.

Repeated Reading

Students are required to read a short story or passages repeatedly in order to achieve a satisfactory level. The main purpose of repeated reading is to build fluency (Samuels, 1997). This reading strategy will enhance reading accuracy and reading rate.

Drama

Drama can be presented in different forms such as film, musical, radio and role play. It often combines music, active actions, and dance. In the educational field, role play is used as a kind of drama presentation. It is a learning tool which

empowers students to move their body, sound out their voices and imagine the plots. By performing stories, learners know how to show their language proficiency (reading, speaking, and listening) and learn how to interact and exchange ideas with each other.

Readers Theatre

Readers Theatre is an instructional and motivational method for both teacher and students. No decorated setting or time-consuming prop and sound effects are needed. Only an interesting and purposeful script is the key element in RT. Students' voices are the way to interact with other characters (Shepard, 1994).

Anxiety

Anxiety is a psychological state coupled with nervousness, fear, and apprehension. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) construct of foreign language anxiety, there are three kinds of anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Anxiety plays both positive and negative roles in different situations. The focus is on its negative impact in this study. As learners have higher anxiety or negative attitude toward foreign language learning, their performances are usually debilitated (Gardner, Day, MacIntyre, 1992; Scovel, 1978).

Struggling students

In this study, learners who could not follow the regular pace of the curriculum in the classroom are so called struggling students. Their abilities are below the average level. In addition, struggling students are always anxious learners (Gardner, Day, MacIntyre, 1992; Scovel, 1978).

Action Research

A definition of action research is a recycle of reflective process. Rossman & Rallis (2003) point out that a practitioner takes action, try to find out better solutions for existing problems, and improve real life situations. An action researcher finds out what the problems are and further works on the problem-solving activity. That is a way to reflect and improve on what individuals have practiced by playing different roles such as the teacher, the researcher or an observer at the same time.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aims to explore the implications of Readers' Theatre on students' oral reading fluency and high anxious students in an elementary classroom. In order to understand what previous studies have contributed in this field, this chapter is divided into four parts. First, I review the definitions about fluency of different viewpoints and describe what a fluent reader is like. The significance of oral reading fluency and its benefits are also covered. Second, the main theme in this study is the use of Readers' Theatre (RT). Thus, the definitions and phases of RT instructions are introduced as well as its characteristics and some beneficial implications. Also, I want to see how RT relates with oral reading fluency. Third, I focus on anxious students and discuss whether RT helps them to overcome the anxiety and then cross the gap. Therefore, the role of anxiety is a concern.

2.1 Oral Reading Fluency

2.1.1 Definitions of Fluency

Some previous studies have indicated that fluency could be an indicator of overall reading performance (Fuchs, Fuchs & Hosp, 2001; Rasinski, 2000; Rasinski, 2004). That is, if one could read fluently, he or she may have good reading abilities. However, there are still several views regarding fluency. Zutell & Rasinski (1991) point out that fluency is not a single dimension but encompasses multiple elements such as supersegmental features (pitch, stress, prosody and intonation), meanings of sentences and emotions. Worthy & Broadus (2002) also agree that fluency makes language just like music. In Worthy & Broadus's words, "Like music, it consists not

only of rate, accuracy, and automaticity, but also of phrasing, smoothness, and expressiveness." Casey & Chamberlian (2006) state that prosodic fluency instructions would facilitate text comprehension and oral accuracy. When using prosodic cues, readers would have deeper understanding and comprehension. Because readers will adjust their reading rates for the texts appropriately, their accuracy and expressions will be better. In addition, Rasinski (2004) provides three dimensions for reading fluency to reach comprehension, which are decoding, automatic processing and prosodic reading. He refers to fluency as having two structures i.e., surface level and deep level. Readers needed to go through the texts (surface level) and also understand the meaning (deep level). As for the first dimension of reading fluency, readers decode words in terms of reading skills such as phonics and reading strategies. It focuses on accuracy. Going to the second dimension, it belongs to cognitive aspect. Readers read texts without hesitation and spend little energy understanding meanings. At this point, Griffith & Rasinski (2004) also write that, "One fluency goal for reading instruction then is to develop decoding to the point where it becomes an automatic process that requires a minimum of attention." Then, readers could separate texts into appropriate units in terms of syntax and semantics. It makes sense that if readers could read texts quickly and parse the texts correctly, he or she may comprehend the text fully. That is the third dimension, prosodic reading.

Moreover, Rasinski (2000) points out many teachers would categorize high or low proficient students by their reading rates. Slow reading is related to poor comprehension. However, he clarifies that fluency does not mean fast reading but meaning-filled reading. The goal of fluency is both fluent and understandable reading. As for Wolf & Katzir-Cohen's (2001) viewpoints toward reading fluency, they think accuracy and automaticity are developmental-based reading stage whereas

speed and rate are component-based sub-skills.

2.1.2 Importance of Oral Reading Fluency

Since many studies have investigated oral reading fluency in reading performance, there is no doubt that oral reading fluency has developed its crucial place in language learning field. While those various definitions of oral reading fluency are focused on different aspects such as accuracy, prosodic cues or speed, the target is fluency. The major concern is for good readers or skilled readers (Adam, 1990) who can recognize words quickly without attention. They will not have problems in reading fluency. But, the struggling students, who are always behind the class and who can not read fluently, will likely avoid reading due to negative attitudes and fear of failure in the reading process (Worthy & Broaddus, 2002). In addition, fluency relates to comprehension closely; hence, fluent readers are usually high proficient learners (Rasinski, 2000; Flynn, 2004). Therefore, it is important to build students' fluency in the language learning process. It not only helps struggling students regain their confidence and interests but also enhances their understanding of the texts.

More importantly, with respect to the real-life language principle from the Communicative Language Teaching approach, it is hoped that fluent reading sounds like oral speaking with rhythms, intonations and feelings. Eventually, it is possible to transfer the fluent reading skills to real life communication (Therrien, 2004). It is known that oral reading fluency is the key to successful reading.

2.1.3 Repeated Reading and Oral Reading Fluency

Definitions of oral reading fluency were mentioned earlier. Some focused on prosodic reading (Casey & Chamberlian, 2006). Others emphasized automatic decoding (Griffith & Rasinski, 2004). Both features are critical to fluency. It is

necessary to tell students the goal of reading is to comprehend the texts but not read word-by-word without understanding.

In order to achieve fluency, several fluency strategies are introduced to language classroom such as assisted reading, reading while listening, paired reading and repeated reading (Therrien, 2004). One influential strategy is repeated reading. In other words, readers read the same text several times until they gain fluency. Samuel (1997) describes repeated reading as a supplement program which is suitable for normal children and some students who have learning problems. Tyler & Chard (2000) also report that repeated reading is an effective method for both older and younger students on a comprehension test. In short, the method of repeated reading is to reread a short and meaningful passage until readers could reach a satisfactory level.

According to Worthy & Broaddus (2002), the practice of repeated reading in the reading classroom is highly effective. Through appropriate guidance, learners show their progress in word recognition, comprehension and fluency performance. In Figure 2.1, it summarizes the brief procedures of repeated reading mentioned by Worthy & Broaddus (2002).

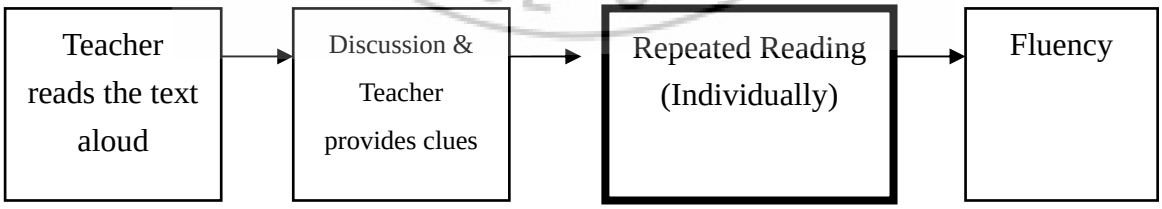

Figure2.1 Procedures of repeated reading (adopted from Worth & Broaddus, 2002)

In Samuel's (1997) study, he investigates the method of repeated reading and observes the progress in reading rate and word recognition of some mentally retarded students. He concludes that repeated reading does have great potential for

improving the learner's reading abilities especially for the use of remedial reading techniques. Further, he found that the ability of fluency would transfer to other contexts. Looking for a long range effect, Flynn (2004) pointed out that "Reading+ recitation + repetition +review = retention". When learners rehearse the familiar texts several times, they remember what they have read simultaneously. It means that repetition will indeed enhance retention. In a recent study, Therrien & Kunina (2006) illustrate that there are important instructional components when doing repeated reading intervention, such as reading aloud to a competent tutor, providing corrective feedback and rereading passages. They suggest that teachers should incorporate repeated reading into a daily routine. Repeated reading is regarded as a well-organized practice strategy which will foster readers' sharpened decoding skills and fluency.

2.1.4 Teacher's Role in Building Fluency

As shown in Figure 2.1, teachers play an important role in helping students to build fluency. At the beginning, the teacher needs to do modeling, i.e., read the texts aloud in order to deliver the information more precisely. Before the students do the practice, the teacher discusses the key points with the students and provides them with enough support and clues at the same time. With appropriate guidance and sufficient practice, students can reach the goal, fluency successfully. Obviously, the role of teacher can not be neglected.

It is important to help students to understand what they are going to learn and why fluency is so important. During the instruction and learning process, the teacher is not a director but a coach, facilitator and consultant (Maloch, 2005; Rasinski, 2004; Worthy & Broaddus, 2002). The teacher demonstrates fluent reading with appropriate tone and speed. It is especially helpful for anxious students.

2.2 Readers' Theatre

This section discusses five relevant issues relating to Readers' Theater (RT). First, definitions of RT are introduced in order to enhance overall understanding. Second, the researcher explains how RT connects oral reading fluency and repeated reading. The third part focuses on the role of the teacher whose guiding and modeling are beneficial to students' learning. Fourth, numerous benefits of RT for students and teachers are illustrated, especially for some anxious students. In the last part, since RT somewhat can be defined as a drama activity, several elements of drama are discussed.

2.2.1 Introductions of Readers' Theatre

Rinehart (1999) simply states that RT is "…a method that is holistic in nature, that potentially integrates language experiences of reading, speaking, listening and thinking. It also potentially integrates components of the reading process.". It is a whole language learning which involves language skills and metacognitive learning (Kellehe, 1997). In addition to the language learning aspect, Readers' Theatre is a motivational reading strategy which motivates readers to read and helps struggling learners play and enjoy the reading processes. Chard & Tyler (2000) explain numerous reasons why RT activities are appealing to children. Reading is a lonely and tedious task but RT provides active participation for readers to get into their characters. All readers take turns reading different parts of scripts and express the characters' emotions and personalities. It allows readers to interact with peers and other classmates that ascertain the power of cooperative learning.

Readers Theater (RT) is also described by Shepard (1994) as "a tool which frees the performers and the audience from the physical limitations of conventional theater, letting the imagination soar". There are no props, stage sets, no memorized lines and

elaborate costumes but only well-selected scripts and the student's voice. In RT, readers' voices are used to make printed words come alive and give characters life. By imagining the details of the stories, both readers and listeners go inside the character's life. When looking at RT performance, there are two kinds of roles, narrator and reader. Narrators always look at audience and tell the background or movement. They are an integral part of a RT performance. Narrators will help the audience to bring the vivid images to mind. Characters, on the other hand, address story lines directly to whomever they are talking to. Through the readers' reading expression, intonation and volume, the audience can get involved in the plots easily. The forms of the written text could be poetry, story, chant, or dialogues. It is important to note that there is no need for students to memorize lines or the whole story. The only requirement is reading aloud for the audience and using sounds to express meaning and content (Casey & Chamberlain, 2006; Chard & Tyler, 2000; Carrick, 2001; Kellehe, 1997; Scovel, 1982). Shepard (1994) further suggests that there are few things that could add to polish RT such as scripts binder, smocks and stools of chair height. Or, teachers may help students to draw a picture or diagram to experience the characters and plots deeply. Nevertheless, it is optional but not a must.

2.2.2 Steps of Readers' Theatre

In order to make RT go smoothly, there is a set of procedures. According to Hoyt (1992), it is important to create a reading response environment even though each child only needs to read his or her own part. Initially, the teacher could model expressive reading and assist incapable students to read scripts. Then, the students could do choral reading in small groups that would enhance their reading fluency at appropriate rates. After rehearsing and practicing texts, groups are allowed to set

their own pace and perform fluently. Worthy & Broaddus (2002) mention that "Readers' Theatre is an excellent activity for grouping students by interest rather than reading level.". In other words, learners can have success on their own parts and each success will lead to increased motivation and self-confidence. Based on Worthy & Broaddus's notions (2002), a regular sequence when applying RT is summarized in **Figure 2.2**

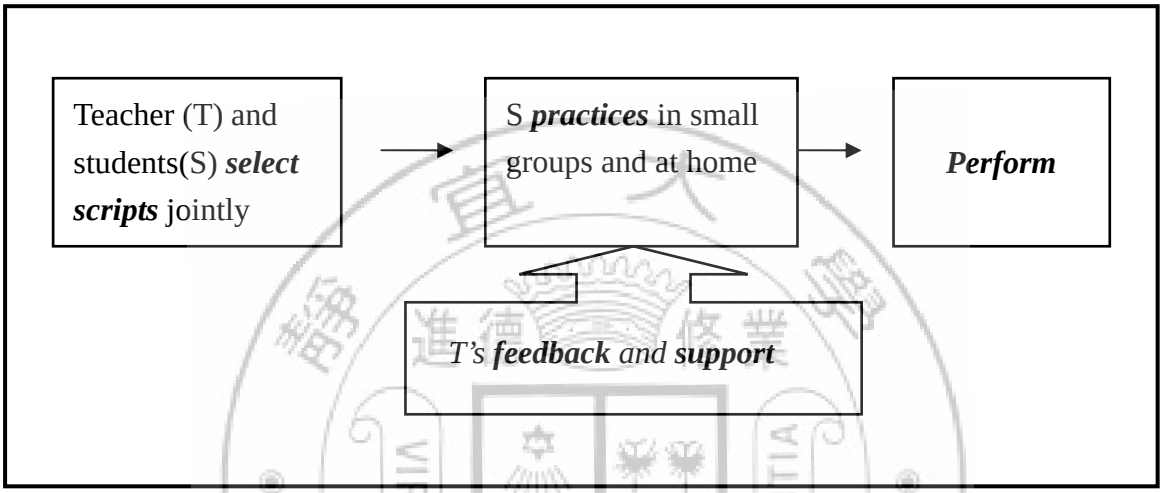

Figure 2.2 A summary of RT procedures based on Worthy & Broaddus's notions

In addition, Kellehe (1997) divides RT into four parts including reading stories or sentences from literature, analyzing the literature and writing the script, practicing and rehearsing the reading performance, and performing to audience finally. During the process of the four-part implementation of RT, Kellehe thinks RT not only develops different language skills, i.e., speaking, listening, writing, and reading but also triggers high order thinking such as cognitive monitoring, compensatory strategies, and cognitive awareness as well. Furthermore, Chard & Tyler (2000) try to make rereading occur naturally so they put much emphasis on reading itself. First, readers read texts silently or with peers or groups. Then, readers exchange roles and read different scripts so that they could choose the characters they wish to perform. Finally, all readers present in front of the class or to other appreciative audiences. In

Martinez, Roser & Strecker's (1999) study, they proposed 5-day plans for RT whose goals and procedures were similar to studies mentioned above. However, after RT instruction and performances, a 5-point scale was used to assess students' progress including fluidity, phrasing and expressiveness of oral reading and on the pre- and post-assessments. Moreover, Carrick (2001) also proposed a 5-day project with a short script. It may take generally 5 to 10 days in the primary grades depending on the learners' level and the teachers' preparations. The central goal is similar to Martinez, Roser & Strecker's (1999) study. Specially, Carrick offered two assessment rubrics; one is designed by Saskatchewan Education and another one is presented by Pearson Education Canada. The difference between the two assessments is on different grade levels.

It's critical to help reading abilities transfer to other use of language mastery. When students are operating RT familiarly and know how to go on in detail cooperatively, it is the time to empower them to write the scripts by themselves. Stewart (1997) discusses how to use RT to prompt students' writing. After reading *Charlotte's Web* in RT, students became familiar with the texts. Readers could then revise the story and make other creative versions by groups. Then, there would be another type of story presented by students. RT can be extended as a follow-up activity.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, RT demonstrates various forms for different language use depending on different purposes such as writing-target, assessing reading, or cooperative learning. In addition, multiple materials can be adapted to RT including picture storybooks, fairy tales, literature, poetry and dialogues. Those are good beginning to bring readers into RT and gain enjoyment and confidence.

2.2.3 Teacher's Role in Readers' Theatre

According to Nuttal's (1996) viewpoints, she focuses on how reading skills could be taught in a foreign language classroom. Hence, many reading approaches are proposed since reading for meaning is so important in communicative oriented classrooms. As an English teacher, he or she may play a critical role in helping learners effectively bridge the gap between real communication and printed pages. There are three stages in which teachers will show their contribution. In the initial stage, a RT teacher can be a *gatekeeper*. Before starting to teach reading, reading material selection is the first gate to an enjoyable reading world. It is necessary to choose a suitable text for learners to work on. Depending on the readers' previous background and knowledge, teachers have the responsibility to find out what learners can and cannot do. Indeed, a familiar or humorous text will be better for readers going inside the story (Martine, Roser & Strecker, 1998/1999; Nuttal, 1996). When scripts are well prepared, the teachers start to lead readers step by step. Prescott& Lewis (2003) suggest that teachers can model the scripts in a fluent and expressive way to strengthen readers' imaginations. It is helpful for all learners to know that how voices and expressions of fluent reading make scripts understandable and vivid. Moreover, when some struggling students hear the part modeled, they will feel more confident and comfortable. The teacher's role is not an instructor only but a coach and feedback provider. When readers do reading practice or rehearsal, they desire to receive suggestions and ideas which will help their performance go well. Hoyt (1992) further suggests that teachers could assign a tutor to read scripts or prepare tape recording at rehearsal period since repeated reading is the major concern in RT. Moreover, teachers are not only an assistant of RT but also could be a character in the play. The benefits of this active involvement would be extended (Maloch, 2005). The last stage is performance time. When children stand

in front of the class, they may be shy or nervous. Teachers need to warm up the atmosphere and give support when needed. It is assumed that all children have done enough repetition and rehearsal work so a RT teacher serves as a patient audience. Besides, teachers also can encourage other off-stage students to provide feedback and compliments for on-stage characters, which may give students more involvement (Casey, 2006).

Based on the procedures of RT, teachers' roles are multi-faceted. It is possible that teachers would be very busy and exhausted when playing so many roles at the same time. However, it is important that both teachers and learners take some time to establish classroom routines and appropriate behaviors. Before everything goes smoothly, it may take time to prepare such a job. When students are familiar with the regular procedures and performance practice, the teacher and learners are ready to enjoy this cooperative success (Worthy &Prater, 2002).

2.2.4 Benefits of Drama Elements in Readers' Theatre

Annarella (1999) distinguishes drama from theatre based on their different focuses. Drama focuses on the individual and learning, whereas theatre emphasizes production and audience. However, they share certain similar features. Readers' Theatre covers the common characteristics which benefits readers in the language classroom. Here, the drama refers to creative drama which could provide lasting benefits for learners on academic language skills.

Student-Centered

It is hoped that each student makes an effort on final performance. Hence, when readers read scripts in a paired reading or group practice, they need to share ideas with group members and brainstorm together. Readers' Theatre (RT) is not a traditional reading activity but everyone is a character who is responsible for presenting the story

to the audience (Annarella, 1990).

Cooperative Learning

Performance is a tool to connect all learners together. It is not a single battle. It will be interesting to watch a cooperative demonstration with a trusting, active and cooperative atmosphere. Everyone works together to develop a sense of empathy and presence during the practice and discussion process. In addition to language skills development, the goal of cooperative learning in RT is on building learners' interpersonal and cooperative abilities (Pinciotti, 1993; Prescott & Lewis., 2003).

Imagination and Risk-Taking

Learners are encouraged to perform in their own way even though they have the script on hands. RT can be presented through multiple ways such as choral reading, singing and poetry reading. Teachers empower learners to feel free to show their team work. As Shepard (1994) states, "Readers' Theatre frees the performers and the audience from the physical limitations of convention theatre, letting the imagination soar".

Annarella (1993) also explains that risk-taking is encouraged during drama practice. Teachers create a non-threatening environment in which learners feel free and are excited to contribute their ideas and efforts.

2.2.5 How Readers' Theater Promotes Oral Reading Fluency

From previous discussions on repeated reading and oral reading fluency, we have shown that there is a direct link between them. In addition, Readers' Theatre (RT) is an alternative reading technique which will enhance reader's reading fluency. The key component of RT is repeated reading which requires readers to do repeated reading until they reach a satisfactory level. RT gives readers an acceptable reason to do repeated practice with their teams and with joy. In Martinez, Roser &

Strecker's study (1999), it is pointed out that RT is a motivational method which encourages readers to read scripts repeatedly. Both high and low achievers benefit from repeated reading. High achievers or fluent readers can recognize words and understand texts simultaneously. Reading may not be a problem for them. But, for lower achievers or anxious students, there is a need for more support and encouragement from others to build successful reading. RT provides a platform for all learners to get involved in reading performance. This is a cooperative team work. From sufficient reading practice to cooperation, struggling students could observe other's gestures and hear good pronunciation and intonation at the same time. As Flynn (2004) illustrates, repeated reading is important in RT because the final performance requires several rehearsals. Straightforwardly, rehearsal is a learning strategy which equals to repetitions. Students are responsible for their own lines and for repeating, reviewing and rereading as much as possible. Once readers have rehearsed enough to stand in public, repeated reading has achieved its goal, i.e., oral reading fluency. Moreover, several researchers have shown that repeated reading is beneficial to different levels of students with and without disabilities. We have discussed how repeated reading relates to oral reading fluency in the previous sections. However, we may like to know how RT brings oral reading fluency to learners. Repeated reading is one of the tools to make reading fluently. Each reader, including the narrator and the characters, needs to perform in front of the class. RT motivates readers to focus on accurate reading as well as understanding and expressions of the scripts. It is a way to present their growth and team performance. Fluency has become an essential target when we want to hear a smooth reading. Moreover, RT allows flexibility for each student's individuality which may build up their sense of ownership, confidence and interest. RT is an effective and purposeful method to implement the reading curriculum promoting fluent and prosodic reading (Casey &

Chamberlian, 2006).

2.3 Foreign Language Anxiety

Many researchers have conducted the investigations on language anxiety. Maclntyre and Gardner (1989) did a study of anxiety on second language learning using two theoretical frameworks. One is Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) construct of foreign language anxiety. The other one is Tobias's (1989) anxiety presentation in different learning strategies, input, processing and output. The former one consists of the three dimensions including communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. The focus of communication apprehension is on the interpersonal interaction which would affect second language learning and performance. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's research (1986), if learners have the problem of communication apprehension, they are not capable of understanding other's meaning or expressing their own feelings. In Young's studies (1986, 1990), he also shows that there is a direct relationship between anxiety and oral proficiency. Some foreign language learners may not feel at ease when they have to speak in front of the class. They become anxious being spotlighted in public to answer the questions. Test Anxiety refers to the foreign language learner's fear of failure in a specific situation. Anxious learners may suffer on a test or quiz and develop a negative stereotype in performance. Due to the struggling and unpleasant experience, test anxiety will emerge. Fear of negative evaluation is defined as "apprehension about other's evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively." (see p.31) This domain is not restricted to test anxiety only but is also for broader situations such as doing role play in the classroom or asking information in the hotel. Anxious learners are uncertain whether their utterances are correct or

not. Also, they are anxious of other people's negative evaluation, which may lead them to avoid learning more difficult or new information of the target language. Therefore, communicative apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are not independent of each other in an anxious situation but can be the complex combinations of learner's self-perception beliefs.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) also propose three perspectives of anxiety as state anxiety, trait anxiety, and situation specific anxiety. State anxiety refers to an immediate emotion experience at a particular moment such as taking examinations. Trait anxiety is identified as a consistent anxious mind in any situation. Both state anxiety and trait anxiety are taken as the foundations of MacIntyre's model (1995), which show the recursive relations among anxiety, cognition and behavior. He identifies anxiety as playing a significant role in influencing second language learning activities such as a listening or comprehension task. When state anxiety arises, the learner's performance will diminish. Chan and Wu (2004) focus on situation specific anxiety in their study. This perspective applies trait anxiety in a given context such as writing examinations, public speaking or performing math. The strength of situation specific anxiety is that we may observe learner's different anxiety level in various aspect of the situation (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991).

2.3.1 Role of Anxiety

Indeed, many researchers have found that anxiety plays both positive and negative roles in the foreign language classroom. Scovel (1978) identifies that anxiety as being facilitating or debilitating to the new task. Also, foreign language activities would be enhanced by negative motivation and positive motivation. That is, different level of motivated learners will perform diversely when encountering the anxiety. Those students with a positive attitude or those motivated to integrate learn

foreign languages more quickly and consequently are willing to take the risk and take an the new task. However, those with negative attitudes or a low level of willingness to integrate tend to flee y and their anxiety may impair the language learning process (Gardner, Day, MacIntyre, 1992; Scovel, 1978).

For many of the studies presented above, scholars have developed teaching methodologies such as the Natural Approach, Counseling-Learning and Suggestopedia to reduce negative impact of anxiety on foreign language leaning (Young, 1991). Indeed, many studies have proved that foreign language anxiety affects language learning and performance. Concerning the different types of anxiety and the role of anxiety, it is important to understand what students' learning anxiety is, especially in Taiwan's EFL context.

2.3.2 How Readers' Theatere Helps Anxious Students

With respect to students' anxiety, many studies have indicated that anxious students tend to be those who are at-risk learners and low achievers in learning. Due to their negative attitude and low proficiency, their performance is lower than the average of the whole class. In the reading curriculum, anxious students are incapable of reading texts fluently and recognizing words at first sight which might result in weak motivation to learn and try. Readers' Theatre (RT), which is often used in remedial program, serves as a reading strategy to help those anxious students to regain their interests and confidence. Or, RT can also be applied into art-education groups using it as a drama training technique. The positive effects are extended to both external and internal aspects of the language. For external aspect of the language, RT builds up a sense of positive emotional needs such as positive attitude, interpersonal interaction, collaborative and social skills. On the other hand, the internal aspect of the language itself, RT boots learners' language skills including

reading skills, oral presentation and vocal expressions.

Prescott & Lewis (2003) cite one teacher's classroom observation, "Students who were usually reluctant to express themselves orally blossomed in the Readers' Theatre arena." RT indeed helps students to lessen their anxiety and shyness. In addition, RT gives teachers a chance to view students' multiple intelligences and lead them to see their own strengths. A similar result corresponds with Rasinski's study (2000). He indicates that teachers need to be empowered to know students' need and problems and further solve the problem. Normally, slow readers or struggling learners who are anxious all the time are afraid of speaking out. Because they are always unwilling to participate in the activities voluntarily, they get fewer opportunities to speak. They have to devote more time to reading and comprehending the texts than other students. Anxious students usually suffered due to their unfamiliar texts, negative attitude and little support. At this moment, if teachers forget to take those anxious learners into consideration, they may always keep silent and less motivated.

Readers' Theatre is used to overcome this reading problem and empower both instructor and learners to achieve certain goals. Rinehart (1999) finds that the links among motivation, practice and confidence were positive. When readers read scripts sufficiently, they gain successful learning experience. It is important for learners to know how much progress they made but not how smart they are. Once they have successful learning experience, they know they could contribute to their performance (Alderman, 1990). In other words, RT tries to develop learners' self-esteem and confidence through repeated reading. Students can do pair reading, buddy reading, or independent reading so they can rehearse and discuss with other students or teachers. Everyone gets to do the job. Casey & Chamberlian (2006) further suggest that poor readers did not read the easier or shorter part of the scripts; instead,

all students needed to learn different materials. In other words, the teachers guided readers to do various reading which may lead learners to know their own strengthens and weakness. Each student has his or her own individuality. Meeting their needs and selecting appropriate materials are essential concerns in RT. Moreover, creating a non-threatening and safe environment for anxious learners is crucial to their learning. Readers' Theatre is elicited without memorization, embracing performance and traditional instruction in the foreign language classroom. All readers use their own voices and additional gesture to display the whole-group performance together. We can find out a trusting atmosphere in Readers' Theatre.

2.3.3 Research on the Implementation of Readers' Theatre in Elementary School EFL Classrooms in Taiwan

Readers' Theatre (RT) is initiated from English-as-first language countries, which is applied to improve students' native language abilities. With the thriving and robust trend of innovative methods of communicative language approach, more and more educators have started to adopt creative and meaningful methods to enhance teaching and learning quality. However, in the academic EFL field in Taiwan, research on using RT as a method is still in bud. By reviewing recent research in Taiwan, the researcher has found some relevant articles including oral reading fluency, students' affective attitude, i.e., motivation and anxiety and benefits of drama application. For example, Yang (2005) investigated how the implementation of RT had been used on students' oral reading fluency, accuracy and prosody. He found that learners would improve their reading rate and accuracy after three performances of RT. Later, Chen's study (2005) corresponded with Yang's results. She indicated that the influence of RT instructions did help on learners' reading abilities and improve their reading accuracy and rates. Especially, the result showed that some anxious learners

whose reading abilities were low had developed greater motivation after RT instructions. Chen concluded that using RT to motivate students to read was effective. At the same time, learners could build trusting cooperative relationships with peers. In addition, Hung (2006) aimed to explore the practice of RT on students' oral reading fluency and motivation. In her study, both high- and low-achievers showed progress in reading fluency after 8-week involvements of RT trainings. Learners gained most in developing self-efficacy and perceiving self-competence. The pleasing result also revealed that cooperative learning and arousal of intrinsic motivation are key points in EFL classroom. In Chang's study (2006), she reported similar results. By applying RT, learners improved on their reading comprehension and gained a positive learning attitude toward English learning. From the learners' viewpoints, they thought it was fun and non-threatening to speak English in a RT environment. Furthermore, Wu (2006) noted that language anxiety may impede student's learning in an EFL environment. She employed drama activities to reduce fourth-grade students' anxiety. After twelve weeks of drama instructions and practice, statistical results showed that anxious learners' negative attitude indeed decreased. Wu further suggested that teachers needed to pay attention to those low achievers whose abilities and motivation are below the average students. In addition, she encouraged teachers to design drama activities to fulfill students' need and interests.

Along with those academic studies mentioned above, a great deal of English journal articles and magazines identify the benefits of RT in EFL classrooms. For example, Chang (2004) explicitly introduced the applications of drama techniques which provide learners with a lively learning environment. He adapted the story *Three Little Pigs* which was a familiar story for everyone. In the process of brainstorming and cooperative learning, learners felt excited and enhanced their

learning qualities. In addition, Tseng (2004) encouraged teachers to try this effective and convenient activity. Each student could be the most important person in a play when all learners were involved in RT performance. Not only reading skills and extensive writing could improve, but listening and speaking abilities could be shown in the RT classroom.

2.4 Research Questions

In view of many studies mentioned earlier, those are written by native speakers of English whose study settings may not be appropriate for Taiwan EFL environment. They discuss mainly about how RT benefits native learners but seldom mention how EFL teachers could apply RT in the elementary English classroom in Taiwan. As for studies in Taiwan, only four unpublished theses have investigated how RT has been used in the English classroom. Some study oral reading fluency and motivation in reading. The others focus on the effect of drama activity on language anxiety which are quantitative-research concerns. None of them have dealt with the implementations of RT on oral reading fluency and the effects in lessening on learners' anxiety.

We have known that RT is an easy to prepare, purposeful, and motivational method. If we could apply RT into elementary school English classroom, there are certainly potential benefits, such as lessening students' anxiety, increasing learning interests, improving oral reading fluency and developing critical thinking and imaginations. Since the concern of adopting action research is the major scheme in this study, the researcher is devoted to conveying up with some suggestions for RT instructions and further providing more ideas for EFL teachers. Research questions of the study are repeated as follows:

1. Do EFL learners feel anxious in learning foreign language? If so, is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' foreign language anxiety before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?
2. Is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' oral reading fluency before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?
3. How is the implementation of Readers' Theatre applied into an EFL classroom?
4. How does Readers' Theatre help anxious students overcome anxiety?
5. What are participants' perceptions toward Readers' Theatre instructions?
6. What are the teacher's roles in the implementation of Readers' Theatre?

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

In this study, action research was adopted. The presentation of the research methods is divided into five sections. In the first section, three reasons of applying action research in this study are explained. In the second section, setting, participants and researcher are introduced. As for the third section, four instruments are introduced to illustrate how this action research was conducted. In the fourth sections, the research procedures are displayed. In the last section, data analysis is covered.

3.1 Action Research

Because action research has become a significant concern in reading instructions, there are three reasons to employ action research as the focus. First, as Wallace (1998) points out, action research is a problem-focused study which tries to find out real problems and solve them. It is different from other traditional or statistical-concerned research. On the contrary, action research puts much focus on a small group of people, which results in more in-depth understandings. Second, due to the major spirits of action research, numerous reflective thinking and examining during the process of investigating is underlined. In Wallace's (1998) notions, he proposes a "REFLECTIVE CYCLE", indicating reflections and professional practice are closely interwoven. This cycle also empowers a teacher-as-a researcher to take theory into practice. That is the third reason why action research is emphasized. As Figure 3.1 displayed, combinations of professional practice and self reflection will benefit a teacher and a researcher in their professional development.

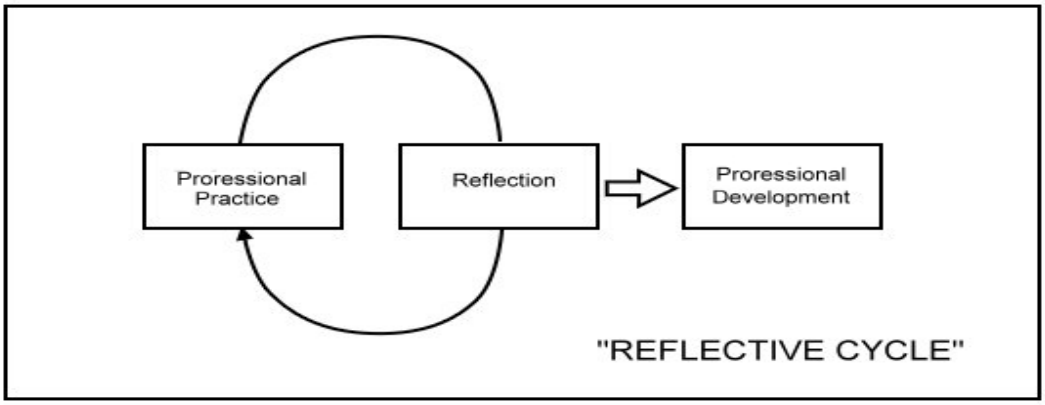

Figure 3.1 The reflective cycle and professional development

[Adopted from Wallace (1998, p 13)]

3.2 Setting and Participants

In this part, school setting, involved participants, the teacher and the role of researcher are introduced, respectively.

3.2.1 Settings

This study took place in an elementary school which is located in the sub urban area of Taichung City. The location of the school is near Taichung County, which does not receive large public resources. It is a middle sized school which has forty-nine classes. Even though Taichung City strongly emphasizes English teaching and learning very much, the involved school does not push English learning very actively. There are three English teachers who take turns using the only English classroom. Since the focus of this school is on science-subject, there are not many opportunities for students to use English outside the classroom. According to the R.O.C. government policy, students who are from third grade to sixth grade need to attend two periods of English course each week. Second grade students have one period of English per week. Each period takes forty minutes. Each class contains around 32 students. There are two standardized tests in a semester.

3.2.2 Participants

3.2.2.1 Students

The participants of this study were an intact class of 31 fourth-grade students. The class consisted of 18 boys and 13 girls. All students have started learning English when they were second grade students. There are 15 students who attend cram school. Even though the cram-school students have more chances to learn English, they seldom use English outside the English classroom. As for those students who did not go to cram school, they only receive English instruction at school. Participants are all beginning learners. Before participating in this study, they have learned English from basic alphabetic writing to story-like dialogue practices. What they have already learned is summarized in Table 3.1. According to school policy, each grade has different learning targets. Because the second graders only have one period of English class per week, the learning objectives are set at the beginning stage. When students go to the third grade, they have to learn more in reading and writing skills. In "*Target Ability*" shown in Table 3.1, the contents are discussed by three English teachers who expect that students can achieve those objectives. In this study, students are fourth graders who have learned basic alphabet writing, simple sentence structures, vocabulary, dialogue practice and classroom language. All participants are native speakers of Mandarin and /or Taiwanese.

Table 3.1 A summary of participants' background knowledge

GRADE	**Period of English per week**	**Target Ability**
2nd	1	*Focus: Listening and Speaking* A. Learn 26 alphabets B. Learn simple classroom language C. Learn basic greetings D. Learn basic phonic awareness
3rd	2	*Focus: Listening and speaking are major* concern. Writing and reading are secondary. A. Learn daily conversation （*Hi, how are you?*） B. Learn simple grammar patterns (e.g., *present tense*；*Yes/No questions*) C. Learn more vocabulary from 26 alphabets (e.g., K-Kite, King) D. Learn Numbers 1-20
4th	2	*Focus: Listening and speaking are major concerns. Writing and reading are secondary.* A. Learn daily conversation B. Learn simple grammar patterns(e.g., *WH questions*; *plural forms*; *Do questions*; *apostrophe writing*) C. Learn phonetic combination (e.g., *c-at*; *f-at*) D. Learn Numbers 1-50

3.2.2.2 A Teacher

I am the English teacher who has four years of experience teaching middle grades, i.e., third and fourth grades. There are 7fourth-grades classes which I am responsible for. I have taught all fourth grade students for 18 months, thus, I have basic understanding of all the participants. The participants in this study are conveniently selected. The reason that I chose this intact class is their classroom is

next to the English classroom. That is convenient and effective for me to collect data and interact with the participants. I always have good relationships with my students. The teaching belief in my mind is enjoying teaching and learning English with my students. I always encourage my students to use English with their friends or family in the daily life. I especially like to use picture books and holiday teaching to bring more understanding for my students of foreign language culture. It is valuable for EFL learners to learn a foreign language and its culture simultaneously which will broaden their sense of world views and recognition of other languages.

There are different English activities such as drama performance or the English carnival held by Taichung City. However, not all students get the chances to participate in English activities, especially for those low achievers or low-income family children. Thus, action research empowers me to use a natural and appropriate approach to teach my students. It is more practical and convincing to choose the class I teach as the participants. As Wallace (1998) agrees that action research empowers teachers to find out the problems and try to solve the problems. It is worth applying theories and background knowledge to real practice. Moreover, thinking and reflecting is always endless when a teacher experiences everyday classroom problems and possible learning situations. The important thing is that a teacher or a researcher knows how to raise the questions, face the problems and further find out the solutions. Therefore, building up their confidence and leading students into a different English world was my purpose in this study.

3.2.2.3 The Role of the Researcher

I am also the researcher in this action research. The role of the researcher is hidden behind the teacher. On the one hand, as the teacher, I was responsible for instructing Readers' Theatre. On the other hand, as the researcher, I audio-taped

class procedures, observed classroom situations and was recorded important facts on the field notes. If it was necessary, the researcher interviewed participants and concerned about what they had learned and how they felt. Because the focus in this study is the implementation of Readers' Theatre (RT) in the classroom and also decreasing foreign language anxiety through RT, the researcher made an effort to pay attention to those anxious students and investigated what their emotions, attitudes and learning needs were then. Playing two roles simultaneously is a busy and challenging task. However, during the investigations and observations, the result is practical and sheds positively light on English teaching and learning.

3.3 Research Design

In this action research, the major concern is on how Readers' Theatre helps students to improve their reading fluency and decrease students' anxiety in terms of an alternative reading technique. The researcher was also the teacher who was responsible for arranging RT instructions, oral reading fluency tests, questionnaires, field notes and follow-up interviews. In order to triangulate this qualitative research, two critical friends were invited to examine the study process and provide suggestions at the right time. In other words, because this is an actions research, it is possible to encounter some teaching problems and impromptu events, those two critical friends were responsible for giving suggestions and advice in adjusting teaching. Furthermore, statistical analysis of the data of questionnaire was also used to support the findings in this study. In order to understand the conceptual structure of this study, the framework of it was displayed in Figure 3.2. With respect to the nature of action research, first, the researcher found out six research questions based on the self teaching experience. Then, it was important to narrow the focus by forming research questions, which ascertained the research directions. After identifying research

questions, the research designed an activity, i.e., Readers' Theatre, which served as a tool to answer research questions. Therefore, relevant data and information were collected and then analyzed.

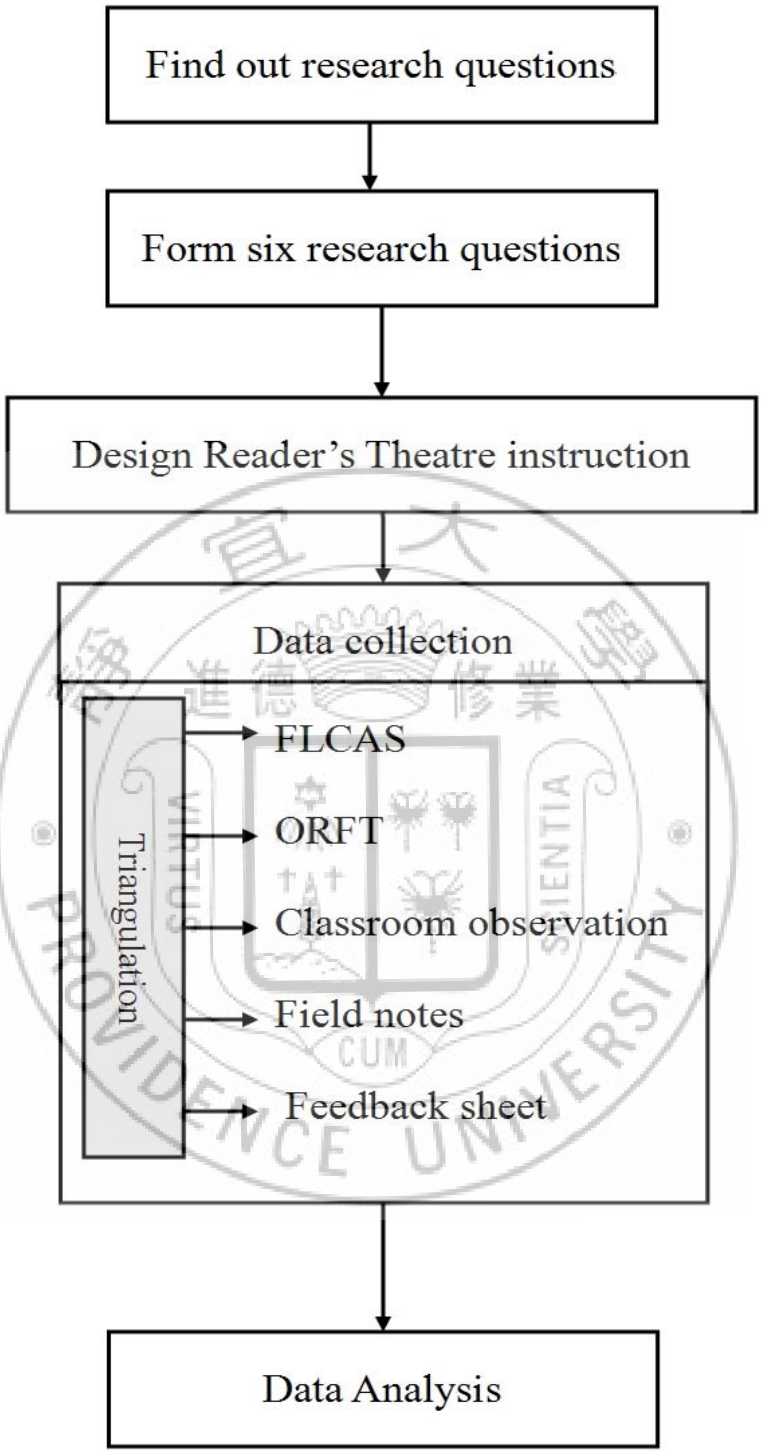

Figure 3.2 The framework of this study

Based on the framework of this study, the research design was presented in Figure 3.3 which involved the study procedures and instruments employed in this study. Four instruments were used in this study. First, pre- and post-oral reading fluency tests (Appendix 1) were used. Second, pre- and post-FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scales) questionnaires (see Appendix 2) were administrated to understand participants' anxious levels. Third, classroom observations and field notes were video-taped to re-examine the RT procedures and participants' responses and interactions. Last, follow-up informal interviews (see Appendix 4) were audio-taped to reflect the participants' perceptions toward RT instructions. Also, data of interviews were collected to understand how learners felt after RT instructions. I will further discuss in detail how multiple data were collected as well as how those data were analyzed in the following sections.

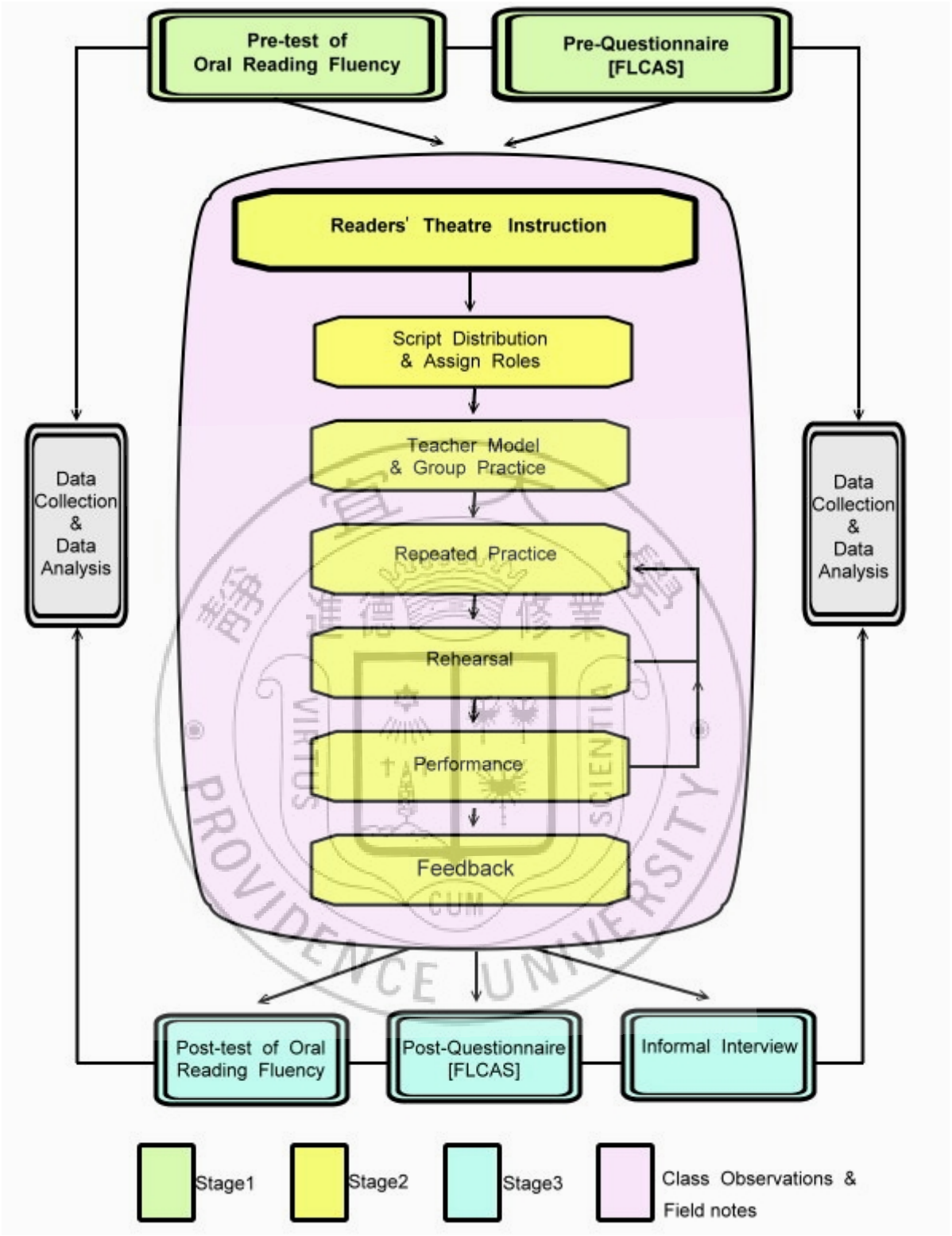

Figure 3.3 Research design of this study

3.4 Instruments

There are five kinds of instruments used by time order in this study. A diagram to present the research procedures and correspondent methods is shown above (Figure 3.3).

3.4.1 Pr- & Post-FLCAS Questionnaires

Although qualitative research designs was adopted to discover the effects of the implementation of Readers' Theatre (RT) on students' oral reading fluency and decreasing anxiety, applications of quantitative designs served as supportive evidences for the whole study. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used to investigate participants' English learning anxiety. Thirty-two items were included which were adapted from Wu's version (2006). There is a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" (5 points) to "strongly disagree" (1 point). The higher the total numbers are, the more anxious participants feel. In addition, Items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32 were reversed items. The FLCAS conveyed three aspects namely, communicative apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluations. The reason for using FLCAS questionnaire was to understand participants' anxious status in terms of degree of foreign language anxiety. By comparing questionnaires at two different times, students' degree and perceptions of foreign language might differ due to the RT implementation.

3.4.2 Pre- & Post- Oral Reading Tests

Before conducting Readers' Theatre instruction in the classroom, pre-oral reading fluency test was administrated, which was used for understanding students' background reading abilities. The researcher created an oral reading test based on

instruction materials and the students' levels. There were two parts in the oral reading tests, i.e., reading part and scoring part (see Appendix 1). Students did not prepare for the tests. The only thing they needed to do was reading the lines and while were recorded on a digital recording pen. Then, after Readers' Theatre instructions, participants were asked to do post-oral reading tests which explained the comparative results of learners' reading abilities.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher used a digital recording pen to collect data. All information was written on the oral reading test including rate and accuracy. All thirty-one students were required to finish two reading tests individually. Before starting recording, the teacher told students to relax in reading informal test. Recording their voices made it convenient for the teacher to write down notes. Once students saw unfamiliar or unknown words, students were instructed to skip it and read the next word.

Students' background knowledge is shown in Table 3.1. The content designs of the tests depended on the participants' previous knowledge and RT materials. Two of the materials were adapted from a picture book, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see?* and cartoon, *Peppa Pig*. The level of the test was suitable for our beginners. Thirty-seven words in total were included. In this test, there were three things to be record: including correct words, reading rates and percentage of accuracy.

3.4.3 Readers' Theatre Instructions

In order to understand students' improvement on oral reading fluency and anxiety, RT was applied into an EFL elementary classroom. The selected materials in RT were from supplementary picture books *Brow Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and a cartoon, *Peppa Pig*.

3.4.3.1 Material Selection for Readers' Theatre

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? was written by Bill Martin, Jr. Participants have already read this book so I used it as a starting point. Sentence patterns from this book are regular. They are *what do you see?* and *I see a looking at me*. It indicated that it was easier for readers to get involved in the story and followed the guidelines of RT, i.e., repeated reading with reasonable reasons. In addition, participants already learned several animal names in the previous semester. By reading this book again, they tended to apply their previous knowledge and anchor new information together to build up comprehensible knowledge bank. The script can be found in Appendix 5. This book has colorful pages and vivid animals which impressed beginners most. Hence, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* was used to be the first book resources for RT. A sample page of *Brown, Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* is presented in Figure 3.4.

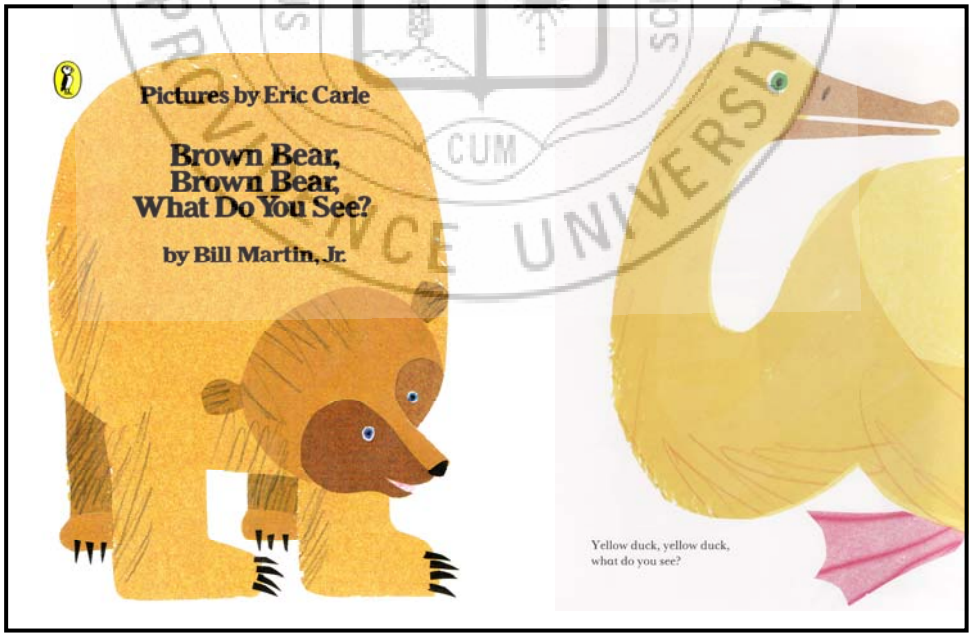

Figure 3.4 Sample pages of *Brown, Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*

The second RT material was chosen from a cartoon, *Peppa Pig* which was a popular video series. One series of *Peppa Pig* "Secrets" was used. The scripts can be found in Appendix 6. *Peppa Pig* was a family cartoon produced in United Kingdom. There are four main characters including Peppa pig, George, Daddy Pig, and Mommy Pig. The characteristics of *Pappa Pig* are interesting, easily understood, and learnable. Pronunciations were spoken by native speakers which served as a tool of modeled reading. Some learners are visual-oriented and some are aural-oriented. Cartoon combines those two learning styles and produces a diversity of learning contents. When learners saw the cartoons, they were motivated to understand the contents of the story. In those two stories, many animals and daily life stories were shown. After they heard the voices, they started to receive spoken input simultaneously. I transformed the visual and audio input into written forms. Listening ability as well as speaking and reading skills were taken into consideration. The designs of the scripts were adjusted depending on the student' levels, interests and plots of the stories. Indeed, learners liked to read the story-like passages because they were like the characters while reading the stories. All participants took roles and were responsible for the whole story. With respect to multiple sources of learning materials, RT fulfilled the learning quality. It could be a review lesson of previous knowledge or a summary of an activity or a lesson.

3.4.3.2 Procedures of Readers' Theatre Instructions

Six-week RT instructions were organized by a timetable in Table 3.2. Because there were two stories used in this study, six weeks were divided into two cycles. The first run was based on *Brown, Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*. The second run was based on *Peppa Pig*. Each cycle followed the regular RT procedures, which made students get familiar with the procedures of RT, including introduction of

materials, teacher's modeling, repeated reading, performance, and feedback time. A routine of RT practices is displayed in Figure 3.5.

Week	RT Guidelines
1	-Introductions of RT and materials（*Brown, Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*）
2	-Script Distribution & Assign Roles -Teacher Model & Individual practice
3	-Repeated practice & Rehearsal -Performance& Feedback
4	-Introductions of materials (*Peppa Pig-Secrets*) -Relevant Activity【Strip Story】
5	-Script Distribution & Assign Roles -Teacher Model & Individual practice
6	-Repeated practice & Rehearsal -Performance& Feedback

Table 3.2 Timetable for 6-week RT instructions

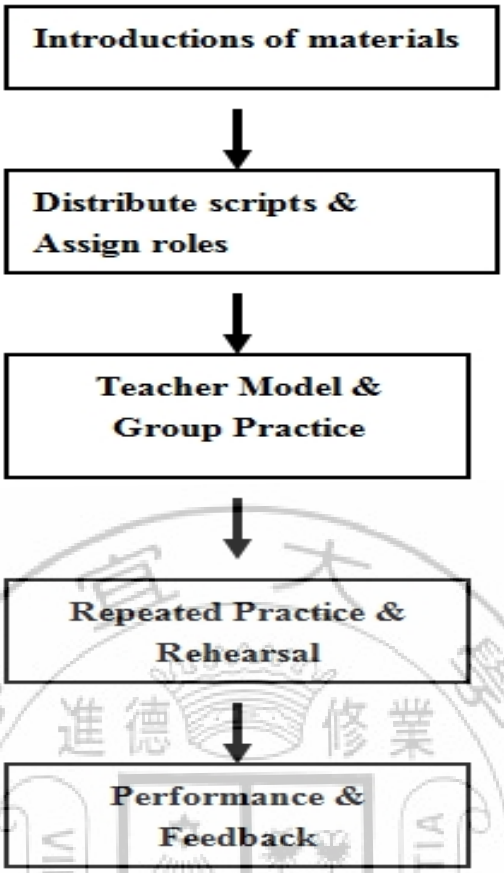

Figure 3.5 Procedures of RT

According to Figure 3.5, at the first step, the teacher introduced the general ideas and meanings from *Brown, Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* and ***Peppa Pig***. The purpose of this stage was to provide readers with whole concepts toward learning materials. The instruction goals were explaining characters, plots and sequences of the story. Then, it was the time for readers to choose the favorite roles and explain the script contents. The participants started to know they needed to work together and take their jobs seriously. After teacher's modeling of reading, participants did individual practice, pair practice and group practice. The teacher needed to check student's reading; thus, the teacher encouraged learners to do repeated reading and rehearse for the final performance. Through sufficient practice and rehearsal, the

group performed their stories to the whole class. Finally, feedback time was arranged into RT schedule. The feedback stage provided learners with an opportunity to appreciate the other's performance and value the other's advice at the same time.

3.4.4 Classroom Observation & Field Notes

As Wallace (1998) mentions that classroom observations are somehow stressful if the focus is not clear. The purpose of observation is concerned about not only the teaching itself but also the teacher's development and improvement of teaching and learning in the classroom. Through observations, the recording of lesson procedures and events indeed benefits the teaching quality. It is hoped that teachers would see what teachers have achieved and to what extent teachers need to add more on classroom with objective data. Therefore, during the whole process of Readers' Theatre (RT) instructions, classroom observations played an important role to record all data by a digital DVD camera. Therefore, after recording each period of RT teaching, the researcher watched the video again and transcribed the relevant conservations between the teacher and the students as well as the interactions occurred in the classroom. In addition, it order to refresh the teaching memory, some important events were recorded into the teacher's field notes. The foci of the observations were on students' attitude and responses as well as the teaching context. As Figure 3.5 shows, the seating arrangement was grouped by a team work. There were six groups which consisted of four to six students. Each group has its own table to do RT practice. As for the teacher, there is no fixed place in the classroom. When the teacher modeled the reading passages, she needed to stand in front of the classroom. When students did the repeated reading, the teacher walked around to see students' learning situations. When it came to the performance time, the teacher

could be an audience standing in the back of the classroom. Depending on different learning situations, teachers have various places in the classroom.

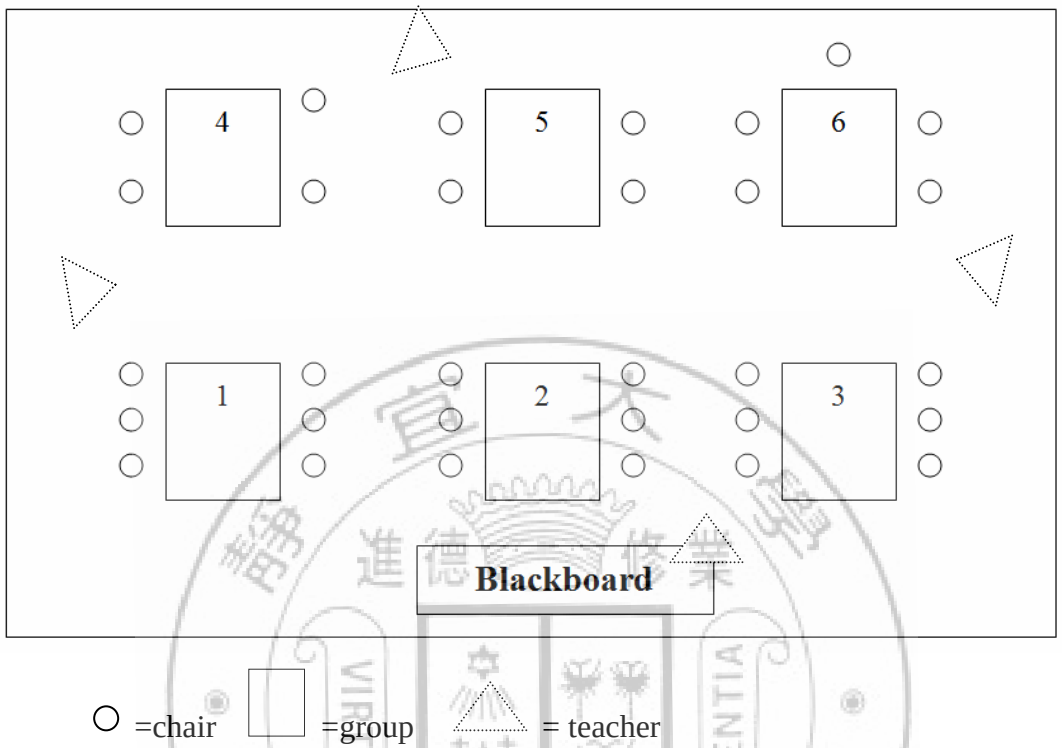

Figure 3.6 Seating arrangement

Moreover, the cooperative learning was also explored to explain how RT enhanced student's affective and cognitive learning. Accompanied by classroom observations, the teacher's field notes were written when encountering special cases or unsolved problems. That would help me to raise my teaching awareness and reflect more deeply on RT teaching. Because the researcher was the teacher, it was important for collect any first-hand information. Some special classroom events were also recorded in field notes were served as a means recording reflections and self development.

3.4.5 Informal Interviews

After RT instructions and completion of oral reading tests and questionnaires, follow-up informal interviews were conducted. Even though there were sufficient data from tests and observations and field notes, interviews covered a wide range of understanding on students' perceptions on RT and anxiety. In order to elicit their real voices, interviews were taken in an informal way. From warm-up questions to body of interview questions, participants' responses were recorded. Moreover, according to participant's answers, there were follow-up questions for the researcher to discover in-depth implications.

Students were divided into two groups, i.e., high anxiety and low anxiety based on the results of FLCAS questionnaires. From two different anxiety groups' perceptions, results of informal interviews and feedback sheets revealed in-depth information and pedagogic implications. The format of informal interview questions and feedback sheets are presented in Appendix 4 and 5, respectively. All participants' names are pseudonyms. In order to present authentic recordings, episodes are accompanied by analytical explanations.

3.5 Data Analysis

First of all, students' oral reading fluency tests were audio-recorded in order to measure their reading fluency abilities accurately. After recording, a unit of seconds was used to calculate how fast the students can read. As for the accuracy, all data were transcribed into a format of oral reading fluency tests, which were accounted for the percentages of accuracy .A critical friend was invited to check the results again to achieve the objectivity. In additions, SPSS 10.0 was used to calculate means of students' anxiety in terms of the FLCAS questionnaires. *T*-test was used to analyze high and low anxious students' anxious status and oral reading proficiency before and

after RT instructions. To answer research questions, the written forms of field notes were examined inductively to fulfill the wholeness of classroom observations. Furthermore, the transcribed interviews were coded to understand participants' perceptions toward RT instructions. In the next section, I will discuss findings from collected data, including the students' progress in reading abilities, cooperative learning, affective attitude and anxious students' performance in detail.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results and detailed discussions of using Readers' Theatre (RT) instructions in an elementary school EFL classroom through various practices of instruments. Based on the six research questions, there are three parts in this chapter. In each part, results are coupled with discussions to illustrate the findings and interpret the implications based on the research questions.

First, it begins with explaining what the results of pre- and post-FLCAS questionnaires at two different times were and further analyze the differences between different anxiety groups (i.e., high anxiety group and low anxiety group). Second, it is hoped to observe participants' reading abilities from pre- and post-ORFT in terms of reading rates and accuracy. By comparing the two reading tests, students' reading improvement is analyzed. Third, the main focus of this study is Readers' Theatre instructions. The implementation of Readers' Theatre will be illustrated. From class observations and informal interviews, field notes, students' reading progress and perceptions toward Readers' Theatre instructions are further illustrated in an organized way. In addition, feedback sheets showed learners' feelings and perceptions toward RT. Finally, teacher's roles in Readers' Theatre classroom will be explored.

This action research aimed to explores the effects of Reader' Theatre on students' fluent reading abilities and foreign language anxiety. Thirty-one fourth grade elementary school students who were from the same class were invited to participate in this action research.

4.1 Results and Discussion on FLCAS Questionnaires

In Appendix 2, there were thirty-two questionnaire items in total, which was written in English version and translated into Chinese in Appendix 3. Based on the research question one, "Do EFL learners feel anxious in learning foreign language? If so, is there a significant difference of EFL fourth graders' foreign language anxiety before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre? ", the major concern of FLCAS questionnaire was addressed to the sources of foreign language learning anxiety. Therefore, two identical questionnaires for pre- & post ones were administered to thirty-one students. The comparative results explained how learners felt before and after Readers Theatre instructions.

In pre-FLCAS questionnaire, students' scores ranged from 48 to 135 (see Appendix 8). Therefore, students were categorized into two groups, i.e., high anxiety group and low anxiety group according to the average score, 88 in the pre-FLCAS questionnaire. In other word, high-anxiety groups got scores which were higher than 88, whereas low-anxiety groups received scores which were lower than 88. 13 students were in the high-anxiety group and 18 students were in the low-anxiety group. In the following section, *t-test* was used to explain how low-anxiety group and high-anxiety group performed at two different times.

4.1.1 Differences of Anxiety Performance between High- & Low-Anxiety Groups

This section discussed in-depth findings which analyzed the anxiety performance by high- & low-anxiety groups by using descriptive analysis, and t-test.

In Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1, the means from two groups in the pre- and post-FLCAS is presented. In the high-anxiety group, their mean scores decreased from 112.15 to 98.77. In the low- anxiety group, they also lowered their anxiety from 73.11 to 65.28. Overall, the two anxiety groups reduced their anxiety after receiving

RT instructions.

Table 4.1 Means of pre- and post-FLCAS from anxiety groups

	High Anxiety	***Low Anxiety***
Pre-FLCAS	**112.15**	**73.11**
Post-FLCAS	**98.77**	**65.28**
Sig.	**S. (t = 3.106, p <. 05)**	**S. (t = 2.79, p<. 05)**

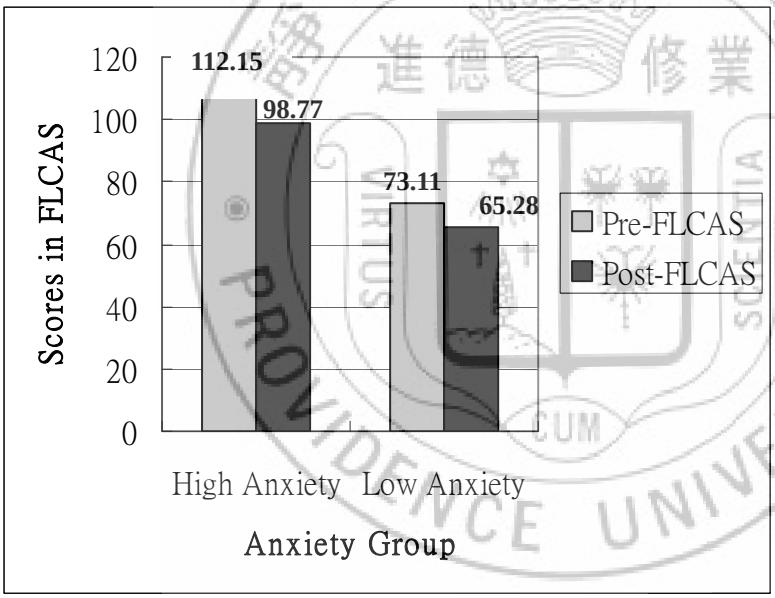

Figure 4.1 Means in pre- & post- FLCAS from two anxiety groups

In order to investigate the effects of Readers' Theatre instruction, *t-test* was used to examine whether there was a significant difference between two different time FLCAS or not. In this study, there were 13 students in high-anxiety group and 18 students in low-anxiety group. As presented below in Table 4.2, it displayed the differences between high- and low-anxiety groups. Both of them reached a

significant level in pre- and post- FLCAS. In other words, the two anxiety groups' anxiety decreased significantly (p <. 5) based on a *t*-test. Moreover, the results of t-test show that the decreasing range is significant for the higher group than the low anxiety (13.38: 7.83).

Table 4.2 The results of *t-test* on pre- & post-FLCAS

	Pre- & Post- FLCAS	
	High anxiety	**Low anxiety**
Means of differences	13.38	7.83
Standard error of differences	15.54	11.91
t	3.106	2.79
df	12	17
Sig.	P < .05*****	P < .05 *****

***** Significant at p<.05

In conclusions, the distributions of scores of FLCAS questionnaires have shown that learners with high anxiety decreased their worries as well as learners with low language anxiety.

4.1.2 Discussions on FLCAS Questionnaires

Based on the research question one, the focus of this study was to investigate to what extents of anxiety students were and whether students' anxiety decreased or not. Based on the results of *t*-test, both high-anxiety group and low-anxiety group's anxiety decreased significantly after RT instructions. In other words, there were significant changes between pre- and post-FLCAS questionnaires. Many students

lowered their worries and built up their confidence during Readers' Theatre practice. According to Rinehart's study (1999), there are direct relationships among motivation, practice, and confidence. By gaining successful learning experience, students start to know themselves and identify their own language abilities. Then, their confidence and self-perception are brought out. Sometimes, not all students have the same pace on learning. It is important to provide enough time for learners to prepare. When they know they are ready, they will be brave to perform in front of the class (Worthy, & Prater, 2002).

Moreover, learning how to cooperate with others is another important learning issue for students. Indeed, cooperative learning is considered as an effective and beneficial strategy for language learning. Many students benefit it from successful performance experience. Through repeated practice and group rehearsal, learners always share ideas and encourage each other. That is another way to reduce learning anxiety. With peers' support and teachers' encouragement, everyone makes effort on the task and build up positive attitude.

4.2 Results and Discussions on Oral Reading Fluency Tests

Based on research question 2, "Is there a significant difference in EFL fourth graders' oral reading fluency before and after the implementation of Readers' Theatre?", this study attempted to investigate how Readers Theatre influences students' reading abilities in terms of accuracy and rate. First, students' reading rates were calculated by a unit of seconds. As shown in Appendix 9, it displayed the overall distributions of all students' oral reading rates. Students were divided into two groups, i.e. high-anxiety group and low-anxiety group according to the results of pre-FLCAS. In order to investigate whether students made significant differences on oral reading tests at two different times, *descriptive analysis* and inferential statistics

(*t*-tests) were used to explore the findings.

4.2.1 Fluency Differences between Pre-& Post-ORFT

Generally, with respect to fluency, all students' reading rates improved after 6-week RT instructions. Seconds of post-oral reading tests were less than the pre-oral reading tests. In pre-oral reading tests, there were 18 students whose reading rates were more than one minute. Instead, in the post-oral reading tests, only four students' reading rates were more than one minute. Both high-anxiety and low-anxiety students achieved the improvements after RT practice. From the results of *t*-test in Table 4.3, both high and low anxiety groups reached the significant levels (p<. 5). In other words, students read the texts more fluently after the treatment and had the significant improvement on reading fluency as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.3 Means of fluency (seconds) in pre- and post-ORFT from two anxiety groups by using *t*-test

	High Anxiety	***Low Anxiety***
Pre-ORFT	**66.50**	**66.15**
Post-ORFT	**44.39**	**34.85**
Sig.	**S. (t = 4.246, p <. 05)**	**S. (t = 5.287, p<. 05)**

Table 4.4 The results of t-tests on pre- & post-ORFT (Fluency) by using *t*-test

	Pre- & Post- ORFT	
	High anxiety	**Low anxiety**
Means of differences	**31.308**	22.111
Standard error of differences	5.922	5.208
t	5.827	4.246
df	12	17
Sig.	**P < .05***	**P < .05 ***

***Significant at p<.05**

From Figure 4.2 students' reading progress can be seen more precisely.

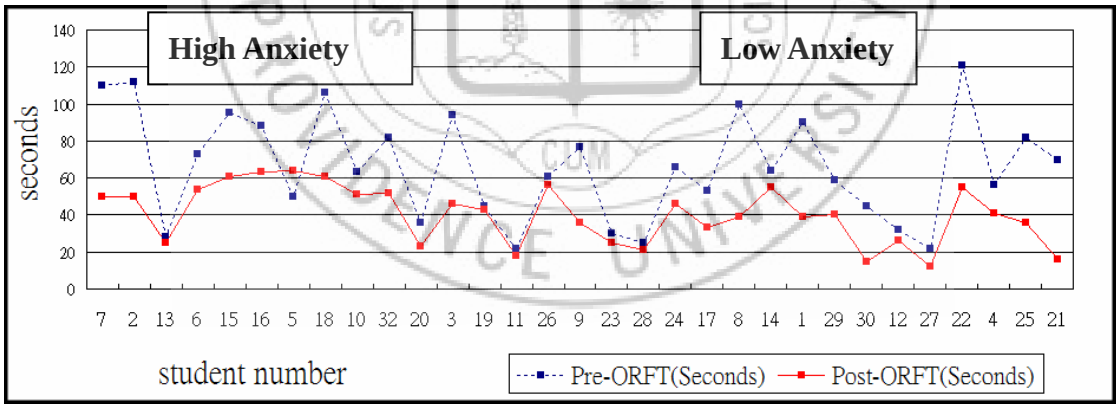

Figure 4.2 Rates (seconds) between pre- & post-ORFT

4.2.2 Accuracy Differences between Pre- & Post ORFT

After examining students' reading speed, students' reading accuracy were also accounted for. A summary of students' reading accurate was presented in Appendix 10. When students read the lines from ORFT, they had to read words correctly. Regarding accuracy, correct pronunciations were included. However, word

mispronunciations, unfamiliar words and incorrect stress were not calculated. There were 37 words in two ORFT in total. Based on the numbers of correct words, the use of percentages was clear to observe how students read. According to percentages of improvement, differences between pre-ORFT and post-ORFT were compared to investigate students' improvement on accuracy as shown in and Table 4.5 and Figure 4.3. More detailed information can be found in Appendix 8. In Figure 4.3, high-anxiety group showed the increased percentages from 41.31 % to 61%. As for the low-anxiety group, they also demonstrated the high increased improvement on accuracy from 62.5 % to 84.89 %. Generally, both groups improved their oral reading tests obviously.

Table 4.5 Means of accuracy (percentages) in pre- and post-ORFT from anxiety groups by using *t*-test

	High Anxiety	***Low Anxiety***
Pre-ORFT	**41.31**	**62.5**
Post-ORFT	**61.00**	**84.89**
Sig.	**S. (t = -6.254, p <. 05)**	**S. (t = -6.855, p<. 05)**

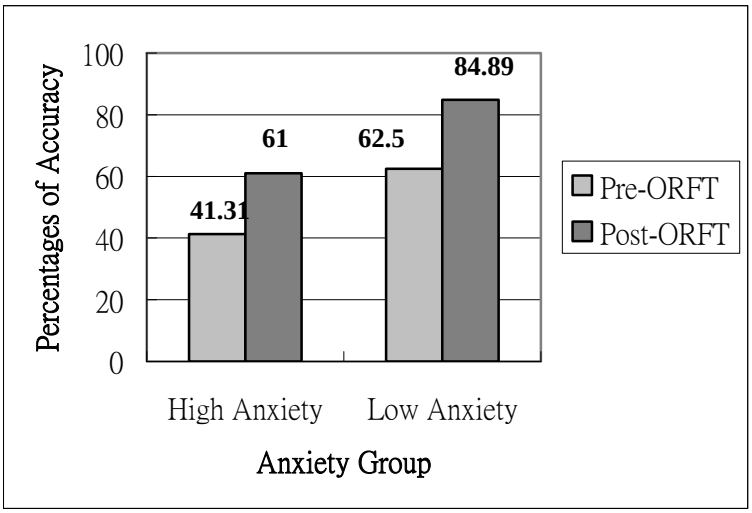

Figure 4.3 Percentages of accuracy in pre- & post- ORFT from two anxiety groups

More precisely, in Table 4.6, it presents the results of *t-test*, which indicated the significant differences between pre- and post- oral reading tests.

Table 4.6 The results of t-tests on pre- & post-ORFT (Accuracy) by using *t*-test

	Pre- & Post- ORFT	
	High anxiety	**Low anxiety**
Means of differences	-13.69	-22.39
Standard error of differences	11.35	13.86
t	-6.254	-6.855
df	12	17
Sig.	**P < .05***	**P < .05 ***

***refers to significant difference

Obviously, both high- and low-anxiety groups reach a significant level ($p<.5$). In other words, after receiving RT instructions, students' oral reading fluency abilities improved significantly. From means of differences, low-anxiety students had higher progress (22.39) than the high-anxiety group.

4.2.3 Discussions on ORFT

Based on research question 2, this study investigates how Readers Theatre helps students' oral reading fluency. Many researchers have confirmed that reading fluency serves as an important factor in students' reading success. Thus, teaching reading fluency has been taken into serious consideration in effective reading teaching. In order to achieve fluency, sufficient practice is required. As Rasinski (2004) also mentions that repeated reading will lead students to improve their reading abilities in decoding, speed, prosodic reading and comprehension of the reading passages. Consequently, repeated reading is an important role in Readers Theatre. Students need to practice repeatedly for their final presentations.

In this study, before receiving RT instructions, students were administrated a pre-ORFT which recorded their previous fluency abilities. After 6-week RT instructions, they were required to do the same ORFT (post-ORFT). In two ORFT, students' reading rates and accuracy were compared to investigate whether students improved their reading abilities with RT instructions. From the results of *t-test*, all 31 participants made progress in reading fluency and accuracy. It was corresponded to Chen and Yang's studies (2006), they stated that RT instruction enhances students' reading abilities in terms of accuracy and fluency. Even though students' levels are varied, RT connects all students together. The result was not corresponded to Wu's study (2006), which indicated that there was no significant difference change in high and low anxious learners after drama activity. However, in this study, students'

reading abilities improved significant after RT instruction based on the results of *t*-test. The reason for this situation may be due to the students' learning motivation. Many low anxious students are interested in English learning and try to do best in RT performance. They spent a lot of time practicing scripts and discussing how to present their final works. For instance, Molly, an advanced student led her group members practice scripts many times and added creativity into their performance. It was the show time for them. They wanted to prove they are good readers in class. In the pre-ORFT, they were not familiar with the contents of the text. However, through enough practice of RT, they read the passage with high self-efficacy. As for those high anxious learners, initially they were not confident with their English proficiency. It was hard to alter their negative nervousness as well as oral reading fluency abilities immediately after 6-week RT instructions. It is important to remember that anxious learners need more time and encouragement when learning a foreign language (Prescott & Lewis, 2003; Rinehart, 1999; Worthy & Prater, 2002)

In summary, with RT experience, learners have learned how to read with appropriate speed and improved their decoding abilities. In Samuel's (1997) notions, a teacher plays a crucial role in helping students to build up fluency. It is necessary to provide fluency instructions such as repeated reading for students. Moreover, sufficient time and motivation are obligated during practice time; eventually, students can achieve the target, fluency.

4.3 Results and Discussions on Readers' Theatre Instructions

From the results of classroom observations, informal interviews, feedback sheets and the teacher's field notes, the results of the other three research questions related to RT are analyzed as follows.

4.3.1 The Implementation of Readers' Theatre in an Elementary School EFL Classroom

Based on research questions three and four, a routine of RT procedure is explored to observe how RT was used in an EFL elementary classroom, including a) teacher's modeled-reading; b) role assignment; c) read aloud; d) repeated reading and rehearsal; e) performance; f)feedback time. In additions, in each procedure, how RT helped anxious students to learn is also included.

a. Teacher's Modeled-Reading

First, the teacher distributed scripts to all participants; therefore, every student had the same copy of the scripts on hand. Then, the teacher started to do modeled-reading which helped the learners to focus on the contents and understand what exactly they were going to do. After reading two times, the teacher explained the scripts line by line and provided clues for the learners to perform on the stage successfully. The teacher put enlarged posters on the blackboard, which caught readers' attentions on the scripts. Besides, the teacher marked important notes on the posters for readers to imagine the story contents such as drawing a pig's head or animal's icons. Certainly, those anxious learners got more ideas when going through the big posters. In Episode 1, the teacher initially asked the students to imitate pig's sound, which raised their interests and curiosity. It is important to note that the teacher's modeled-reading serves as a motivational strategy for the readers to get involved into the story easily. Meanwhile, the teacher's role is not an instructor any more but a facilitator who provides clues for the students to emulate.

Episode 1 Classroom Observations 【Teacher's Modeled-reading】

T: 好！那既然有六個角色表示有六個人要一起唸喔! 等一下我們再來分配角色，看你適合唸哪一個! ….好我先唸…第一次我唸的時候你們不用跟著我…第二次我們跟我一起唸..ok! 好 ！

ready?

[**T**: Ok! There are six characters. So, six people need to cooperate with each other……Then, we will choose roles in the play. ….Let's see which character you are suitable….Ok, teacher first…In the first time, when I read the scripts, you don't need to follow me. ….In the second time, we can read together. Ok?...ready? …..]

S: Ready!

T: Ok! Ready! Go! Today, we are going to present you "Peppa Pig."…….Oink! Oink!

你們猜 Oink 是哪一種動物的叫聲?

[T: Guys, Guess what kinds of animals will make "Oink" ?]

S: 豬

[S:Pig]

T: 很好 就是豬的叫聲! **那我們一起叫一下豬叫聲! Oink! Oink!**

[T: Good! It's made by pig. **Let's imitate how pigs make sounds. Oink! Oink!]**

S: Oink! Oink! Oink…

(Many students feel fun and laugh loudly. Students like to imitate how pigs make sounds and they are gradually involved in the character's life by "Oink"!）

In addition, after listening standard reading, readers got more ideas to present the scripts by themselves. Episode 2 shows that the participants liked to listen to the teacher's reading which was taken from the classroom observation. It indicates that the teacher's modeled-reading served a beneficial direction for the readers to follow.

Episode 2 Classroom Observations 【Teacher's Modeled-reading】

T: 好, 來我們準備來上台表演嚕! 來把稿子準備好, ok! I want to see your scripts on your desk. …Quickly….Ok! Good! Group 2…very good….

[T:Ok! Let's get ready to perform! Prepare your scripts ready.]

Sam: 老師，你先唸一次給我們聽啦！

[Sam: **Teacher, you read the scripts again.]**

T：唸什麼？

[T: Read what?]

Sam: 就等一下我們要上台表演的那個！

[Sam: It's the story we will perform.]

T：喔…真的喔！…..你想再聽我唸一次喔!....

[T: Oh! Really! …..You want to listen again.]

Sam:嗯…對…你唸的我比較記得起來**…**

[Sam: Yes! …..**I can remember easily about what you read. …**]

Particularly, some anxious learners were afraid of speaking in front of the class; therefore, after they listened to standard reading, they were more willing to try and read scripts out in public. In addition, the teacher's modeled-reading brings the readers more imaginations and ideas to know what is going on in RT performance. With teacher's the expressive and fluent reading, readers understand the story contents more easily. Moreover, regarding the analysis of informal interviews, an anxious boy, Fly expressed his interests in teacher's modeled-reading. He understood the story better after listening to the teacher's modeled-reading. In addition, he liked the way the teacher presented the story.

Episode 3 Informal Interview [Teacher's Modeled-Reading]

T: Fly, 你爲什麼喜歡聽老師唸故事呢?

（**T**: Fly, why do you like teacher's modeled-reading?）

Fly: 因爲我比較知道該怎麼唸**…**-而且 我現在比較會唸了…

（**Fly**: Because **I will have more ideas** after listening teacher's modeled-reading, **I am much**

better now.）

T: 哇! 那太棒了! 你聽完老師唸故事給你們聽有什麼感覺嗎? 好玩嗎? 還是有什麼收穫呢?

（**T**: Oh! That's so great. How do you feel after listening teacher's modeled-reading? Is it interesting or something else?）

Fly: 嗯….我覺得好玩啊…因爲老師會模仿動物的聲音…很好笑…所以…我覺得很好..

（**Fly**: Well, **I feel interested** because **teacher will imitate animals' sounds vividly. It is fun**. So, I like it.）

b. Role Assignment

Because of the big class size, all 31 participants were divided into six groups by their own class setting arrangement. Student numbers in one group were summarized in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Student numbers in each group

Group	Number (people)
①	6
②	6
③	6
④	4
⑤	4
⑥	5

All students were responsible for one role except for group 4, 5, and 6 because their group members were not enough to distribute all the roles. Thus, some students needed to take two roles at the same time. Especially for group 4, their English

proficiency was not as good as other groups. As a teacher-researcher, I participated in their RT practice and became their group members. In other word, I was one of the characters in RT, which significantly helped me to further observe their practice situations and involvements and collect authentic data. In order to present the scripts successfully, at the first script, *Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?*, the teacher went down to help learners to choose roles. Because the students were familiar with the story characters, they chose their roles with interests. From the classroom observations, two groups worked collaboratively and assigned roles very fast. The reason for their high efficacy was their matured group experience. In doing group-work activities, many learners have started to have fun.

As for the second script, *Peppa,* students were almost ready to choose their roles after finishing teacher's modeled-reading. Consequently, that is why RT is so convenient and enjoyable for teachers and students. Learners have already built enough background knowledge and experience to use the language. As a teacher, we just need to bridge the pathway or building the scaffolding for them to go through and enjoy the journey.

c. Read Aloud

Reading aloud is thought to be an effective way for readers to get familiar with the texts. It not only trains learner's oral reading abilities but also builds their comprehension step by step. In this part, after listening to the teacher's modeled-reading and assigning roles, participants started to practice the scripts individually or with a group. Learners were encouraged to read aloud for themselves in order to hear their own voices. Each group had one corner to practice their scripts separately. In order to avoid other group's distractions, the whole group needed to concentrate on their voices and read aloud. Molly was a successful example. She was an advanced student who always reminded her group members to read aloud. Episode

4 revealed their practice situations. They were encouraged to speak out no matter how well they read. In that case, the more they read, the more confident they get.

Episode 4 Classroom Observation [Read Aloud]

Molly:ㄟㄟㄟ…我們要唸大聲一點

[Molly: **We need to read very loudly.**]

John:唸到哪裡了!

[John: Where are we?]

Molly: 這裡啊…..預備…..開始….Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?....唸大聲一點才不會被別人拉走啦…我比這你就開始喔! ….小其.. ……..

[Molly: Here...Ready…Go……..If we read loudly, we would not be affected by other groups…we start from here….Angel….]

All group members: Red bird, red bird, what do you see?.....

All group members made loud sounds which sound very fluent and energetic. Besides, they concentrated on the script lines with full attention. Obviously, their reading qualities were better than other group who did not read aloud.

From Episode 5, three non-anxious students Kevin, Coco and Milk thought that reading aloud was important for them to present the story.

Episode 5 Informal Interviews [Read Aloud]

Kevin: 因爲我唸的很大聲的時候..他們比較可以聽見我的聲音..就是..知道我在講什麼

[Kevin: Because **other people can hear my voices** when I speak very loudly, **they can easily understand what I speak.]**

Coco: 我覺得我今天唸比較大聲..感覺唸的比較好….所以很重要..

[Coco: *Today, I speak very loudly. **I feel I read the story more fluently**. So, **reading aloud is important.***]

Milk: 我唸比較大聲..**同學會覺得我唸的比較好**..

[Milk: *I think if I read the scripts very loudly, **other classmates thought I read the story very well.***]

Actually, many students were afraid of speaking in front of the class. It was important to encourage readers to read aloud, especially for anxious learners. The purpose of reading aloud was not only for readers themselves but also for the audience. Dylan was a brave boy but not a confident language learner. Reading aloud was suitable for him to perform his talents. When it was his group's turn to read the story, he imitated animals' sound with powerful sound and tried to say sentence lines very loudly. Thus, his group gained joyful cheers and laughed successfully as shown in Episode 6.

Episode 6 Classroom Observations [Read Aloud]

T: Ok, now….let's see….Oh! it's group 4….Ya...Let's welcome them…掌聲…

[T: clap your hands]

Mark: Hi, I am Mommy Pig.

Group 4: Oink! Oink!..... **(Dylan and Mark make loud sounds.)**

***Dylan**: Good morning, Peppa and George.* **(Dylan used exaggerated facial and gesture expressions which cause the whole class to laugh loudly.)** *啊 再來…換…I…want…to..*

[Dylan: …..So,…then…I….]

d. Repeated Reading & Rehearsal

In Readers' Theatre instruction procedures, repeated reading and rehearsal times play important roles. Readers keep reading the same story lines repeatedly in order to perform the play successfully. With sufficient repeated practice, readers learn to

read the text fluently with appropriate speed and intonations. Even though readers do not read many sentences in each RT performance, they are required to rehearse the text collaboratively. It is a team work. Despite classroom practice, students were also asked to read scripts three times to three different people at least when they were not at school. The important thing is that the teacher needs to always encourage readers to practice and provide feedback for them to achieve the goal, fluency. Once students know how to go through RT, what they gain is more than what a teacher expects. From the teacher's journal below, a shy girl was such a case.

Episode 7 Teacher's field notes [Repeated Reading]

Today, when I went to the bathroom, one student came to me and said, "Teacher, I have finished my practice and I remember all my parts. So, I don't need to take scripts on the stage." At that time, I was so surprised. Because we just finished the first run of practice yesterday, not all students have already remembered lines of the scripts. Also, that girl is a shy but a smart student. She is so willing to participate in this activity. She likes it. Ha! I am so proud and I know my encouragement and RT's magic are going to glow.

Moreover, when the teacher gave enough time and advice for the learners, their learning qualities were getting better and better. Molly was a successful example.

Episode 8 Classroom Observations [Rehearsal]

[The whole class has started to practice with some noise.]

Molly: Teacher, 我們可以到後面去排練一下嗎？

[**Molly**: **Teacher, can we do rehearsal in the back?**]

T: Oh! Yes, you can go there….go! go!

Molly: 我和小其先唸，然後這裡大家一起唸 what do you see 這裡…..好了喔….開始喔…..

Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?.. By Bill…

[**Molly**: Cherry and I read first. Then, we read what do you see together. Here…Ok…Ready……]

[After 5 minutes]

Molly: teacher, 我們練習好了，什麼時候要上台表演？

[**Molly**: **Teacher, we finish our practice. So, when do we perform?]**

T: 好了喔！這麼快！可是其他組還沒準備好呢！…..還是你們先看要不要再去練習一次，然後看要不要排個隊形，還是把唸的順序再排熟一點…ｏｋ？

[**T**: Are you ready! So fast! But, other group are not ready….Or, you can practice one more time and decide whether you want do some changes with your performance…or you can read he scripts more fluently. ...ok?]

Molly: 喔！ 好！ 走我們再練一次好了！**teacher** 說我們可以排一下隊形…我們去後面排好了….

[**Molly**: Oh! Ok…..**Let's practice again. Teachers suggested we can do some changes** …Let's go there..]

However, not all readers were willing to practice the scripts several times. Actually, they were always low achievers and high anxious learners. The observations were recorded in Episodes 9 and 10.

Episode 9 Classroom Observation [Repeated Reading]

Hank: 唉唷! 老師我不會啦! 我什麼都不會唸!

[**Hank**: Oh! I can not read. I have no idea…]

T: 什麼都不會唸? …怎麼會?....來…我看看…那我跟你一起…我們兩個一組…

[**T**: You can not read?...How can it be? ….Come here, let me see….I will be with you. We read the scripts together.]

Hank: 喔! (勉強點頭)

[**Hank**: OK! (node his head reluctantly)]

T：我先唸，你再跟我唸一次….I see a red bird looking at me….

[**T**: I read first and you repeat after me….]

Hank: I see a red bird looking at me….

Episode 10 Teacher's field notes [Repeated Reading]

Today, Hank told me that he could not read the scripts and he did not want to join the practice. I was upset because it was not difficult. How can he give up so fast without any practice? I encouraged him to try with me. He could read it with slow speed. Actually, he was not very fluent. But, I think I still need to give him more confidence and time.)

e. Performance

With sufficient group practice and repeated rehearsal, it was the time for readers to go on the stage and show their progress. In the first play, *Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?*, students volunteered to perform their stories. Some groups collaborated very well and practiced the scripts several times after the class time. Therefore, they were more willing to show their wonderful job. However, some groups who did not prepare the scripts as the schedule set were given more time to practice. Interestingly, when students saw others' good performance, they asked the teacher to give them one more chance to present the story as shown in Episode 11.

Episode 11 Classroom Observations [Performance]

T: Woo! Very Good! …..哇…他們這組表現的很好….對不對?....再給他們一次掌聲….嗯..他們聲音很大聲…而且還有設計動作….**那個豬鼻子的動作阿**….哈...很讚喔….Very Good!....

[T:Woo……Woo! They perform very well, right? More claps for them…..well, their voices are very powerful and they design some actions…**like pig's nose**…Very nice]

Dylan:老師…那個我們也會…

[Dylan: **Teacher, we can do that, too**…]

T:可是他們把它加進表演裡啊…就很生動….對不對….

[T: But, they add it into the play…It is vivid, right?...]

Dylan: **那我們也要再一次….teacher….**

[Dylan: **We want to try it again, teacher..]**

T:好…等一下….我還沒說完….他們的 Hooray 也有動作呢! …..Hooray….Hooray….(手舉高) 嗯….真不錯

[T: Ok! Wait a second….I am not finished…. They also have the "Hooray" action….(stretch arms high)…well…very nice…]

Dylan:**等一下換我們….**

[Dylan: **We want to try in the next run**…..]

As for those groups who did not prepare well, as a teacher, I joined their practice and provided directions to do repeated practice. It was important to keep those unwilling students in mind because they were always given less opportunities to use the language. They needed more encouragement and a gentle push to finish this collaborative task. Therefore, in performance time, those slow students and I performed the story together. Even though we did not read the story as well as other groups, we finally stepped on the stage and read English scripts at least. In Episode 12, it recorded the interaction between the teacher and a slow student.

Episode 12 Teacher's field notes [Performance]

Today, it was the final performance. But, group 2 did not cooperate well because there were two slow students. The group leaders, Hidi told me that those two could not read the scripts. I still asked them to perform and so I could see how much they could read. Actually, they did not read it very fluently but their performance was not bad as I had expected. I think if we could provide learners with more opportunities to practice and show their progress, they are still willing to try. Maybe, they do not improve much but they keep moving. That's enough. I hope so.

Not only improvements of language skills but also cooperative experience were enhanced by students' successful performance. Most students preferred group practice because they brainstormed together and came up with their own works. They obtained a sense of achievement. Moreover, during the cooperative practice, they enjoyed the warm atmosphere and made good relationships. From informal interviews in Episode 13, many students expressed their positive ideas about group performance.

Episode 13 Interviews [performance]

T: 你喜歡上台表演嗎?

（**T**: *Do you like group performance on the stage?*）

Dylan: 嗯…喜歡啊

（**Dylan**: *Yes, I like it.*）

T: 爲什麼啊? 有什麼原因嗎?

（**T**: *Why? Reasons?*）

Dylan: 因爲我可以跟我的好朋友同一組 …..很好玩…我們可以一起表演…我覺得很好 ..就很開心

（**Dylan**: ***Because I can be with my good friends, it is fun. We can perform together and I feel very happy.***）

T: 所以..你覺得上台表演可以學到什麼?

（**T**: *So, what did you learn from performance?*）

Kay: 我覺得..全班都很開心

（**Kay**: *I think we,* ***the whole class is very happy.***）

T: 爲什麼你覺得上台表演很好?

（**T**: *Why do you think performance is good?*）

Dylan: 因爲我們有默契….而且很好玩

（**Dylan**: ***<u>We built the same tempo and feel fun.</u>***）

f. Feedback Time

Even though learners have finished Readers Theatre learning, there was one more important thing for them to learn. That was feedback time, i.e., appreciations of others' performance. After the performance of the whole class, learners volunteered to provide feedback on either good points or improvements to other groups. Because it was easier for EFL learners to share their feelings with native language, dialogues were spoken in Chinese. In Episode 14, there was an interaction recorded for *Peppa Pig*.

Episode 14 Classroom Observations [Feedback Time]

T: 好！那現在到我們分享時間喔! 有沒有人要自願的啊? 有發表的..老師我阿有準備小獎品喔!

[**T**: Ok It is the time to give feedback to others. Any volunteers? Teacher prepare small present for volunteers!]

S: 老師, 我! Teacher……

[**S**: Teacher, me!]

T: 好….先等一下……因爲啊…..你願意發表感想給上台的小朋…..這個很棒啊….不管是好的讚美還是需要改進的都可以講, …..有誰要?.....好….我看喔! 嗯….好! 先來說說第一組台表演的好了! 就是小利這一組 ….嗯…小安舉最快…好…你來說看看…好的優點

[**T**: Ok! Wait a second! Because you are willing to give your feedback to others. that's good!...you can say either good points or improvement to other groups…..Who want to be the volunteers? ….Ok! Let me see! well….Ok! How about the performance from the first group? Lily's group…well….Ann, you go!]

小安: ***<u>優點是講的很好…沒有斷掉</u>***

[**Ann**: ***<u>Good point is that they speak well. There is no stop</u>***.]

T: 嗯….就是很流暢對不對….都沒有停喔….哇…很棒喔…那…有要改進的嗎?

[**T**: Yes, very fluently, right?...There is no stop! ….Woo! That's so good…..and, how about improvements?]

小安: 就是…***聲音太小***

[**Ann**: That is….***their voices are not very clear.***]

T: 喔,聲音太小……聽不太清楚喔….對..很好….謝謝小安…那第二組….小彥這一組呢?....有誰想要分享?.....ok ! ok! Hands down! …….1….. 2…. 3…..ok! 小翰最快!....小翰你來說看看….優點先好了…

[**T**: Oh! They did not speak very loudly so we cannot hear very clearly…..yes...good…Thanks, Ann…..How about the performance form group two? Yan's group……Who wants to share? Ok! Ok!. Hands down! …….1….. 2…. 3…..ok! Han is fast. Go. Han, good point first…]

小翰: 他們***優點是聲音很大聲…***

[**Han**: ***Their advantage is that they speak very loudly.***]

T: 沒錯! 聲音很大聲…哈哈! 應該是 teacher 有加入他們的關係吧! ….哈哈! 不過這一組的聲音真的很宏亮! 那還有要改進的嗎?

[**T**: That's right! Very loudly….Ha! Ha! Because I join their performance…Ha! Ha! But, they really speak very loudly. …So…any improvements?]

小翰: ***沒有***

[**Han**: ***NO!]***

T: ***沒有缺點喔!***

[**T**: No disadvantages?]

小翰: ***沒有了!***

[**Han**: No!]

T: Ok! Thank you …

4.3.2 How Readers' Theatre helps anxious students

This section focuses on research question four, "How does Readers' Theatre help anxious learners?".

Anxious students always suffer from the reading failure because their language proficiency levels are below the average. With little support and encouragement, they tend to give up their chances to learn as shown in Episode 9. Sometimes, they would like to try but they do not make sense about how and what to learn next. Readers' Theatre is a kind of purposeful and meaningful strategy, which leaves rooms for all learners to enjoy learning. Repeated reading and sufficient rehearsal as mentioned before are recognized as beneficial tools to get familiar with the text effectively. Particularly suitable for low achievers, they are given rich time and support to get ready. Even though they are sometimes resistant, encouragement and assistance from teachers and group members are the backbone for their learning. Like one anxious student mentioned, "I feel nice when I can use English. Although I did not perform very well, I think I have a little improvement in English reading." That is to say, sometimes low achievers or anxious learners are afraid of showing their abilities in public because they are worried about other's judgment and negative evaluation. In such a case, they tend to hide. However, if they got the chances to practice, their performance would be different.

Furthermore, another goal of Readers' Theatre is entrainment and joy of learning. Creating a warm and enjoyable atmosphere for students is also a significant issue. In our two RT scripts, the main characters were all animals. The reason for choosing such a text is based on students' interests and levels. Learners are interested in imitating sounds and story telling. Therefore, the focus of two scripts is animals. Imitating animals' sounds is a simple and interesting way to express story contents. Some anxious learners learned how to use their own voices and gestures to show their

abilities. It was the first step for anxious learners to step on the stage. Once they are confident with standing in public and show what they can do; then, reading a passage or story is not an embarrassing task for them. That is also another way to empower students to make their own choices and take responsibilities for their learning. Hopefully, students can use their efforts and styles to express the story. Accompanied by language practice, anxious student start to move and make progress.

4.3.3 Students' Perceptions toward Readers' Theatre

With respect to research question five, "What are the participants' perceptions toward Reader' Theatre?" is examined then.

In the last stage, students were required to finish the feedback sheet which was displayed in Appendix 5. In the feedback sheets, students needed to choose their favorite parts during Readers' Theatre instructions. Besides, if they had chances to exchange the role of RT performance, which character did they like to be? Further, they reflected on their performance and gave themselves feedback by coloring stars. It was important to know how much they had learned in Readers' Theatre. In addition, in the last part of feedback sheet, it showed that how students learned most in Readers Theatre and how many stars they gave themselves. In Table 4.8, summaries of Question 2 in feedback sheet were used to explain which part students liked most in Readers' Theatre.

Table 4.8 A summary of feedback sheet

Q2: In Readers Theatre instruction, I prefer….

Item Descriptions	Numbers of People
Group practice	**22**
Performance	**16**
Teacher's Modeled Reading	**12**
Read Aloud	**6**
Self practice	**3**
Others	**0**

Obviously, over half of the students preferred group practice over other items. In addition, "performance" was the second highest choice in experiencing Readers Theatre. The lowest distribution was on "self practice" which indicated students liked to do group work rather than individual practice. Most students thought that they performed the story very successfully and did wonderful jobs. They gained a lot of confidence and improved their reading abilities. Here, Episode 15 revealed students' feedback.

Episode 15 Feedback Sheet [Students' perceptions toward RT]

Sandy:我覺得我比較有信心和有勇氣。而且我講英文也比較大聲了。

[**Sandy***: I think* ***I become more confident and braver****.* ***I speak English more loudly.***]

Joy: 我發現了我的優點。當我講英文的時候，我都沒有停下來。我覺得我講的很流利。

[**Joy***:* ***I know my advantages****. When I speak English, I will not stop.* ***Every time I speak very fluently.***]

Ruby: 這是我有生以來第一上台表演英文。

[**Ruby***:* ***This is the first time I performed in English on the stage.***]

Peter: 我有更多機會可以講英文，

[**Peter***: I have* ***more opportunities to practice English***.]

Cindy:因爲有上台表演，我的英文好像有進步了。

[**Cindy***:* ***Because of performance, my English become better.***]

Glen:我知道我如果認真學英文，我一定會學會。

[**Glen***: I know* ***if I can concentrate on learning English, I would understand it.***]

4.3.4 Teacher's Roles in Readers' Theatre

Regarding research question six, "*What are the teachers' roles in Readers' Theatre?*", it is obvious to see that teacher's roles are multiple in this study. Sometimes, the teacher is a director or guider. Sometimes the teacher is an audience or counselor. Different roles have different purposes. In RT, a teacher could be a facilitator, a coach or a feedback provider. At the beginning, the teacher modeled the story passages. Accordingly, the teacher is a standard example for readers to follow. From the classroom observations in Episodes 2 and 3, some students preferred listening teacher's modeled reading first before practicing the scripts, which gave them a sense of security. It offers guidance for them to go to the next stage. In addition, with teacher's interesting expressions, students are motivated to learn and read the story as shown in Episode 3. They felt interested when listening teacher's imitating sounds. From students' responses from feedback sheets, they appreciated the fact that teacher's modeled reading is the interesting thing in RT practice.

In order to understand teacher' roles during different periods, a summarized Figure 4.4 is displayed to explain how the teacher play an appropriate role in RT procedures.

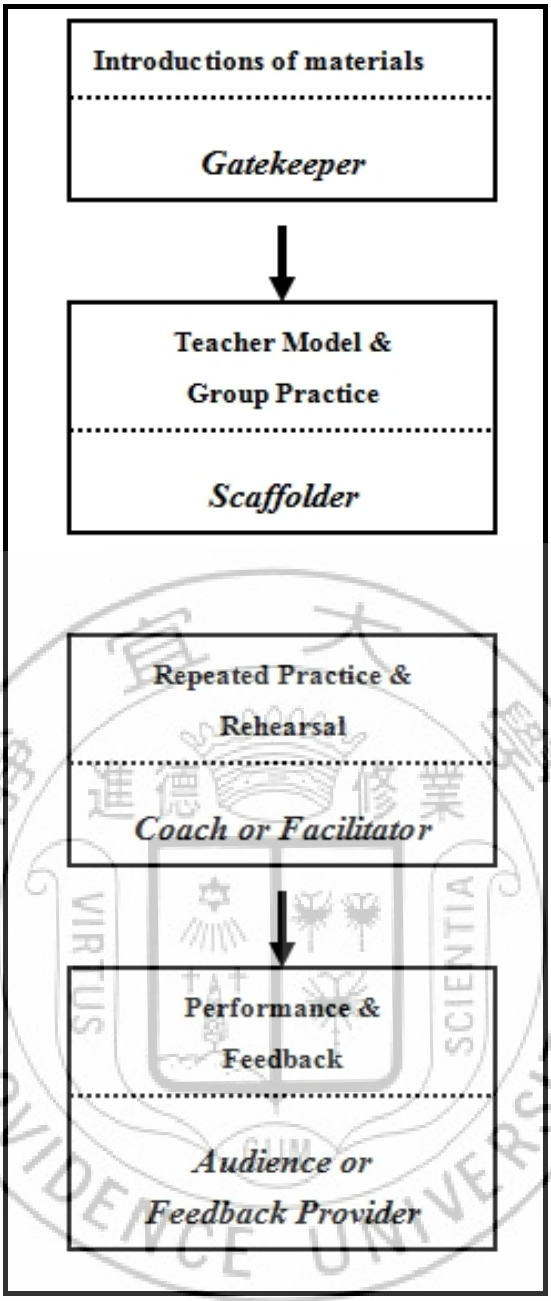

Figure 4.4 Teacher's role in RT

First, when we go to a new lesson, telling students how to plan their performance is necessary, which may affect the smoothness of presentations. Therefore, before RT, pre-planning and pre-discussion is the key to success. Therefore, a *gatekeeper* is responsible for choosing appropriate materials which need to meet students' levels and needs. It is important to know that selecting an interesting and meaningful text for learners will facilitate their learning. If students were not familiar with the passages,

they may stop trying when they meet the difficulties. Or, if they were not interested in the topic, they may show their unwilling participation in that activity. Then, we will encourage teachers to do modeling for all students. Students' attentions are easily caught by teachers' clear and expressive voices. After teacher's *scaffolded* modeling, students will be more sensitive and conscious of their reading performance. In order words, the teacher scaffolds the knowledge by setting a good example and providing clues for learners to follow. Step by Step, students will have deeper understanding about the new lessons. Moreover, during reading instructions period, reading aloud is important. This is the easiest and direct way for readers to listen and understand what a fluent reading is. Poor readers or anxious learners will have more ideas and preparations about what is the next. In addition, we can be a supportive *coach* or *facilitator* when students need help or guidance. During RT practice, students need plenty of repeated practice and rehearsals. In order to achieve fluency, teachers' advice and support are beneficial to students' reading. As readers have difficulties in pronunciation, stress or comprehensions to texts, they need support or encouragement to work on. Walking around in the classroom will help teacher to observe the whole class and an individual case. At the performance stage, teachers can sit in the back of the classroom and be an appreciative *audience*. We watch our students' shows and record everything which is valuable. Finally, either the teacher or students need to *provide feedback* for all performers. It is critical in the learning process to appreciate and give compliments to each other.

4.3.5 Discussions on Readers' Theatre Instructions

Inherently, Readers Theatre is proved as an effective, purposeful and motivational reading technique in language learning field. It is a kind of whole aspects of reading technique, which encompasses natural components of rehearsal such as modeling,

instruction and feedback (Worthy& Prater, 2002). It is valuable that all learners are eager to perform on the stage, especially for resistant readers. Students are constructing their language skills as well social-interaction skills during RT involvement. Therefore, I will interpret how RT was used and evaluate its' benefits and limitations.

a. Teacher's Modeled-reading

In the first step of Readers Theatre, teacher initially models the scripts by reading aloud, which serves a standard example for readers. It is important to notice that before we go on to the new lesson, providing appropriate examples or advice for learners will facilitate students' learning. During teacher's modeled reading, students need to pay attention to intonation, stress, emotions and expressiveness in order to get deep understandings toward the scripts. The results of classroom observation revealed that teacher's modeled reading gave students a sense of security. When the teacher read the scripts aloud and make story lines more comprehensive, it will assist the readers to know how a good reader can tell a story. With expressive and meaningful voice, students get deeper understanding about what they are going to read and how they can prepare for the reading performance (Hoyt, 1992; Martinez, Roser & Strecker, 1998-1999; Rasinski, 2000). In addition, teacher's modeled reading will raise students' interests and motivation to read because they know it is an enjoyable activity. Therefore, modeling a fluent and interesting script is a key to following RT instructions.

b. Repeated Reading & Performance

The significant component of Readers' Theatre is repeated reading which requires oral reading practice repeatedly in order to perform the scripts. Most of the time readers are engaged in rehearsal practice. According to Samuel's (1997) notions, he

indicates that repeated reading is crucial to learners who have learning problems. It gives readers a reasonable opportunity to use English as much as possible. Because students are well-practiced and prepared in a meaningful and purposeful environment, they are sure that they can finish the team work. Their confidence occurs as they get ready. From the results of classroom observations, students' responses of feedback and informal interviews, readers desire to show their progress and proficiency in the performance period so they are willing to join the repeated practice.

From the results of FLCAS questionnaires, this class is divided into two groups, i.e., high- & low-anxiety groups. In low-anxiety students' perspectives, they were confident in trying new things. Some groups liked to add gestures into their performance and some groups liked to create their own style of performance. Readers' Theatre empowers readers to make decisions on their own learning process and output (Annarella, 1999; Flynn, 2004; Miccoli, 2003). Importantly, everyone gets the same chance to finish the task. Not only good readers but anxious learners are taken into consideration. At the beginning, anxious students tried to escape from practice and performance. They had the negative attitude toward themselves and learning itself. However, no one is left behind because everyone takes one character within the script. It is a team work which requires efforts from all group members. It is important to create a safe and non-threatening environment for slow readers to get involved. With teacher's encouragement and peer support, all readers finally read their lines in front of the class.

After enough repeated practice, performance is the final presentation of Readers' Theatre. When the teacher saw students' performance on the stage, she is so proud to see students' self progress with their own efforts and cooperative power. What students felt most exciting was cooperating with their good friends. In students' perspectives, group practice was a pleasant experience because they had more

understanding when participating in team work. They enjoyed performing in a joyful and meaningful context. RT provided them with either independent reading time or group practice opportunities. They gained a sense of achievement when they know they can speak in front of the class without nervousness. RT, then, prompted students to build up their self-esteem and confidence, which provide them with another way to know themselves. As one of the students mentioned "I know my strengths after RT practice."*(Joy).* Moreover, one said, "My English abilities become better after RT instructions"*(Cindy).* It is so amazing to see students' self progress. Overall, RT benefits learners in the whole aspect of learning, from inside to outside of the classroom learning (Worthy & Broaddus, 2002).

c. Cooperative learning

In Readers' Theatre instructions, cooperative learning plays a crucial role in determining students' successful performance. By participating in RT, students are connected together to build a trusting community. As Annarella (1999) notices that trust, group performance and participation are required in performance. No one works alone. On the contrary, with cooperative experience, learners start to acquire cooperative skills as well as appreciations of other's differences. More importantly, students are given opportunities to interchange ideas and solve problems in a cooperative activity. Not only cognitive skills but also social learning and affective attitude are used through group works. In this study, students have positive perceptions toward cooperative performance because they can work with their friends and build up their good relationships. Moreover, they gain a lot of joys and entertainment when participating in final performance. They are motivated to learn. Even though learners' levels are varied, they learn how to give advice and help with each other. Advanced learners learn how to be an assistant and slow learners learn how to ask for help. With RT experience, students discover a sense of achievement

from themselves and become more mature. In terms of anxiety, high anxious learners feel more comfortable and easier when receiving support and clues from their partners. They are not afraid of speaking in front of the class and build up confidence in speaking English. That is the power of RT.

d. Teacher's Roles

Undoubtedly, the teacher plays an important role in building successful reading. Nowadays, teacher is no longer an authoritative role but a creative designer. As Rasinski (1998) suggests, that incorporating many methods into a teaching design is a way to reflect teacher's professional judgment. Teachers are empowered to design what they want to teach depending on suitable principles and students' need. In a reading classroom, like RT, it integrates different skills in one activity such as reading, speaking, listening and communication ability. Nowadays, in favor of alternative and effective teaching trend, teachers should have high awareness of multiple applications on different learning situations (Pinciotti, 1993; Griffith & Rasinski, 2004; Samuels, 1997; Rinehart, 1999; Worthy& Broaddus, 2002).

In summary, results from classroom observations, teacher's field notes and informal interviews revealed that students enjoyed reading during Readers' Theatre learning. They improved on their reading abilities as well as learning confidence and interests. With respect to decreasing anxiety, they lowered their anxiety and built much confident and successful experience. From teacher's modeled-reading, repeated reading, rehearsal, performance and feedback time, readers appreciated the fact that RT enhanced their learning abilities. Moreover, they were not afraid of speaking in front of the class any more and become more self-conscious when they got the opportunities to use English. Particularly, for anxious learners, initially they were not willing to participate in group practice. They needed more encouragement and time to practice the language from teacher's perspectives. Eventually, they still

stepped on the stage and perform their own stories. From their responses of feedback, they expressed that they gained a little improvement and a sense of achievement.

4.4 Limitations of Readers' Theatre

Although many students benefited from RT instructions in terms of oral reading abilities and decreasing anxiety, not all students agreed that they gained improvement during reading practice. According to the results of FLCAS, however, there were four students whose anxiety increased. Even though their increased ranges were not high, it revealed that some learners did not get ready on this reading activity due to some reasons. In order to understand why they feel anxious, Episode 15 revealed the reasons. Ian was one of anxious learners who thought he did not make progress after RT instructions because he did not receive the identity from his group members.

Episode 15 Informal interviews [Anxious Learner]

T: Ian, **你覺得上台好玩嗎?**

[**T**: **Ian, do you think it is fun to perform**?]

Ian: **不好玩 (搖頭)**

[**Ian**: **No (shaking his head)**]

T: 爲什麼? 我看你在台上講的不錯阿

[**T**: Why? I think you read very well.]

Ian: 我不想上去唸 因爲我都不會

[**Ian**: I don't want to read on the stage because I can not read.]

T: **不會? 你沒有練習嗎?**

[T: **You can not? Did you practice?**]

Ian:**有阿 可是還是不會**

[**Ian**: **Yes, but I still cannot read.**]

T: 怎麼會呢? 到了台上 你還是有唸阿!

[**T**: How? You still read on the stage.]

Ian:**其實 我都不會唸 而且 他們都會罵我**

[**Ian**: **In fact, I cannot read and they all blamed me.**]

T: 誰罵你..

[**T:** Who blamed you ?]

Ian:就他們阿…

[**T**: They...are..]

T: 爲什麼罵你?

[**T**: Why did they blame you?]

Ian:因爲我不會..而且他們本來就不想讓我加入..

[**Ian**: Because I cannot read……and they don't want me in]

T: 好可惜喔! 要不然我覺得你唸的還不錯耶!

[**T**: It's a pity. I think you read very well.]

Ian: **我也是有自尊的阿**

[**Ian**: **I have my esteem**]

T:喔 好啦 沒關係 下次我們再試試看

[**T**: Ok! That's fine. Let try again next time.]

In Episode 15, Ian expressed his unwilling participations in RT performance. From the classroom observations, he was not confident with his ability. He always thought that he could not read the scripts even though teacher encouraged him often. After finishing the performance, Ian still did not like RT practice. Because he was afraid of peer's negative evaluations, he had pressure in speaking English. Although the teacher tried to give him encouragement and support, he was still anxious.

Besides, from the students' responses of feedback sheets, two students showed that they did not like one of the group members, Kay. Because Kay was not responsible for his part, their performance was not very successful.

Episode 16 Feedback Sheets [Students' perceptions toward RT]

Helen: 我覺得<u>我們這組有一些不合作，我好想去別組喔</u>!

[**Helen**: **<u>Some people did not cooperate with the group. I want to join the other group</u>**]

Hans: <u>很爛，大家都不合群</u>。

[**Han**s: **<u>We did a bad job because our group did not work together.</u>**]

As examples presented above, it shows a caution for us because not all students were suitable for group learning. It is possible that they are not mature enough to negotiate within a group activity. The failure in cooperation may be due to students' different personalities, learning attitude and language proficiency. Finally, a minor point is necessary to be considered. It is suggested that because there were six groups in this study, it was a big class. When students practiced the scripts, the teacher walked around to observe their reading performance. Sometimes, it was hard to care about all the students. It was a challenging task for the teacher who needed to manage the big classroom size and provide advice to students at one time.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Based on what we have investigated and discussed in this study, I summarize how Readers' Theatre benefits students' oral reading abilities and reduces their anxiety. In addition, based on the students' perceptions and the teacher's roles, I discuss what RT brings to EFL learners. Finally, suggestions and pedagogical implications on implementing RT into an EFL elementary classroom are included.

5.1.1 The Implementation of Readers' Theatre in an Elementary School EFL Classroom

In this study, six-week Readers' Theatre instructions were applied in a fourth-grade EFL elementary classroom. The purpose was to investigate how RT benefited students' oral reading ability and helped them to lower their anxiety. From the quantitative results, students' performance on both oral reading proficiency and decreasing anxiety were significant. Even though students did not receive a long period of reading training, their progress was obvious. The reasons for their sufficient progress included the power of collaborative learning, building a sense of achievement and the teacher's role as a facilitator.

RT indeed served as a tool for students to practice oral reading fluency and accuracy with a reasonable opportunity in this study. Everyone was responsible for part of the story. In order to perform successfully, groups needed to do sufficient practice. Thus, cooperative learning was important. During the process of practice and rehearsals, students worked together and helped peers to read the story fluently. With enough support and practice, students' progresses on oral reading abilities were obvious. It is valuable to note that when students gained successful performance

experience, their confidence and achievement were enhanced. Because they realized that they could complete the task with an interesting and meaningful way, they got the chance to identify their abilities. For instance, there was a student who mentioned "I know my strengthens after RT performance" *(Cindy)*. Another one said, "I know I have made progress."*(Cindy)*. That evidence showed that students not only learned the oral reading skills but also gained positive attitude in language learning.

In addition to students' efforts on RT, teacher's devotions are also significant. From initial modeled reading to support for students' practice, the teacher is responsible for a key to success. As we discussed earlier, the teacher can be a gatekeeper, a coach, a scaffolder or a feedback provider. Teacher's roles are multiple. Based on the nature of RT, teachers empowered readers to practice by themselves. As a teacher, we offer support and feedback when students have difficulties. Especially, when there are some high-anxiety students in the classroom, we encourage them to cooperate with each other and provided encouragement for those slow readers. It is hoped that high-anxiety students or slow readers will benefit both from peer's support and teacher's assistance and encouragement.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

Through the implementation of Readers' Theatre, results of this study have shown that learning is not one aspect and one point. Instead, it is important to consider seriously what learners need and how teachers can provide. The most valuable contribution in this study is to open a door for anxious learners to walk in without nervousness and fear. That is why we focus on anxious learners who are always left behind. Especially in EFL context, insufficient input and traditional methodologies may affect students' learning attitude. Therefore, it is important to discuss here how we, teachers can help our students to improve their oral reading abilities and reduce

their anxiety. Afterward, the designs of follow- up activity are also critical to students' reading learning process. Behind the language learning, classroom management is a significant role in implementing Readers' Theatre. Finally, based on the nature of action research, self reflection is a good way to reflect on what we have done and to revise what we need to adjust.

5.2.1 Students' Improvement on ORFT

Creating an authentic opportunity for students to use English is our ultimate goal while implementing Readers Theatre into elementary school EFL classroom. If teachers only ask students to read lines from textbooks, that is not enough for them. In terms of accuracy and fluency, both teachers and students need to make efforts. During the 6-week RT instructions, students were given sufficient opportunity to participate in language learning. The purpose of repeated reading for learners was to perform their stories to audience. As Martinex, Roser and Strecker (1998-1999) mention, "Readers Theatre, then, offers a reason for children to read repeatedly in appropriate materials." In consequence, from teacher's (advanced reader) modeled-reading, reading aloud to repeated reading, readers go through every procedure and received benefits step by step. In addition, it is important to note that the more students read, the more progress they gain. Oral reading fluency test just serves as a tool to assess students' reading abilities. Readers realized that a good reader means a fluent and comprehensive reader. The only way to be a successful reader is to make well-rehearsed efforts in reading. Different from the traditional reading instructions, in Readers' Theatre, students build up their own reading skills and proficiency by themselves. They read for joy, for entertainment and for a sense of achievement.

5.2.2 Decreasing Anxiety in an Elementary school EFL Classroom

Scovel (1978) proved that anxiety may facilitate or debilitate learners' learning. It is worthy to understand how students feel and why they feel anxious, which may help teachers to meet their needs and give support at appropriate time then. Regarding foreign language learners, especially in an EFL context, students easily suffer from the heavy- loaded schoolwork pressure and uncertainty. They worry about peers' negative evaluations, teacher's impromptu questions in class and mistakes in speaking English. Usually, anxious learners tended to hide behind the textbooks and then give up. Eventually, anxious learners become de-motivated and unwilling to learn. However, it is proved that students try to free their nervousness and to find out their interests in learning English. With reasonable practice opportunity, students prepare their scripts well and rehearsed stories repeatedly. Although they needed to make efforts and time, they felt joyful in a non-threatening and trust environment. Actually, readers need to keep in mind that they should be ready when standing in front of the class. At the same time students' self-esteem and senses of accomplishment will be presented in their final performance. Importantly, anxious learners will change the negative attitude and further attempt to appreciate what they have learned.

Another important element embedded in RT is cooperative power. Many students expressed that they liked to cooperate with their good friends in this study. They knew each other and understood how to plan their performance with their styles. That is one of the major reasons that anxious learners are not afraid of speaking in front of the class. Peer assistance and good relationships connect anxious and non-anxious students together, which make everyone stand on an equal footing. There is no judgment and criticism in RT context. We create an authentic and safe atmosphere for students to participate in performance and devote their contributions

on their own groups. Learners are not passive to do what they are directed; instead, they are empowered to complete their tasks. The only one requirement for them is to present a well-prepared and enjoy the interesting story with audience.

5.2.3 Classroom Management

Classroom atmosphere is an important issue in EFL classroom management. While processing a new technique like Readers Theatre, setting rules and perceiving behaviors for students are necessary. Thereafter, students realize what they need to prepare and achieve. As Worthy & Broaddus (2002) state that it is important to set up routines and appropriate behaviors before new lessons. A teacher needs to walk around and provide feedback in students' practice time. It will make sure that RT will work smoothly and students will know how to practice together (Worthy &Prater, 2002). Readers Theatre is different from the traditional reading activity which asks students to sit on the chairs without interactions. Students are required to cooperate together and produce their performance. Building interaction skills and tolerance with different opinions is essential. When students have trouble in communicating with each other, the teacher is responsible for negotiating and bridging them again. In addition, learning how to create a well-prepared tempo for final performance is also important. Afterward, when we empower students to finish their tasks, time management will also influence the smoothness of lessons. It is a good opportunity for students to learn how to control time well. In a word, cooperative involvement, relaxed atmosphere, and well-prepared time are neglected in EFL classroom.

5.2.4 Self-Reflection

In this action research, the researcher played multiple roles at the same time as the teacher, the researcher and the observer. During the time of research project, the

teacher kept field notes which recorded some important events or individual responses to this research. Some unsolved problems or dilemmas were also recorded in the field notes which helped the teacher reflect on what happened in that day's lesson. Then, based on the events of field notes, the teacher could adjust the contents of RT and figured out the most appropriate way to go on to the next lesson.

According to my field notes, classroom observations and informal interviews, I, the teacher, have experienced a lot from preparing a new lesson for my students to conducting an academic study. While I was doing pre-oral reading test, I was upset with students' poor oral performance. However, in the post-oral reading tests, I was so glad to see their progress. During the RT practices, students spent much time reading scripts in order to perform well. That gave the readers opportunities to recognize words for several times. In fact, it is usually impossible for students to read the same texts repeatedly. In the RT environment, I saw a different learning situation. Readers are motivated to read and try their best. Undoubtedly, the more you read, the more fluent and accurate you can get. From the results of post-oral reading tests, students' progress is the evidence. Repeated reading brings students fluency as well as confidence in reading. From the results of FLCAS questionnaires, I saw students' changes in anxiety performance. By applying FLCAS questionnaires, it provides me with a tool to understand children's anxious status. If I did not use this questionnaire, I may not have known how anxious they were and how I could help them. Many students expressed that they were afraid of speaking in front of the class and feared negative evaluations. In RT environment, I created a non-threatening and fun atmosphere for learners to join. Sometimes I was a feedback provider when students needed encouragement and advice. Sometimes I was one of the characters in group 4. Students liked to see the teacher was one of them. Building a close and warm relationship between learners and the teacher will

facilitate their learning and decrease their nervousness as well. In addition, I liked to encourage them to create their own stories with imaginations. Students dare to take a risk and identify themselves as independent learners. In consequence, their anxiety decreased and confidence occurred with peer support and teacher's encouragement. However, there were still some students whose anxiety did not decline. Although we have finished RT practice, I still need to pay attention to their feelings and provide opportunity and positive feedback for them as much as possible so that there is no one left behind.

From students' feedback sheets, there is one question asked "How do you feel about your performance today?". There were five white stars. Students were required to color stars according to their own performance. That is self evaluation. I was so glad to see most of the students gave themselves 5 colorful stars. They were confident with their performance and agreed on their progress after RT practice. It is a meaningful and joyful experience when seeing students' growth. Actually, many students and I spent a lot of time practicing and planning a good play. We always exchanged ideas with each other and discussed how to make a good play. Not only did the power of RT but also students' efforts and my devotions contribute to the success of this action research.

5.2.5 Follow-up Activity

After going through experiencing RT, students learn how to read fluently with confidence. However, it is not the end of learning. It is worth applying a follow-up activity to enhance students' learning quality. There are many ways to extend RT, such as a writing activity. In our study, students created their own strip stories based on the topic, *Secret* (See Appendix 11). Many students enjoyed constructing a new story by themselves. They used imaginations and creativity to design unique

products. When they shared their stories to classmates, they felt fun and meaningful. Because it is authentic and interesting, the positive effects of RT have been prolonged. For more advanced learners, they are encouraged to re-write the scripts by themselves. Since learners have received reading training for a period of time, it is time for them to create and use their proficiency to write their own scripts. The teacher can lead them to choose an appropriate and interesting text and adapt it into readable stories. When the students are ready for their scripts, their reading and writing skills have been developed.

In addition, Young & Vardell (1993) indicate that nonfiction book is also a suitable material for RT. Material selections should not be limited in language art. It can be used across the curriculum in different areas such as health, math or science. Students can bring their favorite books to the classroom and share their understanding to peers, which may activate students' sense in different topics of interests. Then, both teacher and students choose a most interesting book for the materials in RT together. It is believed that students' knowledge bank will be expanded through multiple experience and understandings. It is hoped that we can not only improve their learning knowledge but also help them to find out special interests and personal growth.

5.3 Limitations of this Study

Because of the time constraints, this actions research had lasted for six weeks. Some expected results have not been achieved. For instances, it is hoped that anxious learners could regain their confidence again and learn English with motivations. However, not every student got the satisfied benefits after RT instructions, which may result from the short research project. In addition, students reading abilities were investigated in terms of accuracy and fluency. Some elements

in reading requirements are important such as intonation and stress. This part is not integrated into this study. Therefore, it is worth to observe how students read with appropriate speed, intonations and voice expressions. In this study, we only focused on fourth graders in Taichung City. In consequence, not all fourth graders are suitable for RT instructions because the discrepancy between students' language proficiency are varied. It is hard to generalize the general learning situations in reading fields.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Study

Students in this study were all beginning English learners. Hence, the contents of oral reading fluency tests were based on their levels and lesson materials. Repeated sentences and words occurred often, which may not assess students' real reading proficiencies. It is suggested that it is valuable to investigate students' progress with multiple designs of reading tests in a longitudinal study. Besides, in terms of foreign language anxiety, sources of anxiety from different students could be further investigated. It is important to understand learners' various anxiety in different contexts, which may provide teachers more understanding of students' affective attitudes. With sincere concern, other relevant studies are required to compensate for the lacking of this study.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 Oral Reading Fluency Test

ORAL READING TEST【1】【2】 **Name:** _____

I see a brown bear.

I see a cat's eyes looking at me.

Monkey, monkey what do you see?

Peppa is a pig.

Dinosaur is so big.

Oink! Oink!

Hooray! Hooray!

Unknown words:_____ Correct words:_____
[Percentage of accuracy: %]
Time (Within One-minute):_____seconds.

Note

APPENDIX 2 FLCAS Questionnaire

Dear all:

First, I appreciate your considerable answers for this questionnaire. As for this questionnaire, it attempts to understand your feeling in learning process. Therefor e, any information you provide would not relate to your English exam and scores. Also, your personal information and ideas form this questionnaire are only used in the academic research. Just take easy to finish all the questions. There are thirty-two questions in this questionnaire. Thanks for your patience and support. Thank you very much ^o^

Providence University English Department
Advisor Der-Hwa V. R.
Graduate Yi-Fang Chang

[Part 1]

1. Class___No____

2. Gender: ☐ Boy ☐ Girl

[Part2]

Each question has five options. After you read the descriptions of each question item，please choose the appropriate answer based on your experience or idea and check on the square. [5=Strongly agree 4= agree 3=Between agree and disagree 2=disagree 1= strongly disagree]

		1	2	3	4	5
01.	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
02.	I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
03.	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
04.	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
05.	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
06.	During English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
07.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
08.	I am usually at ease during tests in my English class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
09.	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. I worry about the consequences of having bad grades in English class. ·····□ □ □ □ □
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over English class. ·····□ □ □ □ □
12. In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. ··□ □ □ □ □
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class. ··□ □ □ □ □
14. I would not be nervous speaking English with native speaker. ·□ □ □ □ □
15. I would not be nervous speaking English with native speaker. ·□ □ □ □ □
16. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it. ····· □ □ □ □ □
17. I often feel like not going to my English class. ·····□ □ □ □ □
18. I feel confident when I speak in English class. ·····□ □ □ □ □
19. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make. ·····□ □ □ □ □
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class. ·····□ □ □ □ □
21. The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get. ·□ □ □ □ □
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class. ····□ □ □ □ □
23. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.....□ □ □ □ □
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students. ·····□ □ □ □ □
25. English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind. ·····□ □ □ □ □
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes. ·····□ □ □ □ □
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class. ·····□ □ □ □ □
28. I get nervous when I don't understand every word that English teacher says. ·····□ □ □ □ □
29. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English.....□ □ □ □ □
30. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English. ·····□ □ □ □ □
31. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English. ·····□ □ □ □ □
32. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance. ·····□ □ □ □ □

APPENDIX 3 FLCAS Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

親愛的小朋友:

首先，謝謝你們花一些時間幫怡芳老師完成這份問卷。這份問卷最主要在了解你們在學習英文時可能會有的心情和學習想法。所以，這份問卷跟你的考試成績或是平常表現絕對不會有任何的影響，而你的的個人資料及問卷內容只讓老師作研究用，也不會外流公開，請大家放心作答喔。請仔細做完每一題，不要漏掉題目了! 謝謝你們的耐心作答! Thank you very much ^o^

靜宜大學 英國語文學系 指導教授 何德華

研究生 張怡芳 敬啓

[第一部分]

1. ____年____班 _____號

2. 性別: ☐男 ☐女

[第二部分]

以下每條敘述後面有五個選項，答案沒有對、錯之分，請你讀完每個敘述後，依照實際狀況和直覺反應，決定你同意或不同意該敘述的程度，並打勾。

	非常不同意	不同意	介於不同意與同意之間	同意	非常同意
01. 當我在英文課上用英文發言時，我一直對自己的表現沒有自信。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
02. 我不擔心在英文課上犯錯。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
03. 上英文課時，當我知道會被點到發言的時候，我會發抖。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
04. 上英文課時，如果我聽不懂老師在講什麼，我覺得害怕。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
05. 就算多上幾堂英文課我也不排斥。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
06. 在英文課上，我發現我通常會想跟這堂課無關的事情。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
07. 我一直覺得其他同學的英文都比我好。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
08. 英文課考試時，我通常能輕鬆對付。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
09. 如果我沒事先準備就要在英文課上發言，我會開始覺得恐慌。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. 我很擔心英文課成績不好的後果。	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	非常不同意	不同意	介於不同意與同意之間	同意	非常同意
11. 我一點也不懂爲什麼有些人一到英文課就那麼沮喪。	□	□	□	□	□
12. 在英文課上，我會緊張到連本來會的也忘記了。	□	□	□	□	□
13. 在英文課上自願回答問題讓我覺得很尷尬。	□	□	□	□	□
14. 跟外國人說英文我也不會覺得緊張。	□	□	□	□	□
15. 如果我不懂老師糾正我的地方，我會覺得沮喪。	□	□	□	□	□
16. 即使我上英文課前已經準備充分，我還是覺得焦慮。	□	□	□	□	□
17. 我常不想上英文課。	□	□	□	□	□
18. 我在英文課上發言時很有信心。	□	□	□	□	□
19. 我害怕英文老師隨時會糾正我的每個錯誤。	□	□	□	□	□
20. 在英文課上當我要被點到的時候，我能感覺到我的心跳加速。	□	□	□	□	□
21. 當準備英文考試時，我準備愈多卻愈感到困惑。	□	□	□	□	□
22. 我對於英文課要準備充分這件事不覺得有壓力。	□	□	□	□	□
23. 我總覺得其他同學英文說得比我好。	□	□	□	□	□
24. 我覺得要在全班同學面前說英文非常不自在。	□	□	□	□	□
25. 英文課的進度太快，我擔心會趕不上大家。	□	□	□	□	□
26. 我上英文課比上其他課更覺得緊張、有壓力。	□	□	□	□	□
27. 當我在英文課上發言時，我變得緊張而且困惑。	□	□	□	□	□
28. 當我無法了解英文老師說的每個字時，我變得緊張。	□	□	□	□	□
29. 對說英文所必須學的那些文法規則，我感到不知所措。	□	□	□	□	□
30. 當我說英文時，我害怕其他同學會取笑我。	□	□	□	□	□
31. 跟說英文的外國人相處，我應該還是很自在。	□	□	□	□	□
32. 如果英文老師問我問題，而我沒有事先準備的話，我會覺得緊張。	□	□	□	□	□

~作答結束~

謝謝你的耐心作答!
檢查一下有哪一題沒有打勾喔!

APPENDIX 4 Interview Questions

✧ warm-up

1. 請問你今天扮演的是什麼角色? 總共唸了幾行呢?
2. 你喜歡你今天負責的角色嗎? 為什麼?
3. 你覺得會很難嗎? 好玩嗎?

✧ Main theme

1. 你覺得你今天的表現如何呢? 你們這一組的表現呢?
2. 你覺得今天哪一組表現讓你印象最深刻? 為什麼?
3. 你覺得怎麼樣會讓你的表現更好呢?
4. 你覺得今天有誰做到這一點?
5. 你覺得在練習劇本的時候最重要的是什麼?
6. 你今天收穫最多的是什麼?

Appendix 5

RT Script 1

Brown Bear, Brwon Bear, What Do You See?

Narrator 1 :, Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? By Bill Martin, Jr.

Narrator 2: Once upon a time, there is a brown bear (熊叫聲) .

All: Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?

Character 1 : I see a red bird looking at me. (鳥叫聲)

All: Red bird, red bird, what do you see?

Character 2: I see a yellow duck looking at me. (鴨叫聲)

All: Yellow duck, yellow duck, what do you see?

Character 3: I see a blue horse looking at me. (馬叫聲)

All: Blue horse, blue horse, what do you see?

Character 4: I see a green frog looking at me (蛙叫聲).

All: Green frog, green frog, what do you see?

Character 5: I see a purple cat looking at me. (貓叫聲)

All: Purple cat, purple, cat, what do you see?

Character 1: I see a white dog looking at me. (狗叫聲)

All: White dog, white dog, what do you see?

Character 2: I see a black sheep looking at me. (羊叫聲)

All: Black sheep, black sheep, what do you see?

Character 3: I see a goldfish looking at me. (魚咕嚕聲)

All: Goldfish, goldfish, what do you see?

Character 4: I see monkey looking at me. (猴叫聲)

All: Monkey, monkey, what do you see?

Character 5: I see children looking at me. (小孩笑聲)

All: Children, children, what do you see?

Narrator 1+2: We see a brown bear, a red bird, a yellow duck, a blue horse, a green frog, a purple cat, a white dog, a black sheep, a goldfish and a monkey looking at us. That's what we see.

All: Thank you very much!

Appendix 6

RT Script 2

Peppa Pig

Name:_____
Number:_____

N1( ): Today, we are going to present you " Peppa pig."

N2( ): Secret

R1( ): Hi, I am Peppa Pig.

R2( ): Hi, I am little brother, George.

R3( ): Hi, I am Daddy pig.

R4 ( ): Hi, I am Mommy Pig.

All( ): Oink! Oink (學豬叫兩聲)

R1( ): Good morning, Mommy.

R4 ( ): Good morning, Peppa and George. I want to give you a box.

R2( ): What's this?

R3( ): Dinosaur! Dinosaur!

R4( ): It is a secret box. You can put your secrets into the box.

R1 +R2(+) : Hooray! Hooray!

N1( ): Peppa put her toy into the box.

N2( ) : George put his dinosaur into the box.

N1+N2(+): But, it' s a secret. Don't tell others.

Pictures are from http://www.ctvc.tv/programmes/milkshake/

APPENDIX 7 Feedback Sheet

I feel good !

No(號碼): _____
Name（姓名）: _____

Dear kids:

我們又完成了一場完美的讀者劇場表演了！真是太棒了！

現在，要請你發表一下你的感想喔!

✧ **我所擔任的腳色是**: _____(　　)

✧ **我最喜歡哪個部分的練習呢?**

☐ 老師說故事 ☐ 大家一起練習 ☐ 自己回家練習 ☐ 上台表演

✧ **如果要交換角色，我最想要扮演什麼角色? 為什麼?**

角色: _____

為什麼: _____

_____

✧ **我覺得今天我表現的最棒的是:（可以複選）**

☐ 合作默契佳 ☐ 講話聲音宏亮 ☐ 講話速度剛剛好 ☐ 表情一級棒

☐ 故事說得很流利 ☐ 其他_____

✧ **對自己今天的表現要給自己幾顆星星呢?**

☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

✧ **你今天最大的收穫是什麼呢? 發表一下你的意見吧!**

APPENDIX 8

A Summary of the Results from Pre- & Post-FLCAS Questionnaires

Anxiety Level	Student Number	Pre-FLCAS	Pre-FLCAS
High Anxiety	07	135	144
	02	127	130
	13	123	90
	06	122	100
	15	118	85
	16	117	100
	05	114	95
	18	108	111
	10	105	78
	32	105	94
	20	98	84
	03	95	85
	19	91	58
Low Anxiety	11	88	77
	26	88	108
	09	87	74
	23	82	78
	28	81	66
	24	78	75
	17	79	53
	08	75	73
	14	75	52
	01	73	65
	29	72	59
	30	70	54
	12	69	69
	27	68	56
	22	67	44
	04	71	58
	25	55	70
	21	48	44
Average Scores		88	79

APPENDIX 9

A Summary of the Result in Fluency from Pre- & Post-ORFT

Anxiety Level	Student Number	Pre-ORFT (Seconds)	Pre-ORFT (Seconds)
High Anxiety	07	110	50
	02	112	50
	13	28	25
	06	73	54
	15	95	61
	16	88	63
	05	50	64
	18	106	61
	10	63	51
	32	82	52
	20	36	23
	03	94	46
	19	45	43
Low Anxiety	11	22	18
	26	61	56
	09	77	36
	23	30	25
	28	25	21
	24	66	46
	17	53	33
	08	100	39
	14	64	55
	01	90	39
	29	59	40
	30	45	15
	12	32	26
	27	22	12
	22	121	55
	04	56	41
	25	82	36
	21	70	16

APPENDIX 10

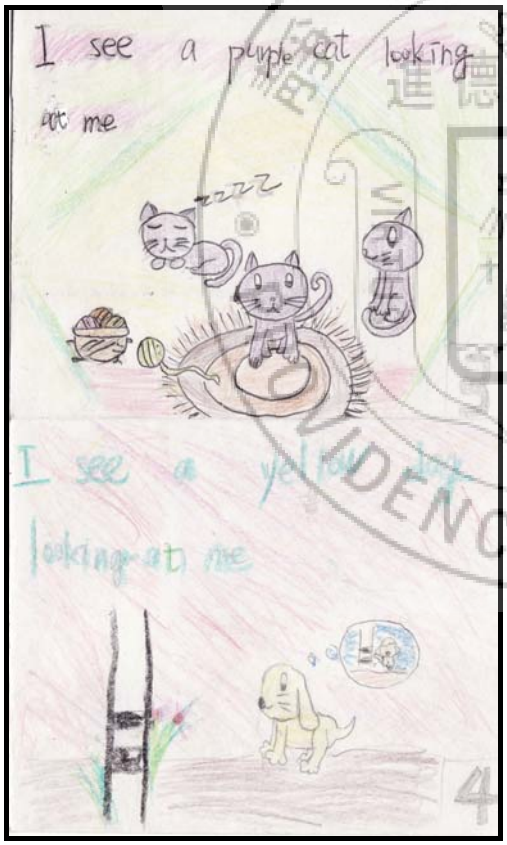
A Summary of the Result in Accuracy from Pre- & Post-ORFT

Anxiety Level	Student Number	Pre-ORFT (words)	Percentages of Accuracy in Pre-ORFT	Post-ORFT (words)	Percentages of Accuracy in Post-ORFT	Differences on Percentages
High Anxiety	**07**	10	27%	25	68%	41%
	02	6	16%	18	49%	33%
	13	29	78%	33	89%	11%
	06	17	46%	20	54%	8%
	15	9	24%	15	41%	17%
	16	14	38%	23	62%	24%
	05	5	16%	14	38%	22%
	18	12	32%	19	51%	19%
	10	23	62%	28	76%	14%
	32	5	14%	13	35%	21%
	20	34	92%	36	97%	5%
	03	5	14%	18	49%	35%
	19	29	78%	31	84%	6%
Low Anxiety	**11**	36	97%	37	100%	3%
	26	9	24%	16	43%	19%
	09	16	43%	27	73%	30%
	23	33	89%	36	97%	8%
	28	34	92%	36	97%	5%
	24	21	57%	29	78%	21%
	17	29	78%	35	95%	17%
	08	16	43%	32	87%	44%
	14	19	51%	31	84%	33%
	01	18	49%	31	84%	35%
	29	16	43%	23	62%	19%
	30	27	73%	36	97%	24%
	12	29	78%	32	86%	8%
	27	37	100%	37	100%	0%
	22	13	35%	26	70%	35%
	04	21	57%	29	78%	21%
	25	21	57%	36	97%	40%
	21	22	59%	37	100%	41%

APPENDIX 11

Samples of Students' Follow-up Activity

【RT 1】



【RT 2】