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Chinese University English-Major Students' Attitude Toward Literature Circles and Literature Reading

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Abstract. Of the four basic skills, namely, reading, is a fundamental tool that supports the development of other skills. In Chinese tertiary education, reading is a compulsory core subject for students. Although the benefits of teaching English reading through literature circles have been recognized in other countries for decades, there is still an insufficient practice of this activity among English-major students in the Chinese university context. This study aims to investigate the attitudes of Chinese English-major students toward literature circles as a method of teaching reading, and to determine the benefits of reading literature in language learning. The study employs a one-shot case study involving only one group exposed to the treatment, followed by a measure. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to determine the participants' attitudes toward literature circles and their perception of the benefits of reading literature. An intact class of 41 students participated in this extracurricular reading activity through the convenience sampling method. The result obtained from the eight closed-ended questions indicated that the participants generally held favorable views toward literature circles. The results from the focus group interviews confirmed the benefits of reading literature in terms of cultural, linguistic, and personal enrichment. The findings suggest that more longitudinal studies involving comparison groups or qualitative studies are necessary to better understand the benefits of literature circles.

Keywords: English-major students; literature circles; reading skills; reading motivation; English learning

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1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, China has significantly strengthened its international standing and expanded its global influence. In this era of challenges and opportunities, proficiency in English is regarded as a crucial skill in China, both at the individual and societal levels (You & Dörnyei, 2016). At the societal level, English remains the preferred lingua franca for international communication, with economic and political implications (Bachman, 2010). On an individual level, English proficiency provides access to numerous economic, social, and educational opportunities (Liu et al., 2023). Currently, the largest English-learning population is in China, with an estimated number of over 300 million people learning English as a foreign language. The State-enforced curriculum requires all citizens to start learning English in third grade and English has become the most popular major offered in over 1300 universities in China, reflecting its prominence in foreign language education.

The Teaching Syllabus for English Majors (NACFLT, 2000) in China emphasizes the significance of independent and creative thinking, as well as the development of students' ideological, moral, cultural, and psychological qualities, alongside the mastery of English language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these skills, reading is considered the fundamental tool for learning, and the ability to read is viewed as the most stable and enduring language skill that supports the development of other competencies, including grammar, vocabulary, and writing (Koch, 1974). According to Grabe (2009), being a proficient reader is essential for success in the modern world. It enables individuals to pursue advanced studies, secure better job opportunities, access information, and effectively communicate with others. English language educators in China are committed to enhancing learners' reading experiences and improving their English reading literacy through continuous reading practices (Mei, 2018).

In Chinese tertiary education, reading is a compulsory subject for English-major students during the first half of their four-year program. However, the current situation is far from satisfactory. In the reading classroom, teachers primarily focus on teaching language and cultural knowledge, while students are often engaged in notetaking (Yi & Bai, 2022). The first prevailing problem faced by Chinese English-major students is poor reading comprehension skills, which is related to various aspects of reading, such as limited reading materials, restricted reading time, lack of interest in reading, and insufficient autonomy in learning (Li, 2022; Zhong & Suwanthep, 2022; Chen, 2022; Gu et al., 2017;). Students' motivation for reading is closely related to the issue of reading comprehension ability. According to the investigation of reading among English majors by Quan (2022), students were generally not interested in reading, which was consistent with the questionnaire-based research by Li and Zhou (2017) on the demotivation of Chinese university ELF learners, showing that most students had little or moderate interest for learning English respectively.

According to Nuttall (1996), the lack of reading skills and ability would lower students' willingness to read, which, in the long run, reduces their learning

interest. Meanwhile, motivation plays an important part in students' reading process, reading engagement, and reading achievement (Wolters et al., 2014). This phenomenon of low motivation affects the teaching effects of language and the English-major students' interest in reading. Therefore, cultivating the reading interest of English-major students and improving their reading skills are crucial in foreign language teaching.

Driven by the need to produce competent language professionals capable of meeting international challenges, there has been a re-evaluation of the close relationship between reading literary texts and language learning by language experts in China (Zhao, 2021; Jiang, 2019; Gu, 2016). Literature, with its rich lexical, syntactic, and aesthetic discourse, provides an ideal source for classroom activities that motivate learners to grasp a foreign language more effectively (Bland, 2019). The benefits of literature in language learning have been demonstrated by researchers (Hall, 2005; Krashen, 2004; Brumfit, 1981). This has led to an increasing number of studies advocating for the integration of language and literature in foreign language classes (e.g., Tucker, 2022; Compton et al., 2014).

Various reading activities have been proposed and implemented by researchers to promote foreign language reading, such as sustained silent reading (McCracken, 1971), reading labs (Stoller, 1994), free reading time (Kirmizi, 2010), and literature circles (Daniels, 2002). Manning and Manning (1984) confirmed previous assumptions that peer interaction is the most successful recreational reading model regarding reading attitudes and achievement. Elliot (1990) also suggested that significant learning can occur effortlessly when learners participate in literature reading groups facilitated by teachers.

Daniels (2002) suggested that literature circles are an excellent approach to integrating the curriculum through authentic book reading and rich student discussions. Ragland and Palace (2017) further confirmed that using literature circles offers a better way for English teachers to create a student-centered class. As an effective learning method for developing proficient readers, literature circles can help students enhance their reading skills and foster their interest in reading through collaborative interactions in a relaxed reading environment (Bedel, 2016; Daniels, 2006; DaLie, 2001). Therefore, incorporating literature circles into the curriculum of EFL/ESL learners is a better choice for language teachers.

Although literature circles were initially designed for young readers in K-12 education, they have expanded beyond young readers in America to learners of all age groups in different countries with different language backgrounds. However, in the Chinese context, limited research has focused on either high school students (e.g., Qin, 2022) or non-English-major students (e.g., Li et al., 2021; Xu, 2021; Liang, 2014), and the benefits of literature circles for college English-major students have not been adequately examined. Thus, the current study hopes to encourage students to have a new experience of reading by participating in collaborative activity, to provide inspirations for language teachers to design more motivating reading activities and contribute to the knowledge concerning

literature circles. Considering the research findings on the benefits of literature circles in fostering learner autonomy, increasing reading motivation, improving reading comprehension, and providing opportunities for extensive reading and collaborative discussions, the current study aimed to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What is the attitude of Chinese English-major students towards literature circles as a reading activity?

Research Question 2: How do English-major students perceive literature reading in language learning?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Literature Circles

Literature circles, initiated by Harvey Daniels in 1994, have gained popularity in America for their versatility in accommodating different ages, circumstances, and needs (DaLie, 2001). This activity involves small student reading groups following a specific framework that allows EFL or ESL students to engage in authentic and meaningful discussions about literature in English (Furr, 2004). Shelton-Strong (2012) specifically defined literature circles as small peer-led discussion groups that read the same literary work and meet regularly to share their understanding.

According to Daniels (2002), the success of literature circles relies on assigning different roles or tasks to each participant in the reading group. The four basic roles designed by Daniels are the connector, questioner, literary luminary/passage master, and illustrator. However, depending on the type of literature, additional optional roles such as summarizer, researcher, vocabulary enricher/word wizard, and travel tracer/scene setter can be included. For higher-level reading groups, Furr (2004) suggested six roles, adding a group discussion leader and culture collector. These roles can vary and rotate for each new reading cycle to ensure that learners focus on different aspects of reading (Shelton-Strong, 2012). By performing various tasks and fulfilling their assigned roles, learners develop cooperation and participation skills within a collaborative learning environment. DaLie (2001) emphasizes that the authenticity, empowerment, and collaboration embedded in the activity promote open discussions and challenge-taking among students.

2.2 The Effects of Literature Circles

Researchers have explored the advantages of using literature circles in EFL/ESL learning from different perspectives. Among these benefits, the impact on reading comprehension performance has been the most prominent and extensively studied. Karatay (2017) conducted action research to examine the effectiveness of literature circles in improving students' ability to analyze texts and their reading motivation. The study concluded that literature circles contribute to students' reading comprehension skills in areas such as text analysis, social learning atmosphere, critical reading ability, independent reading motivation, speaking confidence, speaking ability, and tolerance towards cultural and socio-economic differences. Xu (2021) confirmed Karatay's findings in an academic classroom

setting, where 85% of Business English majoring university students perceived literature circles as effective in improving their Business English reading abilities. Similarly, Chou (2022) and Huljanah et al. (2022) investigated the effects of literature circles on reading comprehension through experimental and control groups, and both studies demonstrated the effectiveness of literature circles in promoting reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reading strategy practice.

The effect of literature circles on social skills has also been a focus of research. Abdelrasoul (2014) implemented a proposed program based on literature circles to develop critical reading skills and social skills among Egyptian EFL second-year preparatory school students and found that literature circles increased students' critical reading skills and social skills effectively. Venegas (2019) highlighted the benefits of literature circles through a case study of Grace, a 10-year-old African American girl in fifth grade. The study showed that Grace's participation in literature circles enhanced both her self-management skills (intrapersonal) and social awareness (interpersonal). Dogan and Kaya-Tosun (2020) conducted an experimental study on 74 fourth-grade students in a public elementary school, concluding that the literature circles method positively influenced the social skill development of students in the experimental group. Literature circles have also been found to improve students' intercultural communicative competence and promote open-mindedness and tolerance towards cultural differences (Imamyartha et al., 2020).

In addition to the instrumental benefits, research has shown that students develop a high level of motivation toward literary reading and become more interested and engaged in literature when participating in literature circles (Bouazid, 2022; Mabe, 2022; Hassan, 2018). Reading motivation, according to Stutz et al. (2016) and Schiefele et al. (2012), is positively associated with reading volume and reading comprehension.

Recognizing the various benefits of literature circles, some researchers (e.g., Nurhadi & Anggrarini, 2022; Imamyartha et al., 2020) have incorporated literature circles as instructional scaffolding in extensive reading programs, demonstrating that shared reading experiences can provide students with new reading experiences and enrich their intercultural knowledge and understanding.

3. Method

The current study is designed as a one-shot case study involving only one group through the convenience sampling method, exposed to the treatment followed by measures. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed to identify the attitude of Chinese English major students toward literature circles and determine the benefits of reading literature in EFL/ESL learning. The research was conducted over four weeks, and feedback from the participants was collected through questionnaires and focus group interviews for analysis.

3.1 Participants

The study was conducted in a private university located in the Midwest of China. According to the National Syllabus of English Major Education in Universities (2000), English-major students in China are required to read 20 books of liberal arts written in English during their first two years to acquire 2 credits. Typically, the reading task in this university is conducted independently by the students, but each class is assigned a tutor to provide guidance. With permission from the Dean of the English Department, the researcher contacted the tutor of a class that agreed to participate in the research. The selected class consisted of 41 second-year undergraduate students majoring in English, including 5 males and 36 females. All participants were preparing to take the national proficiency test for English majors (TEM-4) the following April, which is a criterion-referenced English language test specifically designed for English major sophomores. The TEM-4 assesses listening, reading, and writing skills. Therefore, the participants had a strong motivation to improve their reading ability to pass the exam and earn the 2 credits from after-class reading. The tutor was responsible for evaluating the participants' reading performance and teaching one core subject of the class. Before the study, meetings were held with the tutor to discuss the intervention procedures, and the participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, reporting, dissemination, benefits, and risks of participating in the reading activity. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured to make the participants feel secure and respected.

3.2 Procedures

3.2.1 Grouping

Before the reading program, preliminary instructions were provided to the participants regarding the research purpose, functions of different roles, and procedures. To implement the literature circles, the class was divided into six reading groups. The students were encouraged to form small temporary groups based on their own choice, ensuring that an outgoing and active student served as the group leader. Since there were 41 students, six groups were formed, with five groups consisting of seven members and one group consisting of six members. In the groups with seven members, two participants assumed the role of the passage person. Each group was provided with a role sheet (Table 1), which described the various roles and helped participants understand their respective responsibilities.

Table 1: Role sheet (Furr, 2004)

Roles	Job description
Group discussion leader	Facilitating the whole discussion Opening the discussion with open-ended questions
Summarizer	Providing a complete summary of the plot at the beginning or end of the discussion
Connector	Finding connections between the text and the real world, i.e., between the thoughts, feelings, or actions of

	characters in the story and stories of family members, friends, or classmates
Word master	Focusing on at least five single words or short phrases to share, explain and elaborate
Passage person	Making a careful reading of the text and looking for well-written passages to share the understanding
Culture collector	Looking for the cultural and historical background of the story and noting differences and similarities between the culture in the text and their own culture

3.2.2 Selecting Reading Materials

Each group was given the freedom to select their reading materials, with the restriction that the texts had to be English literature or English translations of literature. During the first week, the students finalized their chosen texts. The selected materials primarily consisted of short stories for the first two weeks a lengthy fiction for the last two weeks. Table 2 shows the reading materials selected by students:

Table 2: Reading materials

Group	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3 & Week 4
1	Araby	Ambush	The Little Prince
2	A Rose for Emily	The Story of an Hour	The Call of the Wild
3	The Story of an Hour	Araby	The Great Gatsby
4	The Little Prince	A Woman on a Roof	The Colour Purple
5	The Rocking-Horse Winner	The Open Boat	The Secret Garden
6	A clean, well-lighted place	Recitatif	The Old Man and the Sea

3.2.3 Reading Tasks and Regular Discussion

After selecting their reading materials, the participants were assigned reading tasks and asked to prepare slide presentations based on their respective roles within one week. Every Tuesday, following the regular class hour, a 90-minute reading-sharing session was held. Each group took turns sharing their readings, with the group discussion leader facilitating the discussion. Once the first round was completed, the second round began immediately, and participants were required to assume different roles from their previous round. According to Furr (2004), literature circles promote the integration of reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills through regular discussions. The intervention spanned one month, allowing each participant to share four times in various roles. Table 3 provides the guideline for administering literature circles sharing sessions.

Table 3. Guideline for Sharing Session

Time: 2 pm – 3.30 pm Tuesday
Location: Multimedia classroom
Duration: 4 weeks
Preparing for sharing session
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Students read the text before the sharing session. ◇ Students take notes while reading. ◇ Group members meet and discuss according to their specific roles before the sharing session. ◇ Groups prepare slides for the sharing session.
Conducting the sharing session
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ The group leader opens the discussion by introducing and posing related open-ended questions. ◇ The summarizer gives a summary of the story. ◇ The connector makes a connection between the literary work and the real world. ◇ The word master teaches words, phrases, and their usage. ◇ The passage person analyses the features of one or two well-written paragraphs. ◇ The culture collector presents the cultural background of the work.
Reflection after the sharing session
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ The tutor comments on the presentation of each group or specific group member based on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Did the group members actively participate in the discussion and sharing session? ✓ Did the group demonstrate a deep understanding of the text? ✓ Did the group leader ask thoughtful open-ended questions? ✓ Did each group member effectively fulfill their assigned roles? ✓ Did each group member use appropriate language and communication skills? ✓ Did each group member demonstrate a collaborative and supportive manner within their groups? ✓ Did each group member demonstrate a love for reading each time?

4. Data Collection and Analysis

Once the intervention concluded, data was collected in two forms by the tutor. A questionnaire (see Appendix 1) consisting of 8 close-ended questions adapted from Smith and Feng's (2018) study, was distributed in online form to investigate the participants' attitudes toward literature circles. The questionnaire was submitted by 40 out of the 41 students, for 1 student was absent for the last reading session. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the results, providing insights

to answer research question one.

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were collected to gain deeper insights into the benefits students derived from the activity. The day after the survey, a focus group interview facilitated by the tutor, was conducted with 5 active participants in the class through purposeful sampling, with the assumption that they can provide rich information concerning the benefits of literature reading. Focus group interviews are particularly useful in case studies involving a few selected individuals, as the data generated is socially constructed within the group interaction (Merriam, 2014). Given that the participants read different books and may interpret them differently, the focus group interview provided an opportunity for them to share their perspectives. To ensure that all relevant issues were covered, an interview schedule was prepared by the researcher as a guide (see Appendix 2). The interview took place in a relaxed café environment to encourage open conversation. It centered around several general questions, such as "Do you like reading literature? Why or why not?" "What abilities have you improved through reading literature, such as language competency, cultural awareness, personal development, and others?" "Do you find literature circles helpful in learning English compared to traditional independent reading?" and "Among the roles you have performed in literature circles, which one is your favorite and why?" All five participants were cooperative and provided informative responses for the study.

The interview was recorded to ensure accuracy during transcription. An interview protocol was also used to capture keywords, non-verbal expressions, and reflections of the interviewer. Following the interview, an edited transcription was created as a written record of the data. Content analysis was then employed to analyze the students' interview responses.

5. Results and Discussion

Regarding the attitudes of students toward adopting literature circles in English learning, the quantitative results from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS 28.0 and then interpreted according to the criteria suggested by Ketkham (2004). Table 4 and Table 5 present the criteria and the results of the Likert scale survey, respectively.

Table 4: Criteria of Interpreting the Questionnaire (Ketkham, 2004, p. 74)

Mean score	Degree of Agreement
1.00 – 1.80	Strongly Disagree
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree
2.61 – 3.40	Undecided
3.41 – 4.20	Agree
4.21 – 5.00	Strongly agree

Table 5: Results of the Attitude Toward Literature Circles

Items	Statements	Mean	Interpretation
1	Reading is fun when I take part in literature circles.	4.30	Strongly agree
2	I prefer literature circles to traditional reading instruction.	4.22	Strongly agree
3	I would like to continue participating in literature circles.	4.20	Agree
4	Literature circles help me enjoy reading literature more.	4.18	Agree
5	Participating in literature circles inspires me to read more books.	4.25	Strongly agree
6	I like to try different roles to improve my different skills.	4.13	Agree
7	Literature circle meetings help me understand the books better.	4.35	Strongly agree
8	Participating in literature circles motivates me to dig deeper into the text.	4.30	Strongly agree
Total		4.24	Strongly agree

In response to the statements of the questionnaire concerning the attitude toward adopting literature circles, the summary of the statistics showed that students generally hold a strong and positive attitude toward this activity ($M = 4.24$). Of the 8 statements, item 7 scored the highest ($M = 4.35$), followed by item 1 and item 8 ($M = 4.30$), indicating that the respondents highly agree that literature circles are useful, fun, and motivating in helping them understand the books better. There were no negative opinions toward any of the statements. The tables showed that the respondents agree or strongly agree with the opinions that reading is interesting and enjoyable (items 1, 4), inspiring (item 5), helpful (items 6, 7), and motivating (item 8). Most of them prefer literature circles to traditional instruction (item 2) and would like to continue participating in literature circles (item 3).

According to Su and Wu (2016), literature circles can provide students with a safe and low-risk environment to experience dynamic interactions among readers and texts and can nurture the pleasure of reading literature and literacy skills simultaneously. The research results are consistent with the conclusion by Smith and Feng (2018) that literature circles could encourage students to read more and actively participate in group discussions with their peers. The results are also aligned with the findings by Carrison and Ernest-Slavit (2005) that students can be actively engaged in using authentic language as literature circle members for real purposes. The survey results have further strengthened the findings of Hassan (2018) from teachers' perspective that students can acquire vocabulary,

develop key reading skills, and literature circles are considered fun and make students interested in literature. The results further support the findings of Kaowiwattanakul (2020) in the context of Thailand that students hold highly positive attitudes towards the use of literature circles in improving their speaking skills.

The responses from the participants after the interview provided insights into the benefits of reading literature on language competence, cultural awareness, personal development, as well as other abilities. The interview responses were analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques. A total of 13 pieces of content were collected from the interviewees and subjected to content analysis. The content was segmented into 34 text units and entered into Excel for line-by-line coding. They were then grouped into code categories, as is common in content analysis, to classify the words of texts (Weber, 1990). The thematic categories were based on pre-established models by Carter and Long (1996) for literature reading, which include the cultural model, the linguistic model, and the personal model. Any references related to interpreting meanings were categorized as cultural, and texts involving decoding linguistic aspects were marked as language-based themes. References concerning feelings and reading interest were marked as personal responses.

Table 6. Categorization of Codes concerning the benefits of literature reading

Categories	Cultural	Linguistic	Personal
Codes	Background (7) Customs (2) Horizons (2) Author (2)	Expressing (2) Share ideas (2) Discussing (1) Analyzing (2) Writing skills (3) Vocabulary (1)	Appreciate (2) Interesting (1) Leadership (1) Empathy (3) Experience (1) World (2)
Number	13 (38%)	11 (32%)	10 (30%)

According to Fraenkel et al. (2012), a common way to interpret content analysis data is to use frequencies and percentages to determine the occurrence of specific categories relative to the total occurrences. As shown in Table 6, 13 (38%) codes are related to cultural knowledge, 11 (32%) to linguistic skills, and 10 (30%) to personal development, respectively. Among the three models of reading literature, the cultural model is valued the most (38%), indicating that students read literature mainly to expand their knowledge of cultures outside of their own. This is followed by a focus on improving language skills in reading, writing, and speaking. Some participants also mentioned personal development aspects such as perception, empathy, aesthetics, as well as cognitive and evaluative abilities.

The results from the interview discussions confirmed previous findings by researchers (e.g., Ashrafuzzaman et al., 2021; Baytar & Timuçin, 2021; Hasan & Hasan, 2019; Aghagolzadeh & Tajabadi, 2012; Yeasmin et al., 2011) that literature helps learners develop a wide range of skills, including language competency through exposure to authentic language, familiarity with universal themes related

to human psychology, increased cultural understanding, enhanced reading motivation, analytical thinking skills, and enriched reading experiences. According to Ashrafuzzaman et al. (2021), literature helps build interpretive abilities by exposing students to a wide range of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, thus being a valuable tool for language learning. Baytar and Timucin's (2021) research with university students also confirmed the benefits of literature in improving students' linguistic, cultural, and personal abilities. The current research and previous studies also reinforced the benefits of integrating literature into language learning proposed by Collie and Slater (1987) that literature can be used in a language class as valuable authentic material, cultural enrichment, language enrichment, and personal involvement.

As a highly developed form of collaborative learning guided by reader response principles (Daniels, 2002), this shared reading by literature circles can provide students with a strong reader-text relationship, and an improved classroom learning environment more conducive to language learning (Lin, 2004). It can also provide students with a multidimensional learning platform to naturally develop learners' language skills, contextualized discussions and interpretations (Shelton-Strong, 2012). Therefore, this reading activity fits Chinese English-major students' learning to inspire their interest in L2 learning and engage them more in linguistic, cultural, and personal enrichment.

6. Conclusions and Implications

The study aimed to investigate the attitudes of English-major students toward literature circles and the benefits of reading literature in a Chinese non-key university. While literature circles had not been practiced in this university before, the findings from the research were quite promising.

Firstly, most participants in the survey expressed high interest in participating in literature circles and agreed that they had benefited from the activity. Additionally, most participants indicated their willingness to continue reading literary texts in literature circles in the future and expressed motivation to read more extensively and deeply.

Secondly, the study confirmed the positive impact of incorporating literature in a Chinese university context. Discussions from the interviews revealed that participants recognized the vital role of literature in language learning, acknowledging its ability to improve their language competence, enhance cultural awareness, and develop other abilities such as perception, leadership, cognition, and critical thinking.

However, it is important to note that not all students in the class enjoyed or were highly motivated to actively engage in the literature circles, as indicated by the survey results. From these findings, several implications can be drawn. Firstly, it is crucial to motivate all participants to transition from negative readers to positive readers to ensure smooth and successful group work. Secondly, as literature reading and the subsequent literature circle discussions can be time-consuming, students may need to allocate sufficient time after regular classes to

fulfill their responsibilities. Teachers or researchers should consider the length and difficulty level of the reading materials and allocate suitable periods for the sharing sessions. Lastly, in this study, the reading groups were formed based on students' friendships, which may have resulted in homogeneous groups (Abrami et al., 1995). According to Webb (1989), cooperative learning groups perform best when they contain members of different abilities, therefore, the grouping procedure was also worth consideration in future studies.

Meanwhile, as a small-scale intervention study conducted to identify the attitude of Chinese English-major students toward literature circles and literature reading, this study can prompt the recommendations for ESL/EFL teachers to integrate this collaborative reading activity into language teaching, thus enhancing the reading motivations and learning efficiency. Several limitations in this study are worthy to point out. First, the participants in this study are all English-major students with intermediate English levels. A more comprehensive study that involves non-English-major students at the tertiary level should be replicated to provide a better insight into the effectiveness of literature circles in improving tertiary-level learners' reading ability. Secondly, since the present study was conducted for only 4 weeks, it is recommended that further longitudinal studies that may last for one academic year or longer be undertaken to better understand the benefits of literature circles. Thirdly, for this study, only literary texts were adopted as reading materials in literature circles, and the other genres were not used. It is recommended that different types of materials be integrated into literature circles in future studies to confirm the effectiveness of literature circles. Lastly, with the wide use of modern technology, literature circles can be implemented in virtual forms conveniently. Therefore, more future studies can be conducted by integrating the convenience of modern technology to provide a different and easy avenue for language learning.

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Appendix 1: Attitude for Literature Circles Questionnaire

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neither agree nor disagree
4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Reading is fun when I take part in literature circles.					
I prefer literature circles to traditional reading instruction.					
I would like to continue participating in literature circles.					
Literature circles help me enjoy reading literature more.					
Participating in literature circles inspires me to read more books.					
I like to try different roles to improve my different skills.					
Literature circle meetings help me understand the books better.					
Participating in literature circles motivates me to try to dig more deeply into the text.					

Appendix 2: Interview Protocol

Topic: How is your attitude toward literature reading?
Part 1: Basic Information
Time of Interview: Date: Place: Interviewer: Interviewees:
Part 2: Introduction Firstly, I would like to express my sincere thanks for meeting me today. The purpose of this interview is to get an understanding of your attitude toward literature reading. The interview will take you around one hour. Thank you for your time again. Also, if you don't have a tape recorder, I will use a tape record our conversation so as not to miss any important information. All the information I take notes during our conversation, sometimes I may not be fast enough to catch up with you. Do you agree to be that? If so, be sure to speak up anything you can share with me. Thank you for participating in the conversation. For your information, all the data will be kept confidential, secure, and I will make sure not to disclose your name and information at any time. Your participation in helping with this research interview is completely voluntary, so you have the right to stop at any time and you can always have the right to decide what to share or not.
Part 3: Opening remarks In the past weeks, we have conducted literature circles and each group has participated in it. Reading literature in literature circles is a new experience for you and hope you enjoy this activity.
Part 4: Content Questions
Q1: Do you like reading literature? Why or why not? Notes: Probes: Please elaborate on the reasons you mentioned.
Q2: What abilities have you improved through reading literature, such as language skills, cultural awareness, personal development, and others? Notes: Probes: Please tell me more about it.
Q3: Do you find literature circles helpful in learning English compared to traditional reading? Notes: Probes: What's next?
Q4: Among the roles you have performed in literature circles, which one is your favorite? Notes: Probes: Please talk more about this?
Part 5: Closing Instruction Thank you so much. Is there anything you still want to add? Have a good day.