# INTRODUCTION

## 1. Rationale

The research project titled **"Developing *reading comprehension competence* (RCC) for senior high school *students* (Stds) in teaching *Vietnamese Language Art* (VLA) (based on data from grade 10th)"** was chosen mainly due to the two following reasons:

*1.1. Developing learners' competence is an indispensable and urgent requirement of the times, reflecting international trend and national education strategy of Vietnam*

*1.2. RCC - an important and essential capacity of humans in the 21st century - is yet to fully develop during high school years; developing RCC is the general requirement in educational curriculum in most countries.*

## 2. Research object and scope

### *2.1. Research object*

The thesis aims to investigate the relationship between teaching VLA, particularly teaching ***reading comprehension*** **(RC)** in VLA, and the development of RCC for senior high school Stds.

### *2.2. Research scope*

- The thesis focuses on investigating the development of RCC for senior high school Stds, mainly from the impact of the teaching process through concrete activities. Regarding the data of the study, the thesis chooses grade 10th as a case study. Therefore, curriculum and practice survey, selection of examples for analysis and illustration of the proposed principles and measures as well as **the experiment** all come from this data. In terms of teaching materials for the experiment, a lesson of literary theory (RC lesson of literary texts) is chosen as it is considered an informational text that needs to be taught for RC.

## 3. Research aim and tasks

### *3.1. Research aim*

The study aims to find out measures in the process of teaching VLA which can lead to RCC development for senior high school Stds in an active and effective manner.

### *3.2. Research tasks*

Research tasks in this study include: 1) synthesising and analysing literature about RCC development for school Stds in Vietnam and in the world to draw out key points; 2) identifying the concept of texts and RCC, views about RCC development as well as the possibility to develop RCC for senior high school Stds in teaching VLA; 3) surveying curriculum and current practice of teaching RC in VLA based on data of grade 10th in comparison with the requirement to develop RCC for learners; 4) proposing principles and measures to effectively intervene the development of RCC for senior high school Stds in VLA; 5) assessing the feasibility of the principles and measures proposed by means of pedagogical experiment.

## 4. Research Methodology

Main research methods employed include: *literature review, observation, survey, expert consultation, pedagogical experiment and case study.*

## 5. Hypothesis

**If** teaching ensures the principles and measures aimed at creating pedagogical impact that activates Stds' reading needs, motivations, and interests, helping them become active readers participating in reading activities and communicating with guidance and adjustment appropriate for RC steps, RCC of senior high school Stds **will** be developed in an active and effective manner.

## 6. The significance of the thesis

*In theoretical terms,* the thesis provides an up-to-date and systematic review of research into the development of RCC among Stds; presents various views about RCC for Stds; proposes and analyse the views about the deep component of RCC, points out the important role of this component in selecting pedagogical interventions in Stds' RCC development process; affirms and analyses the possibility in developing RCC for senior high school Stds in teaching VLA. *In practical terms,* the thesis proposes teaching principles and strategies to actively and effectively develop RCC for senior high school Stds in VLA.

## 7. The thesis organisation

Apart from introduction and conclusion, the main content of the thesis consists of four chapters: *Chapter 1: Literature review of RCC development for school Stds; Chapter 2: Theoretical underpinnings and practice in developing RCC for senior school Stds in teaching VLA; Chapter 3: Principles and strategies to develop RCC for senior high school Stds in teaching VLA; Chapter 4: Pedagogical experiment.*

# CHAPTER 1. LITERATURE REVIEW OF READING COMPREHENSION COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

## 1.1. Research on competence and competence development for school students

### *1.1.1. Research on competence*

The concept of competence appeared a long time ago; however, it has gained popularity and become the research focus since the early 1970s with various approaches and definitions. Among them, the most notable is the functional approach in which competence is defined as "the ability to successfully meet complex demands in a particular context through the mobilization of psychosocial prerequisites (including both cognitive and noncognitive aspects)"[1]; the internal structure of competence is conceptualised as a system of complicated factors such as knowledge, cognitive skills, practice skills, viewpoints/attitudes, values and virtues, and relevant motivations.

[1] Rychen, Dominique Simone and Salganik, Laura Hersh (2003), "A holistic model of competence", *Key Competencies for a successful life and a well-functioning society*, Hogrefe & Huber Publishers, p.43

Competence is dynamic and complex in nature and highly dependent on actual contexts. It is shaped, developed and demonstrated through actions.

#### *1.1.2. Research on competence development for school students*

Competence development for school Stds has become an educational goal of many countries in the world as well as in Vietnam. From the concept of competence in research in general, curriculum designers propose the concept of competence and a system of competencies crucial for Stds in particular. Despite different use of words, the core of this concept is associated with learners' capacity and desire to do. In Vietnam, a draft of a comprehensive general education curriculum has been announced in which orientation to competence development has become the dominant view. In addition, basic and foundational views about the concept of competence and a system of competencies have been identified.

### 1.2. Research on reading comprehension and reading comprehension competence development for school students

#### *1.2.1. Research on reading comprehension*

##### *1.2.1.1. Research on reading comprehension in the world*

RC as a field of research has a long history and a number of achievements. Each stage of research has its own targets which are influenced by psychological, linguistic, an educational theories as well as literary theory. What is researched into in turn influences the process of teaching RC at school. Basically, the achievements of RC theories are deeper analysis of RC activity in term of participating factors such as text, readers, reading activity as well as the relationship between these factors and the broader society. *Research on RC concludes that reading is a dynamic and complex process; "comprehension" results from readers' construction based on the text. In other words, research on RC points to readers' increasingly important and active role: reader as "constructor", reader as "repairer" and reader as "re-writer". It also acknowledges the important role of background knowledge and RC strategies in understanding the text. Reading research is increasingly paying attention to the "reading context", placing reading in relation to readers' language use capacity and other factors (reading community).*

##### *1.2.1.2. Research on reading comprehension in Vietnam*

In Vietnam, the term "RC" has appeared in VLA curriculum and textbooks since 2000 and 2002 which reflects an ideological change in teaching. Hence, RC studies mainly focus on the contents of Literature teaching in school contexts. In the last decade, with the active contribution of many researchers, the "appearance" of RC in educational science has been clearly identified in the viewpoints and basic theoretical directions. Researchers are *aware of and analyse to elucidate the complex nature of RC activities* in many aspects; *paying special attention to the RC contents of school literary works* – "an extremely special and complicated form of RC", increasingly clarifying positive readers' portrait. They also refer to the concept of RC strategies and their application during the RC process at school.

### *1.2.2. Research on reading comprehension competence development for school students*

#### *1.2.2.1. Research on reading comprehension competence development for school students in the world*

Developing RC and RCC for school Stds is a strategic issue that requires to be approached from various aspects. The works of researchers such as Moje, Moore, Wharton-McDonald, Pearson, Duke and colleagues highlight a number of points in this regard as follows:

*Developing RCC for school Stds— a new research focus targeting Stds of high school ages*. The development of RCC is a whole process. Entering high school, Stds still need to be continuously paid attention to develop this competence at a higher level. Particularly, as the International Reading Association affirms, high school Stds as adults entering the 21st century will need to read and write more than any other times in human history, while the national data in the US shows that the Stds have not been prepared for that challenge. Thus, in 1999, the association officially proclaimed a new research focus in RC and teaching RC, that is the issue of developing RCC for Stds.

*Developing RCC for school Stds – the importance of reading curriculum with rich and interesting sources of texts and appropriate time for reading experience.* This is one of the key points that leading researchers target to develop RCC for Stds at all grade levels, especially high school Stds. Surveys and studies show that a key problem lies in that Stds do not want to read, and read less because they do not really have access to rich and interesting sources of texts; besides, they are not guided to spend a satisfactory amount of reading time. Therefore, many researchers have reached agreement that in order to develop RCC, high school Stds need to access diverse sources of texts which they are able to read and want to read and, at the same time, spend time reading in the real sense.

*Developing RCC for school Stds – the necessity of RC strategy*. Awareness of the role of RC strategies is equal to affirming their necessity. Researchers point out that, in any case, teaching RC strategies is still one of the most effective ways to help Stds overcome difficulties encountered in RC.

*Developing RCC for school Stds – the role of reading context*. From the achievements of RC research, the role of reading context in the development of RCC for Stds is heightened. It consists of both a specific context of lessons and a broader context of cultural environment outside the classroom.

*Developing RCC for school Stds – the meaning of assessment.* Many studies contend that assessment, particularly “ongoing assessment” plays a very important role in the development of RCC for Stds. Ongoing assessment is teachers’ monitoring and feedback on Stds’ RC process. This provides information to guide and adjust teachers’ teaching accordingly and achieve maximum efficiency.

*1.2.2.2. Research on reading comprehension competence development for school students in Vietnam*

The appearance of the term RC in current literary curriculum and textbooks has become an important milestone showing educators' deep awareness of the nature of teaching RC that is to teach Stds reading skills and competence. Researcher Tran Dinh Su emphasises, "RC - a breakthrough in literary content and teaching methods"; researcher Do Huy Quang proposes a process for teaching RC of literary texts for junior and senior high Stds; researcher Nguyen Thanh Hung recommends how to teach RC of literary texts in line with each genre; researcher Pham Thi Thu Huong raises the question of teaching RC strategies for Stds. Towards the curricular reform after 2015, benefiting from research achievements in the world, Vietnamese researchers continue to show interest in the issue of developing RCC. They have started to conduct intensive research into topics such as: *proposing standards of RCC; affirming the need to pay attention to the selection of texts suitable for Stds and providing orientation principles of selecting texts; targeting teaching RC through organising activities for Stds, using feedback theories, helping Stds interact to create meanings, have interest and learning motivation in line with the nature of reading activities at schools; recommending structure of RCC and assessment standards of RCC in the new curriculum; providing orientation to develop RCC for a specific genre*. Recently, the publication of the textbook "Methods of text reading teaching" (2016) of Nguyen Thi Hong Nam, Duong Thi Hong Hieu, Can Tho University Press, continues to be an important milestone affirming Vietnamese educational scientists' interests, research and application capacity regarding the development of RCC for Stds.

In summary, the issue of developing RCC for Stds has been and continues to be a topical issue. However, within the scope of reviewed materials, research on the development of RCC for Stds mainly covers theoretical arguments which provide general orientation for all types of readers, in which attention to high school Stds has just been raised. In Vietnam, the official research trend on this issue is marked by curricular reform orientation after 2015. The achievements gained are just initial ones which function as an important foundation. It is required that there be more succeeding in-depth contributions to complement the theoretical contents as well as to be able to apply in solving the practical problems encountered.

# CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS AND PRACTICE OF READING COMPREHENSION COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TEACHING VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE ARTS

## 2.1. Texts and reading comprehension competence

### *2.1.1. Texts*

#### *2.1.1.1. The concept of texts*

The concept of texts has been broadened in many aspects. In terms of composition material and form of expression, texts are not only limited to products in oral or written form. There is a tendency for texts to include products which combine both language and other signs with diverse forms and means of expression. In terms of meaning, the concept of texts also change: from the understanding that texts are a closed structure, to a multi-dimensional open system in light of the theory of intertextuality and reception theory. As such, texts become an “inviting structure” with many "white points" which turn readers into the "constructors", the “repairers”, and the “re-writers”. Reading is both a process of reception and construction, and a process of consumption and production.

#### *2.1.1.2. Types of texts used for teaching reading comprehension in Language Arts and their characteristics*

There are differences in the types of texts taught in RC in different countries. This can be explained from different views about RC goals for Stds. While in the current VLA curriculum, Stds mostly study literary texts, the general trend shown in some countries’ Language Arts curriculum with advanced education is to broaden RC scope for Stds through diverse types of literary languages and forms of presentation from various sources, in which reading and comprehending informational texts closely related to life is paid special attention. Although literary texts still play an important role, they are not the only type of texts and do not account for a large quantity. There are varying ways of classifying texts to be studied in the curriculum. Nonetheless, in terms of content, two major categories can be found as pointed out by researcher Nguyen Thi Hong Nam[2]: Literary and informational texts, in which literary texts is the kind of texts that use of artistic language with high aesthetic values, while informational texts can be broadly understood as all the remaining texts that do not use fictional and imaginational elements with the main purpose of providing information. In the thesis, the concept of texts used in association with RCC is also in line with such classification (some basic characteristics of these two types of texts are summarised in Table 2.1).

### *2.1.2. Reading comprehension competence*

#### *2.1.2.1. The concept of reading comprehension competence*

Having identified the nature and characteristics of competence (demonstrated through activities which are effective in specific contexts) and

[2] Nguyen Thi Hong Nam, Duong Thi Hong Hieu (2016), *Methods of text reading teaching*, Can Tho University Press.

RC activities (active interaction process to create meanings), combining with the definitions mentioned above, competence is conceptualized in the thesis as follows: *RCC is the active interaction with texts through cognitive and metacognitive activities to create new understandings, responses, and use of texts in specific contexts in order to achieve reading goals and develop one's potentials*.

*2.1.2.2. Components of reading comprehension competence*

We concur with the components of RCC expressed through component elements/skills and ten behavioural indicators proposed by researcher Nguyen Thi Hong Van[3]. At the same time, they are viewed as surface component of this competence. Besides, using internal structure model of competence following the functional approach, we propose the deep component of RCC which includes elements of *background knowledge relevant to texts; RC strategy system; relevant viewpoints and feelings; willingness to mobilise background knowledge and flexibly use RC strategies; and the capacity to promote and monitor one's RC process.*

*2.1.2.3. The development of reading comprehension competence*

Competence is a factor of ongoing development. First, this development is linked to readers' psychological and biological maturity from pre-reading time to personality maturity. Researcher J. Chall affirms this when proposing a model of six stages describing the development of readers' reading capacity in line with different ages. Besides, the development of RCC is also understood from the perspective of readers' change and "growth" after each reading. In addition to readers' self-growth and self-maturity through each stage of life and reading action, the development of RCC greatly depends on factors related to readers' sociocultural environment. Each reader is a member in his or her broader reading community. The same applies to readers-Stds. They are greatly influenced by the reading culture of family, friends, schools and society. Among them, classroom environment should be mentioned first.

## 2.2. Possibilities of developing reading comprehension competence for senior high school students in teaching Language Arts

### *2.2.1. Senior high school students' "expectation horizon"*

High school Stds are adolescents. During this period, they undergo a number of dramatic changes in all aspects including physical, cognitive, emotional and social ones to support maturity. Completing junior high school and entering senior high school, Stds move from the first half to the second half of adolescence. Therefore, their growth level becomes higher, moving toward maturity which enables them to get ready for more complex tasks requiring abstract thinking and reading with critique, etc. For them, classroom interactions such as group work and group discussion provide good opportunities to increase their learning motivation, promote growth and help

[3] Nguyen Thi Hong Van (2015), " Proposing the structure and assessment standard of reading comprehension competence in general education curriculum in reform", *Journal of Education Science*, Vol. 114, pp. 19-20, 61.

them strongly affirm their selves. Further, senior high school Stds represent NET generation—a generation who can access digital technology since early childhood. At high school, particularly senior high school, it is common for Stds to not only come into contact with print texts or their interaction and communication does not stop at "face to face" one. They take initiative and become more independent in accessing a huge source of information updated every second or minute. Hence, the opportunity to develop RCC also face with more challenges.

Based on age characteristics and societal features which set Stds' "expectation horizon", it can be stated that given appropriate environment, senior high school Stds' text RCC will be developed at a higher level after completion of senior high education. By that time, Stds are capable of *recognising and firmly grasping information and features (both structure and contents)* of highly complex texts. They are capable of accessing and deeply analysing important information, hidden information of text which, in combination with their knowledge and rich experience, can create multi-level meanings. They are also capable of responding strongly and evaluating text meaning with strong personal views and emotions. They can apply their text knowledge in real life flexibly and proficiently. They own and know how to mobilise and use various RC strategies, develop their metacognition, sustain reading motivation to put themselves into characters' shoes and understand challenging texts. Another feature is that if considering the structure of text RCC in the case of senior high school Stds, deep structure plays a critical role as it will determine the growth of Stds as independent readers in which motivation and putting themselves into characters' shoes are considered decisive.

#### *2.2.2. Impact of teaching Language Arts on senior high school students' reading comprehension competence development*

From the foundational theoretical viewpoint that education and teaching play a leading role that guide development, go ahead of development, lead to development, provide orientation and promote development and the viewpoint that individual active participation and communication which plays a decisive role in human psychological development, it can be said that teaching and teaching Language Arts has immense impact on Stds' text RCC development process when learning activities are organised to motivate Stds to actively participate in. RCC is a tool related to all other subjects. Among school subjects, Language Arts is a specialised one with favourable features such as *providing an environment for Stds to experience RC steps in the real sense; providing an environment demonstrating close integration between the development of RCC and other language competencies such as writing, speaking and presenting; and providing an environment in which Stds' RC process is regularly assessed and adjusted*. After finishing junior high school, Stds' RCC has been shaped and developed at a basic level. Entering senior high school, Stds have the ability to read critically and independently at a high level. At this education level, Language Arts as a subject designed to match their

characteristics of "expectation horizon" and the goal of developing RCC will help them master reading, turning those possibilities into doing competencies. In other words, it helps Stds' RCC to develop at the highest level possible so that they become proficient readers, ready to step outside the school life as mature adults.

## 2.3. Curriculum and current practice of teaching reading comprehension in grade 10th Vietnamese Language Arts

### *2.3.1. Curriculum for teaching reading comprehension in grade 10th Vietnamese Language Arts*

*2.3.1.1. Teaching goals*

A survey of VLA shows that the curriculum has identified the goals of teaching RC: *targeting training and improving RCC for Stds; paying attention to the training of reading skills for Stds —the most important skill among communication skills; targeting the broadening of reading scope and paying attention to Stds' awareness of reading methods*. Besides, the curriculum still *pays attention to the goal of providing systematic literary knowledge*. As such, from the requirement to develop RCC for Stds, the goals of training and improving RCC, paying attention to reading skills and broadening reading scope for Stds need to be continuously valued as the main one while the goal of *providing literary knowledge* should be considered as a component one in the entire goal of developing RCC for Stds.

*2.3.1.2. Teaching contents*

** Texts to be taught*

VLA curriculum specifies texts to be taught for RC. They are mainly texts limited to folklore and medieval literature. Thus, the opportunity for grade 10th Stds to become familiar with diverse literary genres is very limited. Furthermore, only contact with the poetics of folklore, ancient and medieval literature throughout the whole school year makes it difficult to maintain Stds' interest. The nature of texts according to the selection criteria also demonstrates the view which heavily focuses on providing systematic knowledge for Stds, not stemming from the purpose of developing RCC for learners.

** Supplementary lessons*

To support Stds' RC of literary texts, lessons of literary history and theories are also designed in the curriculum. These lessons provide a very useful knowledge tool, particularly, in terms of literary theory contents, the advanced curriculum includes theoretical lessons on how to read (Reading – reading literary texts; Reading to accumulate knowledge; Reading – comprehending texts of medieval literature, etc.). When the curriculum targets the development of RCC for Stds, such lessons which support skill development are essential. However, to make theoretical and methodological contents related to reading have practical significance and capable of providing maximum support to Stds in the reading process, the lessons should have instructions on specific RC strategies for Stds to practise.

*2.3.1.3. Knowledge and skill standards*

Standards of knowledge and skills in the curriculum is the description of RC objectives for each genre towards Stds' awareness, understanding and ability to apply in other texts of similar genre after RC lessons. Targeting competence development oriented curriculum, identifying standards for learners is an indispensable requirement. However, if considering the orientation to develop RCC for Stds, knowledge and skill standards in the current curriculum still show limitations. It only stops at specific requirements of knowledge and skills for each lesson and groups of lessons; it is not systematic, logical, and seamless between grade levels; it is yet to provide orientation for activities of designing curriculum, teaching and learning, testing and evaluation; and it does not reflect the integration between different components of language competence.

***2.3.2.Current practices of teaching reading comprehension in grade 10th Vietnamese Language Arts***

*2.3.2.1. Teaching materials*

** Lessons in textbook*

RC lessons in grade 10th VLA textbook are arranged according to literary periods and genre cluster, seriously reflecting the view that emphasises systematic literary history and pays attention to characteristics of literary genre. Content structure in this textbook is more innovative and progressive than that in previous grade 10th VLA textbooks. However, given the requirement to develop RCC for Stds, this lesson structure still needs to be considered further at some point. For example, the section *Expected results* still focuses more on the knowledge objective other than reading skills and methods. The section *Remember* is, on the one hand, valuable in helping Stds to have an overview of the text, but on the other hand, placing such headings seems to confine RCC to recall knowledge and text meanings is also "molded" in. Also, overall, lesson structure in the current VLA textbook does not really help to guide readers to experience a full range of steps before, during and after reading.

** How to teach lessons in teachers' guide*

Overall, the contents of the teachers' guide in teaching RC (lesson objectives; things to note about lesson characteristics; method, teaching procedure; testing and evaluation; answers to questions in the section *Study guide*, *Practice and Advanced exercises* in VLA textbooks; references) are complete and comprehensive suggestions, helping teachers during the process of studying and designing lessons. Among them, the most important content is the method and teaching procedures. However, from the requirement to develop RCC for Stds, some shortcomings can be seen as: lessons mainly target the standardization of text knowledge and do not pay adequate attention to Stds' reading journey. The organisation of activities for Stds to have reading experience in class (expressive reading, casting reading, silent reading) if referred to is just the general direction. It is not developed into specific reading

tasks and does not include suggestions that teachers can provide and help Stds practise RC strategies.

*2.3.2.2. Teaching activities*

Results from the survey show that in terms of teachers' perception and teaching practice, the use of **RC strategies** in lessons was very limited. There are almost no individual reading activities in RC lessons. **Regarding to expressive reading**, teachers only had time to organise it as a "show" to create a literary atmosphere. Few teachers considered this activity as an important interactive reading activity that they needs to spend time to organise well to help Stds understand texts from exploring the voice. **Regarding reading activities of discussion**, teachers were not aware that this is an interactive reading activity of great values to develop each individual's RCC in the classroom community. Besides, due to time constraints and other limitations of the curriculum, teachers rarely organised reading discussions effectively in an authentic manner. **Regarding teachers' feedback** on Stds' reading outcomes and process, most teachers acknowledged that they did not have enough time and skills to give thoughtful feedback. **Regarding Stds' level of interest, activeness and understanding**, most Stds were at a low or average level; the percentage of Stds with deep understanding after RC lesson was small. Activities to broaden reading scope for Stds were also limited. As a result, Stds' **independent reading of texts outside the curriculum** was weak. Stds mainly stopped at *understanding part of the text* with low percentage of Stds with *deep understanding*.

# CHAPTER 3. PRINCIPLES AND MEASURES TO DEVELOP READING COMPREHENSION COMPETENCE FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN TEACHING VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE ARTS

## 3.1. Principles and measures to develop reading comprehension competence for high school students in teaching Vietnamese Language Arts

### *3.1.1. Strictly follow reading comprehension competence standards during the teaching process*

RCC standards is a crucial element in competence-based curriculum. During the process of teaching RC, teachers need to strictly follow RCC standards. The standards are oriented to design all RC lessons. They are the important basis for teacher to assess, particularly assess Stds' development throughout the whole process of teaching RC. They bring about learning motivation and also form the basis for student self-evaluation, and self-reflection on the RC process.

As the current curriculum is yet to set RCC standards, within the research scope of the thesis, a set of standards for grade 10$^{th}$ VLA is identified as in **Table 3.1**.

**Table 3.1. Content standards for RCC in grade 10th VLA**

| Criteria | Targeted level |
|---|---|
| **1. Reading scope and** | After completing the curriculum, Stds can read and |

| | |
|---|---|
| **text difficulty** | comprehend literary texts themselves (genre: story, poem, and drama) and informational texts with difficulty level appropriate for grade 10th. |
| **2. Recognise information and main features of text** | 2.1. Present general information about text such as author, composing circumstance, genre, and topic.<br>2.2. Identify appropriate meanings of words and phrases used in the text, particularly meanings constructed in the specific context of the text.<br>2.3. Identify main topic of the text as well as its structure (sections, important details, structure); give a brief and objective summary of the text.<br>2.4. Recall/cite details/words in the text to illustrate the grasp of main information and structure of the text. |
| **3. Analyse, connect information to reason and construct text meanings** | 3.1. Analyse the meaning of each section, important details of texts to convey key themes (e.g., central character, arguments, events, etc. ...).<br>3.1.1.<br>* Literary texts: Imagine, reproduce portrayed artistic image; predict, infer hidden information such as writers' attitudes, perceptions, and aesthetic message, etc.<br>* Information text: Predict, infer hidden information such as writers' perceptions and goals.<br>3.1.2. Explain the purpose of the author in the selection and use of artistic elements such as structure, words, characters portraying style, etc.<br>3.2. Compare, relate, and contrast the text's information to that of relevant texts and personal knowledge and experience to see the author's own point of view.<br>3.3. Construct text meaning and explain the relevance of the meaning with the text's structure. |
| **4. Respond, evaluate text meanings and values** | 4.1. Comment on the details as well as the whole meaning of text.<br>4.2. Evaluate the text's values from different perspectives<br>* *Literary text*: reception and creativity, author's contribution to the literary topic and genre development, etc.<br>* *Informational text*: urgency of provided information, the way information is provided, author's own point of view, etc.<br>4.3. Express one's attitude and changes in |

| | |
|---|---|
| | awareness resulted from the text's meaning and value. |
| **5. Apply knowledge of text into real life and when reading other texts** | 5.1. Apply knowledge of text to solve relevant real life situations.<br>5.2. Apply experience and RC strategies during the reading process to read and comprehend other texts of the same genre and topic, etc. |

### *3.1.2. Assuring that students can access sources of texts of diverse genre, suitable with their reading comprehension capacity, needs, and interests*

*3.1.2.1. Assuring that students can access sources of texts of diverse genre*

VLA curriculum needs to help Stds get familiar with texts of diverse genre as genre features are the key to decode texts. Senior high school Stds need to *access informational texts* which are diverse in contents, forms and types since these texts are an inevitable product of modern society. Teaching Stds to be able to read and comprehend informational texts in the right way is the increasing responsibility of schools, and many subjects among which VLA plays the most important role and is traditionally powerful in shaping and developing RCC for learners. In addition, literary texts are indispensible materials in RC curriculum. It is necessary for senior high school Stds in each grade to access more diverse literary texts instead of limited genre such as folk literature and medieval literature in current grade 10$^{th}$ VLA textbook.

*3.1.2.2. Assuring that students can access sources of texts suitable with their reading comprehension capacity, needs, and interests*

Text complexity is defined by American researchers in three aspects, namely, qualitative, quantitative, readers and RC tasks. Senior high school Stds are able to access highly complex texts in both qualitative and quantitative terms. From the third perspective, it is necessary to pay attention to Stds' reading needs and interests. This means that they should be exposed to texts of contemporary literature, literary texts that are of particular interests for Stds of this age group such as literature full of fictional and mysterious elements.

### *3.1.3. Assuring that students can practise reading comprehension steps in line with genre features*

RC is a process consisting of three "micro-periods": before reading, during reading, and after reading. It is necessary to consider each sub-period since distinguishing between what readers "bring in" with what they "learn" from the process of reading is very important. How to support Stds so that they can "bring in" all the cognitive, and metacognitive skills, intellectual capital, and relevant experience and then "draw out" new knowledge to the maximum and became "creative readers", enriching text meaning as well as one's own capital, maximise the development of competencies and RCC. These are the goals that RC curriculum needs to target. Moreover, in each sub-period, the

actions that readers implement are governed by the characteristics of different text genres.

*3.1.3.1. Before reading*: Stds need to *mobilise background knowledge* and *identify reading goals*.

*3.1.3.2. During reading*: Stds need to take reading actions such as *decoding, recognising information and main text features; reproducing, imagining, and predicting while reading; analysing, connecting, synthesising, inferring, and explaining meanings; and monitoring and promoting RC process…*

*3.1.3.3. After reading*: Stds need to *connect, respond, evaluate and apply.*

#### *3.1.4. Integration during reading comprehension teaching process*

Integration, one of the basic principles in teaching RC, is affirmed in the current RC curriculum. In the general education curriculum after 2015 which is currently developed, integration continue to be affirmed as an important direction for teaching. To develop RCC for senior high school Stds when teaching VLA, this principle has been increasingly stressed because it derives from close relationships between RC, writing, speaking, presenting and other competencies. Integration during the process to develop RCC for senior high school Stds is the integration between different components of teaching VLA (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and presenting). At the same time, it is also the integration of VLA with other subjects, particularly courses that have a close relationship such as social science subjects and arts subjects, as well as many other areas in life. In addition, integration in teaching RC is also reflected at different levels such as the use of teaching methods, facilities and techniques, etc.

#### *3.1.5. Using regularly and effectively formative assessment of students' development in teaching reading comprehension*

One of the factors that makes VLA teaching environment become the best environment for the development of RCC for Stds is that Stds always receive feedback and thus adjust their reading through formative assessment. In other words, one of the principles of "survival" to develop RCC for senior high school Stds in teaching VLA is that the regular and effective use of feed back and formative assessment. To be more concrete, teachers need to observe RC activities and their reading outcomes regularly, identify their current "state" of RC including misunderstandings of texts or difficulties encountered while reading, ideas of texts (either preliminary or incomplete), full understanding and insight of texts, etc. Based on these, teachers can provide accurate feedback to Stds, adjust or set the direction for future teaching activities, thereby making accurate feedback for Stds, adjustment or orientation for the future activities.

### 3.2. Measures to develop reading comprehension competence for senior high school students in teaching Vietnamese Language Arts

#### *3.2.1. Instruct students to flexibly apply a system of reading comprehension strategies*

*3.2.1.1. Frequently provide, supplement, and enrich students' strategies*

Providing RC strategies for Stds greatly depends on the active role of the teacher. There are two main time points to provide strategies for Stds. The first

is "to provide learners with initial strategies". The second is "when Stds encounter specific difficulties arising during the process of understanding texts"[4]. When providing new and complex strategies, teachers should apply the steps in the model proposed by Duke and Pearson[5] which has been really proved as convincing. In this model, Stds are led to gradually increase their ownership, ultimately becoming completely independent in using strategies. This means that teachers gradually fade their support and instead provide valuable feedback. Given senior high school Stds' expectation horizon, there are not so many strategies that need to be taught as in the model for Stds to become familiar before applying independently (e.g., connecting or synthesising questions and mental movie, etc.). The majority of the strategies are straightforward or Stds are familiar with (but not using them a lot or are less consciously using them). Teachers can fully give orientation for Stds to practice during RC tasks (e.g. marking and making marginal notes and collaborative notes, making literary communication, and overviewing texts.

*3.2.1.2. Organising activities for students to take initiative in practising strategies during reading comprehension process*

Providing Stds with new strategies only makes sense when they are able to apply and know how to apply at the right time. This is a challenge for teachers, especially in RC lessons of literary texts. For this purpose, there is no other way than organising activities for Stds to regularly practice strategies in RC tasks. For example, when studying the excerpt *Xúy Vân giả dại* (extracted from the traditional drama of *Kim Nham*), Stds are taught to use the strategy *The character wishes but*…to understand the character's tragedy. In case of other tragedies such as Thuy Kieu in *Trao duyen* (extracted from *The tale of Kieu* – Nguyen Du), teachers just need to give hints so that Stds can recall strategies and continue to apply proficiently. Or in reading profiles reflecting the reading process, when teachers guide Stds to choose reading strategies as an important content criterion for recording in the profile, learners will be aware of their role and take initiative to apply these useful tools.

### *3.2.2.* Organising and combining individual and interactive reading activities for *students* during lesson time

*3.2.2.1. Individual reading activity*

Organising individual reading activities for Stds in class is a challenge for teacher as they need to invest reading time and space for Stds to read in a legitimate way. The class is a perfect place for readers to "retreat" and immerse themselves into the text. In addition, they have great motivation influenced by their teachers and "reading community" of classmates. Individual reading activities can be conducted for an entire lesson, provided that the text is

[4] Pham Thi Thu Huonng (2012), *Reading comprehension and reading comprehension strategies at school*, University of Education Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 61.

[5] Duke, N.K, Pearson, P. D, Strachan, S. L, & Billman, A. K. (2011), "Essential elements of fostering and teaching reading comprehension", *What research has to say about reading instruction*, A. Farstrup & J. Sameuls (Eds.), 4th ed, Newark, DE: International Reading Association, pp. 291-309.

organised through specific exercises guided by the teacher (reading contents and reading strategies, etc.) so that Stds can deeply experience the text. In the meantime, the process and outcome of reading are externally displayed clearly which is the basis for teachers to give feedback. With open VLA curriculum in terms of text selection, in addition to texts included in textbooks, Stds also have the opportunity to explore other texts provided by teachers. This is also the time Stds apply and practise the system of strategies. Besides, the majority of individual activities is a prerequisite or an essential part of interactive reading and sharing in the classroom.

*3.2.2.2. Interactive reading activities*

The nature of RC is an interactive and dynamic construction process by many readers. Thus, a RC lesson will become an opportunity and an ideal environment for readers to dialogue their different interpretations and different levels of comprehension in which the teacher is considered an elite, proficient and experienced reader. Beside individual reading activities, interactive reading and sharing accounts for a majority of time during RC lessons.

a. Interactions through expressive reading

Different from organising expressive reading activities at preschool and primary levels, the main purpose of the organising expressive reading activities for high school Stds, especially senior high school, does not just stop at the reception of texts in a one-way manner from the elite readers, but the focus should be directed to readers who share their understanding through *performances and reproduction of texts* by their own voices. Thus, Stds will see clearly that the nature of reading is a process of creating meaning. Expressive reading also opens the door so that Stds have opportuinites to monitor their own understanding through expressing and comparing various interpretations of texts through reading voices.

Given this purpose, expressive reading activities operation can fully become the backbone to connect different activities related to the text or may also become an important content of activities in discussions or when using RC strategies such as providing a "mental movie." Despite being held in any form and at any level, this activity must achieve the following objectives: Stds understand the tone of texts; Stds have the ability to express feelings and interpretations of texts through their voices, find out the relationship between voice and interpretation, respond to other readers' feelings and interpretations of texts through their voices, and adjust ways of reading or understanding more appropriately.

b. Interactions through discussions

Discussion is an opportunity to expand readers, connect different background knowledge, and different ways of interpretations, thus enriching each participating reader. Moreover, discussions create motivation for Stds to return to the texts and read them carefully. In addition, discussions can help teachers observe, assess, give orientation, and adjust Stds' "understanding" of texts. Further, discussing the contents of RC also helps Stds develop other

language and communication capacities such as presentation and collaboration. For senior high school Stds, this kind of activities is likely to bring about motivation and strong interest in learning because it fits the characteristics of multiple social interactions by Stds of this age.

To organise discussions for senior high school Stds during RC lessons, teachers can perform these steps: 1) develop a plan for discussion; 2) unify contents and form of discussion with Stds; 3) let Stds discuss, observe them, support, and adjust if necessary; 4) give feedback, consolidate and give suggestions. Among the four steps, planning with carefully designed contents and forms of discussion is very important. When planning discussions, teachers should *identify issues to be discussed*. In order to identify these, firstly, teachers need to consider and select when to organise discussions during the teaching process or RC process (discussion before, during or after reading a text). For example, *after-reading* discussion aims to help Stds generate "tentative" responses. This can be considered the main form of discussion, accounting for most of the time as Stds have experienced the text in a relatively complete journey. Now it is time to respond to the text in terms of its meanings in interacting with the other readers. Based on that, the reading outcomes and reading journey can be reviewed and developed at different levels. Also at this time, the topics of discussion should be considered and selected to fit Stds' "expectation horizon" and orientation to develop RCC for senior high school Stds. These should be issues/questions of considerable complexity, "provocative", and not easily answered as true/false, or requiring a single solution. They should be open-ended, and require convincing evidence, thorough reasoning and justification. By participating in discussions on this issue, Stds are again aware of the text as a complete art entity in connection with other texts which were learnt and read as well as integrating existing knowledge, skills and capacity. For example, a discussion topic can be raised after Stds read *Chuc phan su đen Tan Vien* by Nguyen Du as follows:

At the end of the story, Nguyen Du comments directly:

"*Than ôi! Người ta thường nói: "Cứng quá thì gãy". Kẻ sĩ chỉ lo không cứng cỏi được, còn gãy hay không là việc của trời. Sao lại đoán trước là sẽ gãy mà chịu đổi cứng ra mềm?*

*Ngô Tử Văn là một chàng áo vải. Vì cứng cỏi mà dám đốt đền tà, chống lại yêu ma, làm một việc hơn cả thần và người. Bởi thế được nổi tiếng và được giữ chức vị ở Minh ti, thật là xứng đáng. Vậy kẻ sĩ, không nên kiêng sợ sự cứng cỏi.*".

As such, the author not only affirms Ngo Van Tu's virtue - a true scholar - but also reminds readers of the philosophy of "hard" and "soft" in life. In using soldiers, Zhuge Liang said: *"Phải biết mềm biết cứng, biết lo biết lường, biết lui biết tiến, biết nhược biết cường, vững vàng như núi đá, biến hóa như âm dương..."*; in the Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu also said: *"Người ta sinh ra thì mềm mại, uyển chuyển như hài nhi, chết thì mới cứng đơ, bất động. Cây cỏ sống chết cũng như vậy. Nên cái cứng là chết, cái mềm là sống"*.

From your perspective, how are “hard” and “soft” are appropriately understood and applied in the way people treat each other? Recalling Tu Van’s steadfastness, is there anything you like to have dialogue with the author?

### *3.2.3. Instructing students to create a reading profile and use it effectively*

*3.2.3.1. The concept of a reading profile*

A reading profile is a type of learning profiles. It is a purposeful and organised collection of Stds’ reading activities in a long time. A reading profile reflects the reading process, and accumulates information about it, creating a portrait and the growth of the reader. The usage of a reading profile is demonstrated in the following points: 1) a reading profile is important evidence for teachers to evaluate and provide feedback on RC process to readers; 2) creating and using a reading profile is an important way to help readers develop both reading and writing competencies; and 3) a reading profile is Stds’ self feedback on their RC process; it is an effective way to monitor one’s reading and comprehension.

A reading profile can be created in various and creative formats. However, it needs to reflect the following basic information: a list of reading texts, reader’s feedback on texts, reader’s interaction with other readers as well as reader’s changes and maturity after interacting with texts and other readers.

*3.2.3.2. Steps to instruct students to create and use a reading profile*

* Introduction to a reading profile: Stds need to have a clear understanding of a reading profile, particularly its using values so that they become motivated and able to create and use a reading profile effectively.

* Unifying structure and criteria for selecting contents and presentation format of a reading profile: The main content of a reading profile is a collection of journeys in reading each specific text (e.g., “my steps” (before, during, after reading); my strategies, my mental movies; my reading tasks; my questions; my reflection and changes after reading (in terms of perception, experience, and actions, etc.). Regarding presentation format, a reading profile should be suggested to be open so that Stds might be interested in and creative in expression. At the same time, they can come back to the texts at any time to supplement and adjust their feelings and responses after other experiences.

* Giving orientation in the process to create, use, give feedback, and assess a reading profile: Teachers play an important role in guiding Stds to create and use a reading profile. There is a need to develop a close relationship between the reading profile with classroom RC activities as well as the activities organised to expand the reading scope aiming at Stds’ independent reading capacity. Teachers can, in many flexible ways, help Stds "fill in" their profile, create the habit of regularly recording their reading any time they read for any type of texts that Stds experience with initiative and excitement. Another important thing is that teachers always plan to review and give regular and periodic feedback to Stds’ reading profiles to promote all the values of this tool in the process of teaching RC.

### *3.2.4. Broadening students' reading scope and increasing their independent reading through reading activities outside lesson time*

*3.2.4.1. Targeting students' self reading outside lesson time*

Senior high school Stds' self reading activity outside lesson time needs to reach the goal: Stds know how to choose books to read and spend appropriate reading time; develop the relationship between reading during lessons and reading outside class hours; broaden reading scope and gradually become independent and proficient readers. To achieve this goal, senior high school Stds should have opportunities to access available sources of texts which are in line with their reading capacity, needs and interests. Further, they also need to know how to select and search for texts which have values and suit themselves. Another important factor is that Stds should receive appropriate support and feedback during self reading. In other words, in essence, to broaden reading scope towards senior high school Stds' capacity to read independently through reading activities outside lesson time, there needs to be a self reading curriculum constructed systematically for each grade as well as the whole senior high school education. This curriculum should become an important element in the overall VLA curriculum.

*3.2.4.2. Providing orientation and guidance about text sources and training students' selecting skills*

Providing orientation and guidance about text sources for Stds to select can come from the curriculum which helps identify level of difficulty suitable for each grade, recommends interesting text sources or provides a list of sample texts. It can come from teachers; each of them becomes a living library who can judge text level of difficulty suitable for each grade, even suitable for specific Stds' capacity, needs and interests, thus providing sound guidance. The third source is the support from school and class library. In addition to guidance about text sources, senior high school Stds should be trained in text selection skill. In an era of information technology, the capacity to critically select and read texts plays an extremely important role. In order to have this skill, teachers need to guide and organise activities for Stds to have opportunities practising during lessons such as modelling or providing recommended sets of texts, organising for Stds to practise selecting texts. In addition, they can provide opportunities for Stds to explore and study activities on specialised websites or those supporting text selection.

*3.2.4.3. Supporting and giving feedback to students' self reading*

Teachers need to have plans to support and provide regular feedback on Stds' self reading. An independent reading profile is one of the useful tools in this case. Also, teachers need to always create opportunities for Stds to connect self-reading texts with those read during lesson time by organising reading activities outside school hours using rich and diverse forms to increase readers' interest and motivation to read such as forming clubs (reading club), project-based learning (connecting both formal and extracurricular lessons) in which reading is the main way and method to create project products such as book

introduction, book exhibition/art exhibition, book fair, book reviewing magazine, and TV/press conference about books/literary issues.

### *3.2.5. Developing and using different types of feedback in teaching reading comprehension for students*

*3.2.5.1. The concept of feedback in teaching reading comprehension for Stds*

Feedback in teaching RC is information reflecting Stds' RC reality (which includes ways of RC) as compared to learning objectives. In specific situations, feedback indicates the level of RC tasks that Stds have reached, which difficulties they are facing or their misunderstandings based on which solutions necessary to assure these objectives can be found. Providing and receiving feedback during RC process is to cultivate meanings for potential texts and develop potentials for each reader.

*3.2.5.2. Developing and using different types of feedback in teaching reading comprehension for students*

Utilising Hattie and Timperley[6]'s categories, it is possible to develop and use four types of feedback in teaching RC, namely, feedback on reading outcomes, feedback on reading process, feedback on the ability to monitor and adjust reading and comprehension, and feedback on readers. Feedback provided often focus on reading outcomes or readers; often the two are incorporated into a single incident of feedback. Meanwhile, in teaching RC, feedback on the ability to monitor and adjust reading and comprehension is very necessary. This is completely in line with the goal to develop RCC for Stds, meaning that attention is paid to not only readers - Stds' capacity to comprehend a particular text but also to reading skills during the reading process in general. For example, the following feedback can be given after Stds expressively read the excerpt "*Noi thuong minh*": "You read correctly, and smoothly but slightly fast. The words and phrases which directly portray Thuy Kieu's mood of poignancy such as "giật mình", "thương mình", and "xót xa", etc. or symmetrical phrases bearing the weight of expression such as "khi sao"/ "giờ sao"; "mặt sao"/ "thân sao", "dày gió/ dạn sương", and "bướm chán/ ong chường" were not emphasised and did not reflect the nuances of embarrassment, pity and pain. Thus, listeners did not feel these poignant words as if showing Thuy Kieu's each gut segment, did not feel sorry for the mental disgrace that character was experiencing, and thus did not see the writer's as well as reader's deep empathy putting themselves into the character's shoes.

In addition to feedback focusing on contents as above, attention should also be paid to feedback according to feedback givers. Feedback in teaching RC comes from three sources, namely, teachers, peers (peer feedback) and Stds themselves (self feedback). Apart from teachers' feedback, peer feedback and self feedback are greatly valuable for Stds. Peer feedback is beneficial in two ways. Research points out that feedback givers gain equal benefits as receivers. Self feedback is

[6] Hattie J., Timperley H. (2007), "The Power of Feedback", *Review of Educational Research*, *77*(1), 81-112.

one of the signs of metacognition; the capacity to self adjust is considered a capacity playing a decisive role in Stds' study success in the 21st century.

# CHAPTER 4
# PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIMENT

## 4.1. Goals, contents and subjects of pedagogical experiment

In order to validate the research results mentioned in chapter 3, given possible educational context, the following contents were selected to be covered during experimental lessons: providing supplementary knowledge of RC steps and strategies; organising activities for Stds to apply and practise these strategies in RC tasks; paying attention to the effective organisation of self-reading and interactive reading for Stds during RC lessons; providing valuable feedback; providing opportunities for Stds to offer feedback and self-feedback in RC activities; incorporating into lessons some contents to target Stds' independent reading; and initially instructing Stds to create a reading profile and carry independent reading outside lesson hours. In order to achieve all these, three experimental lessons were conducted for grade 10th Stds including a RC lesson of the fairy tale Tam Cam, a literary text RC lesson, and a RC lesson of the excerpt "*Trao duyen*" in *The tale of Kieu* by Nguyen Du. Based on the goals and contents mentioned above, the participants selected are grade 10th Stds in Hanoi, Thanh Hoa and Quang Ninh.

## 4.2. Experimental lesson plans

### *4.2.1. Experimental lesson plan structure*

Experimental lesson plan structure comprises lesson objectives, pre-lesson preparation by teacher and Stds, and teaching procedure. The *lesson objectives* do not separate into *knowledge, skill and attitude components* but make concrete the contents in line with RCC standards suitable with the lesson's features, and guide RC activities to be organised for Stds. Meanwhile, they form the basics to give feedback to and assess learners. *Teaching procedure* consists of a system of activities which help Stds experience RC process as active readers. Each activity covers two points, namely *activity objectives and contents and ways to implement activities*.

### *4.2.2. Contents of experimental lesson plans*

To illustrate the contents of experimental lesson plans, one lesson plan of the fairy tale *Tam Cam* is presented here. Other lesson plans are included in the appendix.

## 4.3. Ways and criteria for evaluating experiment outcomes

After each lesson, the outcomes were evaluated using criteria of Stds' active participation level, interests and comprehension during lesson as well as Stds' RCC when reading a text of similar genre not included in the official curriculum. In order to evaluate Stds' active participation level, interests and comprehension during lesson, data collected from lesson observations was analysed in combination with Stds' answers in the sheet in which Stds shared their feelings and answered quick questions after the lesson. In order to evaluate Stds' RCC when reading a text of

similar genre not included in the official curriculum, a test was designed for Stds to do after the lesson. For each test, a sheet evaluating Stds' answers based on the quality level in each answer.

### 4.4. Conducting experimental lessons

After completing experimental lesson plans, the lessons were conducted (list of experimental and **control classes** can be found in Table 4.5 of the thesis). The contents of the experiments include meeting and discussing with teachers about objectives, meaning and contents of the experiments as well as lesson plans (in which special attention is paid to the ways teachers effectively develop and use feedback during the teaching process because this is not covered in the lesson plans); evaluating to assure relative similarity in RCC of Stds in experimental and control classes and collect data to conclude about the development of RCC of the experiment classes before and after the experiment; conducting lessons in experimental and control classes as planned and observing as well as collecting data of all the lessons; and testing Stds' RCC after lessons in both experimental and control classes, collecting data for analysis and evaluation.

### 4.5. Experimental results and conclusions

Data collected after the experiment was analysed using statistics and diagrams. Experimental and control Stds' answers was identified according to four predetermined levels (below standards, near standards, standards, and above standard). Results show that experimental Stds had higher percentage of answers meeting standards and above standards while the percentage of answers below standards and near standards was lower. Having reviewed the dispersion of the data points in both groups of Stds through variance and standard deviation, it is concluded that the results of experimental Stds were more even than that of the control ones. Based on analysis of statistics of Stds' answers in experimental and control classes according to the standards for each answer in the test, the percentage of excellent answers by experimental Stds was notably much higher than those by the control ones, particularly in answers which required readers to give personal response as well as to apply, reason and synthesise in a deep manner. Data collected from the sheet sharing feelings and giving quick answers shows that experimental lessons brought about stronger interests among Stds than the control ones. Thus, in experimental lessons, Stds were more active and their comprehension became better.

In summary, measures to develop RCC for senior high school Stds proposed in chapter 3 demonstrated their feasibility in the experiment in the case of grade $10^{th}$. In experimental lessons, Stds were interested and active in activities; thus, they gained a deeper understanding of the lessons. After each experimental lesson, Stds started to be able to comprehend a text of similar genre not included in the official curriculum.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Developing text RCC for Stds in teaching in general and in teaching VLA in particular is a big, long-term, important and complex issue. At the same time, it is also a current issue in the context of international education and curricular reform in Vietnam. RCC is a dynamic of ongoing development with varying levels according to different readers and time points. For senior high school Stds, despite gaining basic RCC, they need to be paid attention to develop this competence at a higher level, meeting the requirements of study and life so that they are ready to merge into the society as mature citizens.

2. The structure of RCC consists of not only outward reading and reading outcomes but also inward factors such as *background knowledge related to texts, a system of RC strategies, relevant viewpoints and emotions, willingness to mobilise background knowledge and use RC strategies flexibly, and the ability to promote and monitor ones' RC process*. These inward factors are the source to decide the demonstrating level of outward factors. Therefore, they deserve special attention. This is an important starting point to investigate pedagogical approaches to develop RCC for Stds.

3. RCC is always developing in terms of various aspects including readers' psychological and biological maturity, changes in each reading action, and readers' interactions with environmental factors. Among them, teaching activities, particularly VLA teaching, can leave a huge impact on this development. Nonetheless, the possibility to impact on Stds can only be materialised when teaching VLA assures conditions helping learners actively practise RC and interacting with other readers in the context of having RC standards to rely on; offering a system of texts suitable for Stds' levels and reading interests; organising activities for Stds to experience different steps of RC in the real sense; and giving effective feedback to help readers adjust their reading to meet those competence standards.

4. In the context of meeting the requirement to develop RCC for Stds and considering the potential of impact on learners that the subject can bring about, the current curriculum and practice of teaching RC in VLA for senior high school based on the case study of grade 10$^{th}$ reveal a number of limitations: the objectives still prioritised the provision of literary knowledge; text sources were not diverse in terms of styles and generally were not really suitable with Stds' capacity, demands and interests; RCC standards were yet to identify; during lessons, Stds had few opportunities to experience different steps of RC in an authentic manner and to practise RC strategies, and had no time and opportunities to receive feedback on their reading process. Thus, Stds' RC was still at a low level and Stds were not capable of reading and comprehending texts outside the official curriculum. There needs to have systematic changes in curriculum and RC teaching process to overcome these limitations in order to bring into play the great potential of the subject and develop RCC for Stds.

5. To develop RCC for senior high school Stds in teaching VLA, **five principles** can be applied: *1) strictly follow RCC standards during the teaching process; 2) assure that Stds can access diverse sources of texts in terms of genre which are suitable for Stds' RC capacity, needs and interests; 3) assure that Stds can practise RC steps in line with each type of text; 4) integrate during RC teaching process; and 5) frequently and effectively use formative assessment in teaching RC* and **five measures** can be used: 1) *instruct Stds to flexibly use a system of RC strategies; 2) combine individual and interactive group work for Stds during lessons; 3) instruct Stds to create and use reading profile effectively; 4) broaden RC scope and increase Stds' capacity to read independently through activities outside school hours; and 5) develop and use feedback effectively in teaching RC for Stds.* These principles and measures are proposed based on theories in developing RCC for Stds, investigation of the current curriculum and practice in teaching RC for Stds through a case study of grade 10$^{th}$. At the same time, their feasibility was judged through concrete RC lessons of grade 10$^{th}$ in Hanoi, Thanh Hoa and Quang Ninh.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. VLA curriculum at high school level after 2015 needs to be designed to set RCC standards suitable for each category of Stds. Based on that, the curriculum guides the selection of texts for RC which include literary texts as well as informational texts considering readers' interests and text complexity. Skills in VLA curriculum, particularly reading and writing skills, need to be integrated closely to create conditions for the development of both reading can writing competencies in the best way possible.

2. There is a need to change teachers' awareness and action in organising activities for Stds in RC lessons. Teachers need to hold a viewpoint that the ultimate goal of RC lessons is to help learners become independent readers who master reading skills. It means that lessons need to be organised to provide real reading opportunities. As a matter of fact, in order to turn the viewpoint into practice, the curriculum need to be open in term of time and text selection for RC so as to create favourable conditions for teachers and Stds to experience reading activities with effective interactions, sharing and feedback. It is necessary for VLA curriculum and schools to create connections, broaden reading scope, and increase reading opportunities for senior high school Stds outside school hours through various measures and activities.

3. Changes in viewpoint and ways of assessing senior high school Stds' learning outcomes in RC need to be considered as well. Stds need to be assessed by reading texts outside the official curriculum to measure RCC gained compared to the set standards. Choosing texts outside the official curriculum for assessment can prevent lecturing style where teachers read and understand texts instead of Stds and provide opportunities for Stds to read and understand by themselves utilising a combination of knowledge, strategies, skills, viewpoints and emotions, thereby developing RCC.