AN APPROACH TO TEACHING WILLIAM FAULKNER'S "EVANGELINE" IN THE GOTHIC CONTEXT

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Abstract

William Faulkner' s short story, "Evangeline" requires the use of metacognitive reading strategies and a preliminary introduction to the Gothic tradition, as well as background knowledge on the author's biography together with the history of the American Civil War. Through his interweaving of complicated narrative techniques, past and present time shifts, historical allusions, and Gothic elements, Faulkner illustrates some of the social taboos present in his culture to which he strongly disagreed. A research study involving five-year high school students enrolled in the Baccalaureate International program shows that "Evangeline" did not appeal to them at first. The first study in the high school, Joseph François Perrault, shortly ended after an attempt to interpret the text that frustrated the students. Years later, the same text was approached in another public high school, Saint Luc, within the context of Gothic literature. This new contextual information, together with open-class discussions concerning the text opened up new interpretative perspectives.

Keywords: Gothic, Civil War, high school, students, social taboo.

Introduction

Most often the teaching of intricate literary texts, such as William Faulkner's *oeuvre*, generates anxiety both for students and teachers. William Faulkner's works fall into the category of the hard-to-read or hard-to-follow texts requiring an appropriate teaching method. Critics such as Robert Dale Parker and Richard S. Turner conjectured that teachers often avoid teaching this author's texts and students usually become discouraged during the study. As many other pedagogues, Albert-Reiner Glaap (1997) thinks that "for various reasons, Faulkner should be (or become again) firmly established in the literary canon for English classes in our secondary schools" (p. 541). His works are meant to raise the reader's emotion and interest through the characters' social and living condition. Robert Hamblin (1994) explains that Faulkner's fiction transmits educational messages which may influence individuals' way of thinking, "only the individual can decide which aspects of any tradition he deems worth preserving; it is left to each person to discover […] his own voice out of the many voices that float through his mind and experience" (p.15). Teachers are responsible for bringing over such hurdles to help students benefit from Faulkner's humanistic messages.

Among the various literary techniques and devices used by Faulkner in his works, the Gothic elements are obscure for many readers. Despite some studies conducted by Steven T. Ryan, Keith Lawrence, Elizabeth Kerr, Jennie J. Joiner that discuss Faulkner's use of such elements in some of his works, the short story, "Evangeline" still remains a difficult text to read and understand.

Having pondered over my students' comments I soon realized that their difficulties were due to their difficulty in recognizing the Gothic elements that are present in the text such as "the ghost" motif or "the dark house." As such, it becomes a necessity to ensure that students are given some context concerning the Gothic Tradition and the American Civil War. Years later, the same text was approached in another public high school, Saint Luc, within the context of Gothic literature.

Review of the Literature

The traditional pedagogy instruction, based on a teacher-centered approach, assumes that all students have similar levels of knowledge in the subject being taught and that they acquire new information in a similar pace. The teacher guides the student and offers him new information with little interaction. Contrarily, constructivist teachers engage students in experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial hypotheses and then, encourage discussions both with the teacher and among students" (Zhang, 2008, p. 92). Teachers' valuing students' participation in the lesson develops students' autonomy and motivation. In other words, the idea of adopting constructivist pedagogy for learner development is based on Piloneta (2010)'s belief that "learners' mastery of how to learn is more important than the learning act itself" (p. 155). According to several critics such as Jay Parini and

Blau Sheridan, students' learning success depends on teachers' involvement in the planning of classes and their coping with the students' unexpected difficulties. Reflecting on their own educational experiences, they consider the interaction framework pedagogy with the student at the center of the learning process and the teacher as a guide to the learning process. For Jay Parini (2005), the classroom "can become a place where sparks fly, where students confront their own best selves, thinking aloud, with [him]or against [him], as [they] move toward something like Truth" (p. 89). Blau Sheridan (2003) strongly believes that students need to be at the center of the learning process:

> as long as teachers are teaching, students are not going to learn, because the kind of experience teachers have that enables them to learn what they have to teach is the experience that students need to have, if they are to be the ones who learn. […] the experience of being taught was merely an experience of witnessing and possibly recording the teacher's learning, and not an experience of learning for oneself" (p.3).

Elaine Showalter (2002)'s view is like Marshall Gregory's noting that "we can't 'assume that one teaching method or another will solve all problems […] No one teaching method can meet all the demands of learning'" and of T.S. Eliot's belief that "the only method is to be very intelligent" (p.42). Her opinions on teaching are also reminiscent of Biggs', that "there is no single ideal way to teach; what matters is 'how we conceive the process of teaching, and through reflection come to some conclusion about how we may do our particular job better'" (p.8).

Critics such as Gillian Lazar and Peter Barry also conjecture that the approaches to teaching literature are various and depend on the type of the text and the audience's needs. Showalter (2002) views are akin to Kenneth J. Eble's who suggests that "we need to keep 'a sense of play in teaching'" since "'teaching is an improviser's art'" (p.8). My reading of recent research in education together with my teaching experience contributed to my understanding of the advantage of applying a constructivist pedagogical framework to this study. Such a pedagogical method involves a metacognitive process for students. This stimulation is achieved by the teachers' use of the "scaffolding" support which is defined as "a process in which a more knowledgeable speaker helps a less knowledgeable learner by providing assistance" (Lightbrown and Spada, 2006, p. 131). The student is central to the learning process and the teacher becomes the guide and the motivator. Students assist each other's learning by sharing socio-cultural perspectives and try to clarify confusion.

> It has been shown that when reading and thinking processes are taught to students through dialogic interactions, they increase students' engagement and control of the reading comprehension process. Higher student achievement and more positive social, motivational, and attitudinal outcomes have also been found to occur in collaborative learning contexts (Wooley, 2010, p. 112).

Faulkner's use of intricate narrative techniques requires much of readers' attention. According to Cris Tovani (2000), the "text becomes inaccessible when students […] don't have the comprehension strategies necessary to unlock meaning […] don't have sufficient background knowledge […] don't recognize organizational patterns or lack purpose" (p.19-20). The use of metacognitive reading strategies (Table 1) helps to make meaningful connections in students' reading which enhances their understanding of the plot and structure of the text. According to Dawn R. Dolly (2004), this process implies that readers can "clearly identify reading purposes, identify relevant prior knowledge, identify important components of a message, selectively direct attention to the more important contents of a text […] use self-questioning to monitor comprehension, and take compensatory action when comprehension failure has occurred."(p.53) This process enables students "to become aware of some of the knowledge needed" (Miholic, 1994, p. 84).

The Current Study
The current study is the result of a long-term reflection over my past teaching experience of William Faulkner's short story "Evangeline," which according to students had demonstrated their need for a special approach to the text due to the level of obscure meaning concerning the Gothic elements Faulkner uses. Elizabeth Kerr (1979) defines Gothic fiction as "being a fascination with the dark persistence of the past in sublime ruin, haunted relic, and hereditary curse" (p. 4). Her views are in line with Michael Sadleir's who writes that "the cult of ruin in Gothic […] projected a symbolic bond between ruined house and nobly ruined mind" (p. 4). Without that background information (often referred to as cultural literacy or intertextual literacy), the understanding of the symbolic use of dark elements, which encapsulate Faulkner's world vision, would be impossible.

Considering students' manifested needs after their first reading of the short story together with the final

pedagogical aims (interpretation of the author's general messages), I found that the study should consist of three steps: consistent acquiring of the contextual knowledge on the Gothic Tradition which proved to be key to their final interpretation and makes understanding the author's intentions easier. Therefore, it is imperative that students be introduced to William Faulkner's biography and the historical situation before and after the Civil war in preparation for "Evangeline."

The entire pedagogical process consisted of 18 periods of 75 minutes each. A constructive teaching approach involving the teacher's monitoring and prompt feedback to students coupled with providing students with the necessary contextual information helped widen their perspective on the underlying meaning in the text.

1. Background Knowledge on the Gothic Tradition
Some background information is essential to perceive Faulkner's complicated structures and narrative techniques enabling students to name the themes embedded in the work. While reading his texts, readers need to make connections between certain aspects and Faulkner's way of thinking as an artist. Having students acquire some background information about Faulkner's artistic vision and about the historical situation at that time, the teacher ensures students' possibility to metacognitively organize their thinking while reading as they make links between their knowledge and the information in the text in order to better understand the author's allusions.

After a short lecturing on the history of the Gothic tradition used in literature supported by a PowerPoint presentation, I had students brainstorm ideas based on their prior experience with Gothic works. Because they had not studied the same works, their change of opinions was not very effective. In view of their detecting and interpreting the same Gothic elements, I had them watch and afterwards discuss the original versions of the films *Frankenstein* and *Jane Eyre*. During the open class discussion, students made up a list of the Gothic elements they found: decline from its former greatness (e.g. rundown castles /great country manors), hidden passages, trap doors, secret rooms, bleak environments, stormy weather, places far away from civilization, mystery, horror, dread etc.

The most relevant Gothic elements were selected after the groups had shared their findings in each film. Referring to *Jane Eyre*, I related its Gothic elements to the historical background during the Victorian age. Students' interest was evident as they became sensitive when revealing Charlotte Bronte's use of Gothic elements to present women's condition when their feelings were suppressed by the patriarchal authority that dominated the society during the 19th century.

Rosemary Timperley (2012)'s *Harry* vs Bierce (1984)'s *A Diagnostic of Death*
As I foresaw eventual reading difficulties in the upcoming reading of Faulkner's short story "Evangeline" because of the use of complicated narrative techniques (that make the understanding of the plot difficult, point of view hard to distinguish), I decided to approach two easy-to-read Gothic short stories Rosemary Timperley's *Harry* and Bierce's *A Diagnosis of Death,* in which students could notice two distinct narrative frameworks and the use of imagery in order to create some Gothic effects.

The learning process of each of the two texts was progressive. As an assignment, students read the texts individually and wrote down its main ideas. Back in class, they discussed each text in group activities. The teacher constantly monitored them providing them with feedback when necessary. To make sure they understood the storyline, students drew a story chart (exposition, narrative hook, rising action, climax, falling action), discussed the use of point of view, detected and revealed the meaning beyond the Gothic elements, and talked about the use of imagery.

The assessment consisted in formative evaluation (the teacher's constant observation of students' progress during the interactive activities) as well as in summative evaluation (their writing of an opinion piece in which they had to show which of the two authors, Rosemary Timperley or Ambrose Bierce, managed to best create Gothic effects. In their writing of the opinion text, students had to compare the two works in terms of the use of the structure (narrative techniques such as point of view); Gothic elements and imagery used to suit the intended audience and purpose; the authors' general message.

Their comparison of the two texts revealed that students could identify and discuss Gothic elements in the two works as both writers meant to refer to societal taboos, the dark side of human nature, the oppressive settings. As a final project in which students were supposed to use their knowledge, in groups of four and make up their own

Gothic short story which they would later present. As students were fascinated by the creative pieces being presented, they asked questions about different aspects which were either confusing or stirred their curiosity or interest.

2. Cultural Literacy – a basis for understanding "Evangeline"

The understanding of the author's world vision and the history of the American Civil War stands for the core meaning of the text. The watching of the DVD entitled, *William Faulkner's Biography (Famous Authors series),* was integrated in my brief introduction of William Faulkner to students. Understanding the author's choice of complicated narrative techniques, students are aware of the necessity of their engagement while reading the text. Back in class, students had the main ideas of the short story prepared in advance. While writing their opinions about their reading experience, most of the students expressed confusion but showed their interest to continue the study.

2.1. **The Origins of Faulkner's Artistic Vision**

The difficulty of his narrative techniques sprang out of both his private nature and his being a Modernist. On the one hand, Faulkner's apparent creative impersonality in his fiction made his literary intentions mysterious to the reader. He always disliked people prying into his life and in his interviews, he often seems to feel uncomfortable and he gives evasive or short answers. This attitude resulted from his secretive and introvert nature that he showed not only towards strangers but also with those close to him. Despite his determination to protect his privacy, he was curious and liked to approach people and develop relationships. The tension between these impulses forced him to create a variety of ways that he employed to keep himself at a distance. On the other hand, Thomas McHaney (1984) thinks that Faulkner was endowed with some innate talent comparing him to remarkable modernist artists such as, "Stravinsky, Picasso, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Williams, Stevens, Aiken, Cummings, Hemingway, and the rest of their generation, his was a prepared mind, fed with similar abstractions and cultural experiences and charged with sufficient ambition and discipline to accomplish tasks he deliberately undertook (qtd. *In New Directions in Faulkner Studies*, p. 43).

Faulkner's voyage to Paris inspired him with its innovative artists, changing his artistic vision. As Emily Watts (1971) puts it, "in the Paris of the last generation, creative minds in all areas of art met and exchanged ideas […] it was a time when poets became librettists, painters became poets, musicians became painters" (p. 3). That period which favored such a creative fusion among literature, music, and painting seems to have inspired authors in the creation of their artistic styles. William Faulkner borrowed artistic devices, manipulated and transposed them into his novels in a uniquely original way.

Faulkner's intellectual interest in exploring art along with his life experience and his innate artistic talent as a writer illustrated the evolution of his idiosyncratic and exquisite literary artistry characterized especially by much subtlety. The origins of Faulkner's artistic achievement went far back to his youth. His mother was convinced that Faulkner had visual art inclinations. Meeting painters and hearing different excited discussions about art in New Orleans and Paris changed his artistic perspectives. Pantheia Reid (1993) describes his discussions with some students of modern art, which later persuaded him that the most important Bouguereau paintings at that time deserved "a curse" (qtd. in *Faulkner and the Artist,* Kartiganer and Abadie, p. 93). In addition to all these, his painting interpretations in the museums of New Orleans and Paris and the literary works of some modern writers he read changed some of his artistic perceptions. Faulkner's experiences symbolize a journey of his working mind over the world and art. Its destination is the projection of ideas organized according to the themes Faulkner chose. By means of such a vision, he manages to express his thoughts when writing his novels in the most abstract way possible.

Given these influential circumstances, Faulkner developed a unique style of his own. Panthea Reid (1993) exquisitely describes Faulkner's literary evolution as being marked by a passage from transparent language in his poetry - used as a vehicle to express loss, longing, and desire - to a sophisticated language. She also reveals that "Faulkner told Demsey that plot robbed literature of its quality; plot was cheap, absurd, childish, and limited. He theorized that the modern novel should eliminate plot"; however, he did not eliminate it but "…fragmented and juxtaposed bits of plot in a manner that shows…a new understanding of what Cezanne and the avant-garde painters were accomplishing" (p. 89-90). As a result, "He developed an incremental faceting device of shifting, and filling, patterned after the artists' breaking and bending and reassembling planes on their canvases." (p. 102).

2.2. History – **A Source of Faulkner's Concerns**

A thorough examination of Faulkner's epoch is necessary to recognize and appreciate the tensions that weighed heavily on his heart. Some of Faulkner's themes spring out of his disagreement with the reality of that period during which moral and social factors overwhelm and oppress the individual. Virginia Hlavsa (1991) claims that "discovering the themes of Faulkner's chapters or divisions is critical to understanding his works" (p.10). Biljana Oklopcic (2014) notes that:

> As his fiction shows, Faulkner's view of the Old South does not center, even though he did feel nostalgia for it, in idealization of the plantation myth or the plantation aristocracy. Instead, he believed in the Old South's "moral order—a code of personal dignity, courage, honor and integrity" (Miller 1963, 204) that, in his opinion, had to be freed of rigid formalism, unnecessary violence, and sins of slavery (p. 6).

Faulkner struggled with the problems of American southern culture, the most controversial being white supremacy and segregation laws. White upper class were ruthless and cruel towards African Americans which Faulkner completely disagreed with. Faulkner expresses his distaste for these attitudes, subtly illustrating his ideals by portraying their opposites in a negative light. Some themes are created according to the idea of the force of race and class, gender and sexuality, poverty and abundance, failure and success as well as villains and victims. This is realized through a tendency toward a dehumanization of the individual and the presentation of the personal and moral issues with which the individual must deal. As Faulkner puts it "The artist's prerogative […] is to emphasize, to underline, to blow up facts, distort facts in order to state a truth" (qtd. in Gwynn and Blotner, p. 282). Attentively reading his works, the reader realizes that the author's preoccupation with the antebellum traditions represents one thread weaving the substratum meaning in his works.

Zooming down to Faulkner's central theme, the reader realizes that Faulkner's major interest is the individual's soul. As Faulkner puts it, "I was trying to write about people, which to me are the important thing. Just the human heart, it's not ideas" (qtd. in Gwynn and Blotner, 1959, p. 10). Faulkner supports the struggle of African Americans for equal rights. Faulkner believes in equity between races because man "is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance" (qtd. in O' Connor, 1968, 147-148).

3. Approaching "Evangeline" within a Constructive Pedagogy Instruction

Taking into account the students' comments, confusion and misunderstandings, I decided to reread the text in class and have students annotate it referring to Wooley (2010)'s metacognitive framework (see Table 1).

Table 1- Metacognitive framework (Wooley 2010)

Phases	PROCESSES		
	Visualizing/local Scenes/ events	Visualizing/ global Episodes/ story	Self-regulation? self-questioning
Before reading	Visualizing similar scenes from similar background experiences to draw the opening scene of the story.	Using a graphic organizer to understand the structure of the text to be read. Asking questions to help elaborate drawn pictures.	Goal setting What do I think will happen in this Story? Visualize likely scenarios.

During reading	Stopping at an appropriate place in the narrative and drawing a picture related to story events as the plot unfold ds.	Asking and answering questions related to character actions and scenes as it relates to the drawings.	Monitoring meaning/ self-questioning Is the story similar to what I imagined at the beginning? How is it the same/different? What do I think will happen now? Visualize a revised scenario.
After reading	Making a summary drawing of the resolution scene.	Using the graphic organizer as a way to organize a summary by placing each of the three drawings in the appropriate space on the organizer and making an oral summary.	Reflection on strategy used. What can I imagine now that I have come to the end? Were my predictions accurate? What was expected/ unexpected? What else could I have considered?

I asked questions concerning each paragraph to check students' comprehension and had them point out when the text became difficult to understand. I lectured as they needed to be situated in the context of the study. The explanation of the title "Evangeline" which was inspired from Wadsworth Longfellow's poem with the same title, in order "to set the tone" of this short story (Joiner, 2006, p. 526), captured the attention of my students and evoked their interest in proceeding with interpreting of the text. I recounted the poem which tells the story of the Acadian woman separated from her lover, Gabriel, because of the Acadians' forced deportation on different ships from Nova Scotia in 1755. The protagonist' s loyalty, purity, willfulness and determination to find her lover reminds one of both Jane Eyre, the protagonist in the film with the same title (previously interpreted in class), and Judith's loyalty and determination to wait for her husband and her stoicism to cope with the harsh conditions caused by the war "Judith had [Sutpen] fetch back to the house, and read the service for the dead herself and buried him"(Faulkner, 1981, p. 584) "Judith buried [her mother]" (p. 590), "busy around the house in an old dress like trash would wear […] working with them before day and after dark"(p. 591). This dark imagery illustrates the harsh conditions following the Civil War. The story also reminds the students of the condition of the woman during the Victorian age (represented by Jane Eyre) and Judith's loyal waiting for Charles Bon, her husband. Students are also intrigued when discovering that the short story would later evolve into Faulkner's later novel, first entitled *The Dark House* and later *Absalom, Absalom!*.

In their initial reading of "Evangeline," the students experienced difficulties in understanding the plot because of its narrative techniques (the use of characters and narrators and the use of time which defines the narrative frames). Using metacognitive reading strategies such as asking questions, clarifying questions, making connections, visualizing, and summarizing (Table 1), I guided and helped them to understand what the text is about. Students also had to consider time shifts which are triggered by specific events whose relevance the narrator takes care to make evident. Then, I invited students to identify the events of the story. Beyond clarifying the sequence of events in "Evangeline," students had to infer the meaning created by dark imagery such as "darkness," 'summer darkness," "dark kitchen" (Faulkner p. 598- 600).

Identifying the characters helped students mentally visualize the story within the story structure, distinguish between two-time levels and talk about the point of view used. In "Evangeline", the anonymous journalist meets Raby, Sutpen's illegitimate daughter by an African American slave, who still lives in the mansion in the present time of the story. Her narration and conversation with the anonymous narrator constitute the present time narrative frame within which the story in the past is comprised. On the one hand, the present moment represented by the anonymous narrator, an unnamed reporter, who asks his friend Don to investigate a "ghost" in a small Mississippi village. Don learns about a man named Thomas Sutpen who once lived in a now-ruined mansion outside the village. Don and the reporter's discussing the Sutpens established the present-time frame. On the other hand, the story told by the characters already mentioned and at the same time, Raby, the loyal servant, and Thomas Sutpen's, the protagonist's illegitimate daughter represents the past framework of the text. In the past narrative frame, the focus is on the relationship of Charles Bon, Henry's classmate at college, and the Sutpen's children, Henry and Judith. Some hidden

information that Henry does not reveal goads him to kill Charles. The short story ends with the death of all Sutpen's children and the burning of his house set on fire by his illegitimate African American daughter, Raby. The ghost motif is used as a pretext to employ a time shift in the story. More specifically, the anonymous journalist-narrator in "Evangeline" jumps from the present narration time into the past as he goes to Sutpen's mansion to find out more details about those still living there. The anonymous narrator searching for information can find Henry Sutpen ill and hidden in one of the rooms of the house where he had been keeping the secret for forty years. Thus, students get familiarized with the simple narration of "Evangeline" in which the two characters, Don and the anonymous narrator, reveal their curiosities and suppositions.

Once the structure of the text had been clarified and the plot had been explained and analyzed, students drew the story chart as an assignment. At this point, students are ready to focus and observe the use of the Gothic elements and the author's intention to express his critique of the historical and social realities. During the first reading, they found it difficult to interpret the symbol of the haunted house, of the ghost and the decaying atmosphere. Students learn that the code of the past strongly affects the present. Faulkner's discontent with the Civil War aftermath living conditions is expressed through the decaying atmosphere he created, symbolizing instability. Faulkner's emphasis on death in "Evangeline" also seems to represent the only means of defense against corruption. The burning and collapse of the house at midnight with the calm figure in the center parallel the human's inability to react to the injustices caused by the profiteering people. The narrator finds the locket, that Judith gave Charles Bon, her husband, when he left for War, among the remnants, but it contains the portrait of Bon's African American wife instead. According to Joiner, the revealing of the African American woman's picture in the locket symbolizes that truth and past are resilient even when faced with absolute destruction. The revealing of this ghost like-presence in Judith's life, namely the existence of her husband's secret wife, proves to explain Henry's act of murder as he is the protector of feminine purity and social respect. Knowing about Charles' marriage to an African American woman, he strongly and firmly opposes his friend's intention to commit bigamy with his own sister and his spotting the Sutpen's family with his black blood. Having found out the truth, Judith understands that his having killed her husband was "an attempt to protect her under the Southern code of honor requiring adherence to rituals, conduct, and thought" (Joiner, 2006, p. 532).

The readers' attention is captured by mystery and suspense all through the text represented by the ghost that the narrator searches for, the reason why Henry murdered Charles Bon and the African-American woman's picture in the locket instead of Judith's. Raby's recounting of the past facts leads the narrator's way into darkness, gloom, nightmare representing the passage into despair and death "I touched a wall and heard a door click and felt the door yawn inward upon a rush of stale, fetid air warm as an oven: a smell of old flesh, a closed room,[…] "I wondered quietly in that suspension of judgment how [the candle] could burn, live, at all in this dead room, this tomblike air […] I went and stood above the bed, surrounded by that odor of stale and unwashed flesh and of death"(Faulkner 597-598). The Gothic atmosphere is completed by Henry's decaying portrayal "gaunt, pallid, skull-like head surrounded by long, unkempt hair of the same ivory color" "his mouth was open, and he breathed through it, peaceful, slow, faint, scarce stirring his beard. He lay with closed eyelids so thin that they looked like patches of dampened tissue paper pasted over the balls" (Faulkner, 1981, p. 598).

Faulkner's use of the Gothic effects in this short story emphasize the oppressive societal conditions in the post Civil War South, "'the feminine imperils the hierarchies set up in the southern social order: male over female, white over black, virgin over whore, angel over demon'" (Roberts qtd. in Joiner, 2006, p. 531). Judith stoically endures the hardships during and after the Civil War, working to feed its inhabitants. She welcomes the corpse of her husband after the War whereas Raby, her African American stepsister, is devoted and loyal to the Sutpen family. She assists Judith in the burial of her mother, husband, and father and cares for her half-brother, Henry, and her half-sister, Judith until their deaths. Joiner notes that "Faulkner uses both Raby and Judith not only to represent a peril to the hierarchy of the old South but also to delineate and highlight the failure of the men of the old South - exemplified by Henry, Bon, and Sutpen – who went to war in an attempt to protect [the male supporting the institution of slavery, miscegenation] hierarchy but failed" (Faulkner, 1981, p. 531). Faulkner's use of the catharsis is represented through the burning of Sutpens' mansion (the dark house) which was built by unjust means and refers to the corrupt Southern society.

Results

      To better reflect over the interpretation in class and to reinvest the knowledge acquired, students wrote a text consisting of introduction, body, and conclusion. Based on the background knowledge acquired, they had to prove that Faulkner used the Gothic tradition in his text "Evangeline" to express his discontent towards the historical and social realities before and after the Civil War. Not only did students show their ability to interpret the Gothic elements but they also proved originality in the creation of their text.

      The Gothic context created through the discussion of the Gothic elements and the protagonist's social condition in the film *Jane Eyre* and the two texts interpreted in class was the foundation of the final analysis of Faulkner's short story. Observing the simple narrative structure and the Gothic elements represented the starting point of students' progressive learning of how to detect and interpret Gothic elements in an intricate text such as "Evangeline."

      After the open-class interpretation and evaluation, students wrote their opinions about their learning process. The presentation of the social context and the historical situation, as well as a comprehensive interpretation of the text enlightened students, allowed them to better understand the overall meaning of the story according to the Faulkner's intentions. (Figure 1)

    S1: "I now have a better understanding of the short story and because of that I appreciate it even more."
    S2: "An astonishing story" I learn[ed] about the history of the United States", "it requires concentration" "I discovered another type of writing, it held my attention"
    S3: "After further analysis, I was amazed how Faulkner could include so many elements about social adversities and develop them with Gothic elements."
    S4: "I didn't quite see [the gothic elements] during my first reading."

Figure 1. Progressive Learning within a Constructive Teaching Approach
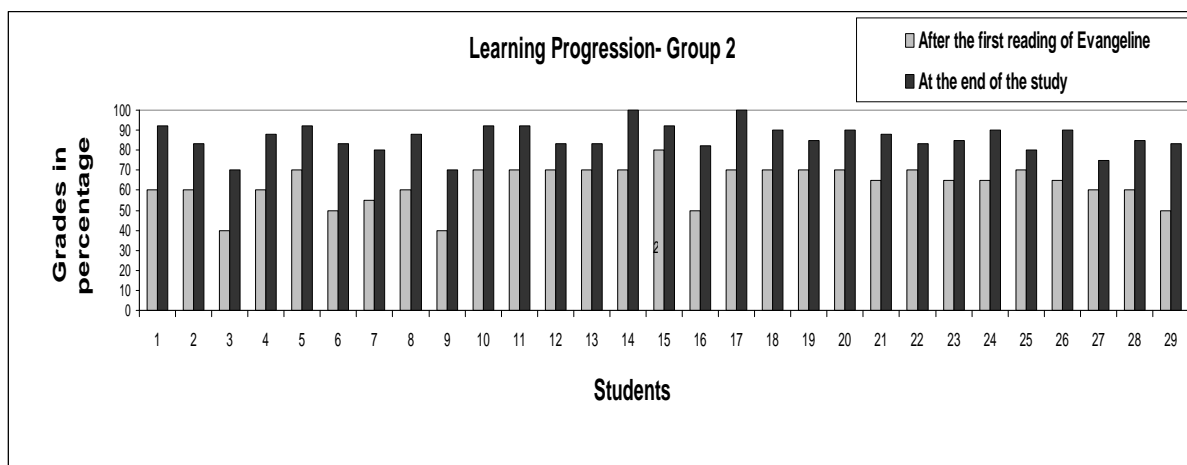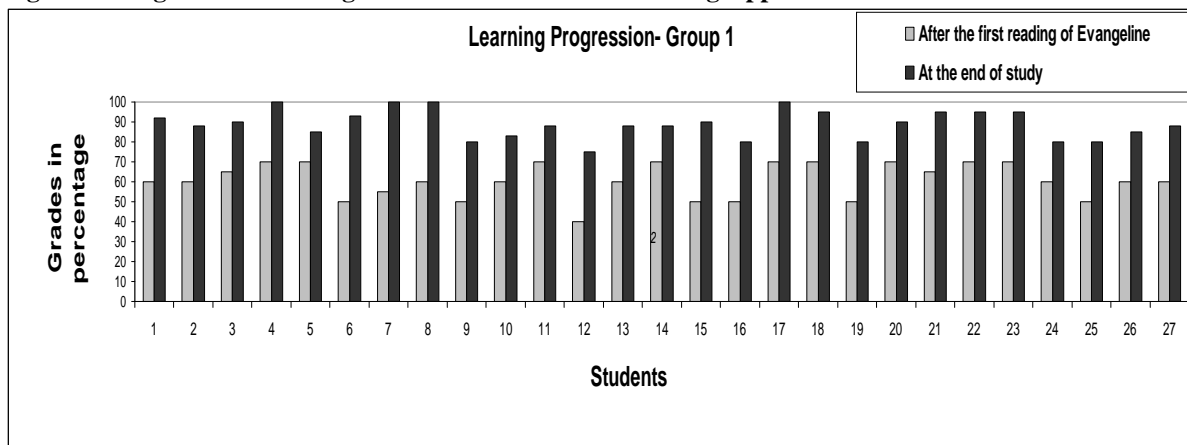
Conclusion

The learning progress occurs at two levels, the reading of the text and its interpretation. At the beginning, students were unaware of the Gothic elements woven in the text and of their significance and they could not refer the text to the historical realities the author criticized. Initially, they considered the author racist but at the end of the study, they cherished him, expressing their wish to read his other work. One student found the study "a little bit difficult at the beginning" but considered it could help her as "an easier transition from high school", and chose to continue her study of Gothic literature registering in one course entitled *The American Gothic: Homesick Horror* in Dawson College in Montreal. She hopes to have even more challenges as "they study the subject more in depth." The background information acquired before reading the short story "Evangeline," and the use of the constructive pedagogical framework (interaction and the teacher's guidance and feedback) were key to students' detection and interpretation of the Gothic elements in the text and their subsequent appreciation of the text.

Many critics consider Faulkner's texts as educational. Cowley believes that Faulkner's works "have the quality of being lived, absorbed, remembered rather than merely observed. And they have what is rare in the novels of our time, a warmth of family affection, brother for brother and sister, the father for his children - a love so warm and proud that it tries to shut out the rest of the world." (The Portable Faulkner xxviii). Students' thinking about the importance to distinguish between good and evil is illustrated in one of my student's statement:
S: "I liked the text because it discussed social issues and realities. Slavery, lies, loyalty etc." The use of fire signifies that" lies cannot disappear". "Through the recurring dos, we see how you can't run away from your past, from your problems."

Biography

Mrs. Daniela Duralia, Ph.D. graduated from Lucian Blaga University in 2003, majoring in English language and literature. Her experience as a student at this university inspired her to study abroad and take several courses in education at Université de Montreal, Concordia University, and McGill University, in Canada, in addition to embarking on a successful teaching career. In 2011, she enrolled as a graduate student in the program of Applied Linguistics at Concordia. In 2016 she graduated from a Doctoral Program in the field of American studies at West University of Timisoara, in the Letters and Arts Department.

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Appendix

Table 1. Teaching Method Familiarity Among Faculty

	Unfamiliar*	Neutral	Familiar*
Flipped Classroom	14.3%	0%	85.7%
Case Based Learning	14.3%	0%	85.7%
Team Based Learning	14.3%	7.1%	78.5%
Problem Based Learning	14.3%	0%	85.7%
Traditional Lectures	14.3%	0%	85.7%

* During the analysis very familiar and somewhat familiar where combined to form the familiar category. The same was completed for unfamiliar with very unfamiliar and somewhat unfamiliar.

** This can add up to more than 100% as surveyors were allowed to select more than one.

Table 2. Faculty Attitudes around Teaching Methods					
Question	Flipped Classroom	Case Based Learning	Team Based Learning	Problem Based Learning	Traditional Lectures
What form of pedagogy did they faculty feel engaged the student the most?	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	0%	0%
What form of pedagogy did students learn the most? *	14.3%	28.6%	21.4%	35.7%	0%
What forms of pedagogy did students respond the least?	21.4%	0%	7.1%	0%	71.4%
* Question was not asked about students learning the least.					

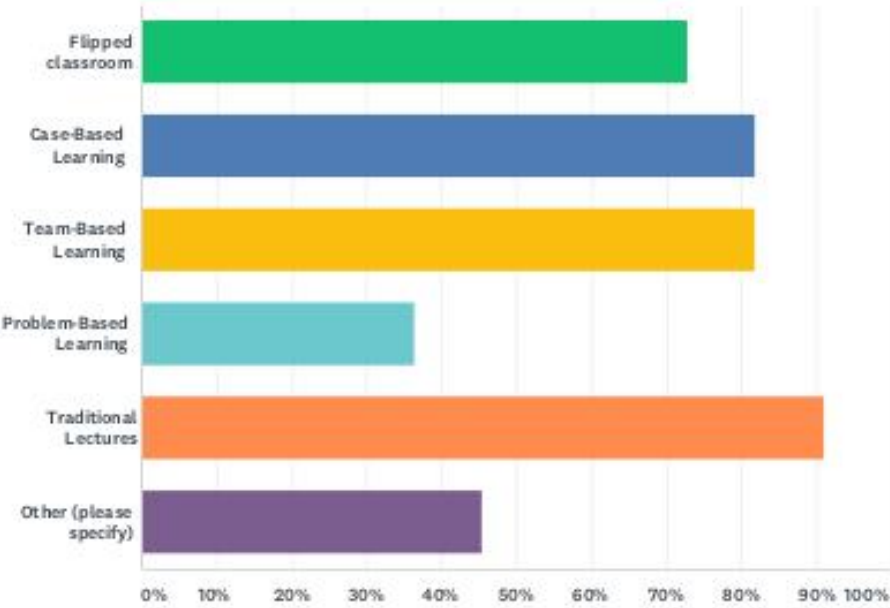Figure 1. Current teaching methodology by course directors at HSDM

Figure 2. Faculty engagement and techniques used to learn new teaching methodologies at HSDM