INVESTIGATING THE READING ENGAGEMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY OF FOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL ELLS

By

Maria Selena O. Protacio

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillments of the requirements
for the degree of

Curriculum, Instruction, and Teacher Education – Doctor of Philosophy

2013

ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATING THE READING ENGAGEMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS: A CASE STUDY OF FOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL ELLS

By

Maria Selena O. Protacio

This study investigates the reading engagement of four middle school English Language Learners (ELLs) in their English or English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. Engaged readers are those who address the four components of reading engagement – motivation, strategic knowledge, constructing meaning from texts, and social interactions. In this study, I focused on five questions: (1) What motivates middle school ELLs to read? What discourages middle school ELLs from reading?; (2) What strategic knowledge do middle school ELLs draw upon when reading?; (3) How do middle school ELLs construct meaning (such as conceptual knowledge) from texts?; (4) How do middle school ELLs engage in social interactions around texts?; and (5) How do motivation, strategic knowledge, construction of meaning from texts, and social interactions interact to make up ELLs' reading engagement?

Four middle school students from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds were chosen as participants for this case study research. Two ELLs were previous focal students from the author's practicum research on ELL reading motivation, while two other students were invited to participate based on their low reading engagement levels. Data included in this case study research include semi-structured interviews, field notes from classroom observations, comprehension assessments, reading activity inventories, and student artifacts.

Findings from this case study research indicate that each focal student had a different reading engagement profile. Three key findings emerged from a cross-case analysis of the focal students' reading engagement. First, all four components are essential to consider and address with ELL reading engagement. Second, ELL reading engagement is situational, and instructional practices must be used in classroom contexts in order to foster ELL reading engagement. Finally, results of this dissertation revealed that ELL identity is also an essential component of ELL reading engagement. The implications for practice and ELL reading engagement research are discussed.

DEDICATION

To my husband, John.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to give praise to God for guiding me throughout this endeavor. There were moments this task seemed insurmountable. But then I remembered, “I can do anything through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13), and I was able to write this dissertation one page at a time. To God be the glory!

Thank you to the participants of my dissertation, especially to Jonathan, Nabila, Farshad, Oliver, Ms. Costa, and Mrs. Blake. I am grateful that they let me in their classrooms and they willingly shared their stories with me. It was a privilege to get to know each of one of them.

Thank you to my advisor and dissertation director, Dr. Guofang Li, who has supported me throughout this process. I am so fortunate to have been mentored by such an accomplished scholar and writer. I am grateful for her patience and feedback on every rough (and sometimes very rough) draft that I sent. Under Dr. Li’s tutelage, I have developed as a writer and researcher.

Thank you to Dr. Patricia Edwards for her support throughout my doctoral program. Pat always provided encouraging words and support and always reminded me to stay positive throughout this process.

Thank you to the other members of my guidance and dissertation committees, Drs. Peter Youngs, Anne-Lise Halvorsen and Susan Florio-Ruane, for their feedback and guidance throughout my entire doctoral program.

Thanks to my parents, Chito and Marisa Protacio for the wonderful opportunities they provided for me in my formative years. Because of them, I was able to develop as a

bilingual and bicultural individual, which has, in turn, influenced my research interests. Thanks for the constant support and prayers throughout my doctoral program.

Thank you to my sister, Guada Protacio, for her help in transcribing the interviews and the think-aloud portions of the comprehension assessments of this dissertation. Anyone who has ever transcribed an interview knows that it is such a tedious task. I am also thankful for Guada for double-checking my references as I was rushing to send a completed draft to my committee.

Thank you to Michelle Schira Hagerman, who is probably the only other person aside from my dissertation committee who has read almost every page of this entire dissertation. I am grateful for Michelle's wonderful suggestions as she listened to me drone on about my dissertation.

Thank you to Shannon Sweeney and Sarah Little. After each of our Skype meetings, I felt motivated to write and tackle the dissertation. Thanks also to Lisa Hawkins, Carlin Borsheim, Kristy Brugar, Amy Lark, Bakar Razali, Jackie Sweeney, and many others for the gift of friendship.

I am extremely lucky to have been able to write this dissertation while I completed my first year of a tenure-track position at Western Michigan University. Thank you to my colleagues Susan Piazza, Lauren Freedman, Esther Gray, and Karen Thomas for their support and prodding to ensure that I completed this big book report on time!

I also want to acknowledge the support of my master's advisor, Loukia Sarroub. Had it not been for her support, I do not know if I would have gotten the graduate

research assistantship at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, which started the whole process of graduate studies in the United States.

I am also indebted to the Department of Teacher Education and College of Education at Michigan State University for all the financial support I received throughout my program such as the Summer Research Fellowship, Research Development Fellowship, and Research Enhancement Fellowship. I was also extremely fortunate to have received the Jere and Arlene Pintozzi Brophy Fellowship which allowed me to devote my summer to analyzing dissertation data.

Finally, thank you to my wonderful husband, John Damian, for his endless support and understanding throughout this whole dissertation process and throughout the six years that it took me to earn a PhD. Thank you for your constant encouragement, reminders, and hugs as I struggled at times to write this dissertation. I could not have asked for a better husband!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Review of Related Literature

> [A good reader is] someone, not specifically who enjoys reading, but who knows that reading would help them and put their heart into reading. You don't read for the purpose of reading; you read for the purpose of learning, I guess. You don't have to like the book, but you just have to have the heart to learn it. -- Jonathan, 7th grade ELL

In the past two decades, much attention has been given to the motivation and engagement of middle school and high school students with regard to reading (Guthrie, 2008; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). Many of these studies have found that as students move from elementary school to middle school, there is generally a decline in reading motivation and reading engagement (Guthrie, Alao, & Rinehart, 1997; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Kelly & Decker, 2009; McKenna, Conradi, Lawrence, Jang, & Meyer, 2012; McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995; Loera, Rueda, & Nakamoto, 2011; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). Even as students progress through middle school, reading motivation continues to decline with each grade level (Kelly & Decker, 2009; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006).

The statement at the beginning by Jonathan (all names are pseudonyms), a seventh-grade Chinese student, illustrates that he understood that while reading should be pleasurable, there is also a greater purpose for reading, and that is to learn. The interview excerpt also indicates that Jonathan was likely an engaged reader. However, the unfortunate reality is that many middle school students, whether they are English

Language Learners (ELLs) or not, are unmotivated and disengaged with reading (Guthrie, Wigfield, & Klauda, 2012; Kelly & Decker, 2009). Even students who enter middle school with a positive disposition towards reading may leave with a decreased level of motivation. For example, Unrau and Schlackman (2006) found that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to read decreased significantly as middle school students moved from sixth to seventh grade and seventh to eighth grade. The decreasing level of reading engagement also translates to a decline in the amount of time middle school students spend on reading (Guthrie, Alao, & Rinehart, 1997; Kelly & Decker, 2009; National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). Studies have reported a relationship between reading engagement and reading achievement (Guthrie, McRae, & Klauda, 2007; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 1999; Lau & Chan, 2003; Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Mucherah & Yoder, 2008). In other words, students who are disengaged readers are also those who typically have lower levels of reading achievement. For example, Mucherah and Yoder (2008) found that middle school students who had lower levels of reading motivation performed lower on a standardized reading test compared to peers who were motivated readers.

The decline in reading engagement of middle school students can be attributed to a few key challenges. First, middle school students are expected to read more challenging texts as a result of the more complex and abstract subject matter encountered in their classes (Guthrie & Klauda, 2012; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; O'Brien & Dillon, 2008). In addition, students predominantly read textbooks in their content-area classrooms, and they have limited access to diverse and interesting reading materials. Those who do read for pleasure need to find time to read their books of interest in their own time as they

likely do not encounter books that interest them in their content-area classes (Alvermann, 2005; Pitcher et al., 2007). Second, the types of tasks students are assigned in relation to reading are often constricting, providing students with little to no choice about the tasks or projects they need to complete (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Hall, Burns, & Edwards, 2011; O'Brien & Dillon, 2008). Third, assessments at the middle school are often more formal, requiring students to have sufficient levels of reading comprehension in order to correctly answer test questions. Students with lower levels of comprehension may find it more difficult to exhibit their full understanding of concepts through formal assessments (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Hall et al., 2011).

Entering middle school is a critical transition period for all students, but this transition is even more complex for ELLs (Walqui et al., 2010). Transitioning to middle school and engaging in reading activities is even more tenuous for ELLs for several reasons. Many middle school ELLs are still in the process of acquiring English proficiency or mastering academic English proficiency; thus, understanding the difficult texts and abstract subject matter is even more demanding for them (Bernhardt, 2009; Goldenberg, 2008). In addition, ELLs may not have the requisite prior knowledge, both in terms of cultural knowledge or content knowledge, needed to fully comprehend texts and discussions provided in their middle school classrooms. Some ELLs may also be intimidated to participate in academic discussions with their mainstream peers, which limits the social interactions in which they engage. Next, ELLs may lack the repertoire of strategic knowledge, such as knowing how to monitor their comprehension or determine the meaning of unknown words, which will allow them to become better readers. Considering these overwhelming demands, it is unsurprising that it is at the middle

school level where the achievement gap in reading widens between ELLs and their mainstream peers (Fry, 2007). For instance, results of the 2011 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) revealed 77 percent of eighth-grade native English speakers were at or above basic on the reading section whereas only 29 percent of ELLs scored at that level. Furthermore, 33 percent of eighth-grade native English speakers were at or above proficient on the reading section compared to only 3 percent of ELLs.

Given the poor performance of middle school ELLs in reading and the relationship between reading engagement and achievement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000), there is a need to closely examine the potential of reading engagement to improve middle school ELLs' academic performance. Students with high levels of reading engagement are those who are (a) motivated to read, (b) use strategies when reading, (c) use reading as a way to construct meaning from texts, and (d) participate in social interactions around reading (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Engaged readers are those who want to read and learn from reading through these four processes. Although cultivating engaged ELL readers is a goal, it is not an instantaneous process for ELLs, or any student for that matter, to become engaged. However, it must also be noted that engagement is not dichotomous, with readers being either engaged or disengaged. Rather, reading engagement could be perceived as a continuum with levels on each of the reading engagement components shifting based on various reading situations.

In my practicum study on middle school ELLs' reading engagement, I specifically explored the reading motivation of upper elementary ELLs. I found that some ELLs were motivated readers of English texts (Protacio, 2010), and some were not as motivated. Students who were motivated readers wanted to read English texts because of social

motivation, instrumental motivation, and high levels of perceived competence. Given the research which has shown that reading motivation, an integral part of reading engagement, steeply declines when students transition to middle school (Kelly & Decker, 2009; McKenna et al., 2012; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006), I wanted to know more about how these ELLs' reading engagement might change in the middle school setting. What motivates ELLs to engage in reading English texts, and what discourages them from reading in the middle school setting? Were those students who had high reading motivation in their upper elementary years able to sustain the motivation when they were in middle school? What are the differences between learners with different engagement levels? These are some of the questions that served as the impetus for this dissertation research.

Despite the promise of reading engagement in facilitating ELL reading achievement, there have only been a few studies conducted on this topic (Arzubiaga, Rueda, & Monzo, 2002; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Loera, Rueda, & Nakamoto, 2011; Robinson, 2010; Sturtevant & Kim, 2010). In addition, none of these studies investigated all four components--motivation, strategic knowledge, constructing meaning from texts, and social interactions--of reading engagement.

Quantitative studies have revealed general patterns of reading engagement (Guthrie et al., 2007; Guthrie, Wigfield, Metsala, & Cox, 1999; Lau & Chan, 2003; Morgan & Fuchs, 2007). However, there is a need for additional research that documents the reading engagement experiences specifically of ELLs in and out of middle school classrooms to better understand what prompts them to be engaged or disengaged with reading in their daily experiences using alternative research methods. Because reading is

embedded in a sociocultural context (e.g., Alvermann, 2009; Au, 2007), a qualitative research design is better positioned to describe the nuances of students' engagement with texts which quantitative research cannot capture or document.

In order to fill this gap in literature, I set out to conduct a qualitative study, which would provide a more complete picture of ELLs' reading engagement. For this dissertation research, I conducted a case study to describe and interpret four middle school ELLs' reading engagement in their English as a Second Language (ESL) or English classroom to better understand the literacy development of young adolescent ELLs. Specifically, I focused on the following research questions:

1. What motivates middle school ELLs to read? What discourages middle school ELLs from reading?
2. What strategic knowledge do middle school ELLs draw upon when reading?
3. How do middle school ELLs construct meaning (such as conceptual knowledge) from texts?
4. How do middle school ELLs engage in social interactions around texts?
5. How do motivation, strategic knowledge, construction of meaning from texts, and social interactions interact to make up ELLs' reading engagement?

Reading Engagement: What the Research Has Found

In this section, I discuss factors that have been identified in the literature as relating to reading engagement and the reasons it is necessary to present a multifaceted

picture of ELLs' reading engagement using qualitative methods of research. I first provide an overview of reading engagement wherein I define and briefly describe each of the components of reading engagement. Then, I review literature for each of the four reading engagement components, focusing specifically on studies that have focused on ELLs or students from diverse backgrounds in the United States. Specifically, I discuss the research in relation to each component while pointing out the gaps in the reading engagement literature. I conclude this section by summarizing the gaps and describing the ways in which this dissertation attempts to fill the gaps in the literature. I argue that studies have provided a limited view of ELL reading engagement by neglecting to provide a holistic picture of reading engagement since there are no studies which address all four components with a focus on ELLs. To redress this significant gap in the research base, I therefore argue the importance of conducting an in-depth case study to fully understand the multiple facets of ELL reading engagement.

What is Reading Engagement?

Reading engagement can be conceived of as the fusion of the cognitive and motivational aspects of reading (Taboada & McElvany, 2009). Guthrie and Anderson (1999) have defined reading engagement as "the joint functioning of motivation, conceptual knowledge, strategies, and social interactions during literacy activities" (p. 20). Guthrie and Anderson's definition offers a quaternary view of reading engagement, and it is this definition that grounds the theoretical and methodological rationale for this dissertation research. Each of these four components has been found, in some part, to account for aspects of reading engagement. In what follows, I define each component,

making special note of the research that has justified its inclusion in Guthrie and Anderson's definition.

The first component to reading engagement is reading motivation, which is defined as "the values, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding reading" (Guthrie, 2011, p. 177). In other words, motivation is what drives students to want to read. Out of the four components of reading engagement, motivation has been the focus of most research studies; these studies have focused on many different facets of motivation (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). For example, numerous surveys have been conducted on students' reading motivation, reading attitudes, and reading interests (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Guthrie & Wigfield, 1997; Kelly & Decker, 2009; McKenna et al., 2012; McKenna et al., 1995; Worthy, Moorman, & Turner, 1999). Other studies have specifically examined students' self-concept as readers and the values they place on reading (Marinak & Gambrell, 2010; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). These, and other studies, have offered a multitude of factors which affect students' reading motivation such as opportunities for choice, instructional strategies, students' perceptions of themselves as readers, and interesting texts and reading materials.

The next component of reading engagement is strategic knowledge. Engaged readers understand and use comprehension strategies, which are defined as "deliberate efforts by a reader to better understand or remember what is being read" (Shanahan et al., 2010, p. 11). Examples of comprehension strategies which have been found to be effective in helping students better understand texts are questioning, integrating prior knowledge, monitoring comprehension, drawing inferences, and summarizing (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012; Harvey & Goudvis, 2007; Shanahan et al., 2010). It has been posited that

readers who have strategic knowledge are better able to comprehend texts compared to those who do not (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999; Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich, 2004).

The third component of reading engagement is social interaction. A common understanding of social interaction in the reading engagement literature is that students participate in discussions to share and increase their understanding of texts (Guthrie, 2011; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Guthrie et al., 2004). Students may join a book club or participate in informal conversations with peers or family members and share what they have learned from texts. Social interactions can also take the form of collaborating on a project centered on a text or exchanging books with friends.

The last component is conceptual knowledge, which involves the acquisition of knowledge from reading (Guthrie & McCann, 1997; Guthrie et al., 2004). Out of the four reading engagement components, conceptual knowledge is the most nebulous and difficult to define. In the seminal research on reading engagement, Guthrie et al. (1996) designed a classroom-based reading program called concept-oriented reading instruction (CORI), which integrated reading, writing, and science instruction. Conceptual knowledge in Guthrie et al.'s (1996) study was rooted in content-area literacy instruction. Since the contexts of this study are English and ESL classrooms, I use the term *constructing meaning from texts* rather than conceptual knowledge. In its simplest form, constructing meaning from texts as operationalized in this study is students' abilities to acquire information or knowledge from in or out-of school reading. With engaged reading, the primary purpose is to make meaning. In a middle school English Language Arts or ESL class, there are several ways in which students can construct meaning through reading. Ideas students can learn through reading include (1) a better

understanding of an author's technique in contrasting the point of views of characters in a story; (2) the ability to readily identify the central theme or idea of a text; or (3) understanding the textual structures an author employs in a particular genre (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2011). It is also through reading that students can make connections with personal experiences.

Researchers have noted the complex relationship among the four reading engagement components (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999; Guthrie et al., 2007). Guthrie and Anderson (1999) explained the interconnectedness of these components:

> When students are intrinsically motivated, they learn to use cognitive strategies for reading. These reading strategies, such as recognizing words, comprehending, predicting, summarizing, and self-monitoring, when properly deployed and fully executed, lead to conceptual understanding. Social interaction patterns in the classroom can amplify or constrict students' intrinsic motivations, their use of self-regulated strategies, and their attainment of deep conceptual knowledge. As students gain conceptual knowledge [or make meaning from texts], their sense of self-efficacy grows and their motivations for reading increase. (p. 20)

While the reading engagement components are interrelated, I have chosen to review the literature one component at a time. The rationale for this is that no study on ELLs' reading engagement has focused on all four components in one research study. In fact, the only studies which have focused on reading engagement holistically are those by Guthrie and his colleagues (e.g. Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie et al., 1996), and these studies focused mainly on the influence of CORI on mainstream students' reading engagement. Because of the absence of studies which investigated all four components

specifically with ELLs, I have organized the following section by discussing research findings on each individual component of reading engagement.

Motivation

Out of the four components of reading engagement, motivation is certainly the one that has received most of the research attention in relation to ELL reading engagement. The research on ELLs' reading motivation has generally revealed the following: (a) ELLs' motivation to read is related to their perceived competence in reading; (b) access to interesting and appropriate texts is related to ELLs' motivation to read; (c) ELLs are motivated when they understand the instrumental value of reading; (d) the families of ELLs influence their reading motivation; and (e) ELLs are motivated to read to fit in to their new environment (Arzubiaga et al., 2002; Casey, 2008/2009; Cho et al., 2010; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Loera, Rueda, & Nakamoto, 2011; Protacio, 2010; Robinson, 2010; Rueda, MacGillivray, Monzo, & Arzubiaga, 2001; Sturtevant & Kim, 2010). In what follows, the research base for each of these findings is reviewed.

Perceived competence. ELLs enter US schools with various schooling experiences and English abilities (e.g. Peregoy & Boyle, 2000; Rubinstein-Avila, 2003). Thus, their competencies in reading English texts vary greatly. Research has shown that ELLs' level of motivation to read is related to their perception of how well they read in English (Cho et al., 2010; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Protacio, 2010). ELLs will be more motivated to read if they think they can be successful at reading; conversely, if they have had little success with reading English texts, then their motivation to read English texts is low. Researchers found that ELLs were more motivated to read when they could read books that were more challenging rather than books that had linguistic simplicity (Cho et

al., 2010). Reading these moderately challenging books boosted ELLs' confidence in their own reading. In contrast, Ivey and Broaddus (2007) found that ELLs who were just beginning to acquire reading skills in English were motivated to read simple informational texts with engaging photographs as their limited English literacy skills constricted their ability to engage with more complex texts.

Access and exposure to texts. Many studies focusing on ELLs' motivation and/or literacy development highlighted the importance of exposure and access to a diverse set of texts (Casey, 2008/2009; Chun, 2009; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Meltzer & Hamann, 2004; Smythe & Neufeld, 2010). ELLs need access to books from diverse genres that are well matched to their reading abilities. For example, Chun (2009) suggested that graphic novels are a type of text that would motivate ELLs to read. In Chun's research study, ELLs exhibited higher levels of interest when reading the graphic novel *Maus* in their ESL classroom. While the ELLs still encountered challenges in reading this graphic novel, the students showed more enthusiasm for this text. This study provides evidence of how using a non-traditional type of genre might facilitate increased motivation among middle school ELLs. Reading culturally relevant trade books may also motivate ELLs to read (Ivey & Broaddus, 2007). Students may be able to activate their prior knowledge on familiar experiences or make connections to ideas and concepts in these texts to which the students can relate. Adolescent ELLs need and deserve access to a wide variety of texts, both printed and electronic, since the quality and diversity of reading material is related to reading engagement (Alvermann, 2005; Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Meltzer & Hamann, 2004). As Feger (2006) noted, the textbooks for ELLs that focus on grammar are useful only for those who have recently arrived to the U.S.

Instead, ELLs should also have access to more authentic, meaningful reading (Li & Zhang, 2004) rather than texts solely focused on low level skills. This wide variety of texts is not a luxury; rather, it is a key facet of creating and sustaining a learning environment that supports literacy development (Meltzer & Hamann, 2004).

Instrumental motivation. Another factor that is related to ELLs' reading motivation is instrumental motivation. When ELLs understand the instrumental value of reading, they are more motivated to read. In my practicum research, instrumental motivation -- operationalized as the motivation to do something because of its perceived benefits or practical advantages (Dornyei, 2003a, 2003b; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003) -- was the factor which had the highest mean in a reading motivation survey given to 132 upper elementary ELLs (Protacio, 2010). The survey results also revealed that instrumental motivation was one of four factors which differentiated those who self-reported to be motivated readers and those who did not. In other words, instrumental motivation was an important contributor to ELLs' reading motivation. In addition, through interviews with focal students, I found that ELLs were cognizant of the ways in which reading helped them become more proficient in English. Researchers have also found that ELLs are more motivated for their academics in general and reading specifically when they could see how what they were learning was essential to their career goals (Conchas, 2006; Rubinstein-Avila, 2003/2004; Sturtevant & Kim, 2010). In a case study of Miguel, a middle school ELL with low literacy engagement, Rubinstein-Avila (2003/2004) found Miguel's engagement increased when he could link literacy activities to his career aspiration.

However, research has also shown statistically significant differences for instrumental motivation based on both proficiency level and grade level (Protacio, 2010; Sturtevant & Kim, 2010). In my practicum study, I found that as students progressed through school, their levels of instrumental motivation decreased. In other words, the fourth graders in the study were more motivated to read because they placed more pragmatic value of reading compared to the fifth-and-sixth grade students surveyed. The level of ELLs' proficiency in English is also a factor in relation to instrumental motivation. In their survey of middle school ELLs, Sturtevant and Kim (2010) identified a statistically significant difference between ELLs who were beginning readers in English and ELLs who were more advanced readers on survey questions focusing on the instrumental value of reading. ELLs who were just beginning to learn how to read in English placed a higher value on reading compared to those who were intermediate and advanced English readers. These are troubling results as they indicate that as students progress through school and improve their English skills, they are less motivated to read because they do not see the practical benefits of reading in English. Both of these studies relied on survey methods to gather data, and the researchers did not elaborate on the reasons for the decreased levels of reading motivation. Thus, through qualitative research, we can better document the reasons why ELLs might not be as instrumentally motivated to read in English as they progress through school or as they become more proficient in English.

Integrative motivation. Integrative motivation is a "positive interpersonal/affective disposition toward the L2 [second language] group and the desire to interact with and even become similar to valued members of that community"

(Dornyei, 2003a, p. 5). If applied to reading motivation, ELLs who are integratively motivated want to read English books to learn more about the American culture or become valued members in the American community. Integrative motivation can play an important role in ELLs' reading engagement. My practicum research revealed that students who engaged in social interactions around reading did so with American peers. Focal students revealed they preferred to discuss reading with their American classmates. One reason is that ELLs from their native countries are sometimes unable to read at their level. Reading in English provides ELLs with a way to participate in social interactions with American peers and, by extension, have a deeper cultural connection with their new community (Protacio, 2010). In addition, reading helped students learn about the American culture. For instance, it was through reading that Nabila learned information about how holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas are celebrated in the US. Through reading, ELLs are allowed a glimpse into the American way of life.

Family influences. Researchers have also specifically investigated the relationship of family influences on ELLs' reading motivation. Findings in this section reveal the interplay of multiple motivational factors in ELL reading motivation.

Families play a role in helping ELLs see the instrumental value of their academics. In a qualitative study, Robinson (2010) reported that family members provided ELLs encouragement to read. While the family members were not avid readers themselves, they made sure to advise ELLs to continue to read in English in order to do well academically. Robinson also found that ELLs were motivated to read so they could do well in school because of the pressure they felt from their families to receive good grades. Similarly, the middle school ESL students in Sturtevant and Kim's (2010) study

were encouraged by family members to study well and to read. Some participants in Sturtevant and Kim's (2010) study were also motivated to continue to improve their English literacy abilities because these ELLs helped their immigrant parents in understanding English texts.

Family involvement in literacy activities is also important in motivating ELLs to read in English. Researchers have found that ELLs whose families engaged in Spanish and English cultural or literacy activities at home valued reading compared to students whose families did not (Arzubiaga et al., 2002; Rueda et al., 2001). Other researchers have looked at the explicit link between immigrant parents' involvement with reading and its relation to children's motivation. Through survey research, researchers found that parental involvement in reading (e.g. listening to children read, reading to children, giving children choices about reading materials) was linked to higher reading motivation for ELLs (Loera et al., 2011). Thus, family influence is a factor to consider in relation to ELL reading motivation.

Through this section, it is evident there is a substantial amount of research on ELLs' reading motivation. The findings of the studies included in this section of the review suggest that numerous factors are at play when motivating ELLs' reading motivation. It is also noteworthy to point out that while this section provides a substantial amount of information about motivation, very few of the research studies included in this review were conducted within the classroom context. Many of the studies relied on self-reports from the students through surveys or utilized data solely from interviews (e.g., Cho et al., 2010; Robinson, 2010).

Dornyei (2009) argues that learner characteristics, such as motivation, cannot be evaluated without taking into account the individual's interaction within a specific environment, such as a classroom context. He also highlighted the need for a better understanding of the interplay among a language learner, the language being learned, and the environment in which the language is being acquired (Dornyei, 2009). Therefore, if Dornyei's argument is applied specifically to ELL reading motivation, there is a need to examine ELLs within the classroom context to obtain a more comprehensive view of their motivation to read in English. As Baker, Afflerbach, and Reinking (1996) point out, "underlying the engagement perspective is the assumption that diverse instructional context can better prepare students for reading in a wide range of situations, as expected in literate societies" (p. xvi). Despite the importance of examining the classroom context, Ivey and Broaddus' (2007) research was the one classroom-based study found through a review of the literature. However, in their formative experiment, they focused only on the Latino/a population, which does not reflect the diverse populations of ELLs in ESL and English classrooms in U.S. public schools.

Strategic Knowledge

In comparison to reading motivation, less research has been conducted on ELLs' strategic knowledge. The few studies that have focused on this topic have generally revealed three key findings: (a) ELLs who are good readers utilize numerous comprehension strategies while reading, (b) ELLs who are strategic readers are able to "transfer" comprehension strategies from reading in one language to another; and (c) struggling ELL readers are able to learn to use comprehension strategies with focused

instruction (Cho et al., 2010; Jimenez, 1997; Jimenez, Garcia, & Pearson, 1995; 1996; Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002).

Research focused on mainstream students' comprehension has found that good readers utilize comprehension strategies to increase their understanding from texts (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012; Duke & Pearson, 2002; Duke, Pearson, Strachan, & Billman, 2011; Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1996; Shanahan et al., 2010). The same conclusion generally holds true for ELLs (Jimenez et al., 1995, 1996). In a mixed methods study focused on the strategic knowledge of middle school ELLs, researchers found that successful English readers were students who used multiple comprehension strategies--such as clarifying unknown vocabulary, monitoring comprehension, making inferences, asking questions, and connecting prior knowledge--while reading in English (Jimenez et al., 1996). Conversely, ELLs who were not proficient readers often did not use such strategies to improve their comprehension (Jimenez et al., 1996). The non-proficient ELL readers were able to monitor their comprehension and realize they did not understand the text, but they could not use strategies such as clarifying unknown vocabulary to improve their comprehension of the text (Jimenez et al., 1996). Poor ELL readers were also less likely to use higher order strategies such as summarization and making inferences to better comprehend what they were reading.

ELLs who are successful readers of English texts are also able to transfer their knowledge of comprehension strategies from one language to another (Jimenez et al., 1995, 1996; Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002). According to Jimenez et al. (1996), middle school students in their study indicated there were several comprehension strategies they used--such as questioning, rereading, evaluating, and monitoring--regardless of the

language in which they were reading. For example, the students knew they needed to monitor their comprehension more when reading in their less dominant language. In addition, these students used additional strategies such as searching for cognates and translating as a way for them to better comprehend texts. Successful ELL readers had an enhanced awareness of the importance of using various strategies between their two languages to overcome comprehension hurdles.

Research conducted with struggling ELL readers has shown promise of increasing students' strategic knowledge through targeted instruction. Jimenez (1997) used a formative experiment design to implement eight cognitive strategy lessons with Latina/o students who were reading up to four grade levels below their current grade. Students were provided strategy instruction on an individual basis with a focus on three key comprehension strategies: integrating prior knowledge, formulating questions, and figuring out unknown vocabulary. Results indicated that through lessons wherein the strategies were modeled and demonstrated in both English and Spanish, these struggling ELLs were able to use and provide an improved understanding of the strategies.

In a more recent study, researchers worked with fourth-grade ELLs, who scored below the twenty-fifth percentile on a standardized test, in order to provide targeted instruction on a specific comprehension strategy (Cho et al., 2010). Researchers conducted an intervention study using an adaptation of the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA), which is a problem solving discussion strategy designed to support comprehension. Students were instructed to pause at predetermined sections in texts and asked to make predictions. Following the intervention, students were able to make more substantial and focused predictions compared to the initial data (Cho et al., 2010).

Overall, these studies show the discrepancy in the strategic knowledge between good ELL readers and poor ELL readers. Similar to findings with mainstream, native English speaking students, research has shown that ELLs who are better comprehenders are those who utilize multiple comprehension strategies while reading. Fortunately, Jimenez's (1997) research shows promise in that poor ELL readers, even those reading four grade levels below their actual grade, can increase their strategic knowledge given intensive and individualized instruction.

While the studies of Jimenez and his colleagues provides important information about the strategic knowledge of middle school ELLs, the samples used in their studies were fairly homogenous. These studies focused on Latina/o middle school students. More data needs to be obtained about the strategic knowledge of a more diverse group of ELLs.

Jimenez et al.'s (1996) research also supports the idea that ELLs who are proficient readers utilize many reading comprehension strategies while those who are struggling readers do not. While the gap in the number of strategies have been documented in terms of varying proficiency levels, there is not research providing data on the differences of ELLs' strategic knowledge and strategy use because of varying reading engagement levels. Given that I utilized think-alouds in this study, I am afforded an opportunity to investigate more closely on whether or not ELLs who are disengaged are aware of comprehension strategies and if so, when they employ these strategies when reading.

Social Interactions

Much research has supported the idea that social interactions contribute substantially to students' levels of reading engagement. Research on native English

speaking students' reading motivation showed that students are more likely to be engaged to read when they can participate in social interactions around reading rather than viewing reading as an isolated and solitary activity (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Guthrie et al., 1996; Lapp & Fisher, 2009; Strommen & Mates, 2004). Out of the studies which have focused on ELLs' reading engagement, few focused specifically on the social interaction component. Thus, the literature in this section is based on the ELL literature which has indicated that social interaction is an important component to ELLs' literacy development. According to the ELL literature, social interactions around reading provide (a) opportunities for engaged ELL readers to have discussions with others; (b) membership within a community of readers; and (c) additional support for ELLs for reading.

Engaged readers enjoy participating in discussions around those who also enjoy reading, such as peers, teachers, parents, or other family members (Feger, 2006; Klauda, 2003; Lapp & Fisher, 2009; Protacio, 2010; Strommen & Mates, 2004). In their research in a diverse classroom, Lapp and Fisher (2009) reported that students enjoyed participating in their classroom book club. These students were highly engaged in this social interaction as they discussed characters, provided insights, and synthesized across texts. The peer discussions allowed students to voice their interests and share their ideas around a common text. As another example, in my practicum research, social interactions around reading emerged as a primary factor in motivating ELLs to read. Focal students reported they regularly participated in conversations around reading with various individuals. Some engaged in social interactions with family members such as a parent or

sibling while others frequently participated in discussions around books with friends (Protacio, 2010).

Participating in social interactions around reading also provides students membership in a community of readers. In such a community, students experience less anxiety with their academics compared to students who are placed in highly competitive classrooms (Conchas, 2006). In classrooms where there is a sense of community, students work together to better understand the concepts and ideas they encounter in the texts they are reading. For example, Smythe and Neufeld (2010) reported high levels of student engagement among middle school ELLs when students were able to work collaboratively on a digital story project which they were planning to post on their class website. The nature of the digital projects allowed ELLs to work collaboratively by providing suggestions and feedback to one another. While this study was focused on digital storytelling, the authors found the opportunity to engage in social interactions increased the level of engagement that ELLs had for the project.

Social interactions also foster a collaborative environment where students in general, and ELLs specifically, can assist one another to better appreciate texts and acquire knowledge from reading (Cho et al., 2010; Guthrie et al., 2004; Lapp & Fisher, 2009; Protacio, 2010). As Guthrie (2011) indicated, through small-group interactions, students should add to each other's interpretations of texts in order for everyone to come to a collective understanding about texts they are discussing. For ELLs, participating in social interactions around texts provides access to other individuals who can assist with their comprehension by exposing them to others' perspectives and points of view (Cho et al., 2010; Lapp & Fisher, 2009; Protacio, 2010). These social interactions provide

opportunities for ELLs to share cultural, linguistic, and intellectual resources (Cuero & Dworin, 2007). For example, peers may serve as translators for other students who have limited English skills (Cho et al., 2010).

The literature reviewed in this section indicated that social interactions contribute to ELLs' reading engagement by providing them membership within a community of readers. In addition, ELLs have access to more resources when provided opportunities to engage in collaborative interactions with their peers. However, little research has documented the types of social interactions in which middle school ELLs participate and how these experiences might *directly* influence their reading engagement. The studies reviewed in this section did not intend to focus on social interactions specifically. For instance, Smythe and Neufeld's (2010) study was focused on the influence of digital storytelling on ELLs' literacy development. The increase of students' engagement levels was a tangential finding. Thus, details about the quality and content of these social interactions were not provided. In my study, I was able to focus specifically on what kinds of social interactions occur through classroom observations. Then, I gathered information through interviews on how these social interactions relate to ELLs' reading engagement.

Constructing Meaning from Texts

Engaged readers understand that the purpose of reading is to acquire knowledge and make meaning from texts (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002). Baker, Dreher, and Guthrie (2000) describe how engaged reading is related to the acquisition of knowledge.

> The heart of engagement is the desire to gain new knowledge of a topic, to follow the excitement of a narrative, to expand one's experience through print. Engaged

> readers can find books of personal significance and make time for reading them. The investment of time is rewarded by the experience of immersion in the text itself. Engaged readers draw on knowledge gained from previous experiences to construct new understandings, and they use cognitive strategies to regulate comprehension so that goals are met and interests are satisfied. (p. 2)

The acquisition of information and the desire to gain new knowledge becomes even more important in the middle school context as the subject matter being taught becomes more abstract and complex (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Hynd, 1999). Thus, it is even more pertinent to investigate how students make meanings from texts and what they learn from reading. In previous studies on reading engagement, the focus has been more on students' performance on standardized reading comprehension assessments (Guthrie, et al., 2007; Guthrie et al., 1999; Taboada, Tonks, Wigfield, & Guthrie, 2009) rather than looking at what, in particular, they have learned from reading. In studies conducted on ELL students' reading engagement, even less has been reported about ELLs' construction of meaning through reading. For example, Ivey and Broaddus (2007) conducted a formative experiment with adolescent Latino/a students who were just beginning to speak, read, and write in English. Because of the students' emerging English skills, the researchers focused primarily on finding texts at the ELLs' lower reading levels that students would find interesting. Although Ivey and Broaddus indicated their study was focused on reading engagement, they focused mostly on students' motivation and touched upon strategic knowledge; they did not report on what students learned from reading these texts, nor did they talk about the social interactions in which students participated.

Fairbanks' (2000) qualitative study is one of the few studies which has provided data on *how* students made meaning from reading. She found that adolescents were engaged when given the opportunity to conduct an inquiry project focused on a relevant topic to their lives which were connected to family, school, or community issues. In her two-year qualitative research in a middle school with a large immigrant student population, Fairbanks documented students' development as literacy learners. Students focused on issues such as gang violence, which affected them because their school neighborhood was home to several gangs. Other students focused on school policies such as the implementation of a dress code. Aside from reading narratives which contained themes similar to their topics of inquiry, students then had to find other sources such as newspapers and library books. Others, such as those who were researching homelessness, had to locate and contact local agencies which support the homeless. Fairbanks reported that ELLs were highly engaged with this project, and each student reported learning a great deal about the topic they were investigating. Fairbanks did not go into much detail into what the students learned, nor did she provide examples of the student work completed for this instructional unit. Rather, she provides evidence of students' positive reactions about the opportunity to explore a personally relevant topic in-depth.

Guthrie and his colleagues (1996) conducted one of the few studies that have documented actual conceptual knowledge gained when reading engagement is targeted in an integrated literacy and science unit. Even though the following two studies were not conducted with ELLs or diverse populations, I include these in the review because of the limited knowledge about this component in the ELL reading engagement literature. Guthrie et al. (1996) developed performance assessments (consisting of seven distinct,

but connected tasks), which allowed students to apply what they learned from their CORI unit wherein they explored different science concepts. Some of the tasks included drawing, writing, and applying what they learned to a related problem. The researchers found statistically significant differences in the students' abilities to search for information in multiple texts, represent acquired knowledge in both drawing and writing, and transfer conceptual knowledge to new situations.

Other work by Guthrie and his colleagues have also found that when reading engagement is targeted in classrooms through CORI, students' performance on standardized reading comprehension assessments improve. Guthrie et al. (2007) conducted a meta-analysis of eleven quasi-experimental studies focused on CORI, which is an instructional strategy which embeds reading instruction within a content area such as science so students can participate in inquiry projects around topics of interest. Within a CORI instructional unit, there are structures in place that support each of the four components of the engagement model. For example, in order to address motivation, students are allowed to choose the texts they want to read which will help them address their focus. Students are also encouraged to collaborate so that they can exchange ideas and develop their expertise together on an area of investigation. To address strategic knowledge, teachers will then introduce and explain specific comprehension strategies that students should use in order to acquire the information that will answer their inquiry questions. Lastly, students are able to construct meaning from the texts they read in completing their inquiry projects (Guthrie et al., 2004). Results of the meta-analysis of CORI studies indicated that this instructional approach had a substantial impact on students' performance on standardized reading comprehension assessments (Guthrie et

al., 2007). In other words, when students' reading engagement was targeted, their levels of comprehension increased, which would then most likely lead to their ability to learn and construct meaning from what they were reading.

In sum, the studies reviewed in this section show there are a very limited number of studies focused specifically on how readers have constructed meaning from texts, particularly with the ELL population. With the exception of one study by Fairbanks (2000), little research has provided a naturalistic description of how ELLs construct meaning from the texts they are exposed to in middle school classrooms and what they learn from these texts.

Summary

This review of literature indicates that while there is a firm foundation of knowledge about ELLs' motivation to read and strategic knowledge about reading, the social interactions and meaning construction components have been overlooked in the ELL reading engagement literature. To offer a holistic and comprehensive view of reading engagement, all four components must be addressed in one in-depth study. Studies have mostly focused on single components of reading engagement, and thus, there are fragmented views about ELLs' reading engagement. In addition, many of the studies reviewed relied on single sources of data for their studies. While each of these methods provides pertinent information, they do not afford researchers to present a multifaceted picture of reading engagement. Lastly, majority of the studies on ethnic minority populations focused on students from Latino/a backgrounds. As the ELL population is becoming increasingly diverse, more research on under-researched populations is needed (Garcia, Jensen, & Scribner, 2009; Goldenberg, 2008).

Through this dissertation research, I attempted to fill the gaps in the reading engagement literature by conducting a classroom-based, in-depth case study on young adolescent ELLs from diverse racial backgrounds focusing on all four components—motivation, strategic knowledge, constructing meaning from texts, and social interactions-- to provide a holistic description of ELLs' reading engagement (or disengagement). This holistic perspective is especially needed in order to fully understand the literacy development of young adolescent ELLs and how these students might develop into engaged or disengaged readers.

Conceptual Framework

Aside from the literature on reading engagement discussed in the previous section, the conceptual framework of this study is guided by the expectancy-value framework and sociocultural theory. Since an integral part of reading engagement involves reading motivation, there is a need to incorporate aspects of a motivational theory in order to better understand reading engagement. While there are several possible motivational theories that could be utilized, for this study I have focused on the expectancy-value framework. Further, by utilizing sociocultural theory in this study, I acknowledge the roles that ELLs' social and cultural backgrounds play in influencing their engagement with reading. Sociocultural theory allows me to emphasize the broader picture of the social and cultural contexts and how they play a part in cultivating reading engagement. In this section of the dissertation, I briefly discuss each theory. Throughout each section, I make explicit connections with how each theory informs the study.

The expectancy-value model. The motivational framework that is most applicable to the study is the expectancy-value model (Eccles et al., 1983). Eccles and her

colleagues posited that for motivation to occur, individuals must both believe they will succeed at a task and must also value the activity. Both expectancy for success and value of the activity or task must be present; the interaction of these two components influence one's performance, effort, and persistence at the task they face (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). From an expectancy-value framework, ELLs need to think of themselves as capable readers in order to become motivated. In addition, they need to understand the value of reading or outcomes of reading. If ELLs consider themselves poor readers or if they do not value reading, then most likely then this will influence their reading motivation levels.

Studies have documented that expectancy and values regarding reading decline from elementary to middle schools (Guthrie, Alao, & Rinehart, 1997; Henk, Marinak, & Melnick, 2012; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). Guthrie et al. (1997) offer an explanation on the declining levels of reading motivation of students at the middle school level: "As children get older, their competence beliefs and expectancies for success tend to become more sensitive to success and failure experiences...Less successful students lose their intrinsic motivations for reading due to their eroding sense of competence" (p. 440). In other words, when students have repeatedly experienced failure or encountered numerous challenges with reading or tasks associated with reading, it becomes increasingly more difficult to address students' perceived competence as readers. Given that ELLs may have experienced challenges in acquiring English proficiency and learning the grade level content, focusing on their perceived competence and the value they place on reading becomes even more important. If students' motivation has been documented to decline, then the reasons behind this decline must be addressed in middle school classrooms.

Thus, in this study, I closely examine focal students' perceived competence and instrumental motivation (value) since this likely influences their motivation and correspondingly, their reading engagement.

Sociocultural theory. While the expectancy-value framework focuses on factors at the level of the individual, sociocultural theory provides a broad picture. Rather than focusing only on the individual, those who ascribe by sociocultural theory examine the individual's interaction within the larger sociocultural context (Alvermann, 2005, 2009; Au, 2007; Rueda et al., 2001). In other words, one's literacy development is influenced by his or her social context and cultural backgrounds (e.g. Au, 1997; Gee, 1996). As Gee (1996) posited, each individual has his/her own "identity kit" or Discourse, which he characterized as "composed of ways of talking, listening, (often, too, reading and writing), acting, interacting, believing, valuing, using tools and objects, in particular settings at specific times, so as to display and recognize a particular social identity" (p. 128). Below, Gee (1996) provides further elaboration on the concept of Discourse.

> A Discourse is a socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions, and 'artifacts', of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network', or to signal that one is playing" a socially meaningful 'role'. (p. 131)

Gee's conception of Discourse indicates that individuals are shaped by their context and their inclusion in social groups. It is through membership in these social networks that individuals learn how to act and talk in ways that are expected of members of their Discourse. It is also through this that individuals learn what should be valued and

what could be considered as successful. If applied to reading, it follows that one's Discourse may influence or dictate the role of reading in his/her everyday life. Discourse can help shape a student's reading identity.

Au (1997) provides an application of sociocultural theory to the field of reading. Below, she describes how one's perception of reading is influenced by social and contextual factors.

> A sociocultural perspective begins with the assumption that reading, like other higher mental functions, is essentially social in nature. Even reading a book alone can be considered a social activity, because the reader is engaged with the author, the book is written in a language developed through long periods of use by other people, and the reader's concepts and schemata for responding to the book borrow from the thinking of others and result from previous social interactions...Learning to read cannot logically be separated from the particular milieu in which it takes place. When children learn to read, or fail to learn to read, they do so in a particular social, cultural, and historical environment. (p. 184)

Hence, in this study, I cannot examine ELL reading engagement without considering the social contexts and cultural backgrounds of these students. ELLs' perceptions of what it means to be a reader might differ based on their social contexts and cultural background. For instance, in Sarroub's (2005) study on young adolescent Muslim females, reading the Quo'ran was the most valued literacy practice, and young women who were able to recite from the Quo'ran provided honor to her family, regardless of her academic achievement in school.

By using a sociocultural lens in this proposed study, I considered the ELLs' backgrounds as I analyzed the data in order to describe what ELL reading engagement entailed. Similar to Rueda et al. (2001), I would argue that ELL reading engagement cannot be truly understood without viewing it through a sociocultural lens.

Summary

The multifaceted nature of reading engagement calls for numerous theories to be utilized to guide this research. While motivational theory is certainly important in examining ELLs' individual beliefs and values with regard to reading, the idea that reading is a social and cultural activity must be considered. Thus, sociocultural theory should be utilized to consider how social and cultural contexts influence ELL reading engagement. Furthermore, examinations need to be conducted on how ELLs' primary Discourse can influence the construction of reader identities.

To sum, in this chapter, I discussed the purpose and background of the study, pointing out that this dissertation attends to the gap in the field on the reading engagement of ELLs at the middle school level. Then, I reviewed the relevant research on reading engagement and its components, focusing in particular on the ELL literature and described a theoretical framework drawing on sociocultural theory and motivational theory. The focus of Chapter 2 is the methods employed for this case study research. In particular, I provide more information on the data collection procedures, data sources, and data analysis which I used for this research. In chapters 3 through 6, I present the results of this research with a case study on each focal student. In Chapter 7, I present a discussion of a cross-case analysis of reading engagement across the four focal students. In Chapter 8, I provide implications for both research and practice.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

The aim of this dissertation study was to fill the gaps in the reading engagement literature by conducting a classroom-based, in-depth case study on young adolescent ELLs from diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. In this chapter, I first provide an overview of the research design, and I explain why a case study design is appropriate to answer the research questions. Second, I describe my positionality as the researcher. Next, I introduce the setting of the study, both in terms of the school context and classroom contexts. Fourth, I discuss the different data collection procedures utilized in the study. Lastly, I describe the analytic procedures I employed in order to make sense of the data.

Research Design

Dyson and Genishi (2005) posited that case studies are used to examine "the meaning people make of their lives in very particular contexts" (p. 9). In the case of this dissertation research, a case study approach was utilized in order to examine four focal students' reading engagements in their English or ESL classroom. A case study design is well suited to address the research questions for this study as it makes use of multiple qualitative data collection techniques (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989) in order to address the multifaceted components of reading engagement. As Yin (1989) argued, the unique strength of a case study over other research methods is "its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence -- documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (p. 20).

While previous studies that have focused on components of ELLs' reading engagement have utilized qualitative methods such as interviewing (e.g. Cho, Xu, & Rhodes, 2010; Robinson, 2010), they did not utilize numerous qualitative data collection methods within a single study in order to provide a holistic description of reading engagement. Various sources were used in this study to gather data on each of four components of reading engagement, motivation, strategic knowledge, conceptual knowledge, and social interaction, which allowed me to offer a quaternary view of reading engagement. Table 1 provides an overview of the data sources which helped answer each of the research questions.

Table 1

Research Questions and Corresponding Data Sources

	1. What motivates middle school ELLs to read? What discourages them from reading?	2. What strategic knowledge do middle school ELLs draw upon when reading?	3. How do middle school ELLs engage in social interactions around texts?	4. What conceptual knowledge do middle school ELLs gain when reading?	5. How do motivation, strategic knowledge, conceptual knowledge, and social interactions interact to make up ELLs' reading engagement?
Classroom Observations	X	X	X		X
Student interviews	X	X	X	X	X
Teacher interviews		X	X	X	X
RAI	X	X		X	X
QRI		X			X
Student artifacts				X	X

One of the strengths of this dissertation research in relation to other studies on ELL reading engagement is that it was conducted within actual middle school classrooms with a diverse immigrant population. Thus, this study allows an in-depth investigation into the various factors which influenced ELLs' reading engagement. Having a sustained presence in classrooms also afforded the observation and documentation of situations in which focal students were engaged with or disengaged from academic reading.

Spradley (1979) indicated that one way of thinking about fieldwork in qualitative research is that rather than researchers studying people, it could be considered that researchers are "learning from people" (p. 3). In connection to this idea, the use of a case study design allowed the focal students the opportunity to share what factors influenced their engagement to read in English. By using a case study design, I was also in a better position to describe ELLs' reading engagement by observing them on multiple occasions within their classroom context, engaging them in in-depth interviews and informal conversations, and collecting student artifacts that speak to their reading engagement (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989).

Positionality of Researcher

Merriam (1988) emphasized the importance of the researcher's role in qualitative research since he or she is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. As such, in this section, I describe my background to be forthcoming about how my experiences may have influenced this research study. I am a biliterate, bicultural woman who has had a similar educational experience to the ELLs in this dissertation study. I came to the United States when I was five years old, unable to speak a word of English. It was through my experiences in a U.S. public school that I learned to speak the language,

and in so doing, I ended up forgetting how to speak my native language, Tagalog. Even though I was completely fluent in English by the time I was in fifth -grade, upon moving to a school in California, I was placed in an ESL classroom, and my classmates were mostly new immigrants from Mexico. The following year, my family and I returned to our native country, the Philippines, and I was once again thrust into a school system where I needed to learn the language in order to be academically successful. Learning a language also means learning a country's culture and customs (Agar, 1996), which I learned from both my experiences acculturating to the U.S. as a young child and my re-adjustment to my native culture and norms as a young adolescent in the Philippines. Thus, my background as a second language learner helped sensitize me to the experiences of ELLs in schools.

I was also an English teacher in the Philippines, where students learn English as a second language. While I taught at a school with a homogenous student population in terms of academic achievement, my students' reading engagement levels varied greatly. My own reading engagement has always been fairly high, especially when given autonomy in choosing reading materials. As a high school English teacher, I wanted to motivate my students to read English texts beyond what they read for my class and their other content-area classes. I encouraged my students to always bring a text they would read for pleasure in my class during independent reading time. However, despite my prodding, I had a few students who would not bring any reading materials, insisting there were no reading materials that were of interest to them. This experience prompted me to pursue a graduate degree in literacy education since I wanted to learn more about reading motivation and engagement to encourage more students to become engaged readers.

The topic of this dissertation is the cross-section of my experiences as both a language learner (of English and Filipino) and a teacher of language learners. I relate these experiences to be forthcoming about my subjectivity as a researcher. Having undergone similar experiences as a child and young adolescent, it was difficult at times to separate my researcher identity from my identity as a teacher, as a former ELL, and as a bilingual, bicultural individual. These identities likely influenced the subjectivity which I have brought to my interpretation of the data I collected throughout this research process. As Peshkin (1998) argued, "One's subjectivity is like a garment that cannot be removed. It is insistently present in both the research and non-research aspects of our life" (p. 17). He urged researchers to confront and be conscious of the subjectivity they bring to the research process. By elaborating on my own background as a language learner and English language teacher, I have shared the experiences which might influence and shape my interpretations of the reading engagement or disengagement of the focal students.

The School Setting

This study was conducted at Ford Middle School (FMS), which was a seventh-and-eighth grade suburban school in a Midwestern state. During the 2011-2012 school year, the school had a diverse student population composed of 522 students. These students represented 27 countries and numerous native languages. Forty-three percent of students qualified for free or reduced lunch. According to the school's annual report, during the 2011-2012 school year, FMS did make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in English language arts and mathematics. However, FMS was named a focus school because there was a wide gap in the scores of high and low achievers across the different content areas. FMS planned to address these issues by "focusing on student engagement,

using research-based instructional strategies, providing additional support in reading, establishing professional learning communities among staff, providing direct vocabulary instruction, and implementing positive behavior supports, and implementing the Common Core Standards" (FMS Annual Report, 2012, p. 1). The following information was provided in the school's annual report about the students' performance on the yearly statewide assessment:

- 72 percent of 7th grade students met or exceeded the reading component
- 59 percent of 7th grade students met or exceeded the writing component
- 55 percent of 7th grade students met or exceeded the math component
- 77 percent of 8th grade students met or exceeded the reading component
- 45 percent of 8th grade students met or exceeded the math component (pp. 2-3).

FMS is the only middle school in its district. Students at FMS have access to many resources. One of the distinct advantages of FMS is its huge library with books and magazines of various genres that cater to students' different interests. There are also approximately 25 computers in two areas around the library. Scattered around the library are tables where groups of students can gather and meet. There are also individual carrels for students to use to study. Another facility in FMS is a new two-level auditorium, which is used for school assemblies and productions.

In terms of resources for ELLs, there were two ESL classes, which were taught by the ESL teacher, Mrs. Blake. She did not have any paraprofessionals as support

personnel. Instead, Mrs. Blake relied on community volunteers and pre-service teachers from the local university for additional help in the ESL classroom. One class period was specifically for seventh-grade ELLs, and it served as a resource room where ELLs can obtain support for their academics. For newcomers, this was also the class period in which they received intensive English instruction. Another class period was for both seventh and eighth-graders. The initial part of the class was devoted to academic vocabulary instruction. Students who were advanced in their English proficiency and who were enrolled in a mainstream English class then proceeded to the library and used the rest of the period for academic support. Meanwhile, ELLs who were still in the early stages of acquiring English proficiency were provided English instruction through reading and writing activities.

The Participants

In this section, I first describe the selection of focal students for this dissertation. Next, I provide an introduction to each focal student (cf. Table 2). Finally, I provide background information on the two classroom teachers who were involved in the study.

One of the purposes for this dissertation was to better understand reading engagement among ELLs. In order for this to be possible, there needed to be a range of reading engagement levels among the focal students in order to examine the reasons why some ELLs become engaged readers while others do not. In total, I had four participants. I had met two highly engaged readers during a previous study I had conducted (Protacio, 2010), and I selected two less engaged readers were from the ESL class in the school. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, an impetus of this dissertation was to determine if and how two of my previous participants' motivations for and engagement in reading had

changed upon entering middle school. In my previous study, Jonathan and Nabila had fairly high reading motivation (Protacio, 2010). Because I wanted to get a range of engagement levels, I needed to invite students who were not as engaged with reading to participate in this research study.

Although there were fourteen total students in the ESL class, my pool of choices was limited. There was another graduate student who was conducting an intervention study on vocabulary with a small sample of the students in the ESL class. I did not ask any of her participants to be in my case study research because of the time commitment of both studies.

Based on my initial observations and teacher recommendation, I asked Farshad, a seventh-grader from Afghanistan, and Oliver, an eighth-grader from Congo, to be focal students. I decided to invite Farshad because he was a student who openly resisted having to read for Reading Month. I wanted to delve more into his resistance to reading. Meanwhile, I chose to ask Oliver to participate because he was a fairly quiet student in the ESL class. He never took the initiative to participate in discussions, and often would be staring into space during the discussions in ESL class. I wanted to know more about Oliver and how he might be engaged or disengaged with reading.

In sum, Nabila, Farshad, and Oliver were my focal students in the ESL class, and Jonathan was my focal student in the seventh-grade English class. In the section that follows, I provide background information on each focal student.

Table 2

Overview of Focal Students

Name	Grade	Years in U.S.	Native Country	Native Language	Receiving ESL Services
Farshad	7	6	Afghanistan	Farsi	Yes
Jonathan	7	4	China	Mandarin	No
Nabila	8	6	Afghanistan	Dari	Yes
Oliver	8	8	Congo	French	Yes

Student participants

Jonathan. Jonathan was a seventh-grader who was originally from China. He arrived in the United States in 2008 when his family moved to the country so his father could be a visiting scholar in the engineering department of a large state university. His mother, who worked as an accountant in China, became a stay-at-home mother, devoting most of her time to taking care of Jonathan. In their second year in the U.S., Jonathan's mother became pregnant with another son.

When Jonathan first came to the U.S., he knew very little English although he was already literate in Chinese. I first met Jonathan in the spring of 2010 when he was in fifth-grade and he agreed to participate in my practicum study on ELLs' reading motivation. When it was time for me to choose focal students, the ESL teacher recommended Jonathan since she said he had made substantial progress with his English language proficiency. At this time, Jonathan's oral English speaking abilities were well developed, but he spoke with a thick Chinese accent.

In the beginning of 2012, when I encountered Jonathan as a seventh-grader, he had grown approximately half a foot since I had last seen him and he now towered over

me. Aside from his physical growth spurt, there was a noticeable change in his speech as his thick Chinese accent was almost non-existent although there were traces here and there.

Nabila. The next focal student is Nabila, an eighth-grader whose family was originally from Afghanistan. Her family left Afghanistan because of the conflict in their native country and moved to Pakistan, where Nabila and her youngest brother were born. Although Nabila's family lived in Pakistan, they lived in an Afghan community and, thus, Nabila and her siblings were exposed to Afghan culture and norms. When Nabila was eight years old, she and her family came to the U.S., except for her father, who remained in Pakistan. Her mother was granted a refugee visa and was allowed to bring all six of her children. Nabila mentioned the primary reason that her family relocated to the U.S. was so she and her siblings could have a better education. The importance of a good education was instilled in Nabila. She was very concerned with how well she did in school, and she took full advantage of the help offered in her ESL classroom.

When I first met Nabila in the spring of 2010, she was in the sixth-grade. After she participated in the survey portion of my earlier research study (Protacio, 2010), I chose Nabila to serve as one of the focal students for the interview portion of that study based on the ESL teacher's recommendation. During the first interview, Nabila was initially very timid, but she was still able to articulate her thoughts on what motivated her to read in English. In the second interview, she opened up more and was very enthusiastic about explaining the different factors which affected her reading motivation. In fact, out of the six ELLs I interviewed for the practicum study, Nabila was one of the most motivated to read.

When I started the dissertation research two years later, I saw that Nabila had morphed into a young woman. She had grown approximately four or five inches. She also continued to wear the traditional *hijab* (head scarf) that Muslim women wear, wearing a different one everyday that complemented her outfit. In class, Nabila was often very quiet in whole group discussions, but she was very outgoing and talkative in small group settings.

Oliver. Oliver was a 13-year-old eighth-grader, who was originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo. He came to the United States with his single mother and older brother, and his father had no involvement in his life. Oliver was only five years old when he came to the US, and he remembered little of his time in Congo. When I asked about his experiences in his native country, Oliver simply remembered that he "jumped in puddles a lot." Oliver was still fluent in his native language, French, which was the language spoken at home although he was not literate in French. Oliver was also fluent in English, although he did have a tendency to mumble and often needed to be asked to speak louder and more clearly.

In terms of classroom participation, Oliver was fairly quiet. He did not participate in class discussions very often, and he offered answers only when the teacher called on him. As I got to know Oliver throughout the data collection process, I found that his passion was science, and anything related specifically to physics. Unfortunately, however, his teachers did not know of this interest.

Farshad. The final focal student is Farshad, who was a 13-year-old seventh-grader originally from Afghanistan. When he was very young, his family moved to Russia to escape the conflict in his country. His family, except for his father, moved to

the U.S. when he was eight or nine years old. Farshad went to school in Russia for first and second grade, and he did not learn any English there. Thus, his initial exposure to the English language was when he entered the third grade in a U.S. public school. Farshad recalled that he did not have any problems learning English and learned how to read in English fairly quickly.

Out of the four focal students, Farshad was the only one who was placed exclusively in the ESL class. Even though Nabila and Oliver were in the sixth-period ESL class, they attended it for academic vocabulary lessons and homework support. They were in a separate grade-level mainstream English class. Farshad was adamant that he should not be in ESL class and did not know why he was placed there. According to the ESL teacher, even though Farshad was a fluent English speaker, he was placed in the ESL class because he needed additional support on his academic English skills.

Teacher Participants

Mrs. Blake has been an ESL teacher for twelve years although she has been teaching for over twenty years. Besides ESL, Mrs. Blake has also taught Spanish and English for mainstream students. At the time of this study, Mrs. Blake served as the ESL teacher for both the district's middle school and high school. In the morning, she taught ESL classes at the high school, and at noon she drove to FMS where she taught three periods of ESL classes. Although she taught at both schools, Mrs. Blake acknowledged that FMS was her "home base" and that this was the school with which she was more involved.

In fact, Mrs. Blake spearheaded a school-wide vocabulary initiative during the 2011-2012 school year. The vocabulary initiative involved several components. Each

morning the school principal would announce the word of the day, which was typically an academic vocabulary word. Classroom teachers were then supposed to use the word of the day in their lessons to show how these academic vocabulary words could be used in different content areas. Powerpoint slides were printed and posted in each classroom so that students could conveniently refer to these words. Lastly, lunch signs were created that used the word of the day in a sentence on a health or nutritional topic. Mrs. Blake focused extensively on academic vocabulary with her ESL students, and thus, she was asked by the principal to choose the focus words for the vocabulary initiative and create the lunch signs.

Mrs. Blake was an avid reader, and this was apparent in her classroom. Even though the ESL classroom was right beside the school library, Mrs. Blake had an extensive classroom library. She had a book display rack especially made for her classroom to accommodate her many books. Her classroom library included books of various topics and fictional genres, although there were minimal informational texts. Students were allowed to borrow books from her classroom library. Most students took advantage of this on Fridays during Drop Everything and Read time if they did not bring their own reading materials. Aside from leisure reading materials, Mrs. Blake also kept copies of the content-area textbooks in her classroom so volunteer tutors could more effectively and efficiently help the ESL students with their assignments and projects.

The decorations in Mrs. Blake's classroom also projected a classroom environment which celebrated diversity. Her classroom door had the word *welcome* and *hello* printed in many languages. Pictures of students from her ESL classes for the past 12 years were posted near the classroom entrance. On one of the walls, she had displayed a

world map with pictures of her current ESL students beside it. There were strings connecting each student's picture to their native country on the map. Lastly, at the very back of the classroom, Mrs. Blake displayed each student's coat of arms as well as an introduction to each student. Having all of these displayed created an inviting classroom atmosphere. It also made it easier for the numerous pre-service teachers and community volunteers to get to know some background information on the ESL students.

Mrs. Blake taught three periods at FMS. The first period that Mrs. Blake taught was called REACH, which was a 30-minute period which was similar to a study hall. During this time, Mrs. Blake typically had the eighth-grade ESL students in her classroom working on their various assignments on Tuesdays through Thursdays. Every Monday, REACH period was devoted to vocabulary while the school's Drop Everything and Read time was held every Friday.

The fifth period was when the seventh-grade ESL students came to get more support for their academics. At the beginning of the semester, there were six students in the class. All of these students were Muslim students, but they were from different native countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Saudi Arabia). In mid-May, a Korean student joined the seventh-grade class. There were no whole group interactions during fifth-period. Mrs. Blake determined what the students needed to accomplish, and she asked the pre-service teachers to help the more advanced students either individually or in pairs, while she worked with the newcomers on their English speaking skills.

The sixth period was a combination of seventh-and eighth-graders. The students who were in Mrs. Blake's fifth-period stayed on for the sixth-period. Seven eighth-grade students joined the ESL class for sixth-period. The majority of the ESL students were

Muslim. In the sixth-period, the female students generally interacted with one another while the males talked to one another. There was very little gender interaction, which is not permitted according to Muslim customs (Sarroub, 2005; Zine, 2001).

The first twenty minutes of sixth-period were always devoted to vocabulary words. Each day, Mrs. Blake would teach students a vocabulary word, which was in addition to the vocabulary word that was taught through the school wide vocabulary initiative. She would discuss the meaning of the word and provide examples of how the word is used. She would then present two sentence prompts that utilized the vocabulary word and would call on students to complete these sentences. Finally, students would work in pairs on two other sentence prompts while she and the pre-service teachers would listen. Students then provided examples of their responses to the whole class. After the vocabulary lesson, five of the eighth-grade ESL students, Nabila and Oliver among them, were allowed to leave and proceed to the library. These five students were all enrolled in a mainstream English class. Meanwhile, the other students, Farshad included, stayed in Mrs. Blake's ESL class for structured English lessons focused on reading and writing.

While I spent majority of my observation time in Mrs. Blake's classroom since three of the four focal students were there, I also observed in Ms. Costa's seventh-grade English class in order to collect data on Jonathan. The 2011-2012 school year was Ms. Costa's first with her own classroom. In fact, she had a part time contract and only taught two classes of seventh-grade English. Ms. Costa graduated from the teacher preparation program of a small liberal arts college where she majored in secondary education with an English major and a psychology minor. Ms. Costa completed her degree in 2010, but was unable to immediately find a teaching position. Thus, she

accepted a long-term substitute position in a suburban school district where she taught AP Psychology at a high school. Ms. Costa accepted the part-time position at FMS to increase her chances of being hired when a full-time position became available.

Ms. Costa's classroom was a little sparse with decorations. On one side of the wall, she had posted the Powerpoint slides with the words from the school-wide vocabulary initiative. There was a section towards the front of the classroom where Ms. Costa placed posters of athletic teams of the local university. Towards the back of the room, Ms. Costa had some posters with quotes. She did not yet have a classroom library, but she had started to collect books for her own library.

Ms. Costa's teaching style mainly consisted of lectures and recitations. There was very little discussion among the students. A typical lesson included Ms. Costa reading aloud, calling on students to read aloud, and asking questions based on what was read. She also typically had sheets that students completed while they were reading to help them focus on the main ideas of the text. Each unit would typically conclude with one or two videos being shown. For instance, the seventh-graders completed a unit on the Titanic, and the culminating activity was viewing a documentary on this topic. As another example, the class read the short story "The Monsters are Due on Maple Street." The class spent three days reading the short story aloud. Afterwards, they watched two versions of videos that were based on the short story. One video was from the 1960s and one was from the 2000s. The students then had to write a "compare and contrast" essay on the two videos. It must be noted, however, that many of Ms. Costa's lessons were patterned after those of her mentor. When she was able to create her own unit on mythology, she was able to provide more opportunities for students to express their

creativity as she allowed her students to create a visual representation of their mythological character for their class presentation for extra credit.

One of Ms. Costa's strengths was building relationships with her students. Students were allowed to sign up to have lunch with her in the classroom. She also allowed independent work time, and during these times she was always available to answer questions. During these classroom events, there was typically a line of students who wanted to obtain her feedback, which indicated that students felt comfortable with her. Nevertheless, Ms. Costa's status as a new teacher was apparent in her reflections about teaching. Ms. Costa acknowledged that when she was in front of the class teaching, she was more preoccupied with what she was going to say rather than focusing on the students.

In this section, I introduced and described the participants of this case study research. In the following sections, I describe the multiple methods and various data sources that were utilized for this dissertation.

Data Collection

I collected data from January 2012 to June 2012, which was the entire second semester of the school year. I spent most of my time in two classrooms, Mrs. Blake's ESL classroom and Ms. Costa's seventh grade English classroom. I spent the first three months as a participant observer in Mrs. Blake's ESL classroom. I used this time to establish rapport with the students in the class and make initial observations about students' engagement with learning English and reading activities. It was also during this time that I started to think about whom else I would ask to participate in the study.

At the beginning of April, I started to gather additional pieces of data. These included interviews, classroom observations, student artifacts, informal reading inventories, and reading activity inventories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1989). Because reading engagement is multifaceted and includes four different components, it was necessary for me to employ various data collection techniques so there would be a diverse set of data sources. Each of these data sources provides data for at least one of the reading engagement components. In the following section, I describe the different data sources of this dissertation.

Observations. I observed the focal students two to four times a week in their ESL/English class. In Ms. Costa's class, I was primarily an observer. There were a few instances when students had work sessions at the school library, and I was able to roam and engage in conversations with the students. Otherwise, in observing Jonathan, I took on the role of a full observer, writing descriptive field notes about classroom events (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). In these field notes, I focused specifically on Jonathan's participation in and reaction to classroom discussions and tasks.

In Mrs. Blake's classroom, I was a participant observer. From early on, Mrs. Blake encouraged my participation in small group interactions with the ELLs in her classroom. I was able to provide additional support to students. In the initial months, I was alternating the students with whom I was working in order to establish rapport with them so that I could decide whom else to invite to participate. In the latter part of the data collection period, I spent most of my time working with Farshad during fifth period and with Nabila during sixth period. Oliver kindly declined any help that I offered to him

during sixth period, and there were no sessions in which I was able to help him with any of his assignments or projects.

During the data collection period, I noted that I had very little evidence of Oliver's participation in Mrs. Blake's classroom. I wanted to determine whether or not this was Oliver's standard level of classroom participation. Oliver was in Mrs. Blake's ESL class, but he was also enrolled in a regular English class. I asked permission from Oliver's English teacher, Mr. Kilian, if I could observe Oliver in his classroom, and Mr. Kilian agreed. I was a full observer in Mr. Kilian's classroom on two occasions.

While I also wrote field notes in Mrs. Blake's classroom, these did not contain as much detail as those written in Ms. Costa's classroom. Yin (1989) noted the disadvantage of being a participant-observer: "The participant-observer may not have sufficient time to take notes or to raise questions about events from different perspectives, as a good observer might" (p. 94). In all of the observations in Mrs. Blake's and Mr. Kilian's classrooms, I focused primarily on focal students' contributions during discussions around texts, their non-verbal cues during classroom or small group discussions around classroom texts, and their behavior during independent work time when they were responding to or producing texts.

Interviews. Interviews allow researchers to explore topics in greater detail and expound on themes emerging from ongoing data collection (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Seidman, 2006; Spradley, 1979). I conducted four semi-structured interviews with each of the focal students. I chose to conduct a semi-structured interview for two reasons. First, compared to a structured interview, a semi-structured format allows for more flexibility for the researcher to delve deeply into topics brought up the interviewees,

which may not be included in the interview protocol (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Semi-structured interviews also provided a greater opportunity to uncover factors which were personally significant to the focal students regarding their reading engagement. On the other hand, the presence of prepared questions ensured that topics discussed in these interviews were likely to directly answer the identified research questions (see Appendices A through C for initial interview protocols).

In order to prepare for each succeeding interview, I reviewed the prior interview. I included follow-up questions that were meant to clarify ideas or probe for more information based on the preceding interviews. In addition, I included questions from the initial interviews in the succeeding interviews based on Spradley's (1979) assertion that interviewees need to have multiple opportunities to respond to the same question. His rationale was that when asked the same question during different interviews, it is more likely that interviewees will provide all possible information on a topic. Questions in the succeeding interviews were also based on classroom observations. Doing so ensured that the participants had opportunities to voice their own thinking or rationales rather than relying merely on my interpretations of what I had observed in the classroom (Eder & Fingerson, 2002). In addition, this also addressed the issue of the sparse field notes as a participant observer in Mrs. Blake's classroom since I was able to gather information about classroom activities through interviews.

Interviews with the focal students provided data for all five research questions, however many of the prepared questions were crafted to target the components of motivation and social interactions. Other data sources, such as the Qualitative Reading

Inventory, the Reading Activity Inventory, and student samples provided detailed information about the other reading engagement components.

Aside from obtaining information about focal students' reading engagement, I also wanted to obtain background information about each of the focal students. I had different initial interview protocols for the focal students who were part of my practicum research (Nabila and Jonathan) and those who were new focal students (Oliver and Farshad). In interviews with Farshad and Oliver, I obtained information about family background and initial experiences in the U.S. and in U.S. schools. For interviews with focal students who had participated in my practicum research, I asked them about their experiences in middle school. I also asked Nabila and Jonathan about the changes, if any, in their reading motivation and their participation in social interactions around reading since I had last interviewed them in 2010.

I also interviewed teacher participants. The original plan was to interview each teacher four times during the study. My intent was to ask the teachers questions about their perceptions of the focal students' motivations, their observations of students during social interactions, students' use of strategic knowledge, and their observations of focal students' ability to construct meaning from texts. However, I was able to formally interview Mrs. Blake only once. After the first interview, Mrs. Blake informed me she did not think she could give me much information regarding students' reading engagement since her focus was more on language acquisition. Although we only had one formal interview, Mrs. Blake and I regularly debriefed before and after my observations. She was able to provide valuable background information about the focal students and their families.

Meanwhile, I conducted three formal interviews with Ms. Costa. Through these interviews, I gathered background information on Ms. Costa's teaching experience. Most of the interviews were spent obtaining information about Ms. Costa's observations of Jonathan's performance in her English class. We also spent time discussing Ms. Costa's rationale for certain instructional activities based on questions I noted in my field notes about classroom observations.

Reading Activity Inventory. The focal students completed Reading Activity Inventories (RAI) during the study (see Appendix D for a copy of the assessment). All of the focal students completed three RAIs, except for Oliver, who only returned two. The RAI is adapted from Wigfield and Guthrie's (1997) study wherein they studied the relationship of reading motivation to the amount and breadth of reading students completed. In the RAI, students were asked whether or not they had read a book from a particular genre in the past two weeks. If they responded affirmatively, they were asked to supply the title of the text they read. Each student was then asked to indicate how often he or she would read that kind of book with responses on a 1 to 4 scale indicating *almost never* to *almost every day.*

Because the original RAI was administered to elementary students, I made some modifications to the assessment to make it more suitable for middle school respondents. First, I changed the practice question. The original question asked, "Do you have a name? If yes, write your first name." To make it more age-appropriate and interesting for middle school students, I changed this to "Do you watch television? If yes, write the title of your favorite television show." I also made modifications to the genres of texts that were included in the assessment to include genres that might interest middle school students.

Specifically, I added questions about magazines since recent work has shown that this is a genre that middle school students are motivated to read (Gabriel, Allington, & Billen, 2011). I added a question about reading electronic texts since the original RAI included only questions on traditional texts. I also included a question asking students whether or not they read any texts in their native languages.

The original RAI asked students to provide the book title, author, and topic of each book. In the adaptation used for this study, I added sections wherein students were to provide the main idea of the texts they had read and other comments about the texts. By asking students to supply the main idea of the texts, I was able to obtain some measure of students' conceptual knowledge and strategic knowledge. In other words, adding this piece allowed me to determine if the students were able to remember main ideas of texts they read and if they were able to summarize texts they had read.

The RAI is an artifact that I used to supplement data obtained from interviews and observations. The purpose for using the RAI was to have a measure of the kinds of genres that the students were reading. However, it did not provide as much information as I had hoped since the focal students did not spend much time completing the RAIs.

Student artifacts. As a way to get information about students' ability to construct meaning from texts, I obtained samples of papers the focal students had submitted for their English or ESL class. Most of the samples that I obtained were from Nabila, Jonathan, and Farshad. While I requested samples from Oliver, he did not provide any writing samples. The writing samples provided by the three focal students supplemented the information I gathered through interviews about what they had learned through completing various writing assignments in their English/ESL class.

I was also able to obtain the reading logs that Nabila, Farshad, and Oliver had submitted to Mrs. Blake for Reading Month. Completing the reading logs was a requirement in Mrs. Blake's ESL class for the month of March. These readings logs provided substantial information on a number of areas: (1) the frequency in which the focal students read during reading month, (2) the types of texts students read, and (3) students' comprehension of what they read.

Qualitative Reading Inventory-5. In order to obtain information about students' strategic knowledge and comprehension abilities, I administered the Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 (QRI-5; Leslie & Caldwell, 2011) to the focal students. I realize that a shortcoming of using an informal reading inventory such as the QRI-5 is that the experience may not be authentic in terms of the kinds of texts that students are reading; nevertheless, data obtained from this assessment presented a heuristic perspective on what the students knew in terms of strategic knowledge. I selected the QRI-5 because an earlier edition had been found to be the most reliable and valid among informal reading inventories (Spector, 2005). The QRI-5 is a leveled instrument wherein a decoding assessment in the form of graded word lists is first administered. Based on the results from the word list, appropriate comprehension passages are administered at the students' instructional levels, as determined by their decoding skills. In addition, there is a think-aloud component to this assessment. Starting with passages at the sixth-grade level, there are specific areas at which students have to stop reading and think aloud. In my previous research (Protacio, 2010), focal students described their perceived competence in reading in English, but I had no data on their actual reading abilities. By administering the QRI-5, I was able to collect assessment data that enabled me to better describe the

comprehension strategies that focal students were employing while they were reading in English.

Based on the results of the word lists, I determined that Nabila and Jonathan should read passages at the upper middle school level while Oliver and Farshad's instructional level in terms of word recognition was sixth grade; thus, Oliver and Farshad read passages at the sixth grade level. Four QRI assessments were administered to each focal student, with each of them reading two narrative passages and two expository passages. The rationale for the different genres is that their comprehension levels might vary between genres (Duke, Caughlan, Juzwik, & Martin, 2012; Duke & Roberts, 2010). The students were given a choice of narrative and expository passages they could read to ensure some levels of interest in the topics. I asked the students to read the passages silently since my focus on this assessment was gathering information about students' strategy use and comprehension and not their decoding or fluency abilities.

In case the focal students were not familiar with thinking-aloud, I first modeled how to think aloud before administering the assessment to the students. The QRI-5 contained a sample passage and a script for it, so the modeling of the think-aloud was uniform across all focal students. In addition to the think-aloud portion, the focal students were asked to respond to comprehension questions after reading each passage. One of the advantages of the QRI-5 is that it asks students a combination of questions which require implicit or explicit answers. In other words, the QRI-5 comprehension questions go beyond simply asking literal recall items. If students had incorrect responses after all the comprehension questions had been asked, they were given the opportunity to look back at the texts and attempt to correct any of the wrong answers they had initially provided.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was concurrent with data collection. During the data collection period, I reviewed the data I had already collected to help focus my attention on emerging patterns that I was observing or that continued to surface in interviews. As previously indicated, I reviewed interviews immediately, taking note of ideas that I needed to revisit in succeeding interviews. I also reviewed field notes prior to each interview so that I could identify classroom events that I wanted to discuss during each semi-structured interview.

A combination of provisional coding and open coding was applied to the field notes and interview and think-aloud transcripts. With provisional coding, qualitative researchers establish a predetermined list of codes prior to fieldwork (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Because of my previous research on ELLs' reading motivation and my examination of the available literature on reading engagement, I had developed a list of provisional codes (cf. Table 3). However, the list of provisional codes was not exhaustive enough to represent all the data collected. As a result, I also used initial coding to make new codes for ideas that were observed in the field or raised in interviews that were not included in the list of provisional codes. Examples of initial codes included *compliance* and *book characteristics* for motivation, *visualizing* and *evaluating* for strategic knowledge, and *isolation* and *recommendations* for social interactions. Since there were no provisional codes for constructing meaning from texts, all codes related to this component were done through initial coding. Examples of initial codes for this category include *difficulties in understanding, mythology,* and *learning about disabilities.*

Table 3

List of Provisional Codes

Reading Engagement Component	First Level Codes	Second Level Codes
Motivation	Instrumental motivation	
	Integrative motivation	
	Perceived competence	
	Access to texts	
	Family influence	
Strategic knowledge	Strategy use	Clarifying unknown vocabulary
		Monitoring comprehension
		Making inferences
		Questioning
		Summarizing
	Transfer of strategic knowledge	
	Translation from one language to another	
	Explanation of importance of strategy use	
Conceptual knowledge		
Social interaction	Group membership	
	Support for reading	
	Book discussion	

The coding scheme used for the data analysis included several levels. The first level of coding is based on the reading engagement component. The second level of coding provides a more specific description of the observed behavior to be coded.

Strategic knowledge was the only reading engagement component which had three levels of coding. For the second level code of *strategy use*, I identified which strategy the reader was using as the third level code. In the think-aloud transcripts, all of the first level codes were strategic knowledge, the second level codes were strategy use, and the third level codes indicated what strategy the focal student used while thinking aloud. The only exceptions to this were Farshad and Oliver's think-alouds, and I created the initial codes of *misunderstood meaning* and *distracted* for portions of their think-aloud transcripts.

In order to keep track of the codes, I developed an Excel codebook. I listed the codes for each interview and each think-aloud transcript and took note of the document and page in which it was located. There were several advantages of creating a codebook. First, it helped me look quantitatively at the prominent codes in the data corpus thereby making it easier to see patterns and themes based on the frequency of codes. Second, it allowed me to see and ponder if there were codes that needed to be merged, deleted, added or refined. Last, I could sort the codebook in different ways; this allowed me to examine different patterns within the various categories.

Throughout the data analysis process, I wrote analytic memos, which enabled me to relate the data to theory throughout this process (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Writing these analytical memos also allowed me to distance myself from the data itself and instead reflect on the themes that I was noticing through the data collection process. For example, I wrote memos around the influence of the Muslim religion on Nabila's reading engagement.

Finally, when I selected themes on which to focus for each focal student, I utilized triangulation to ensure that these themes were supported by multiple sources of data.

Stake (2008) described triangulation as “repetitious data gathering and critical review of what is being said” (p. 34). According to Stake, each important finding should have at least three confirmations or assurances that interpretations are supported by data gathered. Hence, I used multiple data sources (e.g., interviews, field notes, student artifacts) to support the findings of each case.

To sum, in this chapter, I provided a rationale for why a case study would be the most appropriate research design for the research questions. Next, I was forthcoming about my positionality as a researcher. Third, I introduced and described the participants of the study. Fourth, I provided extensive details on how and what types of data were collected for this dissertation and how they were gathered. Lastly, I explained the data analysis process.

In the four chapters that follow, I focus on each focal student and describe his or her reading engagement in-depth. I note that each student’s reading engagement is influenced by different factors. In the following chapters, each focal student’s story of reading engagement unfolds.

CHAPTER 3

A Portrait of a Seemingly Engaged Reader: A Case Study of a Seventh-Grade Chinese ELL

Under the reading engagement perspective, an engaged reader is an individual who is motivated to read, uses comprehension strategies while reading, makes meaning from reading, and participates in social interactions around reading (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Theoretically, each of these components in the reading engagement perspective interacts with and influences an individual's reading achievement (Guthrie, Wigfield, & You, 2012).

In this chapter, I discuss the experiences of Jonathan, a seventh-grade ELL originally from China. At first glance, Jonathan seemingly meets all the requirements of an engaged reader. However, a close examination of the data illuminates some problematic areas with Jonathan's reading engagement. Thus, I argue that even when all of the reading engagement components are seemingly satisfied, there are still areas in students' reading behaviors on which improvements can be made. In what follows, I examine Jonathan's reading engagement with both academic texts and texts he reads for pleasure. At the same time, I consider how Jonathan's evolving sense of identity influences his reading engagement.

Two specific factors are integral to Jonathan's reading engagement. First, his motivation to read academic texts is driven by a compliant mindset in order to obtain high grades in school. Jonathan's high grades helped him have a higher status among his American friends as he helped them with their academics. On the other hand, this led to the second problematic area of Jonathan's reading engagement: his friends placed a lower

value on academics, hence Jonathan did not participate in meaningful social interactions around reading. Although there were many positive aspects about Jonathan's engagement as a reader, attention needs to be given to these two factors to ensure Jonathan's continuity as an engaged reader as he progresses through secondary school.

Because this study is framed by sociocultural theory, it is impossible to examine Jonathan's reading engagement without considering the continuing development of his bilingual and bicultural identity as a middle school ELL. I use Kanno's (2003) definition of bilingual and bicultural identity, "where bilingual individuals position themselves between two languages and two (or more) cultures, and how they incorporate these languages and cultures into their sense of how they are" (p. 3). In particular, young adolescents at the middle school level are consciously exploring their identity and determining where and how they fit within diverse social groups (Walqui et al., 2010). These ideas are certainly applicable to Jonathan's case because he navigated how to position himself as a Chinese student in an American public school, trying to fit in and become more American, thereby disassociating himself from his Chinese identity. The development of a bilingual and bicultural identity is particularly important in Jonathan's case because it impacted the quality of the social interactions in which he participated with his peers. Specifics about his reading engagement, coupled with his bilingual and bicultural identity struggle, are what I present in this chapter.

Getting to Know Jonathan

When I first met Jonathan two years ago, he was a fifth grader who was slowly becoming a reader. When his family initially arrived from China to the United States, his parents required him to read for at least 30 minutes every day. Initially, Jonathan resisted

and said he “really hated reading” (Protacio, 2010). While Jonathan was completing his required reading, he realized reading was actually enjoyable. As he continued to find more books that met his interests, his reading motivation levels increased. Another plausible explanation for Jonathan’s increased reading motivation was his instrumental motivation. He noted reading was a way for him to continue to improve his English skills and learn new vocabulary. In addition, he participated in book discussions, particularly with his American peers (Protacio, 2010). As a fifth grader, Jonathan was motivated to read texts that interested him and ones on which he could participate in social interactions with his American peers.

An impetus for this dissertation study was to examine whether Jonathan was able to sustain his high level of reading motivation as he transitioned into middle school. Previous studies have documented a decline in students’ reading engagement when they enter middle school (e.g., Kelly & Decker, 2009; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). In this chapter, I discuss how Jonathan’s engagement as a seventh grader has not declined, although his motivations to read and participation in social interactions in particular are now different compared to when he was a fifth grader.

Adjusting to Middle School Life

Jonathan adjusted very well to middle school. He fit the mold of a “model minority” in that he was an Asian student with a high academic performance (Sue & Okazaki, 1990). Jonathan arrived to the United States in 2008, unable to speak English. In four years, Jonathan was able to overcome linguistic barriers and succeed in the U.S. public school context. In addition, Jonathan adjusted well socially. He was part of a solid group of American friends. The one area in which Jonathan struggled was acculturation.

He wanted to fully integrate himself into the American culture; he did not want to remain as the perpetual foreigner (Zhou, 2009). Jonathan was very concerned about his peers' perceptions of him, and he constantly strived to gain the acceptance of his American peers.

At FMS, Jonathan was in all mainstream classes because he was exited from the ESL program after the sixth grade. His English teacher, Ms. Costa, did not even know that he was an ELL and assumed he had been born and raised in the U.S. This is indicative of the drastic progress Jonathan made with his English speaking skills in four years.

Jonathan enjoyed the middle school setting, particularly the increased level of independence given to students. He appreciated being treated like a high school or college student rather than being treated like a child. In terms of academics, Jonathan was performing very well and was a straight-A student. Similar to Rubinstein-Avila's (2003/2004) and Sturtevant and Kim's (2010) findings, Jonathan was motivated in middle school because he was able to see the relevance of what he was learning to his career goal of being an engineer:

> Middle school compared to elementary is a lot more deeper, I guess. You study things more deeper and it gives you more routes, I guess. It shows you all sides of the road so I have more roads to choose.

As indicated in this quote, Jonathan understood and appreciated the depth with which he was able to study concepts in middle school. In particular, he performed well in his math class, which was highly relevant to his aspiration of becoming an engineer. His other goal would be related to business management, such as managing an engineering

firm. Jonathan also shared that his parents had similar career plans for him. For instance, Jonathan's mother signed him up for golf lessons. Jonathan explained that if his family was to return to China and if he were to be a high-ranking Chinese business executive in the future, he would need to know how to play golf as this was the sport that was played by such business executives. This example illustrates that Jonathan's parents were very deliberate in ensuring that the activities in which Jonathan partook were preparing him for his eventual career.

Aside from being committed to his academics, Jonathan was also extremely involved with extracurricular activities. Despite being only a seventh grader, he was chosen to be one of 10 members of the school's Pioneer Leadership Club. He also played clarinet in the school band. Because he towered over most of his peers with his 6'1" frame, he also served as the center on the school's basketball team.

Despite being well adjusted to the middle school setting, Jonathan admitted that it was, at times, very stressful. Although students are given more independence on some matters, when it came to their academics, teachers were stricter compared to elementary school. Jonathan provided some insight into the increasing pressure that he felt as a middle school student:

> Selena: So what don't you like about middle school?
>
> Jonathan: The break times, I guess. Every time after class I'm so nervous about getting to class, I don't have much time to relax. I guess I'm so tensed up every day that when I get home I feel so exhausted and tired that doing my homework is a nightmare for me.
>
> Selena: Tell me more about that.

> Jonathan: Well, I guess I'm exhausted every day 'cause I'm so scared that I'm gonna get a tardy. I'm so scared I'm not gonna catch up in class. I'm so scared I forgot a homework that when I get home I was like, "Oh, finally," and I wanna go to sleep. But then I got a bunch of things to do and I need to do the chores and do all that. I can feel the pressure getting harder than elementary, I guess.

Even though there was pressure that perhaps was inherent to the school structure, for Jonathan this pressure was magnified because he wanted to excel in school. Whereas others might take on a happy-go-lucky stance when it came to their academic performance, Jonathan wanted to do well and, consequently, he experienced a great deal of stress. However, not all students might perceive middle school as being as intense as Jonathan did. For example, Jonathan noted, "I don't get tardies but other people do; they don't really seem to care. I care a lot about that." Although Jonathan was able to keep up with everything that he needed to do for his classes, it took a toll on him and he was very stressed out. I shared with Jonathan in one of our interviews that I thought he was focused and attentive based on my classroom observations of him. He replied, "I try to make as much effort and focus as I can at [Ms. Costa] and what she's reading 'cause I don't wanna fall behind. I guess I don't wanna fail." It is plausible Jonathan's anxiety came from both a fear of failure and a desire to succeed.

Despite his concern with academics, Jonathan still had time to socialize. As I observed in his classroom, he would regularly socialize with four male students; three of them were Caucasian and one was a biracial student. Jonathan admitted he did not have many Chinese friends and his good friends were American. When I asked him why he had only American friends, he provided the following response:

> Compare if it’s like 300 in the school, [then] there's gonna be like 260 people that's American and 40 people that's from another country. And out of that 40 probably only 20, 18, [or] 17 is Chinese so I don't have much people to talk to. So I kinda, even though I'm not forced, there's like an invisible force that pushes me to the American side ’cause I have to.

Jonathan used the idea of proportions to explain why he had more American friends compared to Chinese friends. The invisible force that he mentioned was the lower number of minority students at FMS. Jonathan was exited out of the ESL program when he entered middle school, and his classes were all mainstream ones. Because of this, he did not have many opportunities to engage in interactions specifically with other ELLs. It also did not seem as though Jonathan sought out any opportunities to interact with current or former ELLs.

For the most part, Jonathan was quite happy about having a solid group of friends in middle school. However, he admitted that he sometimes felt left out when conversing with his American friends.

> Sometimes I feel like I'm left out [in conversations] ’cause I'm Asian, which I don't know if it's true. I just feel that way sometimes, but sometimes I don't. I mean I feel special that I'm Asian, and I can be cool about my race, and I don't really care if other people make jokes about it.

Although it did not seem that his friends were deliberately excluding him from the conversation, some topics of discussion were ones with which Jonathan was unfamiliar. When his friends discussed popular culture, Jonathan could not offer much to the conversation. For example, he mentioned one instance when his friends were talking

about a television show that had aired several years earlier, when Jonathan's family was still in China. As a result, Jonathan felt left out and could not participate in the conversation because he had nothing to contribute on that topic.

During this interview, I shared with Jonathan that I understood how he was feeling, but told him that in some ways, we had the best of both worlds because we were exposed to two cultures. Jonathan agreed, but he added, "Sometimes I wish I was the same." Researchers such as Valenzuela (1999) note that school structures often provide subtractive assimilationist policies that undermine immigrant students' language and culture. In Jonathan's case, it seemed he was the one who wanted to assimilate in such a way that undermined his background.

Despite the desire to "be more American," Jonathan still expressed appreciation for his native culture. He highlighted positive aspects of his native culture, such as the importance of Chinese sayings. He said these nuggets of wisdom helped him make sense of what was occurring in his life. Nevertheless, there seemed to be a clear divide for Jonathan between his cultural identities. At home, he was Chinese. In school, he wanted to just be like his American classmates.

In interviews and conversations with Jonathan, there did seem to be a struggle in his pride about being Chinese and his desire to be more American. The more prevalent statements he made, though, were about trying to be more American. For example, he proudly mentioned, "I look more like I'm American 'cause I don't talk in my accent anymore. I talk in English accent." He also had a more positive attitude about speaking in English compared to speaking in Chinese.

> I personally don't like Chinese ’cause it's hard. I'm the kind of guy that I don't want hard stuff. I mean, no one wants to do something that's hard, and I'm staying here for right now, so if I learn Chinese here and I'm gonna stay here there's no point of learning it except for just learning it and losing it.

Jonathan’s statement indicates that he did not see the relevance of improving his Chinese skills if his family remained in the United States. Instead, he focused on his English skills. His view aligned with that of instrumental orientation (Dornyei, 2003a; Gardner & Lambert, 1972) in that he wanted to learn and improve in the language that he felt had the most utilitarian value. Because Jonathan wanted to do well in U.S. schools and attend a good American university, his focus was improving his English skills. Jonathan was also integratively motivated (Dornyei, 2003a; Gardner & Lambert, 1972) because he affiliated himself with American peers and wanted “to be more American.”

In this section, I described Jonathan’s experiences as a seventh grader at FMS. He was a high-achieving student who was in all mainstream classrooms after being exited from the ESL program. He was also extremely involved with extracurricular activities. However, middle school life was stressful for Jonathan because he wanted to maintain his high academic standing. He also struggled to negotiate his bicultural and bilingual identity.

Motivation

Researchers have provided a distinction between current reading motivation and habitual reading motivation (Schiefele, Schaffner, Moller & Wigfield, 2012). The authors explain that current reading motivation is an individual’s intention or desire to read a specific text for a specific purpose or activity. Meanwhile, “an individual who repeatedly

shows a form of current reading motivation can be ascribed a certain amount of habitual reading motivation" (p. 429). In other words, those who have high levels of habitual reading motivation denote a stable readiness to participate in or undertake reading activities.

Jonathan was one of two focal students who had high levels of habitual reading motivation, particularly with texts that he read for pleasure. Reading was an activity that was constant in his life. However, although Jonathan's reading motivation was fairly high at the beginning of the study, he admitted that his motivation was declining, especially as the end of the school year approached. Based on observations and interviews, three factors seemed to be primary influences in Jonathan's motivation to read: (1) intrinsic motivation (willingness to engage in reading because it is satisfying and rewarding), (2) series/genres (motivation to read books by the same author or in the same genre), and (3) compliance (reading because it is required). Although the first and the third factor seem to be contradictory, I explain next that Jonathan's motivation to read depended on the text he was reading and his purpose for reading (Rand Reading Study Group, 2002).

Intrinsic motivation. One of the most noticeable differences in Jonathan's reading motivation was his increased intrinsic motivation to read compared to two years prior. He found reading for pleasure to be satisfying and rewarding. In elementary school, Jonathan had been required by his parents to read at home. Now that he was in middle school, Jonathan seemed to derive real pleasure from reading. In fact, he claimed that he needed to read for at least 30 minutes before he went to bed in order to become more relaxed. The middle school context was quite stressful for Jonathan, and reading at night before he went to sleep was a way for him to calm down to recover from his school day.

His mother still required him to read every day, but Jonathan actually enjoyed reading now compared to earlier, when he was reading just to comply with his parents' wishes.

Unfortunately, as the end of the school year drew near, other activities seemed to take up Jonathan's time and attention. In our last interview in June, he said when he got home he would play computer games for about an hour before doing his homework as a way to relieve his stress from the school day. After this, he sometimes read for about 30 minutes before dinner rather than reading before he went to sleep.

Nevertheless, for the most part, Jonathan was an intrinsically motivated reader. He claimed he wanted what he was reading to "take time." In the second interview, I followed up on the idea that Jonathan liked to read books in a series, and I asked him what other materials he liked to read. He shared that although he used to like comic books, he did not read this genre anymore. I probed and asked him if he liked graphic novels because those were becoming very popular among teenagers. He said he did not because graphic novels are short, easy to read, and do not take time to read.

> I wanna take time.... If you want me to read, I wanna read for a long period so I can enjoy it. Graphic novels kind of ruins it 'cause most of the graphic novels right now are from books, and they shorten it and then the writer, the drawer, is depending on what the writer writes and what the drawer visualize(s) in his mind. So I can't visualize anymore 'cause he tells me what to visualize already.

The idea that Jonathan wanted to read for a long period is evidence of his intrinsic motivation. It indicates that he found reading to be intrinsically satisfying, so much so that he wanted to spend a substantial period reading. This statement also shows that Jonathan was an active reader in that he wanted to be able to use strategies such as

visualizing and did not like reading materials that did not afford him the opportunity to do so. Jonathan described his new interest in the 39 Clues series:

> I read the fifth book in one day, the whole book, ’cause I was so interested in it. I just finished another book yesterday and I'm trying to find the seventh book, but it's not in the library yet and I haven't checked out the public library yet ’cause mostly they don't have any ’cause they have one book, like one book of each copy.

In this interview excerpt, Jonathan provided evidence of his intrinsic motivation to read. He shared that he was able to finish an entire book, which was 156 pages long, in one day. He emphasized he was able to read the whole book in a short period because of his high interest in the topic. Guthrie and Wigfield (1997) might relate this type of reading experience to the motivational construct of involvement (or the idea that the reader gets lost in the story). Schiefele and Schaffner (in press) might use their motivational term of absorption (becoming deeply absorbed in a text) to describe Jonathan’s reading experience. Jonathan’s desire to read more shows that topics of texts and personal choice are significant in enhancing reading motivation (Flowerday, Schraw, & Stevens, 2004; Guthrie & Klauda, 2012; Guthrie, van Meter, et al., 1996; Hughes-Hassell & Rodge, 2007; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; O’Brien & Dillon, 2008).

However, Jonathan was not afforded the opportunity to delve deep into a text in his English class. His English class textbook was full of short stories. If he were to read a short story on his own, Jonathan probably would have been able to finish reading it in one class period. In contrast, when the class read a short story, they would do so orally, alternating with Ms. Costa taking the lead on reading aloud and at times having student

volunteers read aloud. It took three entire periods for the class to finish reading a short story. There were times that Ms. Costa would stop and ask questions or provide explanations for some of the ideas in the story. For proficient students like Jonathan, this was likely a much slower pace of reading. In his book *Readicide*, Gallagher (2009) claims that one of the ways in which teachers are contributing to the decline of students' love of reading is the practice of taking apart texts in minute portions, such that students are not able to get into the flow of reading. This is especially important to keep in mind for a reader like Jonathan, who got involved with the texts. He needed to be able to experience flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), or the idea of getting lost in a text. It is hard to do this when there are stops and questions after every couple of paragraphs.

When I asked Jonathan how he used reading as a way to learn in his English class, he provided the following statement:

> When we read a story she [Ms. Costa] takes a break, explain why, and she use some of her experience to explain... give us some fun facts that we want to learn, and those are really helpful to help me understand why that happened.

Thus, it seems that for Jonathan's perspective, the breaks in reading helped him understand the story. He didn't mind that reading was broken up into shorter segments. As a former ELL, Jonathan probably appreciated the elaboration that Ms. Costa provided because this helped facilitated his comprehension of the academic texts they read in English class.

Series/Genre. As was alluded to in the previous section, Jonathan was very motivated to read books by his favorite authors or that were part of a series. When he was in the fifth grade, he loved to read Rick Riordan books, and as a middle schooler he still

enjoyed reading Riordan's books. He continued to read the two new trilogies (the Heroes of Olympus series and Red Pyramid series) that Riordan released since the highly popular Percy Jackson series, which was Jonathan's favorite series in the fifth grade. Jonathan also enjoyed the Alex Rider series, by Anthony Horowitz, which represented his favorite genre of action and adventure books. Jonathan stated the importance of genre and series to his reading engagement:

> What I specifically love is more like action, but then I wanna have a series after it. So I don't wanna read a single book and just leave me hanging. I don't like stuff which leave me hanging and I wanna have a nice end or I can read on and on and on until I kind of know everything about it and then I stop.

This statement reemphasizes the importance of time for Jonathan's motivation to read. Similar to his statement about not wanting to read graphic novels because they are easy and fast to read, the idea of having to read books in a series shows Jonathan's desire to really invest his time, thinking, and emotions in reading. Reading all of the books in a series requires dedication and investment on the reader's part (Guthrie, 2011). When Jonathan exhausted all the books in a series, he would look for other series that he could then read. For example, toward the end of the school year, Jonathan shared his interest in the 39 Clues series. As previously mentioned, he would actively seek out copies of the books in the series and devour each one. He also monitored when his favorite authors were scheduled to release their new books, and he made sure he was one of the first to borrow these books from the school library or public library.

Compliance. Jonathan was the focal student who had the most neutral attitude about academic reading. Rather than being intrinsically motivated to read required

sections of his textbooks, he seemed to be motivated to read out of compliance. In other words, he was reading his textbooks because of an "external goal or requirement" (Wigfield, 1997, p. 23). He read the textbook requirements because he knew doing so would be necessary to reap the rewards of high grades. In this section, I provide several examples wherein Jonathan repeatedly mentioned he needed to read textbooks so that he would earn a better grade in his classes.

Although he did not necessarily enjoy reading textbooks in his content-area classes, Jonathan did know that in order for him to do well academically, he would need to read the assigned portions of the textbook. As he explained, "Those books I don't have specific interest in it. I'm just reading it for [completion] of schoolwork and just reading for a grade. I don't love it, neither do I hate it. I'm just reading it." This statement highlights his neutral attitude about reading for school. He realized it was something he needed to do if he wanted to do well in school.

Despite his desire to do well in school, Jonathan did not have a positive attitude toward textbooks. He said, "You look at the size and the pages, it just gets you scared and when I get scared it gets me bored 'cause it's just words, words, words. Mostly it's true facts, and true facts sometimes get really boring." Even though he found textbook reading boring, his motivation to read these texts stemmed from the importance he placed in attaining high grades. Jonathan's case confirms Guthrie, Wigfield, and Klauda's (2012) assertion that even high-achieving students find textbooks dry and boring.

Jonathan also mentioned the idea that textbooks are "scary," and indeed the thickness, volume, and content of textbooks in content-area classes is intimidating to many secondary students (Guthrie et al., 2012). The ubiquitous use of textbooks at the

middle school level could be a major factor in contributing to the decline in students' reading motivation (Guthrie & Davis, 2003). Even though Jonathan did not enjoy reading textbooks for his classes, he still did so but only because he might receive a bad grade if he did not complete the reading assignment.

Selena: So when you have a reading in school you always do it?

Jonathan: Yeah, 'cause I wanna get a good grade, but for real, if I don't like it, it's really hard to do it. I mean, it's like focusing your mind in liking the book but you know you don't like it.

Jonathan was able to muster enough motivation to get through assigned reading, but he needed to exert considerable effort in order to accomplish this. He tried to focus on the textbook because he wanted to excel and not fall behind in his classes even though the topics and/or texts were not interesting for him.

Even a student like Jonathan, who performed well academically, struggled at times with understanding the content in textbooks. For instance, he admitted that in science class, he mostly learned the information from his teacher and not from the textbook. As he explained, "It's pretty hard to read a whole textbook with, like, specific details and actually understand them 'cause most of the textbooks for science are really complicated, to me at least." Despite the difficulty of the language in textbooks, Jonathan said that for the most part he read the assigned sections so that he could learn the content.

Textbooks are the most dominantly used reading materials in middle school, and these texts require students to use higher order comprehension skills and reasoning (Guthrie et al., 2012; Guthrie & Klauda, 2012). In order to motivate adolescents to read more informational texts, one of the practices that Guthrie and Klauda (2012) suggest is

to provide supplementary texts or materials, especially in cases when the textbook is too challenging for students. Even though Jonathan was exited out of the ESL program, he was still continually developing his English proficiency. He would have benefitted from having supplementary materials to read that would help bridge his comprehension of difficult portions of the textbook. Another result of using supplementary materials would likely be higher interest levels from students because these materials break up the monotony of using only the textbook (Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Guthrie & Klauda, 2012).

As indicated by the quote at the beginning of this dissertation, Jonathan articulated that he realized a good reader reads for the purpose of learning, even if the reading might not necessarily always be pleasurable. Although it is positive that Jonathan completed the assigned reading for his classes and he understood that reading is a way to learn, it is problematic that he was doing so out of compliance. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Jonathan could be intrinsically motivated to read when given interesting materials. However, the bulk of the academic reading he had to do was from textbooks, which Jonathan found intimidating, even though he was a proficient reader based on both Ms. Costa's observations and the QRI assessment discussed later in the chapter. Jonathan was still an engaged reader as a seventh grader, but how long could he sustain being motivated out of compliance?

A noteworthy point to consider is that when Jonathan was younger, he also read because of compliance. As mentioned earlier, he hated to read when he first arrived in the United States. He did not even like to read for pleasure. However, he was required by his parents to read, and thus he read 30 to 45 minutes a day. In this case, reading out of

compliance resulted in Jonathan finding books that he liked, and he ultimately became intrinsically motivated to read. Although complying with his parents' requirement resulted in him becoming an intrinsically motivated reader in terms of reading for pleasure, we have yet to see whether his compliance for academic reading will also result in the same positive outcome.

In this section, I illustrated the multidimensionality of Jonathan's motivation to read. His motivation varied depending on the purpose and types of texts he was reading. Although he was intrinsically motivated to read texts for pleasure, Jonathan provided a neutral attitude in reading academic texts and completed his school reading tasks out of a sense of compliance, a disposition that may or may not be tenable for him as he advances, academically, through high school and beyond.

Strategic Knowledge

In my previous study, I reported that Jonathan had high levels of perceived competence about reading based on his own self-evaluation (Protacio, 2010). In this dissertation study, I administered the QRI-5 to obtain information about his comprehension abilities and strategic knowledge. This assessment provided a more complete picture of his engagement with texts. In this section, I describe Jonathan's strategic knowledge based on the think-aloud portion of the QRI assessments.

According to Ms. Costa, she spent a substantial amount of time at the beginning of the school year teaching her students six active reading strategies, among them visualizing and making connections. In one of the interviews, Ms. Costa emphasized that throughout the earlier part of the year, she made sure to consistently incorporate reading strategies in her English lessons. She also used the gradual release of responsibility model

(Duke et al., 2011; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) to model to her students how these strategies should be used. Thus, her students should have become familiar with using reading strategies. Indeed, Jonathan seemed to have a good grasp of the different reading comprehension strategies, and he clearly used many strategies on the QRI comprehension assessments.

Based on the results of the QRI word recognition lists, Jonathan was reading independently at the upper middle school level. He consistently did well on the comprehension sections of the passages that were administered at this level. When asked the comprehension questions without the opportunity to look back at the text, Jonathan would score at the instructional level in terms of comprehension, which indicated he could read these texts with some support. For the three passages in which he was able to look back, his comprehension improved to the independent level.

While I had Jonathan silently read the passages, he was asked to think aloud and describe his thoughts as he was reading. His think-aloud statements were brief. He rarely said more than two sentences during each think-aloud instance. However, he used a wide range of comprehension strategies. There were 41 separate instances of comprehension strategy use throughout the four comprehension passages (see Table 4). Specifically, he made inferences, made connections, and made emotional connections to the text. Although he did not use these as frequently, it is also important to note Jonathan's use of higher order comprehension skills such as synthesizing and evaluating.

Table 4

Frequency and Examples of Jonathan's Comprehension Strategy Use

Comprehension Strategy	Number	Percentage	Example From Think-Aloud
Making inferences	11	29	These people spread their culture here and I guess that's why the United States is so cultural and diversified 'cause of these immigrants spreading their own culture around.
Making emotional connections	8	20	I feel really sad about it, about that part 'cause people were chased out for their belief and that's not nice for someone no matter what and second of you have to give them some freedom to do whatever they want.
Making connections	7	17	Looks like lots of people like me, trying to be American and the hardest part was learning, writing, [and] reading English.
Paraphrasing	6	15	He's reading a huge long dictionary and started copying each word.
Monitoring	2	5	I don't really understand this part but I think she's trying to find an opportunity to escape.
Questioning	2	5	I was just thinking about why a million immigrants came here and who are they and why they come between the period 1866 and 1915 and not earlier or later.
Clarifying	2	5	I reread it again. I guess now I kinda get it.

Table 4 (cont'd)

Evaluating	1	2	This is, I guess this is kinda like the paragraph before. To me, it should be together.
Summarizing	1	2	And even though she got her wealth she did not turn into the white people back then. She actually gave her wealth out helped other people and she supported a lot of people.
Synthesizing	1	2	I guess before this paragraph, it's all about the bad things and on this side it gives all the things that's needed for these poor people. If you want money there's money. If you want freedom, there's freedom. And they give everything that on the push side they don't have and that's why people come, I guess.

In this section, I provide extended examples of Jonathan's think-alouds and responses to the comprehension questions in order to present a more vivid description of his strategy use. For one of the narrative passages, Jonathan read about Biddy Mason, a former slave who was able to secure her freedom by petitioning a Los Angeles court. She went on to have a career as a nurse, and she devoted her life to helping others. One of the comprehension questions for this passage was "Why do you think the author chose to write a biography of Biddy Mason?" Jonathan provided the following response:

> 'Cause she is a courageous woman. She gave up safety for freedom, and she risked some dangers to tell the sheriff that "I want to be free." And she's lucky she didn't get hurt and she actually took the chance and she wanted to be free. She didn't give up.

There are several positive aspects of Jonathan's response. First, he was able to

draw conclusions from the passage. The author did not use the term courageous in the text. Jonathan concluded this based on what he read about her. Second, he provided specific details from the text to support his claim that she was courageous. Finally, he was able to provide his own evaluation of her situation by saying, “She’s lucky she didn’t get hurt.” This statement shows Jonathan was aware of how special Biddy’s situation was during this time, and he made inferences about her plight throughout the passage.

Another strategy that Jonathan used was monitoring. After reading a paragraph in the Biddy Mason passage, he said, “I don't really understand this part, but I think she's trying to find an opportunity to escape.” In this instance, Jonathan realized he did not understand what he was reading. He later said he used the fix-up strategy of rereading the paragraph to improve his comprehension.

Two of the passages that Jonathan decided to read for the QRI assessments were centered on immigration. After reading a paragraph about the assimilation process that many immigrants went through, Jonathan commented in his think-aloud, “Looks like lots of people like me, trying to be American and the hardest part was learning, writing, [and] reading English.” On a basic level, his statement indicates that he was making a text-to-self connection, relating the experiences of those he was reading about to his own immigration experience. But his statement was also telling in that he said he was “trying to be American.” This is a theme that was consistent across his think-aloud statements for these two immigration passages and through interviews.

As another example, assimilation was a topic that was discussed in the second immigration passage. After reading about assimilation, Jonathan commented, “That's what I'm doing right now, I guess. I'm trying to be American style ’cause, yeah, to

change, to be in the American style ’cause you don't wanna be the oddball I guess.” As he read this passage, Jonathan was making an explicit connection between the assimilation of the immigrants in the passage to his own process of assimilating to the American culture and trying to become more American. These examples also provide specific evidence for the assertion made in this chapter’s introduction that Jonathan was trying to negotiate his bicultural identity.

Connections could also be made with transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1994). Rosenblatt notes, “The meaning does not reside within the text or within the reader. Rather it is constructed through the interaction between the reader and text” (p. 1369). Jonathan brought his own experiences, apprehensions, and feelings to this text. Even though it was written as an informational text, it evoked emotions in him because the issues being described, such as the assimilation process, were issues that he grappled with.

Overall, Jonathan was more engaged in reading the two informational passages about immigration compared to the narrative passages about Malcolm X and Biddy Mason. Unsurprisingly, the immigration passages were more interesting to him because of his own experiences immigrating to and assimilating in America. Jonathan’s comprehension of the immigration passages, in particular, was so rich because he approached these texts from the perspective of deep personal experiences that he likely utilized to aid his understanding.

More important, results of Jonathan’s performance on the QRI comprehension assessments confirm that ELLs who are good readers use multiple comprehension strategies (Jimenez, 1997; Jimenez et al., 1995). Not only did he consistently use

comprehension strategies, but he also used a range of strategies, which is a mark of a strategic reader (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Duke et al., 2011). In the following section, I discuss the kinds of knowledge that Jonathan gained through reading, especially when he was particularly engaged with a task, text, or topic.

Constructing Meaning From Texts

The reading engagement perspective emphasized that engaged readers use reading as a venue for learning (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Reading should be knowledge driven, and engaged readers are those who want to gain information through reading. Jonathan was the focal student who was most intent on acquiring knowledge through reading. Overall, he realized that reading is used for learning. He recognized that reading is fun and enjoyable and consistently engaged in leisure reading, but he also understood that it is through reading that he can continue to learn.

> I just wanna read as much as I can and learn as much as I can ’cause I have lots to learn. I guess to me, I don’t have a specific area [that I want to read]. I feel that I’m just proceeding [in] every area one step at a time ’cause the book, I guess I read all kinds of books. I don’t think I’m missing anything, neither do I have anything [I’m] strong at.

Jonathan was able to effectively and confidently express his conceptual knowledge. Toward the end of the school year, Ms. Costa decided to develop a unit on mythology. For the introduction of this unit, she provided a visual representation of the various mythological characters. Throughout the unit, students were exposed to multiple Greek myths. Given Jonathan’s interest in the Percy Jackson and Heroes of Olympus series, he was excited. He not only showed higher levels of motivation for the readings in

his English class during the mythology unit, but he was able to fully express his understanding of the different myths that they were reading in class. For example, during one of my classroom observations, Ms. Costa handed out two myths about Pandora and Prometheus that the students read silently in class. During our interview the next day, I asked Jonathan to tell me about what he learned from the myths he had just read.

> Prometheus, that's how a man came to be. ’Cause Prometheus created man. Epimetheus created animals. So that's the story in how Prometheus stole fire from the God and gave it to humans. He was punished and he was hanged on the top of some mountain and a vulture will scoop his liver every day and the liver will grow back. That's why human liver grows back and that's how a liver will regrow came and so the vulture would scoop his liver every day ’cause it will grow back. And then the next story is about Pandora's box. It's about they created the first woman and that was a gift Zeus gave to Epimetheus to punish the humans. But he gave him a gift as a good gift. He gave Pandora two things: curiosity and a box that's sealed and he told her to never open it. She wants to open it so badly. One day she opened it when she was married to Epimetheus and everything came out—it’s disease, envy, jealousy, revenge. The only thing left inside was hope. ’Cause hope is the one [thing] that's inside every human, and all the other things that got out it's around the world. And so that's why now people, no matter what happens, if you have hope that'll be it. ’Cause hope is the only thing that she can control and that's what we can control. ’Cause you can't control diseases or revenge—like you can't control the thought of revenge. And that's sorta how it came to be.

In the preceding example, Jonathan was able to provide many details about what he read and was able to clearly describe the myths. This extensive response was typical for Jonathan when I asked him questions about what he had learned during the mythology unit. This was a stark contrast to his usually curt responses during the think-aloud portion of the QRI assessment. Also, he had typically provided short responses when I had previously asked him about projects and readings in other content areas. In his extended responses to questions about his readings for the mythology unit, both his motivation and comprehension were evident.

The final project for the mythology unit was for students to pick a mythological figure, write a paper, and prepare a presentation to share with the entire class. Other students in the class were eager to write about mythological figures who were more well known, such as Zeus or Aphrodite, but Jonathan chose to write about the Fates. To gather information on the Fates, he consulted approximately 12 websites on Greek mythology. After poring over these websites, Jonathan said that, compared to the other gods in Greek mythology, the Fates were “outstanding.”

> ’Cause they're, like, they're the Fates. They control the people. They affect mortals' life more than gods' life and they're not in any, I guess.... All the mythology mostly are with love, fighting. They're not in any of those. They're just little side characters that controls every human being [and] even some of the gods. I mean even though they’re not in lots of mythology, they're actually the power one ’cause they actually controls everything. They just don't say it ’cause, they don't say it in mythology ’cause they don't involve in any love or they don't involve any fighting ’cause they don't fight and neither do they love.

This explanation illustrated that Jonathan was able to summarize and synthesize the information he had acquired through his Internet research about the Fates. In addition, he was able to provide a solid rationale for his initial statement of why the Fates were "outstanding." As he explained, rather than dealing with a ubiquitous topic such as love, the Fates deal more with the idea of power in that they decide when mortals' lives end.

When students are able to explore multiple texts and have to integrate information from multiple sources, they are more likely to develop higher order reasoning and comprehension skills (Guthrie & Klauda, 2012). By reading across texts, students commonly notice inconsistencies with information that they have read (Guthrie & Klauda, 2012). This is something that occurred with Jonathan during the mythology unit. He said that in order to gather information for his project, he looked at 12 websites and found contrasting information. Jonathan explained, "This is a bad part about Greek Mythology is [that] it's uncertain. Some say they [the Fates] control mortals. Some say they control mortals and Gods, so I really don't know." The following is his elaboration of the process that he undertook to acquire information about the Fates.

> I searched it on Google, "the Fates." I looked through about 12 different sites. It says that the Greek mythology is 2,000 years ago or 3,000 years ago. At that time, all these myths are passed down from generation to generation to generation, so it could change. That's why there's so much version of the story and I don't know who it is. So some say they're the daughters of Zeus and Themes. Some say they're the daughter of Nyx. Some say they're just created out of nowhere. Some say they are born out of the underworld. Lots of people say different things. And I found 12, 13, 14 stories and I have to try pick which is most commonly said.

’Cause some of the websites are reports that they research over from the site other. So it's kinda like I'm reading someone else's paper, but they research in the same website I'm researching and I know. So I'm just trying to pick the common ones.

A few things are worth noting from this interview excerpt. It is evident that Jonathan used higher order comprehension skills when he was researching information. On the most basic level, he was able to understand the content of the websites that he was exploring for information and easily recall all of the information that he read. More importantly, he was able to evaluate the content and sift through the information. For example, he recognized that a few websites reported exactly the same information, and thus he looked for corroborating information to determine which information he should trust as the most commonly reported version of each story. He was also able to distinguish between primary and secondary sources. Given his understanding of the content, Jonathan recognized that some of the websites he had read were simply based on other websites he had already visited. His elaboration through his research process indicated that Jonathan was able to use reading, and in this case reading digital texts, as a way to acquire information. He did so as an active reader by using higher order comprehension strategies such as synthesizing and evaluating.

As part of the mythology project, the students were also asked to prepare a brief presentation to explain to their classmates what they learned about the mythological character on whom they focused. When it was his time to present, Jonathan confidently went to the front of the class and started presenting in a loud voice. He also brought props, such as scissors and string, to illustrate who the Fates were. Jonathan was the first

presenter who was able to get his classmates to laugh through his presentation. He told me that in order to prepare for the presentation, he looked over all the articles he had read and picked out the key points and worked from there to try to inject some humor into his presentation. Jonathan wanted to make his presentation humorous to ease his nerves. Below is Jonathan's reflection of his presentation.

> I guess I explained my idea well. What's sloppy is I think I talked too much that I'm confusing everyone, and I just left out some parts. I mean, mostly I think everyone got the idea what I'm trying to say.

Jonathan was able to effectively provide a self-reflection of his presentation, although he could have been more specific about the content. His presentation was definitely entertaining for his classmates, and Ms. Costa said that his enthusiasm was apparent. However, she noted, "I think he was very focused on how he was saying something instead of what he was saying." She said he could have been more focused on the content of his presentation; instead, he seemed to be concentrating on his classmates' perceptions of his presentation style. Nevertheless, in the last two interviews, Jonathan spent a substantial amount of time sharing what he had learned from the mythological unit. Although he had some background on mythology because of his obsession with the Percy Jackson series, there were still several myths with which he was unfamiliar.

> Selena: So what's something new that you learned aside from who Cronus is or Epimetheus is? What are some things that you found interesting so far about this unit?
>
> Jonathan: All the myths, I guess. They're really interesting, like how human come to be. And we just read this about Percius and how he came to be, and killed his

> father and all that. It's interesting ’cause that's kinda like how we came to be. It explains lots of the things, and I guess it's cool ’cause you feel like you know how everything is now. You know why there's human, you know why there's animal, and why humans are smarter than animals. Though those are all myths, they're still pretty cool.

Jonathan’s enthusiasm and interest in the mythology unit were evident. He had many more responses to and explanations of the myths that showed his detailed understanding of the ideas that were being presented in English class during this unit. As he mentioned in the previous example, although he realized that what they were learning were all simply myths, it was still interesting for him to learn these and understand the origin of things.

In this section, I discussed Jonathan’s ability to acquire information through reading, although this varied depending on his interest level. When he was interested in the topic, he was able to provide extended responses that indicated a thorough understanding of the texts that he was reading in and for class.

Social Interactions

In this section, I discuss the ways in which Jonathan engaged in social interactions around texts. Social interactions typically indicate collaboration, but this was not the case with Jonathan. He had two types of social interactions in the English classroom: (1) “helping” others and (2) seeking support from his teacher. Although Jonathan mentioned that he sometimes engaged in casual conversations with classmates about books, the idea of book discussions or being part of a reading community did not seem to be a prominent theme. Jonathan mentioned that he and his close friends rarely talked about books.

Providing "help" for peers. Jonathan seemed to be the one that his peers went to for help, particularly in his math and English classes. His science teacher even recognized him for helping his peers by nominating Jonathan as one of the Students of the Month earlier in the school year. Ideally, providing help would indicate that Jonathan was teaching his classmates how to better understand the content through modeling or coaching, but I did not observe this happening in the classroom. In these interactions when Jonathan was helping others, he often was providing the answer rather than coaching his peers to get the correct answer. Part of the problem might have been the types of tasks in which the students were engaging.

The types of tasks typically given in his English class were closed tasks, "those in which either the product (e.g., there is one correct answer), the process (e.g., sound out the word), or both were specified" (Turner & Paris, 1995, p. 664). An example of a closed task is a worksheet because the answers are already predetermined. Thus, closed tasks do not really afford collaboration to occur.

In the following vignette, I describe Jonathan's interaction with a fellow student during pair work in Ms. Costa's English class. Ms. Costa told the class that after working independently for 15 minutes, they could work with a partner to answer the questions on the worksheet she handed out. Charlie, a Caucasian student, asked Jonathan to be his partner. Jonathan agreed and came over to sit by Charlie. Fortunately, I had been sitting behind Charlie at the time, so I was able to overhear their conversation.

> Jonathan asks Charlie what number he is now on, and Charlie says he has been skipping through the items and answering the ones he knows. Jonathan says that he is on number 9. The two are sharing a book and both of them are looking at the

text and finding the answer. Charlie tries to answer one of the questions and Jonathan corrects him and says, “It was a nightmare actually. That’s what it says in the book.” They go back to work. Charlie was whisper reading the text as he tries to figure out the answer to one of the questions. Charlie says to Jonathan, “OK, I’m on number 6. We’re not even working together. You’re ahead.” Jonathan replies, “I’m trying to slow down so you can catch up.” For the next couple of minutes, Charlie would say something and then Jonathan would clarify. (Field notes, April, 2012).

Several observations and inferences can be made based on this vignette. First, although Charlie and Jonathan were supposed to be working together, they were not necessarily doing so. Instead, they seemed to be playing varying roles. Jonathan assumed the role of helper or the more knowledgeable other (Vygotsky, 1978), whereas Charlie was the one being supported. Seemingly, Jonathan decided these roles; Charlie wanted to be on equal footing and work together. Charlie even wanted Jonathan to stop working for a while so he could catch up. Instead, Jonathan kept on working and their discussions were not really about co-constructing knowledge. In this instance, they were not working together. Rather, Jonathan seemed to be supporting and correcting Charlie and providing the answer.

In another class session later in the semester, students were supposed to be independently filling out a worksheet identifying the different gods in Greek mythology. Wesley, one of Jonathan’s close friends, kept whispering in a loud voice asking Jonathan for help. There were some other boys in the class who also were asking Jonathan

questions as they were filling out the worksheet. Jonathan would give them a short response and then get back to work and resume writing his responses.

When I asked Jonathan about these instances of his classmates asking him for help, he replied, “I'm always [the] helper guy, I guess. That's how most people know me.” Jonathan recalled that it started off with him shouting out correct answers in math class. People then knew that he was someone who did well in math, and they started asking him for help. This then spread to people asking him for support in other subjects, too. In the instance above, Jonathan explained that Wesley and other students were asking about the mythological figures that were being asked for in the worksheet. In all of my observations, I noticed that it was always his peers asking Jonathan for support and never the other way around. It could be inferred that one of Jonathan’s motives for participating in social interactions was so he could serve the role of the more knowledgeable other.

More importantly, Jonathan rarely received help from this peers. He recounted an experience in his English class, when he and a partner were supposed to review one another’s paper:

> I had a not very good working partner for my research paper when revising. He revised two word(s). I revised his whole paper. That didn't really help me, so I had to find Ms. Costa for help. Ms. Costa, she gave a bunch of... she graded my paper really good and she made a lot of revision. It took me an hour to change all of them.

In this explanation, Jonathan recognized that group members are not always on equal footing and not everyone exerts the same amount of effort. Rather then prodding

his partner for more feedback, Jonathan instead resorted to asking his teacher for her comments and revisions.

Jonathan seemed to relish his role of being the more knowledgeable student when working with others. When I asked him whether he minded helping others, he replied, “I feel really proud ’cause I'm from another country and people are asking me for help, especially in English. It's sweet.” Jonathan felt pleased that despite not growing up in the United States he was able to perform well academically and help others. This offered him a position of higher status. His role as the more knowledgeable student boosted his self-confidence and provided him with a space where he felt wanted and accepted by his peers, especially those who benefitted from the academic support.

A noteworthy point to consider is that several of Jonathan’s friends were not as dedicated to their academics as he was. This is something that Ms. Costa brought up in one of our interviews. She said she found it troubling that Jonathan was hanging out with students who did not seem to care about their academics or those who would act up in class. One day, the class was watching an animated film based on The Odyssey. Ms. Costa gave the students an opportunity to change seats and sit with their friends. Jonathan and his friends, Wesley, Justin, and Ron, quickly scrambled to get the seats at the back of the classroom. Throughout the 45 minutes in which the class was watching the movie, Justin and Wesley whispered loudly to one another. Meanwhile, Jonathan was focused on the video, stopping only to take notes on the sheet that Ms. Costa had provided. When I brought this up with Ms. Costa in an interview, she said Jonathan was adept at tuning out his friends during class time, especially when they were off task. However, she expressed

concern and said she hoped Jonathan could sustain this focus so he would not pick up bad habits from his friends in the future.

More importantly, the findings point to a lack of meaningful interactions, which is problematic considering that social motivation had been prominent in Jonathan's reading motivation when he was a fifth grader. In my previous research, I found that he regularly engaged in book discussions with his American classmates. This was due in part to integrative motivation. When Jonathan tried to share something he enjoyed and found humorous with his Chinese friends, they snubbed his enthusiasm about the book. They also accused him of becoming "too American" because he primarily read American books. These instances caused Jonathan to seek out American classmates with whom he could participate in book discussions (Protacio, 2010). However, now that Jonathan had a group of American friends, they were not having discussions around books. It brings up the question of how long integrative motivation would be relevant for ELLs. Perhaps integrative motivation could initially motivate ELLs to read in English, but once they have been in the United States for a substantial period, then other factors need to be present in order for their reading motivation to be sustained. Also, as Gee (1996) points out, individuals are shaped by their inclusion in social groups. In Jonathan's social circle, reading was not an important part of their Discourse. Therefore, interacting around texts was not something that Jonathan and his friends regularly did. Perhaps integrative motivation would still play a role in Jonathan's reading motivation and engagement if his friends were also engaged readers. Unfortunately, his close friends were not readers.

Support for reading. Jonathan frequently sought support from Ms. Costa for writing his papers and completing his projects. Ms. Costa cultivated a classroom

environment wherein students felt comfortable approaching her to ask questions or solicit feedback on their work. There were several work sessions during which I observed a queue of students, Jonathan among them, waiting for their turn to interact with Ms. Costa.

There were three sessions wherein Ms. Costa reserved the computers in the library so that students could conduct their research for the mythology project. During the first day, I observed Jonathan sitting with his friends from class. Some of them were just chatting while sitting in front of the computer, but Jonathan was actively looking things up on the computer and poring through various websites to obtain information about the Fates. I would then see him go up to Ms. Costa to ask a question. Later in the week, when his friends were then just starting to gather information, Jonathan had already finished his paper. He went to Ms. Costa and asked her for her formative feedback on the paper. He then handed me another copy of the paper and asked me if I would not mind also providing comments on it. By the next day, he had considered our feedback and revised his paper. While his classmates were still working on the first drafts of their paper, Jonathan had completed his revisions and was then focusing on the artistic representation of the project. These examples illustrate that Jonathan was a highly focused and organized learner. He did not want to rush his school projects, so he planned his tasks efficiently to ensure that he would have opportunities to seek teacher feedback.

Also, as mentioned earlier in this section, when Jonathan was unable to get support from peer revisions, he would approach his teacher for comments. Approaching Ms. Costa was something he consistently did throughout the school year. Jonathan said he initially tried to figure things out on his own, but he always wanted to make sure he clearly comprehended the questions or tasks ahead of him.

> Well, I try to figure out. If I don't figure out or I'm not sure, especially something I'm not sure of, I'm not gonna take the risk. I don't gamble a lot on teacher's reaction ’cause if I gamble, mostly I'm wrong. So I go up and ask.

Because Jonathan had high expectations of himself as a student, he did not want to risk getting a bad grade. Thus, he approached Ms. Costa so that the expectations were clearly defined. Ms. Costa confirmed that Jonathan was a student who consistently asked questions and requested feedback. More important, he put forth the effort to make revisions to his projects based on her feedback. For instance, students read the short story “Monsters Are Due on Maple Street.” After reading it together as a class, they spent two class periods watching two videos depicting this story. Students were then asked to write a compare-and-contrast essay about the two videos. Ms. Costa scaffolded their learning about how to write this type of essay by providing templates, which helped students organize their ideas. Jonathan finished the draft of this essay a couple of days before the deadline and asked Ms. Costa to read through it and provide comments. She described the interaction that occurred when she was providing feedback on this paper:

> He was verbalizing it when we were talking through it. He could tell me the differences and he could tell me how to word it, but it wasn’t written like that on his draft. [Also] he would make a claim, which is great, but he didn’t really have a lot of examples. He was very big on run-on sentences. And he understands what they are. I think it’s just a habit of doing them. His ideas were there. So we were just working together on, he said something, like a sentence, and I said, “Beautiful. Write that down. That’s exactly it.”

In these interactions, Ms. Costa would ask Jonathan questions based on his draft,

and he was able to verbally articulate his ideas. Based on this, She provided suggestions on how to improve his paper, such as providing more examples, including more transition words, and fixing run-on sentences. According to Ms. Costa, Jonathan took detailed notes on the feedback she provided. The next day, he was able to submit his paper based on her feedback on his draft.

In this example, Ms. Costa was modeling to Jonathan what a positive social interaction around support should like look, in which there is coaching and feedback rather than explicit answers being given outright. Despite Jonathan's constant interactions with Ms. Costa in which he was given support, he was not able to translate the coaching stance that she modeled for him in the social interactions wherein he was helping his peers.

In this section, I described how Jonathan participated in social interactions around reading. In peer interactions, he took on the role of the helper, providing support to his peers to perhaps make up for his perceived feeling of "being different." Jonathan did not get support for reading from his peers, and instead he decided to approach his teacher for support.

Jonathan: A Seemingly Engaged Reader

By all accounts, Jonathan was a very engaged reader. He was motivated to read, used numerous strategies when reading, and comprehended what he read. However, he did not engage in the types of social interactions expected of an engaged reader because he did not regularly participate in discussions of texts.

When he was able to read for pleasure, Jonathan invested time and effort in reading entire series of books, showing his dedication and motivation to read. However,

despite being a good comprehender, Jonathan did not derive the same kind of pleasure from academic reading for his classes. He was forthcoming about doing his reading for his classes out of a sense of compliance rather than actual interest in the texts. Certainly, in Jonathan's case, being compliant was related to the extrinsic motivator of grades. This begs the question: How can educators better engage students with academic reading?

For the most part, Jonathan exhibited the behaviors of an engaged reader identified by Taboada and McElvany (2009) in that he had topic preferences, genre interests, reading habits, and enthusiasm. Indeed, compared to the three other focal students, Jonathan was the one who had the least negative attitude toward academic reading. However, it is concerning that he was not particularly engaged with academic reading. This finding is similar to that of Guthrie et al. (2012), who found that even high-achieving students thought academic reading was a "waste of time" because these texts were dull and unrelated to their lives. Given the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, students will have to be more exposed to more academic reading, such as informational texts, in order to meet these higher standards. The CCSS highlights even more the importance of finding ways to better engage learners with academic reading.

Jonathan had high levels of intrinsic motivation to read leisure texts such as the books in the *39 Clues* series. These were books he could not get enough of, enjoying them so much he would finish reading an entire book in just one day. How can that kind of intrinsic motivation be cultivated for academic reading? One of the hurdles is the presence of the textbook, which often is not written in an engaging manner because its main purpose is to provide information. Thus, in middle school classrooms, teachers have to consider not only the texts that are bring read but also how they are being read.

One of the most engaging tasks for Jonathan in his English class was the mythology project, which had several positive aspects. First, the mythology project was what Turner (1995) would identify as an open task. Ms. Costa allowed students to choose not only the topic of their paper and presentation but also what texts they would consult. Students were able to use multiple texts to find out as much as they could about their topic. Students needed to evaluate the information they found and synthesize ideas across these multiple texts. Through the research process, students learned about their topic by comprehending the texts they were reading. In general, students are more motivated to complete open tasks because they have more autonomy compared to closed tasks for which there is only one correct answer or one correct way of completing the task (Turner & Paris, 1995). This certainly rang true in Jonathan's case. He was very engaged with the mythology project because it allowed him to explore a topic that was interesting to him. The task also presented a moderate challenge for Jonathan. Specifically, he had to look at several sources of information, comprehend the texts, evaluate the information, and synthesize what he learned in order to write a paper and give a presentation.

In sum, for the most part, Jonathan was an engaged reader. However, there are two areas in which his engagement could be improved. First, pedagogical strategies need to be found to encourage him to become more intrinsically motivated to read academic texts. Second, there needs to be more opportunities for Jonathan to participate in meaningful interactions around texts such that he can be part of a community of readers. These two areas will help sustain his reading engagement as he progresses through the secondary school system.

CHAPTER 4

"I Really Hate This Kind of Reading":

A Case of an Eighth-Grade ELL's Situational Reading Engagement

> During REACH period, I helped Nabila on her social studies homework. It was the kind of assignment that we had worked on in previous days. She had a worksheet with vocabulary words on it, and she had to write the definition of the terms or provide details about the events listed by finding the information from her social studies textbook. She was working fairly independently during this time, but she stopped and asked me a question about a certain term. I said, "Well, why don't we look at what it says." As we were looking at the text and both reading silently, Nabila suddenly said, "I really hate this kind of reading!" She then proceeded to read some of the words in a sarcastic tone. (Field notes, February 2012)

In the above vignette, Nabila, an eighth grader from Afghanistan, presented a negative reaction to reading academic texts. This was a strong contradiction to her positive attitude about reading when she was in the sixth-grade (Protacio, 2012). Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) describe reading motivation as situational and argue that a student is not simply motivated or unmotivated to read. Rather, the situations in which students become motivated or unmotivated readers should be examined.

In this chapter, I describe how Nabila's reading engagement levels fluctuated based on situational factors. In particular, Nabila's reading engagement levels differed based on the types of texts she was reading and her purpose for reading. When she read books for pleasure, Nabila was motivated to read, used multiple higher-order

comprehension strategies more frequently, and engaged in positive social interactions. In contrast, when reading purely academic texts, Nabila was unmotivated, used higher-order comprehension strategies less frequently, and engaged in social interactions for support rather than discussion.

In addition to situational factors, socio-cultural factors such as her identity as a young Muslim girl also influenced different aspects of her reading engagement. Zine (2001) points out that Muslim girls in public schools have to negotiate their identity within "three often conflicting cultural frameworks: the dominant culture, their ethnic culture, and Islam" (p. 404). These intersecting frameworks melded to form Nabila's identity as a reader. In Nabila's case, her identity as a Muslim girl influenced who she engaged with in terms of her social interactions around reading, and it also affected the types of texts which she chose to read.

Getting to Know Nabila

Nabila and her family were originally from Afghanistan, but Nabila spent many years of her childhood in a Pakistan village with fellow Afghans. Nabila's family was granted refugee visas, and they moved to the U.S. when Nabila was in the third grade. Her parents decided that Nabila's mother would take the family to the U.S. so that Nabila and her five siblings could have a better education, while Nabila's father remained in Pakistan. Nabila realized the sacrifice that her parents had made; thus, she strived to do well academically to fulfill her parents' wish of their children to have a good education. When Nabila arrived in the United States, she did not know how to speak any English. During the early days in the U.S., Nabila's older sisters often read English books to her, which influenced Nabila's motivation to learn how to read in English. As Nabila learned

how to read and speak in English, she became a highly motivated reader. In my previous research on ELL reading motivation, I found that Nabila, as a sixth-grader, read primarily for two reasons. First, she read for social reasons so that she could engage in book discussions with her teachers, friends, and siblings. Second, she read for instrumental reasons so that she could learn from reading. Nabila said through reading she could "shop for her mind" (Protacio, 2012), which indicated that she chose her reading materials based on what she wanted to learn. In elementary school, Nabila had very positive relationships with her teachers. She attributed her motivation to her teachers' recommendations of interesting books. Nabila's reading engagement changed once she entered middle school.

Adjusting to Middle School Life

Being an eighth-grader, Nabila had adjusted to the middle school experience in terms of academics. While she enjoyed her Spanish and art classes, Nabila mentioned that she did not enjoy her content-area classes such as science, math, and social studies. When I probed for the reason, rather than commenting on the subject matter in these content-area classes, Nabila explained that she did not feel as though her teachers were very supportive. I did not observe in any of these classes, so I do not have observational data to support or refute Nabila's claims. Nevertheless, this indicates that in Nabila's perception there was less teacher support at the middle school level. Despite this, Nabila was very diligent with her academics. In my observations, when she was able to use free time to work on homework and projects, she made good use of her time. She would also take the initiative and ask for help when she did not understand something that she was

reading. Nabila also noted that middle school had become easier because she was more fluent in English.

Throughout the study, Nabila seemed very invested in her social relationships. When I asked Nabila to reflect at the end of the school year about her middle school experience, her primary focus was on her social standing. She recalled that students whom she thought were her friends in the seventh-grade ignored her and treated her as if she was a "loser" or outsider. Nabila implied that her adherence to religious norms may have affected other students' perceptions of her. As she reflected, "Now that I think about it, I lost a lot of friends, but they weren't true friends, so it doesn't really matter." While Nabila tried to put forth a dismissive façade around her social standing, I could sense that she wanted to be more accepted by her mainstream peers. Nevertheless, Nabila did not conform to the pressure to become more Westernized, and instead stayed grounded in her Muslim identity.

For the most part, Nabila seemed to be very comfortable in her own skin and embraced and accepted that she was not part of the mainstream group. Perhaps Nabila felt, like participants in Zine's (2001) study, that "It was easier to just be with [her] own kind" (p. 412). Her close friends were fellow Muslim girls who were all in the ESL class. While they came from different countries, their adherence to their Muslim faith and desire to do well academically were common denominators within their social circle.

Nabila was extremely committed to adhering to expectations of her Muslim faith. Nabila not only took the customs of her religion very seriously, but she also expected this of her Muslim peers, particularly of other female Muslim students. In fact, there were instances where she seemed to even monitor whether other female Muslim students

abided by their religious customs. On one occasion Nabila noted that a fellow Muslim female wore shorts to school, which under her beliefs was inappropriate attire. In this case, Nabila seemed to take on the role of an enforcer, ensuring that the Muslim students abided by Muslim customs.

There were moments, however, when Nabila's attitude about her social status seemed to fluctuate. During these times, she was concerned with other students' perceptions of her and her religious and cultural background. One afternoon, I was in the library with Nabila and Sanaa and homework help time was almost over. Mrs. Blake came over and Sanaa told Mrs. Blake that her hair was becoming a bit unmanageable. Mrs. Blake turned to me and asked, "Have you seen her (Sanaa's) hair? It's gorgeous." One thing that Mrs. Blake, the ESL teacher, was really consistent about doing with her ELLs was making their culture valued. She always complimented the female Muslim students in her class about their *hijabs*, taking note of the designs. She would say things like, "Is that a new *hijab*? It's beautiful!" or "I love the way your *hijab* matches your outfit today." When I told her that I had not, Mrs. Blake asked both Nabila and Sanaa if they would show me their hair. The girls agreed. We went to Mrs. Blake's classroom, and once away from the door, the girls removed their *hijabs*. I noticed that both Nabila and Sanaa looked very different when their hair was down compared to when they had their *hijabs* on. Mrs. Blake and I complimented both girls on their hair. Nabila then commented, "I wish they [other students] could see me like this." While I did not address it with Nabila at the time, her statement struck a chord with me. The presence of the *hijab* automatically marked Nabila and her friends as different from the mainstream (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

During the following interview, I delved more into this issue with Nabila.

Selena: I really appreciate you and Sanaa for showing me your hair without your *hijab*. One thing I found interesting was when you were like “All the kids in school just see me with a *hijab*. I wish they can see me like this.”

Nabila: Yeah.

Selena: So what made you say that?

Nabila: Because most people think that just because we wear the *hijab* and long clothes and stuff means that we're not pretty or nice or something. They just judge you and if they see that I can look like American too.

Nabila’s explanation indicated that she felt that other students made assumptions about her, both in terms of her physical attributes and her personality, simply because she adhered to the traditional Muslim religious custom in terms of her wardrobe. She wanted students to be able to know her and neither judge nor exclude her because of her *hijab*.

Nevertheless, Nabila appreciated diversity and realized that everyone could not be the same. In the example below, while Nabila was supposed to be responding to a question in a comprehension assessment about immigration, she instead shared her insights about assimilating into the American culture.

Because like it's so funny how if you go to your country, you're so stuck with the way of living there. And when you come here all of a sudden you just look at other people and be like, “I should look like them because maybe they think I'm different and they're too scared to be different cause many people don't like different people.” So they'll just be like “I'll just be the same.” Well, if you're the same then, what's the point of the world?

Through this interaction, I learned that Nabila realized that diversity was a positive thing because as she noted, “If everyone is [sic] the same, then everything would be boring.” Nabila may have also said this because she understood that her mainstream peers might have perceived her as being very different from them. Thus she hoped that they, too, would value diversity rather than embracing conformity. But it also highlighted there were times where Nabila contemplated changing things about her primary Discourse as a Muslim female in order to conform to her secondary Discourse of the school setting. Nabila seemed to be wavering about her identity as she continuously tried to reconcile the customs of her Muslim faith with how she wanted to be perceived by her mainstream peers.

In the larger sociocultural context of Nabila’s school setting, she was struggling to make sense of her social relationships while simultaneously trying to adhere to the customs and norms of her Muslim religion. Nabila’s identity struggle impacted the social interactions around reading in which she participated. As a sixth-grader, Nabila had mentioned that she could start a conversation with anyone about reading. In contrast, as an eighth-grader, Nabila had only a limited circle of people with whom she shared her passion about reading.

Similar to her stance as a sixth-grader, as an eighth-grader Nabila continued to enjoy reading leisure texts. On the other hand, she had extremely negative attitudes about academic reading. Her low levels of academic motivation did not negatively affect her ability to use comprehension strategies or make meanings from texts, as she was able to do both with ease. In terms of her social interactions, Nabila engaged in book discussions with her Muslim friends around texts she read for pleasure, but only consulted adults

when she needed support for her academic reading.

Contradicting Motivations

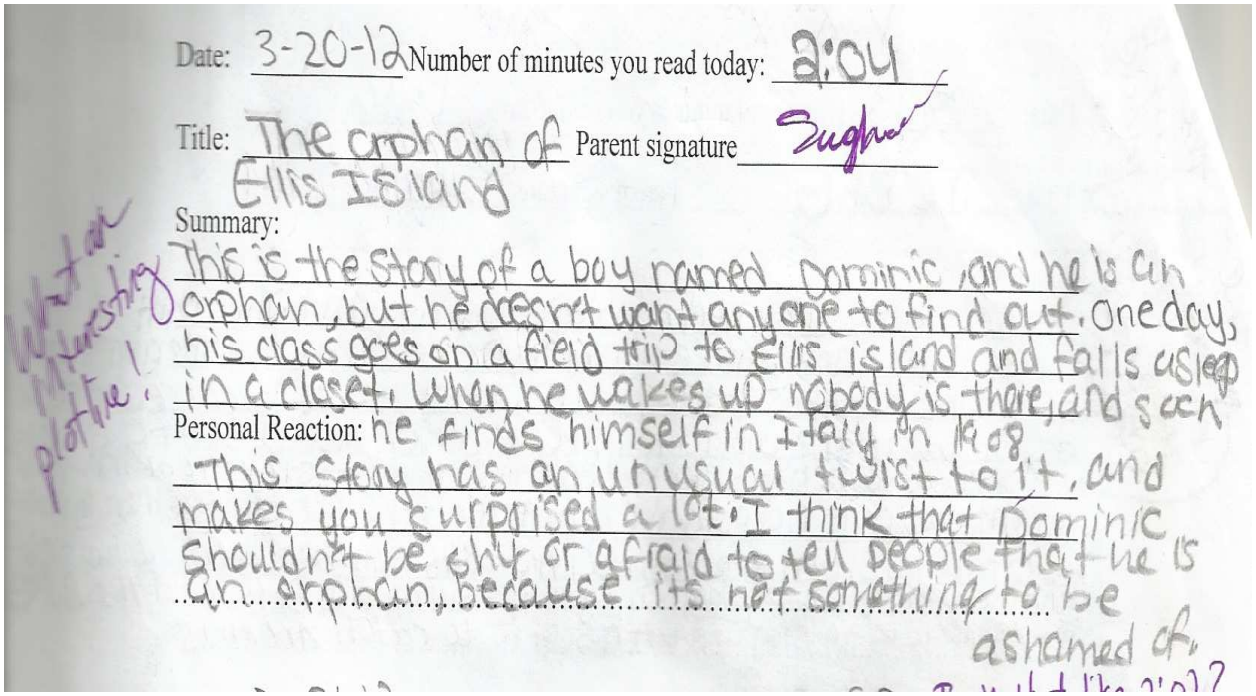
Throughout the time I spent observing and interacting with Nabila in the eighth-grade, it was very evident that she had very strong, contradictory feelings about reading for school versus reading for pleasure. While the statements initially shared in the vignette at the beginning of this chapter may provide the impression that Nabila was unmotivated and disengaged, this was not the case.

Nabila's motivation was highly dependent on the situation and context. For instance, Nabila was highly unmotivated to read the textbooks assigned in her content-area classes.

> Well…I don't know. It's just, it [the textbook] doesn't make it sound exciting or fun or something. You know? It doesn't have anything. I don't know, it's just a list of things. It doesn't really make your mind feel into it. If a book starts with something good that you wanna keep on reading. They need to start, I don't know, they can't make social studies or science fun, I know that for sure.

Yet Nabila was also the focal student who was most intrinsically motivated to read books especially when given the opportunity to pursue her own reading interests in her spare time. For example, during Reading Month, Nabila was one of the top three students in her ESL class who spent the most time reading based on the reading logs that students submitted. Nabila's reading log entries indicated that she found much pleasure in the hours she spent reading (see Figure 1). While the Reading Month initiative can be considered a form of extrinsic motivation because there was external recognition and pressure to read, Nabila went above and beyond the expectations for Reading Month. In

some ways, Reading Month helped prompt Nabila to engage in even more pleasure reading because it gave her an additional reason to read for pleasure, and it also offered the promise of recognition. I would argue that the amount of time Nabila spent reading, coupled with her extensive summaries and reactions on her reading log, is indicative of her intrinsic motivation to read.


Date: 3-20-12 Number of minutes you read today: 2:04

Title: The orphan of Ellis Island Parent signature Sughra

Summary:

This is the story of a boy named Dominic, and he is an orphan, but he doesn't want anyone to find out. One day, his class goes on a field trip to Ellis Island and falls asleep in a closet. When he wakes up nobody is there, and soon he finds himself in Italy in 1908.

Personal Reaction: This story has an unusual twist to it, and makes you surprised a lot. I think that Dominic shouldn't be shy or afraid to tell people that he is an orphan, because it's not something to be ashamed of.

What an interesting plot line!

Figure 1a. A sample entry in Nabila's reading log

Summary: This is the story of a boy named Dominic and he is an orphan, but he doesn't want anyone to find out. One day, his class goes on a field trip to Ellis Island and falls asleep in a closet. When he wakes up nobody is there and soon he finds himself in Italy in 1908. Personal Reaction: This story has an unusual twist to it. And makes you surprised a lot. I think that Dominic shouldn't be shy or afraid to tell people that he is an orphan because it's not something to be ashamed of.

Figure 1b. Key to Figure 1a.

In the semester that I spent observing in Nabila's ESL class, more often than not along with her binder and textbooks she would be carrying a book or magazine she was currently reading. Sometimes, when she got to the ESL class early, she would rush to the school library (which was next door to the ESL classroom) to exchange magazines. Nabila took full advantage of her school's extensive library. Having access to texts certainly facilitated Nabila's reading motivation by providing her with a wide range of books and other materials from which to choose. Three other factors also seemed to positively motivate Nabila to read: social motivation because of her peers, interest in certain topics and genres, and book characteristics.

Social motivation. Out of all the focal students, Nabila was most motivated because of social influences. As an incentive, after each interview and QRI assessment, focal students were given a book. Nabila repeatedly mentioned that she was motivated to read books that were recommended by her friends. When she looked through the book options, she would make comments about those books that had been recommended by her friends. In one instance, she was very excited when she was able to get the book *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* because it was a book highly recommended by one of her friends. Nabila mentioned that she would, in turn, also recommend books that she liked to her friends. Providing book recommendations to one another was a way in which Nabila and her friends became excited and motivated to read specific books.

Nabila was also the only one among the focal students who also sought adult recommendations. She frequently asked the school librarian, Mrs. Jenkins, for book recommendations. In the seventh grade, Nabila had read some multicultural books which she thoroughly enjoyed, and she wanted to find similar books. Nabila said that Mrs.

Jenkins had been helpful in helping her find interesting multicultural books. Nabila then later encouraged her friend, Aina, to also ask Mrs. Jenkins for book recommendations.

In contrast, Nabila did not mention getting book recommendations from teachers, except from Mrs. Blake. In fact, she indicated that she found it annoying when a teacher would keep on reminding students to read a certain book. She said this tactic did not help in getting her motivated to read. This was the opposite of Nabila's stance from when she had been in the sixth grade. At that time, Nabila seemed to have a high regard for her teacher's recommendation: "Once you start reading a book that you like that the teacher has picked for you, it captivates you and takes your attention and you just can't stop. You just want to keep on reading" (Protacio, 2010, p. 23). It might be that when she was younger, Nabila needed assistance in finding books because she was still figuring out what interested her. In addition, Nabila seemed to have a good relationship with many of her elementary school teachers. Now that Nabila was in middle school, however, it was troubling to note that aside from Mrs. Blake and Mrs. Jenkins, she did not have any close relationships with her middle school teachers. It may be that Nabila did not acknowledge other teachers' book recommendations because she did not have a good rapport with most of them, nor did she engage in any conversations around pleasure books with them.

It should be noted that Nabila did not hesitate to recommend books to Mrs. Blake. In the reading log which she submitted to Mrs. Blake in March, Nabila wrote a note at the bottom of the page, "I highly recommend you to read the *Hunger Games* trilogy Mrs. Blake – Nabila. <3 <3 <3 <3 this books!!!" (The <3 in this case represents hearts; in other words, Nabila said that she loved these books). In another instance, Nabila wrote a short

note to Mrs. Blake about the book *Home of the Brave*, "If you liked *Inside Out and Back Again*, read this." (See Figure 2.)

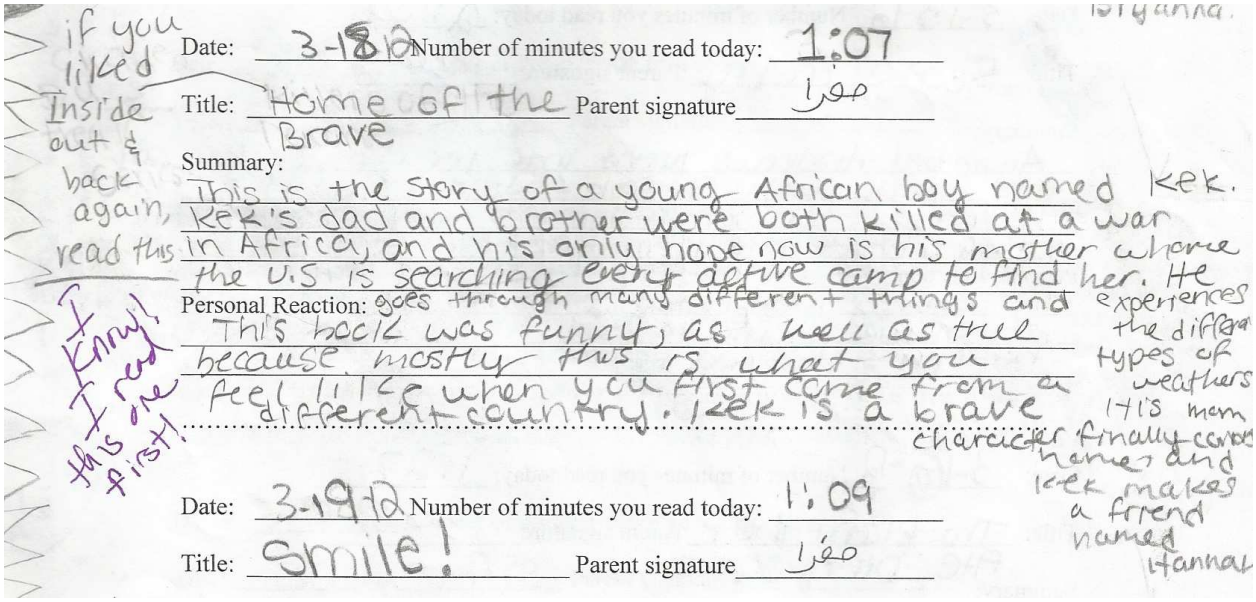


Figure 2a. Nabila's reading log entry with recommendations for Mrs. Blake

Summary:
This is a story of a young African boy named Kek. Kek's dad and brother were both killed at a war in Africa, and his only hope now is his mother [who is in] the U.S. is searching every active camp to find her. He experiences different types of weathers. His mom finally comes home, and Kek makes a friend named Hannah.

Personal reaction:
This book was funny as well as true because mostly this is what you feel like when you first come from a different country. Kek is a brave character.

Figure 2b. Key to Figure 2a.

As another example, in one of the RAIs that Nabila completed for this study, she wrote about reading the book *Bitter Melon.* In the comments section, Nabila wrote, "I really liked this book! (P.S. You should read it!)." In this case, Nabila even took the initiative to recommend a book to me. Nabila did not only rely on book

recommendations, but she also willingly recommended books to others, at least to those whom she recognized as fellow readers.

Interest. Aside from book recommendations, Nabila was often motivated to read in order to fulfill her interests, such as reading multicultural books.

> Well, [I like reading] books that take place, like the setting is in a different country and they have a different religion and a different lifestyle, cause you just kinda see. And that's when you compare your lifestyle with theirs. You just go "Oh, we never do that" or "Oh yeah, we used to do that in our country but we don't do that in the US or something." This one book, *Parvana's Journey*, her sister got married when she was like 15 and then I was like "Oh yeah, in the past this happened in my country but they don't do this anymore."

This interest in multicultural literature is likely connected to Nabila's stance towards diversity, which was mentioned above. By reading multicultural literature, Nabila was able to personally affirm her social standing as a minority by reading about characters who were also in diverse situations and contexts.

Nabila also tended to borrow books that dealt with adolescent issues, particularly teenage relationships. She often commented that she liked a specific male character in the book and would talk about him with a dreamy expression in her eyes and then giggle about her statements. These literacy events show that Nabila was transacting or interacting with the texts. For example, when reading *Matched* and its sequel *Crossed,* Nabila was very animated in talking about the relationships that the main character, Cassia, had with the two male characters in the story.

> Selena: So if you were Cassia, who would you choose, Kai or Xander?

Nabila: Xander.

Selena: Why?

Nabila: Because why waste your time finding Kai? Plus like you would've known Xander like forever so...

Selena: So they have that foundation. Okay, is there anything that you're learning as you're reading *Crossed*?

Nabila: No. Well, I'm learning about the society and how they lie to them and they make them go to this place to farm and stuff and then they just die there.

Selena: How could you make comparisons to what's going on now? Are there any? Or does it help you think about any issues that we have in society?

Nabila: No, I don't know. I just think about the love triangle

Selena: So that's what you enjoy about it? The love aspect?

Nabila: Yeah.

These kinds of stories made Nabila giddy as she thought about the love stories of the characters. When discussing a young adult novel in our interviews, she always brought up the relationship aspect of the book that she was currently reading, and she did so in an animated manner.

Another interest that influenced Nabila's reading habits was pop culture. Specifically, Nabila liked to read magazines that dealt with the latest news in pop culture. For example, in the RAI, the only genre which Nabila consistently read were pop culture magazines, such as *People* or *Seventeen.* In the RAI, Nabila indicated that she read about articles that focused on celebrities that she liked or about current events.

Book characteristics. Nabila also explicitly talked about book characteristics as something she considered when determining whether or not she wanted to read a certain book. Specifically, Nabila said that she could tell immediately if she was going to like a book or not just based on the introduction.

> The introduction really matters to it. 'Cause when you read the introduction, when you get a book, even after you read the summary, sometimes people just wanna read the first page and see if it keeps going, if you wanna continue reading. 'Cause some books when you just read the summary and you wanna read it and you check it out and when you go home, the first page is so boring you wanna die.

While Nabila's last statement is hyperbolic, it does illustrate how passionate she felt about a book's introduction. In another interview she brought up the idea again and said, "If the first page doesn't make you wanna turn the page, then why read it?" She later acquiesced and said that some books did get better but adamantly stated that authors should focus more on the beginning of books as this would determine whether or not readers would continue reading. These statements by Nabila showed that she understood the importance of the "hook."

In connection to this, Nabila also identified the author's word choice as another book characteristic that affected her motivation to read. Nabila shared her thoughts about the book *Of Mice and Men*, which she decided to read because her older sisters had talked to her about this book when she was younger. "

> I hate it when books use really big words like *Of Mice and Men*. When I opened it, when I read the first page, I was about to like burst out and scream. It was so boring. I hate it when they use big words. They need to use simple words."

For Nabila, the number of complex vocabulary words in a book was indicative of the interest that she was likely to have in the text generally. If a book had a lot of difficult words, Nabila was less apt to appreciate it. One explanation might be that these complex vocabulary words hindered Nabila's fluency and comprehension of the text. Like most ELLs, when Nabila encountered unfamiliar and complex vocabulary, she was less able to make sense of the text and appreciate its content. She needed to expend more cognitive energy when reading texts with difficult vocabulary. However, this moderate challenge is beneficial for ELLs as explained by Krashen's (1988) comprehensible input theory. He explained second language learners should be given input that is one step beyond their current stage of linguistic competence. This would help their continuous development and success in the second language. In other words, students should be provided reading materials which present a moderate challenge to ELLs.

If Krashen's theory is considered, Nabila should not have dismissed books simply because of difficult vocabulary, as this moderate challenge would have allowed her to continue to develop her English vocabulary. Furthermore, the Common Core state standards emphasize text complexity. Shanahan, Fisher, and Frey (2012) make the analogy that complex texts in reading instruction are what weights and resistance are in an exercise program in that, in both these cases, individuals are building muscle and stamina.

Overall, Nabila was motivated to read when she had the autonomy to choose what to read, which were typically books that were recommended by friends or which were on an interesting topic for her such as multicultural literature, pop culture, or teenage love stories. In contrast, Nabila was highly unmotivated to read textbooks because she found

them boring and uninteresting. In addition, Nabila avoided books that had challenging vocabulary.

Strategic Knowledge

Based on multiple data sources, such as interviews, QRI assessments, reading logs, and RAIs, Nabila used numerous comprehension strategies when she read academic texts and leisure texts, although the specific strategies used varied greatly depending on her purpose for reading.

In an interview, I asked Nabila what made someone a good reader. Nabila defined a good reader as someone who utilizes and makes good use of comprehension strategies.

> Selena: What makes someone a good reader?
>
> Nabila: If you understand what's going on and you don't just skip through the reading. Like some people they have school projects and they just like to read the summary and that's it. You wouldn't know the important details and stuff, and if you get lost, you go back and review it again.
>
> Selena: Is there anything else that a good reader does, besides the things you mentioned?
>
> Nabila: Well every reader has their own strategies, not the same so maybe they do something different but I don't know what it is 'cause I just use my own strategies.
>
> Selena: Can you tell me more about the strategies that you use then?
>
> Nabila: Well if I read it out loud, I don't understand it so I read it to myself... And if I have some questions in my head, if I read one part about someone, for example, someone named Charlotte and then I got to the next chapter and they're

talking about something I don't know then I have to go back and know what they're talking about if it's a book I really like. If it's a school book, I just skip it.

This interview excerpt demonstrates the foundation of the strategic knowledge that Nabila understood and used while reading. Based on her comments, Nabila understood that successful readers utilized comprehension strategies and had many of them in their repertoire. For instance, Nabila indicated that she monitored her understanding and used fix-it strategies such as re-reading. However, she admitted that she did so only when she was interested in what she was reading. This means that even if Nabila realized that she did not understand a certain text, if it was a text that she was uninterested in reading (such as a textbook), she would not use fix-it strategies to improve her comprehension. Taboada and McElvany (2009) argued that engaged reading involves both strategic reading and reading that is prompted by intrinsic motivation. "The engaged reader will learn to be selective about the use of different reading strategies, and these will be a toolbox to draw from in order to comprehend diverse texts" (p. 186). When reading academic texts, Nabila had a repertoire of strategies to choose from, but she chose not to use them because she lacked the intrinsic motivation to read those texts. In contrast, when reading self-selected texts, Nabila used a number of comprehension strategies, which will be examined in the sections that follow.

Strategic knowledge during academic reading. During the think-aloud portion of the QRI assessments, Nabila was able to exhibit seventy-eight instances of strategy use. The high frequency of strategy use was partly due to Nabila's extensive responses during the think-aloud portions compared to the curt responses of the other focal students. In terms of the range of comprehension strategies, Nabila exhibited the use of ten

comprehension strategies. Paraphrasing was the comprehension strategy she used the most, followed by making connections and making inferences (cf. Table 5).

The QRI assessments not only provided rich information about Nabila's reading strategy use, but it also provided another glimpse of her attitude toward any kind of academic reading. While Nabila was very enthusiastic about interviews and sharing her thoughts about reading, she expressed resistance to the comprehension assessments. After completing the first QRI assessment, Nabila asked, "How many more of these do we have to do?" When I replied that we would do three more, she said, "I don't like these. I like doing the interviews better. Those are fun."

Despite her negative attitude towards the comprehension assessments, Nabila performed quite well on the QRI assessments. Results of the QRI word recognition lists indicated that Nabila should be administered passages at the upper middle school level, which is at grade level. For both narrative and expository texts, Nabila was able to initially understand texts at an instructional level. When given an opportunity to look back at the text, Nabila's comprehension improved to an independent level for both genres, indicating that these were texts that Nabila could successfully comprehend independently.

According to the QRI results, Nabila was able to comprehend texts and answer structured comprehension questions. Meanwhile, her think-alouds provided evidence of her understanding as she was reading the passages. In her think-aloud about a passage on immigration, Nabila provided the following paraphrase about the paragraph she had just read, "It's talking about how cities were crammed too because it was filled with people because most people, the place where they came first, that's where they stayed in the

cities, so like it was really crowded." As another example, Nabila was able to summarize a section of a passage about Malcolm X, saying, "It was just talking about how he felt happy that he learned these words and he continued learning words 'cause each time he wrote like a section of the dictionary, he would learn about more people and places and history."

Table 5

Frequency and examples of Nabila's comprehension strategy use in QRI assessments

Comprehension Strategy	Number	Percentage	Example from Think-Aloud
Paraphrasing	25	32	He's talking about Armenians and how they were persecuted by people and how they moved to America because of that reason.
Making inferences	11	14	I think he was glad that he went to jail so, not glad but you know what I mean, like kind of you feel sad at first but later on you learn something from that mistake so like he went to jail and then he learned all these words and then he said that from then on he started reading more like books and stuff cause he was so in love with it and he said that it brought him in a new world and stuff so I think that he was kind of happy afterwards so he get to read books and study more.
Making connections	11	14	It talks about, this is kinda funny but this happened in m y country too. They thought that trees had like dollars on it and stuff…I don't know where people got that from but it's funny when I came here I was looking for it it's kinda funny it was so embarrassing.
Questioning	9	12	I just found out that he went to prison and I was like "Well how could he go to prison if he's a famous person?" but I don't know.

Table 5 (cont'd)

Summarizing	7	9	He's talking about the push factors and he's talking about some examples like this Jewish people and how there was I don't know who coming, the government was coming or like killing them or something in their village and then they have to run away and come to America so basically because of war some more reasons like they come back and come here and in the beginning he's talking about how when they came here they weren't that rich so they were like farmers or something.
Clarifying	7	9	But I think it's talking about when he first went to a prison that didn't have any learning facilities or something and then he went to a different one so that he could learn I think.
Monitoring	4	5	There's some things I don't know in this paragraph like what some things mean like who Bimby is and what emulate means.
Interpreting graphs	2	3	It's the graph of where US immigrants came from. Nortern and Western Europe [has the largest percentage of immigrants].
Emotional connections	1	1	(Laughing) That last part is so true.
Predicting	1	1	Maybe after this reading he's gonna talk more about how these struggles affect his life.

These examples illustrate that Nabila was able to identify the key points in what she read and talk about them in her own words. Through the think-aloud portions, Nabila also showed her use of comprehension strategies such as questioning, clarifying, and

monitoring, although she did not exhibit the use of these strategies as often as she paraphrased, made connections, and made inferences.

As an example of Nabila's use of comprehension strategies such as monitoring and clarifying, one of the passages that Nabila read was entitled, "Malcolm X." When I asked her the concept questions listed on the QRI, which were meant to ascertain how much background knowledge students had on the topic, and asked her who Malcolm X was, she said she did not know. The passage was mainly about Malcolm X's trials and how he trained himself to become literate while in prison. During the think-aloud portion, Nabila showed that she understood the text and the events that were discussed. At the end of the passage, Nabila commented, "But that doesn't really tell me who he was." This statement showed that Nabila was thinking beyond what she was reading. She realized from the concept questions I asked at the beginning of the assessment that she did not know any specific information about Malcolm X. At the end of the assessment, she was curious to learn more about him beyond what the passage provided. Nabila recognized that there was a hole in her background knowledge prior to reading the passage. Even though she understood the information that she read through the assessment, the text did not provide her with a complete understanding about Malcolm X. Nabila acknowledged that she still had limited knowledge of Malcolm X despite reading a passage about him, and as evidence of her intrinsic motivation (e.g. curiosity), she continued to ask questions.

The "Malcolm X" passage also prompted her to monitor her understanding. In the example below, Nabila was able to articulate aspects of the reading which did not make complete sense to her.

> There's some things I don't know in this paragraph like what some things mean like who Bimby is and what *emulate* means. But I think it's talking about when he first went to a prison that didn't have any learning facilities or something and then he went to a different one so that he could learn, I think.

As evidenced by her think-aloud statements, Nabila was able to point out the sources of her confusion. She was then able to make use of other comprehension strategies, in this case making inferences and clarifying, to make sense of the aspects of the text that were causing her confusion.

In another instance, when we were working on a text about immigration, one of the comprehension questions was, “What is assimilation?” Nabila responded, “I think it means similarity, but I’m not sure.” She then looked back at the text and found the section where assimilation was defined and discussed. “Assimilation is the process of becoming part of another culture,” Nabila read. “So adapting to a different culture, a different place,” she concluded. This instance showed Nabila’s use of several comprehension strategies. First, she indicated that she was unsure of the word’s definition, which showed that she monitored her understanding. Second, she was able to locate the information in the text, which illustrated that she was able to use fix-it strategies when she encountered words or information that she did not initially understand. Finally, her last statement demonstrated that she was able to clarify unknown vocabulary in texts.

Out of the four focal students, Nabila was the one who expounded the most during her think-aloud. Below is an example of Nabila’s think-aloud statements after reading a part of the QRI narrative passage, “Biddy Mason.”

> Three years passed since they stayed at California and Mr. Smith, which I'm guessing is their owner, I think, wanted to go somewhere else. ‘Cause he wanted to travel a lot so they were going to Texas and then they were all ready to go. And then Biddy Mason was like “I have to take advantage of this opportunity so I can escape.” She was making like an escape plan and she found one. I guess she found someone who can help her and she sent a word to the Sheriff of Los Angeles, the person who could help her.

This is a typical example of the amount of detail that Nabila included in a think-aloud, a stark contrast to the other focal students who rarely elaborated and only provided short statements. At the beginning of the think-aloud, Nabila made an inference about one of the characters that had just been introduced in the story. She likely used context clues to determine that Mr. Smith was the slave owner of Biddy Mason. She then talked about the events in sequential order and also provided her own inferences about these events. Based on just a small portion of text, Nabila was able to demonstrate use of multiple strategies such as paraphrasing and making inferences and provide many details about what she had just read.

Because my study focused on engagement, I wanted to make sure that students were allowed to choose the passages that they would be reading for the comprehension assessments. For the expository passages, Nabila chose to read about immigration between the late 1900s and early twentieth century. Because of her own personal experience as a refugee to the U.S., she expressed more interest with these passages than with the narrative ones. During the second passage on immigration, Nabila started giggling while reading.

Selena: Why are you laughing?

Nabila: Because the last part is so true.

Selena: What about it is true?

Nabila: They played American games and dressed in American style clothes. Yeah, it's talking about how parents [are] older than [their] kids. Their brain can, like, adjust to the new language but, like, children learned it quicker in school and then they taught their parents. My mom still doesn't know how to speak [English]. It's been like 5 or 6 years. I don't know why she just quit. I'm like, "Mom, you need to learn English."

Nabila not only made a connection between what she was reading and her personal life, but she also made an emotional connection. Nabila related to the text so much that it made her laugh because she was thinking about the similarities between the immigrant parents in the passage and her own mother's experiences. Although this text was written in a more academic voice, Nabila was able to easily understand it and make connections because the topic was familiar to her. This is in line with Goldenberg and Coleman's (2010) recommendation that ELLs be given texts on familiar topics in order to boost their reading comprehension.

However, the use of these immigration passages also illustrated how Nabila sometimes over-relied on her background knowledge rather than thinking about the information that the text explicitly provided. One of the comprehension questions in the second passage about immigration was, "What was one way in which the immigrants found jobs?" The text explicitly mentioned that the immigrants during that time were able to find jobs through friends, relatives, labor contractors or employment agencies. Nabila

provided a different response to this question.

> "Well, they couldn't just find jobs really fast because they didn't know English or anything so they got help from their, I don't know what to call it, their helper people? When you come here you're assigned like a case-worker or something, right?"

Her answer to the question indicated that she was using her own experiences of coming to the U.S. to understand the passage, but in this particular instance, the question called for an explicit answer from the text. Rather than providing a response to the question based on what she had read, Nabila instead relied on her own experiences to answer the question.

Strategic knowledge during pleasure reading. While the information from the QRI assessments provided data on the comprehension strategies that Nabila used for more formal, textbook type reading, Nabila was also able to illustrate the strategies that she used in texts she read for her own interest. The primary comprehension strategy that she used when reading for pleasure was making connections. In the interview excerpt below, without much prodding, Nabila provided an example of how she made connections between the text that she was currently reading and a book that she had read in the past.

> Selena: So what have you learned recently from reading something?
>
> Nabila: Last year I read (Lois Lowry's) *The Giver* and then now when I read (Ally Condie's) *Matched,* sometimes when I read books if they are alike, like, the same stories cause I never knew that. I just found that some people, some authors, may think alike in their minds. But they wouldn't know that, so they write the

books. So *The Giver* and *Matched,* they are really similar. I thought it [*Matched]* was the second book of *The Giver*.

Selena: Tell me what the similarities are that you noticed.

Nabila: Well, they lived in the same kind of atmosphere. The same kind of place where the government rules. They get tablets and they have their own curfew for the whole city and stuff like that. So people really don't have their own rights. The government tells them what to do and they can take whatever they want away from them and basically they don't have control over themselves.

In this instance, Nabila was able to make a connection between a book she was reading for pleasure, *Matched,* and a book she had been required to read for school in seventh grade, *The Giver.* Unlike most of the texts that she was assigned to read in school, *The Giver* seemed to be a book that Nabila had been highly engaged in reading. This exchange also indicated a good understanding on Nabila's part of the different aspects of the books' settings. While the characters in each book are different, Nabila recognized the similar characteristics of the dystopian societies depicted in the two novels. She was clearly able to see connections between these two texts, which is an indicator of a good comprehender (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Duke et al., 2011).

Aside from making connections between texts, Nabila was also able to make connections between what she read and what occurred in the world around her. In the excerpt below, as she described why she liked to read multicultural books, Nabila demonstrated an example of a text-to-world connection that she made.

Well, in *Shiva's Fire,* [it] took place in India and then there was like camel fighting or something. Well, that never happens in America, obviously. There was

also a really, really bad storm and a lot of people died, but then in America they like warn you or something. But in India and stuff, they don't have warnings or anything. The storm just comes. You should know or like hide or something ‘cause then if you don't you just die.

Nabila contrasted the setting of the book, India, to what she knew about how the United States prepares for disasters. She was able to draw comparisons between the events in the fictional book and what would happen in real life. These and other examples illustrated that Nabila was an active reader, constantly making connections between what she was currently reading and her own experiences, other texts, and her knowledge of the world.

Without being prompted, Nabila also evaluated texts that she read for pleasure. For example, in her reading log, Nabila provided a reaction to *The Hunger Games.* “This book was my favorite book I’ve ever read in my whole entire life. Definite page-turner, love it! The characters are interesting. I think Peeta and Katniss will fall in love for real even though they were faking it before.” Nabila evaluated the author’s writing style and character development. She supplied a rationale for why this was her favorite book. In addition, she predicted what would happen in the next book in the trilogy. More importantly, her enthusiasm about this book was apparent.

Nabila was also able to evaluate books according to different factors. Among the aspects she evaluated were text features, writing style, and characters’ actions and personalities. This can be seen in some of the statements that she wrote in her reading log about different books she read during March’s reading month:

1. “I think that Ha and her family were sooo lucky to survive the ship and come to

America. Ha is an amazing character." (*Inside Out and Back Again*).

2. "I think that Anne is a fun, outgoing, kind, matured girl, and I felt bad for their family and hoped that they should of not been caught. I also feel bad for the millions of Jews that were killed for nothing." (*Diary of Anne Frank*).

3. "This book was funny, as well as true because mostly this is what you feel like when you first come from a different country. Kek is a brave character." (*Home of the Brave).*

Aside from being evaluative, Nabila's comments on these books also illustrated the strong emotional connections that Nabila made with the characters she read about. Nabila commented on the protagonists' personalities and made inferences about their character. These were examples of moments when Nabila was transacting with the texts she was reading (Rosenblatt, 1994). As Rosenblatt (1969) explained, when transacting with the text, the reader is paying attention to the "images, feelings, attitudes, associations that the words evoke in him [or her]" (p. 34). Based on the examples provided above, it is apparent that Nabila consistently did this, at least with texts that she read for pleasure.

Nabila was also able to provide evaluations about a character's actions. When she read the book *Bitter Melon,* Nabila gave the following reaction in the RAI, "Frances needs to stand on her own feet because her mother always tells her what to do." Nabila's statement implied that she disapproved of the character's lack of ability to take more control of her life. Evaluating characters' actions and personalities was something that Nabila frequently did while reading. As another example, when we were discussing *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children,* while Nabila enjoyed the scary plot and

pictures, she “didn’t like that he was dating the same girl as his grandfather ‘cause that was just weird.”

These examples demonstrate that when reading academic types of texts, Nabila resorted to using strategies such as paraphrasing and summarizing although in some cases she was able to utilize higher-order comprehension strategies such as clarifying and monitoring. Meanwhile, when reading texts of her own choosing, Nabila used a wider range of strategies and utilized higher-order strategies such as evaluating and making connections between texts.

Constructing Meaning from Texts

Because of her low motivation to read academic texts, especially in her content-area classes, in order to obtain information about what she learned through academic reading Nabila had to be prodded in interviews. Despite interview probes, Nabila mostly did not discuss what she learned from reading in her content-area classes, nor so when it came to her reading logs and RAIs. When I asked her what she learned from reading, she tended to provide information about books she was reading for pleasure, such as the example provided earlier in the chapter about *Matched* and *The Giver*, and how she did not know that two different authors could write stories that were so similar. Nabila rarely provided information on what she learned through reading in her content-area classes. Towards the end of the school year, however, she did elaborate on ideas she had been learning in her English class.

In the last month of the school year, the eighth-grade English and social studies teachers designed a cross-disciplinary unit wherein the students had to research a specific topic that happened either in the Gilded Age or the Progressive Era. Nabila chose the

invention of the teddy bear as the topic she would focus on for her paper. When I asked her about the project, Nabila initially replied that she thought the project was fun despite the hard work. She had learned some new things such as the teddy bear being named after former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt. Nabila's elaborated:

> These Jewish people in their little shop because it was, you know, how President Roosevelt went on this trip and he decided not to kill the bear then it went in the news and then they saw it and they were like "hmmm maybe we should make a toy out of that" and they made a toy and it got public.

Nabila was able to summarize the key ideas from the events that influenced how the teddy bear got its name. However, Nabila was not able to provide more details in our interview aside from that. Nevertheless, Nabila was able to reflect on her work and identify areas of improvement for her project.

> Now that I think about it, when they talked about it, something about the Progressive Era like child labor. I should have added child labor to the list that I did, but I didn't. I just said when working conditions are bad, but I didn't add child labor. I should have. Cause we watched videos on social studies about child labor. Yeah, that was in Progressive Era.

As demonstrated, Nabila was a reflective learner who was aware of what she could have done to make her work better. In addition, she realized that because this was a cross-disciplinary project, she should have provided a stronger connection to the historical aspect of the paper. She also showed that she clearly understood some of the key ideas that were discussed in her social studies class. Even though she initially was not

able to include these thoughts in her paper, Nabila was able to reflect on her work and think of improvements that could be made to her project.

In another interview, Nabila discussed her experience in preparing a project for her English class. Students were assigned a seemingly straightforward word, and they had to consult different resources and write about the different meanings and connotations of that word. Nabila was assigned to write about the word “peace.” Nabila explained how she extended her understanding of the word.

> We have to do news articles and stuff, not the things we usually read. I don’t read articles or the dictionary for fun. Most people do that, I don’t know. But when you read for fun, it’s like one book, but then that [project] we have to look through a lot of stuff like I mentioned. So it wasn’t that much fun.

Nabila’s utilized several references such as the dictionary, the Qu’ran, poetry, and novels. She then included in her paper what she learned about the word *peace* as she read the Qu’ran.

> The religious text showed me the interpretations of the word peace in the Islamic religion. The verse that I chose for the word “peace” comes from the Surah al-Baqara, in chapter 2, verse 224. It came from the Islamic religion and I chose it because I wanted to see how it was interpreted differently than the other sources that I had picked earlier. The Surah stated: (3) And not make Allah’s (name) an excuse in your oaths against your doing good and acting piously, and not making Peace among mankind. And Allah is All-hearer, All-knower (i.e. do not swear much and if you have sworn against doing something good then give an expiation for the oath and do good) (“Al-Baqara, Chapter 2, verse 224”).

> In this source, I found out that Peace has a different meaning in the Islamic religion. The meaning states that you shouldn't use God's name as an excuse for doing bad deeds. People should be good to fellow humans and not swear. They should make peace with everyone, since God hears and knows everything. If someone makes an oath and breaks it, then he/she should start doing good deeds. The religious text showed me the interpretation of peace from a religious point of view.

Nabila demonstrated the ability to provide explicit statements about *peace* in the Qu'ran, but then she was also able to also provide her own interpretation. Nabila could have chosen not to include information from a religious text for this project, but because her religion is an important part of her discourse, she purposely did so.

In the paper that Nabila submitted to her teacher, she indicated that aside from learning multiple meanings of the word peace, she also gained additional information related to her development as a writer.

> This project was a fun way to know what a word means and to also learn about yourself as a learner. I think that after everything I have done to get to this point, this project actually helped me understand the word peace in my own way. Overall, I think that I learned that other peoples' mind work differently towards the definitions and meanings of the word itself. Also, I learned many different writing techniques than I had already known before. These include learning extra transitional words. In conclusion, this project was a very good way for me to learn about myself as a writer and how I have improved over the last few years. Also, I learned about my word and its different meanings.

While she found reading multiple sources tedious, Nabila said that at the end it was a good experience and helped her to understand the multiple definitions of *peace*. In an interview, she elaborated, "I already knew what peace meant, but I didn't know that it has many synonyms for it. I thought it just means quiet but it [also] means not war and stuff like that."

Therefore, while Nabila did the required readings in order to fulfill her academic obligations, she did not typically enjoy reading when it was required for class. Despite the fact that Nabila would read only to satisfy academic requirements, it was apparent that she was still able to learn from this type of reading. However, she often provided only the main ideas when asked about the academic texts which she read, compared to the very detailed information she tended to share from texts which she read for pleasure.

Nabila's case showed that motivation played a role in her willingness to acquire information from academic reading. As indicated in the QRI assessments, Nabila was able to comprehend academic texts. However, she did not value academic reading as she found it boring. While she was always eager to discuss what she understood and appreciated from texts she decided to read for pleasure, she did not express the same level of enthusiasm for sharing what she learned through academic reading.

Social Interactions

When I interviewed Nabila in the sixth grade for my practicum study, I discovered that Nabila was very motivated to read for pleasure for social reasons. She frequently engaged in book discussions with another friend who was also an ELL, and she also participated in social interactions around books with family members. She also

seemed to value her teachers' opinions about books as she relied on teacher recommendations to find books to read.

As an eighth grader, Nabila's purpose for participating in social interactions around reading shifted. Out of all the focal students, Nabila was the one who engaged in the most social interactions around reading both with her peers and adults in her classroom. However, as demonstrated through several examples below, Nabila was very deliberate about the social interactions she engaged in depending on the situation and her purpose for participating in these interactions. Primarily, she held book discussions with her Muslim friend, Aina, but she only asked for support for reading from interactions with adults.

Nabila's participation in social interactions were results of her own volition. In Mrs. Blake's class, there were a few opportunities for social interactions, but these interactions were centered on academic vocabulary words and not on specific texts that students were reading. Instead, Nabila was the one who sought to participate in interactions with others around texts.

Engaging in book discussions. Nabila and Aina regularly engaged in conversations around reading. As mentioned earlier, they recommend books to one another, and they also discussed these books. In an interview, I asked Nabila about the importance of having someone to discuss a book with.

> Nabila: I just feel really excited. Like your heart is like 'Oh my gosh, I need to tell her about this.' Plus it makes each other read more but it's just like really fun.
>
> Selena: You said it makes you read more. Why does it make you read more?

Nabila: Well, we have someone to talk to about it so it just make you read more books by yourself then, like, [I can] tell the other person about it.

Having someone to discuss books with prompted Nabila to read more since she was eager to talk about what they liked or did not like about a particular book. She also said that having discussions allowed her to learn more about the topic of the book. In addition, Nabila mentioned that she and Aina also talked about the books that they liked which had been turned into movies, such as *The Hunger Games* and *Twilight*.

Nabila indicated that she was able to discuss her feelings and ideas about the books she was reading through social interactions with Aina. However, when asked if there was a disadvantage in engaging in social interactions, Nabila said that Aina sometimes revealed the ending of books to her before she herself had a chance to read them. Through social media sites such as Facebook, Nabila had also provided some of these spoilers about books she was reading. But Nabila explained why she posted the spoiler about what she was reading. “That’s the problem. That’s what happens. Your heart is like, you have to tell this to someone and she [Aina] wasn’t there so I could call her so I just wrote it [on Facebook].” This example shows that Nabila was so immersed and attached to what she read that she needed to express this to others. In this instance, Facebook allowed her the platform to interact with others about books.

It must also be noted that Nabila’s opportunities to engage in social interactions were limited because of her outsider status. When she was younger, Nabila interacted with more peers about what she was reading. However, as a middle schooler, Nabila interacted mostly with other Muslim students. Thus, she could not initiate conversations around reading as often as she had before because she did no longer had many friends.

Students with whom she used to engage in conversations around books ignored her now that they were in the eighth grade, and Nabila's social circle was limited to the Muslim girls in the ESL class.

Social interactions for support. Nabila only liked to engage in book discussions with her Muslim friends around books that she read for pleasure. For academic reading, Nabila preferred to interact with either her teachers or the pre-service teachers who had field placements in her ESL classroom. When Nabila did not understand something she read in her textbook, she reread the text, asked the teacher, or asked the tutors during sixth period and homework help. FMS provided after-school homework help for students on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. There was a supervising teacher who took care of things such as students' signing in and handing out late bus passes. In addition, there were tutors who were typically the pre-service teachers from the local university. Nabila and her friends consistently stayed after school to receive additional support, preferring to do their homework at school where they could ask for help if needed.

Nabila shared that she had had varying experiences working with the college students who came to Mrs. Blake's class. She said, "Some of them help me understand the words and some paragraphs [that] don't make sense, so they try to explain it in an easier way and draw pictures. That really helps me a lot." Nabila's social interactions in these instances provided her with the necessary support to help scaffold her understanding of the textbooks that she was often assigned to read for her different classes.

On the other hand, she noted that some of the college students did not exert much effort in helping the ELLs with their homework or academic activities. She said that some

of the students just seemed to be there to fulfill the field requirements of their course, but they were not interested in actually helping the students. Nevertheless, Nabila preferred to ask for help from the pre-service students rather than ask her friends for help.

The primary reason Nabila cited in not asking for support from her peers was that she did not want to seem inferior to her peers.

Nabila: I don't like it when a student helps me understand.

Selena: Why not?

Nabila: ‘Cause then I feel dumb because it's not a teacher who's helping me understand. It's a student and I should know the same as the student.

While social motivation seemed to be a primary source of Nabila’s motivation for reading for pleasure, she did not see the advantages of using her social network for providing support with her academic reading. Nabila regarded her friends as peers she could have book discussions with, but she viewed those who were older as the ones she should go to when she needed academic support. Nabila did not want to put herself in social situations where she was the less knowledgeable student.

Aside from the homework help from the pre-service teachers, Nabila also took advantage of opportunities to ask her content-area teachers for clarification and additional information. There were several instances where Nabila would leave homework help because her math teacher had announced earlier in the day that he would be available for office hours after school. Nabila would go to his classroom to ask for clarification since math was a subject in which she particularly struggled.

Despite these efforts that Nabila was exerting towards her academics and after-school interactions with teachers, she was disappointed that she was not getting

recognition from her content-area teachers. Nabila talked about how she and her friend Aina were often overlooked for awards such as the student of the month. She was even surprised that teachers still often nominated students who misbehave in class. When I explained to her that perhaps this was a way for the teachers to try to motivate their peers who were not academically engaged, Nabila argued, "What about us? We need some motivation too." She elaborated, "You know some bad kids, teachers act really nice, like 'It's okay. Come here. Sit down' and [they] give them more attention. But us, if we're good, they don't even care. They didn't even nominate me." Even though Mrs. Blake nominated her for "Student of the Month," Nabila wanted to be recognized by one of her content-area teachers. She said she just wanted moral support from her content area teachers. "But they're not willing to give it to us because they think that we know everything, which unfortunately we don't." Nabila's statement indicated that she and her ELL friends were overlooked in the classroom because they were not acting up, and they seemed to be doing well in class. But what their content-area teachers might not have known was the amount of effort that Nabila and her friends exerted in order to complete the class requirements. Nabila and her friends were the students who consistently stayed after school to complete their projects or ask for support during homework help, and they wanted recognition from teachers besides Mrs. Blake.

Absence of family interactions around books. What was perhaps the most striking change in terms of Nabila's social interactions compared to two years ago was the absence of interactions around books with her family members. When she was in elementary school, Nabila credited her older sisters with much of her motivation to read, because they shared with her what they themselves were reading (Protacio, 2010). She

also said that she and her brother would stage skits for their family based on texts that she and her brother had both read.

In contrast, once she was in middle school, Nabila did not participate in any discussions about reading with her family members. Out of all her family members, Nabila was the only one who was still an avid reader:

> Selena: Can you think of anything else that affects your motivation to read something?
>
> Nabila: What affects it really is the people around you, if they read or not. In my family, no one reads.
>
> Selena: I thought you said your sister reads?
>
> Nabila: Yeah, my sister reads, but she quit now. I don't know why. She likes to watch movies and hang out now.... Well the only person in my family that actually reads and kind of motivates me, we share the same thoughts, like Aina and me, my little brother, he used to do that. But now he's playing lacrosse, so he's like outside 24/7.

Nabila pointed out that she was unsure why her sister, who used to be an avid reader, suddenly had no time for reading. In addition, Nabila seemed to have a downgraded view of her sisters' reading habits. When she was in the sixth grade, Nabila described her sisters' read-alouds to her as "magical" (Protacio, 2010). Nabila recalled that when she could not yet read in English, her sisters would tell her about the stories they had been reading, and this positive social interaction seemed to have influenced her reading motivation when she was younger. She wanted to be able to read in English since her sisters were avid readers.

As an eighth-grader, however, Nabila seemed to be critical of her sisters' reading choices. For instance, Nabila mentioned that when she and her sisters visited the mobile library, they tended to choose books based on the cover, which Nabila said was not how books should be chosen. As previously mentioned, Nabila had negative thoughts on *Of Mice and Men*. She had initially decided to read it because it was a book her sisters told her about when she was younger. She was excited to read it because her sisters were able to make the story seem interesting for Nabila. When Nabila had the chance to read it herself, she thought the book's introduction was boring and decided to stop reading the book. She did not understand what her sisters had seen in the book.

While Nabila seemed to have a good relationship with her sisters, one of the tensions that had arisen in the past two years concerned her sisters' decision to not follow certain aspects of their Muslim religion. In our last interview, Nabila mentioned that her three older sisters had all decided not to wear their *hijab* when they entered high school. Their mother told them to wear it, but her sisters chose not to. Nabila said, "[They stopped wearing the *hijab]* in high school 'cause that's when most people look at themselves and want to look better or something. I guess it's their own choice if they don't wanna wear it." Nabila also said that her sisters were questioning her decision to continue to wear her *hijab* throughout high school.

> Well, my sister's like "Are you sure you wanna wear it? 'Cause like maybe if you go to high school then you'll change your mind and it'll be too late and maybe if you want to you can start now and wear a little bit?" And I was like "No, because once you wear something you get used to it. Then if you take it off, it kinda feels weird plus like people would talk about you like 'Oh, why'd she wear it if she's

gonna take it off?’”

Thus, Nabila was also being pressured at home to conform to more American ways. Her sisters were encouraging her to not adhere as much to Muslim expectations and customs. However, Nabila and her friends were very traditionally devout Muslim females. Sarroub (2005) described the experiences of adolescent Yemeni-American girls in a U.S. public school who struggled to negotiate between the expectations of them as Muslim women and their own aspirations and goals as individuals:

> At school, where the intersection of multiple cultures and literacies is most evident, Yemeni American girls learned to adapt various texts to different situations. The most direct way they did this was by organizing some behaviors and speech events into three categories that stem from the Qur’an and religious teachings. The three categories were *haram*, meaning forbidden; *halal*, meaning lawful; and *mahkru*, meaning not written as forbidden in the Qu’ran but condemned by the Prophet Muhammad. All things *haram* are written in the Qu’ran. Drinking alcohol, for example, is *haram*. Things *halal* are good deeds, which include learning and being learned. Things *makhr*u include wearing makeup before marriage or listening to music. The *makhru* category is controversial and is therefore the marked category. (Sarroub, 2005, p. 64)

By using the categories that Sarroub provided, it became clearer that Nabila was striving to do things that were *halal* and avoid those that were *haram*. Her older sisters did not seem to be as concerned as much as Nabila was whether their actions were *halal*. Even though Nabila maintained a close relationship with her sisters, these differing views pertaining to religion might have played a role in her negative stance towards her sisters’

reading habits.

Nabila engaged in numerous social interactions around reading, and each of these interactions involved different groups of people. Nabila relied on her friends as an outlet for pleasure reading, but she did not see them as a resource for support for academic reading. Rather, she relied on teachers and pre-service teachers for academic support. Nabila also did not engage in any interactions around reading with her family members, which is a reversal from two years ago when her sisters were her reading role models.

Nabila as a Semi-Engaged Reader

Based on the data presented, Nabila served as an interesting case for reading engagement with her being an engaged reader of texts she read for pleasure and being a disengaged reader of academic texts, which provides evidence to the idea that reading engagement is situational. In addition, Nabila's identity as a young female Muslim also impacted some areas of her reading engagement.

Applying the expectancy-value framework, Nabila had high levels of perceived competence for both academic and pleasure reading. She knew she was a good reader, and she understood that good readers used comprehension strategies, which she was able to do with ease. It was with the value aspect that there was an apparent disconnect between academic reading and pleasure reading. Based on the data presented in this chapter, Nabila was an engaged reader when she was able to read a book that was interesting for her, which had also likely been recommended by a peer. She valued the social interactions in which she was able to participate when reading for pleasure. She also valued the connections that she was able to make with those texts. However, there was another side to Nabila as a reader. She was unmotivated when she was obligated to

read academic texts for class. She did not have the motivation to read textbooks, and she did not seem to find value in this kind of reading. Although Nabila was certainly a capable reader of academic texts, she did not find satisfaction in doing so. There were some instances wherein she provided an inkling of interest when reading academic texts, especially when she was able to seek her own sources for projects, and when she was able to learn some new information. For the most part, though, Nabila was not engaged when reading academic texts. However, she completed the reading out of a sense of compliance, especially given her parents' expectations that she would achieve high grades.

Nabila's varying stances between pleasure reading and academic reading highlight the idea that engaged reading is in a constant state of flux, with motivation being the reading engagement component which dictates the level of engagement a student has with the text. In Nabila's case, regardless of whether or not she was reading academic or leisure texts, she was able to use comprehension strategies. However, her motivation to read certain texts influenced the amount of knowledge she gained or connections she made across texts. It also affected who she chose to interact with around these texts. Rather than seeing her peers as a source for support, Nabila chose to avoid her peers when discussing academic texts to lessen the risk of being perceived as inferior. Instead, she participated in social interactions with adults around these readings, some of whom also had little interest in the academic texts.

Nabila's identity as a young female Muslim also impacted her reading engagement, primarily her motivation and social interactions. In wanting to read multicultural books, she desired to read about protagonists who, like her, were living their

lives in diverse contexts and settings. Most importantly, the conflicting outlooks that Nabila and her sisters had about their Muslim faith caused a rift in her perception of them as her reading role models. Instead, Nabila chose to engage primarily in social interactions around reading with her social circle of fellow Muslim girls since she was being excluded from other groups of peers.

Nabila's case shows that reading engagement is situational. There are contexts in which Nabila was an engaged reader, and those were when she was able to choose what she could read. When there was no reader autonomy, such as instances in school when she was required to read the textbooks, Nabila complied but in a disengaged manner. This case prompts the question of "How can teachers transfer the engagement Nabila exhibited with leisure texts to academic reading in the classroom?" In addition, Nabila's case illustrates that when considering the socio-cultural background of ELLs, students' religious backgrounds must also be included as this might impact aspects of their reading engagement.

CHAPTER 5

"Reading is Just a Waste of Time":

Investigating the Disengagement of a Seventh-Grade ELL

Struggling readers in middle school are likely disengaged readers who not only have low levels of reading achievement, but they also have low levels of reading motivation (Guthrie & Davis, 2003). According to Guthrie and Wigfield (1997), students' levels of reading motivation are related to the amount of reading they tend to do. In this sense, struggling readers are less likely to actually read. This is problematic since the more they are disengaged in reading, the more difficult it becomes for these struggling readers to improve their reading skills (Allington, 1977; Cunningham, 2005). What struggling readers need in order to become better readers is actual time spent reading (Allington & Gabriel, 2012). However, with low motivation, this is unlikely to happen.

Studies on disengaged readers, such as Hall (2005), have found that struggling readers' decisions to actually read are influenced by many factors, such as their perceptions of themselves as readers or the perceived difficulty of a task. When students encounter a reading task that they deem difficult, they will likely not do it. In this chapter, I describe the reading disengagement of Farshad, a 13-year-old boy from Afghanistan whose perceptions of himself as a reader are an inaccurate portrayal of his actual reading abilities. Farshad was a seventh-grader who struggled with comprehension, had low levels of reading motivation, and did not consider himself a reader. In a nutshell, Farshad did not enjoy academic reading nor did he like to read books for pleasure. Throughout this chapter, I examine the reasons for Farshad's overall low reading engagement levels. In particular, I highlight two factors: one is Farshad's lack of strategic knowledge as a

plausible explanation for his comprehension difficulties, and hence, decreased reading engagement. The other is Farshad's identity as a reader; specifically, Farshad was concerned about others' perceptions of him as an ELL. Because of this concern, Farshad utilized strategies which made him seem more competent in English than his actual abilities. His experiences mirror that of other English learners who have devised ways in which they seem to be more proficient in English as a form of self-preservation (Monzo & Rueda, 2009).

Getting to Know Farshad

When Farshad was six months old, his family left Afghanistan and moved to Russia, which is where they lived for six years. As a young child, Farshad was not able to attend pre-school or kindergarten in Russia because he was his mother's constant companion as she ventured in the unfamiliar streets of Russia. He did have formal schooling experiences as he attended first and second grade in Russia, and thus he learned to speak and read Russian.

When Farshad was seven years old, he immigrated to the U.S. with his mother, brother, sister, and paternal grandmother while his father remained in Russia. Adjusting to the U.S. was initially difficult for Farshad because he missed his extended family in Russia. He has remained connected to his family members in Russia. In fact, in the six years that he has been in the U.S., Farshad has been able to visit Russia three times. During the data collection period, Farshad told me that we would need to finish all the interviews and assessments early because he was leaving school in mid-May to accompany his grandmother on a trip to visit relatives in Iran and Russia.

Farshad did not know how to speak English when he arrived in the U.S. Yet, he recalled learning how to speak and read English easily in his third-grade ESL class. Despite saying that he had easily learned how to read in English, Farshad did not see himself as a reader. While he was in elementary school, Farshad would sometimes read when he "had nothing else to do" but now that he was in middle school, he never read.

Adjusting to Middle School Life

> I got to Mrs. Blake's classroom at 12:30 p.m., and no one was in the room yet. Shortly after I arrived, Mrs. Blake came in with Farshad. She explained that Farshad was serving an in-school suspension today and tomorrow because he got into a fistfight with another student. (Field notes, February, 2012)

I was surprised when Mrs. Blake shared that Farshad was suspended for fighting. At first glance, he did not seem like the type of student who would engage in fistfights primarily because he was shorter and more slender compared to other seventh-grade boys. He also did not seem to have a temper. This event piqued my interest about Farshad.

Overall, Farshad came across as a carefree student who was not very stressed about school. Farshad was confident and nonchalant about his academic performance in middle school. He revealed that academics, including homework, were easier in middle school. Farshad's perception that his elementary school experience was more difficult likely stemmed from the fact that during this time, Farshad was still learning the English language. As a result, it was harder for him to understand not only the content they were studying but also the tasks that were being assigned. Farshad was now fluent in English,

and thus, it was easier for him to understand what was being taught in his middle school classes.

Despite Farshad's fluent English speaking skills, he was exclusively in Mrs. Blake's ESL class even though he has been in the U.S. for six years. Farshad insisted he should not have been in ESL, and he proudly informed me that in the eighth-grade he would be in a mainstream English classroom. Indeed, compared to the other students who were in the ESL class, Farshad's English speaking abilities were superior. The other seventh-grade students in Mrs. Blake's fifth-period had been in the U.S. for less than two years. Some of them had been in the country for less than a year and were still learning conversational English. Mrs. Blake explained that Farshad was still in the ESL class because he needed additional support in academic writing skills.

Beyond the academic scope of the ESL classroom, Farshad was embarrassed by some of the activities they completed in the ESL class. Below is a field note excerpt from a classroom observation, which occurred right before Easter.

> When I got to Mrs. Blake's classroom today, I found out that she had a special activity planned wherein the students would be painting spring eggs. During fifth-period, Sabeen, Amira, and Farshad all helped in getting everything ready such as arranging the tables around the classroom, putting newspapers on the table, and distributing the dyes to each table. When the eighth-graders arrived for sixth-period, the boys joined Farshad at one table and Aina, Nabila, and Sanaa joined the girls at another table. I sat with the boys. As everyone was starting to color the eggs, Farshad got up and closed the classroom door. Emir saw me looking at

Farshad as he was closing the door, and without me asking, Emir told me, "He doesn't want other students to see us doing this. It's a bit babyish."

Some of the students, such as Sabeen and Amira, who were fairly new to the U.S., were very excited to color spring eggs since they had never experienced it before. However, Farshad thought these activities were embarrassing. He did not like being part of the "special" classroom that did such "babyish" activities. After he closed the door though, Farshad and his male classmates seemed more carefree and actually enjoyed the activity. By having closed the classroom door, Farshad's concern about other students seeing him doing such childish activities dissipated, and he was able to fully participate in this special classroom activity.

I also observed Farshad behaving uneasily about his ELL status during a fire drill. Mrs. Blake's seventh-grade ESL class was very small, with only five students while the other classes had approximately 20 to 25 students. Thus, the small class size automatically differentiated Mrs. Blake's class from the mainstream classes as each class lined up outside the building. During the entire fire drill, Farshad had an uneasy expression on his face, and he had his arms crossed. Two girls from another class asked Farshad what class he was in. Farshad just shrugged, did not answer their question, and stared straight ahead to avoid further questions.

When I asked him about these instances, Farshad admitted that he felt embarrassed that he was in ESL class. Even though his friends do not say anything about it, Farshad felt that being in ESL class made him different than his friends. He said quietly, "I feel like that I'm not like them. Like I'm not in the good English class." In our following interview, I delved a little bit deeper into the issue.

Selena: So I wanted to talk a little bit more about what we discussed last time that you felt uncomfortable about being in ESL. Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

Farshad: Yeah, ‘cause, like my friends, when they see me, they’re like “What’s that special class you go to?” And I’m like, “Uh.”

Selena: Do you tell them?

Farshad: I just ignore them and change the subject.

Farshad does not want his friends to think of him as being different from them although some of his friends know that he is in ESL. In Farshad’s view, inclusion in the ESL classroom denoted a low level of English abilities. Farshad tried to hide his status as an ELL from as many of his peers as possible because he did not want other students to think he had inferior English skills. He avoided letting his peers know about his inclusion in the ESL class, and he was looking forward to the eighth-grade since he would be in the regular English class.

In this section, I provided information on Farshad’s experiences at the middle school level. I also discussed Farshad’s uneasiness about his identity as an ESL student. He did not want to be marked as being different from his peers, and thus he assumed airs that provided a facade of being a carefree, nonchalant student. In what follows, I provide an in-depth discussion of each of the reading engagement components in order to create a clear picture of Farshad’s disengagement.

Motivation

In general, Farshad was unmotivated to read although he was unable to articulate the reasons behind his low motivation. He simply stated, “I don’t really like reading

books and stuff." In another interview, he said, "I haven't read any books in months. I don't have enough time." His low level of motivation was very apparent when Mrs. Blake introduced Reading Month.

> At the start of fifth period, Mrs. Blake explained to students that it was now Reading Month, and students would be required to read thirty minutes every day. An additional requirement in Mrs. Blake's class is that students would keep a reading log where they would document what they read, how long they read, and their reactions to what they read. Mrs. Blake then mentioned to the students that she knows that Pi day was coming up. She shared with the students that last year Sanaa won the Pi contest because she had memorized over 400 digits of Pi. Mrs. Blake said that while she was very proud that Sanaa won the contest, she couldn't help thinking that perhaps Sanaa's time would have been better spent reading. Mrs. Blake said she didn't see the value of memorizing all those digits. Farshad piped in and said, "Well, what's the value of reading? I haven't even ever finished a book." Mrs. Blake replied, "There's a lot of value in reading. Do you have five hours so I can tell you the value of reading?" I spoke up and asked, "Well, have you ever laughed because of a book, cried because of a book." Farshad shook his head. Mrs. Blake continued, "There's a lot of things that you get to experience through reading that otherwise you would not have been able to experience." (Field notes, March, 2012).

It was after this classroom event that I decided to make Farshad one of my focal students. I wanted to find out why Farshad was so unmotivated, and why he was so

willing to be vocal about it. However, when I tried to probe on the reasons why he was unmotivated to read, he was unable to elaborate and identify specific reasons.

Selena: You said before that you don't really like to read. Can you tell me a little bit more why? I really want to understand why.

Farshad: I just don't like reading. Sometimes I feel like it, in school not at home.

Selena: So on Fridays during Drop Everything and Read, you're open to reading?

Farshad: Yeah.

Selena: But if you were going to choose between playing sports and reading, you would never choose reading?

Farshad: No.

Selena: So why not?

Farshad: I don't know. I just don't want to.

As indicated in the preceding example, Farshad did not see the value of reading. Farshad's motivation is indicative of the importance of the expectancy-value framework. Based on my observations and interviews, Farshad has a high sense of self-efficacy and a low sense of value, and this influenced his motivation to read in English. Farshad admitted to reading books for two reasons. First, he had some interest in particular genres. Second, he read to comply and obtain good grades and avoid punishment.

Expectancy and value. As mentioned earlier, Farshad said he found middle school to be easier than elementary school in terms of academics. Farshad claimed, "I can understand everything." When I asked him why he thought middle school was easier, he replied, "Cause the homework, the subjects and stuff are a lot easier." Below is an interview excerpt which illustrates Farshad's high level of self-efficacy.

Selena: What are some things that you typically have a hard time understanding or comprehending? Like what kind of reading or what kind of books?

Farshad: I don't have a hard time with books.

Selena: Even the textbooks?

Farshad: Yeah.

Selena: What do you find easy with reading? What are some books that are easy for you to read?

Farshad: I can read any book.

Based on this interview data, Farshad believed that he was a good reader and he could read any book. Farshad's high self-efficacy with reading, however, is not indicative of his actual reading abilities. Farshad's comprehension level, as indicated by QRI assessments, was below grade level. Also, Farshad's confidence may be a defense mechanism to counter the fact that he is not in the "good" English class. He puts forth a very confident stance towards his academic performance to hide his insecurities about his reading skills.

There were moments where Farshad showed a more vulnerable side. These typically happened when I would be asking him things that he learned, and when I probed so that he would elaborate, he would sigh and say, "I don't know" in a tone that indicated some frustration. I would argue that Farshad's high self-efficacy might be part of a facade that he created to make up for his ELL status. Since he knew he was not in the "good" English class, he wanted to project an image that he was a strong reader who really did not belong in the ESL class. He presented himself as a good reader to compensate for the

fact that he was in the ESL classroom with other students who were just beginning to learn English.

In contrast to his high levels of self-efficacy, Farshad placed a low level on the value of reading, which was apparent throughout the duration of the study. Even up to the final interview, Farshad expressed that he did not appreciate the value of reading. He shared that when he was younger, he did read a little bit.

Selena: So why were you motivated back then?

Farshad: 'Cause I was, like, a kid.

Selena: So now that you're older, why isn't reading appealing?

Farshad: 'Cause I think reading is just a waste of time, and like, I don't know. I mean...[long pause]

Selena: Why do you think reading is a waste of time?

Farshad: 'Cause you can do other stuff instead of reading.

It is troubling that Farshad thought that reading is "a waste of time." He did not see how reading or any of the components of reading, such as vocabulary, would be beneficial for him. One aspect to consider is that no one in Farshad's family is a reader. He has never had any reading role models at home, and reading does not play any role in his home environment. The absence of reading at home is a plausible factor in why Farshad does not assign much value to reading.

Farshad did not assign much value to school endeavors which would help him attain better literacy skills either. In an earlier chapter, I described Mrs. Blake's vocabulary initiative. In my classroom observations, Mrs. Blake really emphasized the vocabulary words being used in the school-wide initiative, and she provided multiple

opportunities for her ELLs to learn the words and practice using them. When I asked Farshad if he liked learning the words, he replied, “I don’t really care.” I told him that he would sound really smart if he used the vocabulary words that they were learning such as *infer, imply,* or *subsequent.* Upon hearing this, Farshad shared, “Yesterday, I did my math homework and I wrote, like, a sentence. Like, I didn’t say combination, I said *components,* and the teacher was like, ‘Oh.’” He also recalled that he used other words from the vocabulary initiative such as *analyzed* in his science class. From this example, Farshad was able to learn words through the vocabulary initiative, yet he still did not value the experience.

Farshad also did not think that school was important to his career goal. He said he wanted to move to California to become an actor. When he shared that with me, I told him he would need to read a lot as an actor. I pointed out he would need to read and memorize scripts and comprehend the script well enough so he would know how to say his lines. Prior to this, Farshad could not see the connection between being actor and reading.

Genres. While Farshad was not an avid reader, there were moments he shared the little reading he did. For example, he liked to read magazines. He also mentioned that once in a while he would read a newspaper in order to prepare for his turn to report on current events in his social studies class. In addition, when I asked Farshad after the QRI assessments if he preferred to read the narrative texts or the informational texts, he said he enjoyed reading the latter. But, as I point out later on, while he may have enjoyed reading the informational passages a bit more, this did not translate into higher comprehension levels for these passages.

Towards the end of the semester, students in Mrs. Blake's class were required to complete an oral book report which they presented to the class. Farshad did his book report on *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, and when I asked him why he chose this book, he said, "Because I kinda like adventure books." Indeed, in his completed RAIs, adventure and suspense books were the only genre where he ever listed any actual reading materials. In one RAI, he listed that he read Rick Riordan's *Percy Jackson: The Lightning Thief* and in another RAI, he indicated that he read three to four pages of *The Shadow Project* during Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time. In his reading log for Reading Month, Farshad also listed adventure books. These few examples were the only ones in which Farshad even showed the slightest interest in any reading materials.

Compliance. Towards the latter part of the semester, Farshad exhibited somewhat higher levels of motivation to read (or skim) sections of his textbooks that were assigned in his classes. He said, "I mean, I do my work all the time 'cause if I don't, I would get an E or something." Farshad shared that earlier in the school year, he received Es in his math, ESL, and science classes because he did not turn in projects and homework assignments. He explained, "Sometimes I didn't feel like doing my homework, and then I told the teacher I did my homework and I forgot it." But his teachers would not allow him to submit his homework the next day; consequently, he received Es on these assignments. When I asked him to reflect on these experiences, Farshad replied, "I wasn't focusing and I never did the work. But when I looked at my grades, I figured that I should start changing that and it changed. Now I have As and Bs."

The potential for punishment also made a difference in Farshad's outlook. When I asked him about the turn-around in his attitude about his academics, Farshad said, "I

knew it was bad for me, and I knew my mom would be mad at me and I knew I couldn't go outside and play." Farshad's social life was very important for him, and so knowing that he would be unable to go out with his friends was a motivator for him to do better in his academics.

Farshad was also noticeably more active in the ESL class towards the latter part of the semester. During earlier observations, Farshad never raised his hand to volunteer to share his responses for the vocabulary activities. He often wore a bored expression on his face. Later in the semester, there was a complete turn-around in his classroom demeanor. He was eager to respond to questions, even looking disappointed when Mrs. Blake called on others and not him.

One interesting finding related to Farshad's motivation was that despite his low reading motivation, he ranked fourth in his ESL class in the number of minutes read during Reading Month. The reading log was a component of the ESL grade in the month of March, and so Farshad completed it because he knew it would affect his ESL grade. Based on his reading log, Farshad read a total of 1,465 minutes from March 7 through March 29. He reported that he read an average of 70 minutes a day. Throughout this time, Farshad said he read three books: *Breaking Stalin's Nose, The Tale of Desperaux,* and *Percy Jackson: The Lightening Thief.* In the reading log, Farshad was able to provide a short summary of what he read each day. Mrs. Blake admitted she was a little hesitant about Farshad's reading log. She questioned whether or not he actually read for the period that he reported. For instance, Farshad's summaries for the days he supposedly read *The Tale of Despereaux* do not reflect the actual plot of this book. However, since

the reading logs were verified and signed by Farshad's mother, Mrs. Blake gave him credit for the time that he indicated on the reading logs.

In sum, Farshad exhibited little motivation to read in English. Even though he had a high level of self-efficacy as a reader, Farshad did not enjoy reading, nor did he find it pleasurable. However, because of external factors such as grades and the possibility of punishment, Farshad became more serious about his studies towards the latter part of the school year, showing that with his focus and determination, Farshad could become a more successful student.

Strategic Knowledge

Results of the QRI word list assessment indicated that Farshad's instructional level of decoding was at the sixth-grade level. For the two expository texts, Farshad chose passages entitled "Building Pyramids" and "Lifeline of the Nile." When Farshad initially answered the comprehension passages, he scored at the frustration level in terms of his comprehension, which indicated these texts were too difficult for him. When he had the opportunity to look back at the text, his comprehension for both expository passages improved to an instructional level. When reading QRI expository passages in particular, Farshad had the most difficulty with answering implicit questions.

Farshad did relatively better in comprehending narrative passages. He chose to read the passages "Abraham Lincoln" and "Pele." Farshad's comprehension of the Abraham Lincoln passage was at instructional level, even without look backs. In the passage about Pele, Farshad initially scored at a frustration level, but when he was able to look back at the text, his comprehension improved to an instructional level. In the end, Farshad did score at instructional level for all four passages, which indicated these

passages are ones he could read with some support. It must be emphasized though that he was reading *sixth-grade* passages at an instructional level and this was in the second semester of Farshad's seventh grade year. Thus, his comprehension of texts was below grade level expectations according to the results of the QRI assessment. These results are in contrast to Farshad's self-assessment that reading in English is easy for him.

It is not just Farshad's comprehension levels that are troubling. He also exhibited a lack of strategic knowledge. Out of the four QRI think-alouds, I was able to document 22 instances of strategy use. Out of the 22 instances, 21 of them consisted of Farshad paraphrasing what he was reading. The only other strategy he used was one instance of clarifying. In addition, there were 14 instances wherein Farshad was not even able to paraphrase what he was reading. In these cases, he would glance quickly at the passage and read verbatim what was in the text. It seemed he had the most difficulty out of all the focal students in completing a think-aloud even though I modeled how to conduct a think-aloud the same way for all focal students.

Farshad was the focal student who was not able to exhibit a range in comprehension strategy use. We know from previous research that good comprehenders actively use comprehension strategies when reading (Dole et al., 1991; Duke et al., 2011; Duke & Pearson, 2002; Palinscar & Brown, 1984; Pearson & Dole, 1987; Shanahan et al., 2010). Almasi and Fullerton (2012) suggest that strategic knowledge is one of the main characteristics that differentiate expert readers from novice readers. Expert readers "know a variety of strategies that they can use to enhance comprehension and memory of texts" while novice readers "are not aware of alternate strategies for enhancing comprehension and memory of text" (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012, p. 10). From this

characterization, Farshad was a novice reader since he was not able to use a range of comprehension strategies. In fact, he was able to use only paraphrasing, and there were even moments that he tried to paraphrase, but then would not know what to say and so he would glance at the passage and read directly from the text.

Farshad also did not exhibit and integrate much background knowledge with the QRI assessments. I spent a great deal of time working with Sabeen and Amira during fifth-period in the early part of the semester. We typically worked on their social studies homework. Because of this, I knew the topics were discussed in Farshad's social studies class, among them Ancient Egypt. Thus, I expected Farshad would possess background knowledge for the passage, "Building Pyramids." However, when I asked the concept questions from the QRI, which are meant to ascertain the familiarity the reader has with topic of the passage, Farshad was unable to provide answers. For instance, when asked, "What is a pharaoh?" Farshad's replied, "I forgot all this." The next question was, "What is a mummy?" Farshad answered, "They mummy the body." These examples showed that despite Ancient Egypt civilization being discussed in Farshad's social studies class, he was unable to recall and retain information from this unit, which implied that he did not really learn or internalize the information.

Farshad did relatively better on the passage about Abraham Lincoln. Even without look-backs, this passage was at his instructional level. A plausible explanation for his performance on this passage was that his social studies class had just finished discussing the Civil War. This raises the issue of passage dependency. McKenna and Stahl (2009) explained that one of the struggles in assessing reading comprehension is that the assessor never truly knows how much the student comprehended from reading the text

and how much of their correct responses were because of prior knowledge. McKenna and Stahl, therefore, recommended that when developing comprehension assessments, it is important to include questions that would really assess students' understanding of the specific passage. Farshad's correct responses, thus, could have been due to his prior knowledge based on what was discussed in his social studies class. For example, some of the questions in the "Abraham Lincoln" comprehension assessment such as "What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?" and "What did the southern states threaten to do if Abraham Lincoln was elected president?" were ones which Farshad could have answered even without reading the passage since these ideas were recently discussed in his social studies class.

One comprehension strategy that Farshad would benefit greatly from doing is clarifying unknown vocabulary. Vocabulary seemed to be a weak area for Farshad. When Farshad was serving his in-school suspension, Mrs. Blake had Farshad use the time to review the vocabulary words on StudyStack.com, which she used as a form of virtual flash cards. According to Mrs. Blake, Farshad needed to retake the ESL vocabulary assessment because of his extremely low score of 44 out of 100.

There were several instances in the QRI assessments when Farshad's lack of vocabulary knowledge was apparent. For instance, when asked the question "Why were pharaohs buried with their possessions?" Farshad said he did not know what *possessions* meant. In the same passage, Farshad was unable to answer the question about asking why pharaohs' bodies should be preserved because he did not know what *preserved* meant. These examples bring further evidence to vocabulary's key role to comprehension of ELLs (Calderon, 2007). In the instances of the QRI assessments, Farshad was able to ask

for clarification from me about these vocabulary words, but that will not be the case during formal assessments when he is unable to ask for assistance with unfamiliar vocabulary. Thus, with certain comprehension assessments for ELLs, how do we know that it is comprehension that is being assessed and not vocabulary knowledge? This data also raises the importance of placing value on the vocabulary initiative since it could help Farshad acquire more essential vocabulary words.

Farshad was also unable to express his strategic knowledge in interviews. When I asked him what some of the strategies were that he used when reading, he initially said, "What is it [strategies]?" When I explained what strategies were and provided examples, I then asked him again what he did when he was reading.

Selena: Are any of these strategies things that you think you do or use when you're reading?

Farshad: I don't know.

Selena: Like, tell me what goes on in your head when you're reading. What are some things that you do?

Farshad: I read it and read it again.

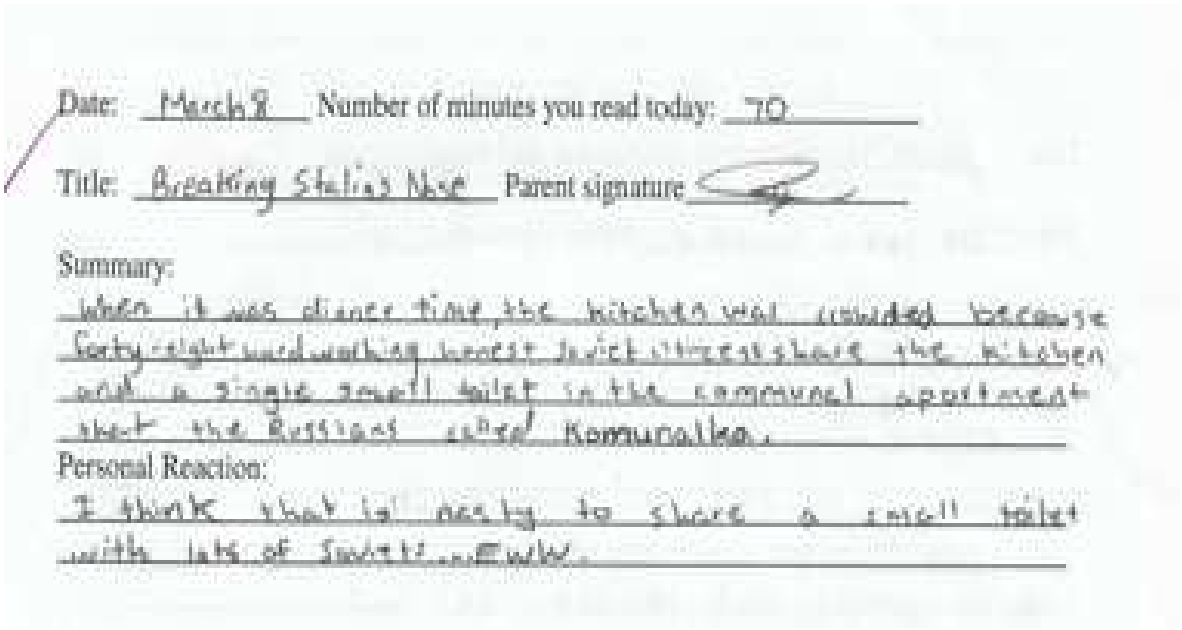
Selena: So what do you do when you don't understand something you're reading?

Farshad: Read it again and see if the answer or something is there.

Farshad over-relied on rereading as a strategy. While rereading is certainly beneficial, he needed to have a repertoire of comprehension strategies to use in order to increase his ability to make meaning from texts. Farshad's entries in the reading log provide further evidence of the lack of comprehension strategy use. There was a section in the reading log wherein students needed to provide a summary of what they read.

Upon closer inspection of what Farshad wrote in his reading log, it seemed he would just copy a sentence or two from the book he was reading instead of writing a summary of what he read. For instance, in his summary for *Breaking Stalin's Nose*, Farshad wrote, "When it was dinner time, the kitchen was crowded because forty-eight hard-working Soviet citizens share the kitchen and a single small toilet in the communal apartment that the Russians called *komunalka*" (see Figure 3). For this reading log entry, Farshad indicated he read this book for 70 minutes, but his summary does not include the amount of detail that is expected from having read a text for an extended period. It seemed he just copied this sentence from the book.

On the other hand, there were examples of comprehension strategy use in Farshad's reading log (see Figure 4). For instance, on March 23, Farshad read *Percy Jackson: The Lightening Thief* and he wrote the following summary: "It was Percy's first time going to camp half-blood school. Percy had displexia [dysplasia], he could read words different." In his personal reaction, Farshad asked the following question, "How can you have displexia [dysplasia]?" This was one of the very few instances wherein Farshad used the comprehension strategy of questioning. Farshad would also make predictions in his reading log entries.


Date: March 8 Number of minutes you read today: 70

Title: Breaking Stalin's Nose Parent signature

Summary:

When it was dinner time, the kitchen was crowded because forty-eight hard working honest Soviet citizens share the kitchen and a single small toilet in the communal apartment that the Russians called Komunalka.

Personal Reaction:

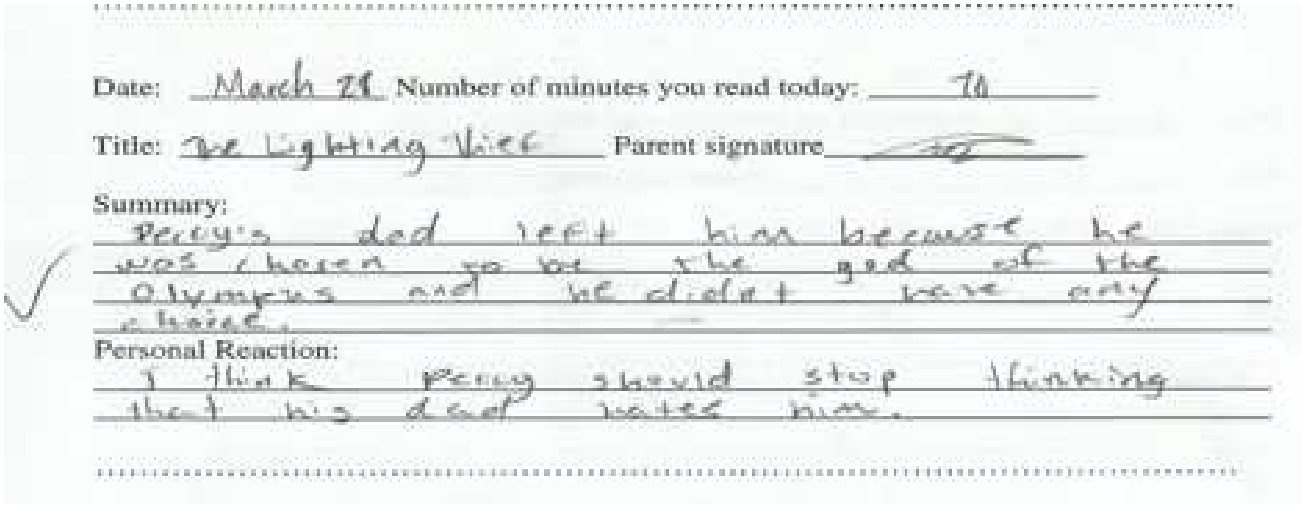
I think that is nasty to share a small toilet with lots of Soviets...Ewww.

Figure 3a. Farshad's reading log entry.

Summary: When it was dinner time, the kitchen was crowded because forty-eight hard working, honest Soviet citizens share the kitchen and a single small toilet in the communal apartment that the Russians called Komulalka. Personal reaction: I think that is nasty to share a small toilet with lots of Soviets…Ewww.

Figure 3b. Key to Figure 3a.

In one example, Farshad mentioned in his summary that Percy and his mom were living in someone else's house. He predicted, "I think Percy and his mom are going to move because they don't feel comfortable." Lastly, there were moments when Farshad evaluated character's actions. In a reaction to a section in the *Percy Jackson* book, Farshad wrote, "I think Percy should stop thinking that his dad hates him." Thus, there were instances wherein Farshad exhibited some use of comprehension strategies, but overall, the reading log entries do not show Farshad using higher-order comprehension strategies such as making inferences or synthesizing information.


Date: March 21 Number of minutes you read today: 10

Title: The Lightning Thief Parent signature

Summary:
Percy's dad left him because he was chosen to be the god of the Olympus and he didn't have any choice.

Personal Reaction:
I think Percy should stop thinking that his dad hates him.

Figure 4a. Farshad's reading entry which shows an example of evaluation.

Summary: Percy's dad left him because he was chosen to be god of the Olympus and he didn't have any choice. Personal reaction: I think Percy should stop thinking that his dad hates him.

Figure 4b. Key to Figure 4a.

Overall, data presented in this section confirm McKenna and Stahl's (2009) claim that struggling readers often do not know how to utilize different strategies to achieve different purposes for reading. They are more focused on decoding the text rather than comprehending it. Thus, this section illustrates that Farshad would theoretically benefit from more explicit comprehension strategy instruction. As he proceeds to eighth-grade and high school, he will encounter much more complex texts. If he is unable to use a wide array of comprehension strategies, it is likely that he will fall further behind his peers academically.

Constructing Meaning from Texts

In this section I discuss how Farshad constructed meaning, or not, while reading texts. As mentioned earlier, results of the QRI assessments indicated that Farshad's comprehension of texts was at the sixth-grade level.

In all of our interviews, I would consistently ask Farshad what he learned from reading in his classes. In one interview, Farshad replied, "Like I didn't learn anything. Just, for science, we watched a movie and we took notes. For social studies, on Thursday, we just took care of the packet. Religion and stuff and the holidays." The packets that Farshad mentioned ranged from 8 to 12 pages of worksheets for each unit that students would complete. Tasks for each packet ranged from identifying vocabulary found in the textbooks, describing events from each unit, and responding to questions based on the textbook. There were some pages where comparative charts were filled out to show the similarities and differences between ideas or events. It was unclear whether time was spent in the social studies class to answer these packets, but for the entire semester that I was observing, a substantial amount of time was spent during the seventh-grade ESL class in supporting the ESL students in completing these packets.

When I probed to determine some facts he might have gained from his social studies packet, he said that he "learned" some of the holidays associated with some of the religions that were discussed, but he was unable to provide any details. The only holiday that he was able to cite specifically was Yom Kippur, but he did not remember any details. Thus, what does learning mean for Farshad when he said he "learned" things but was unable to share what he learned? This might be related to the packets and that the perception for him is that as long as he completes them, he has "learned" that material

since the packets seem to be given value in the class because of the amount of time and attention given to them in his classes.

These packets are not only used in his social studies classroom. He also has to complete similar ones for his science class. Below is an interview excerpt where Farshad discussed some ideas from his science packet.

Selena: What's your topic now in science?

Farshad: Plants, and we're doing a packet right now. About plants like if there was no plants what [long pause]...

Selena: What would happen? Like to the environment? Well, what would happen?

Farshad: No one would be alive.

Selena: Why not?

Farshad: 'Cause we live with plants, right? If there was no plants or anything like grass or trees, we wouldn't be alive. There would be no oxygen, right? Is that right?

Even though Farshad was able to explain the idea correctly, he was uncertain about his understanding. He needed to have affirmation from someone else to let him know that what he was saying was right. On a general level, Farshad was very confident. As expressed earlier, Farshad would consistently say that middle school was "easy" and learning English was "easy." But when pushed for details and information about what he was learning in his content-area classes, more often than not, Farshad would say that he did not learn anything or that he did not remember.

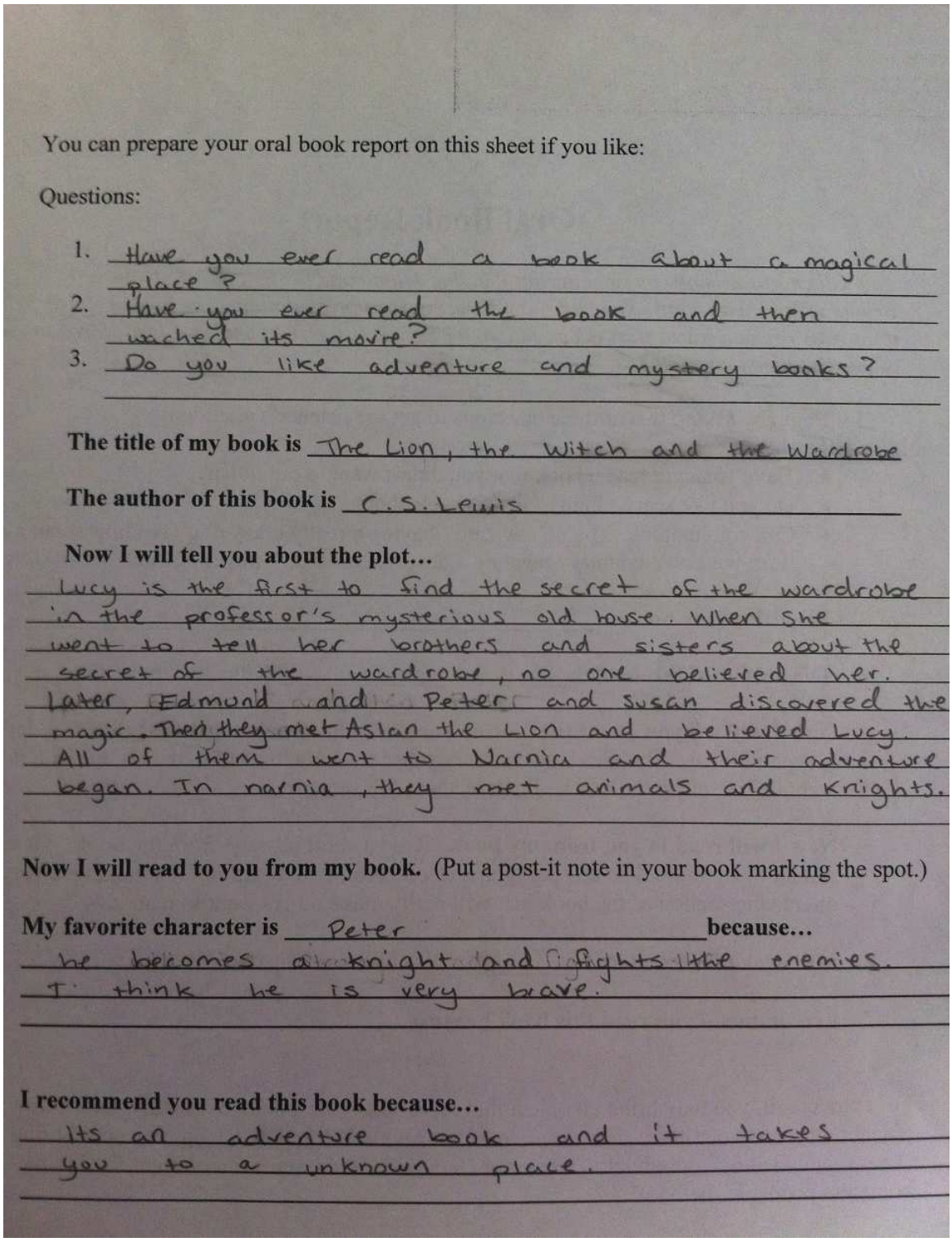
Farshad was fairly more articulate about what he learned in his ESL class. One of the units that Mrs. Blake taught was on invisible disabilities. Throughout this unit, Mrs.

Blake used different ways to engage the students. Aside from the typical reading and writing activities associated with the English class, Mrs. Blake also invited guest speakers. The class also watched the movie, *Door to Door*, wherein the main character had cerebral palsy.

As I arrived in the classroom one day in March, the students excitedly told me a guest speaker was coming during sixth- period. The guest speaker, Steve Johnson (pseudonym) was a former professor who was blind. During the presentation, Mr. Johnson shared with the students how he became blind and the adjustments that he had to make. The class had come up with questions ahead of time, and the students interacted with Mr. Johnson and asked him some of the questions they had come up with. In this unit, the students also read about dwarfism. In connection to this, Mrs. Blake invited a community member who had dwarfism to also be a guest speaker in the ESL class to speak about her experiences.

These experiences resonated with Farshad. In his paper for this unit, Farshad said that he wrote about the guest speakers. When I asked what he wrote about them, Farshad replied, “Like how you should act in front of them, like in a good way. Make them feel like they can do anything like us. That you should use the right way to talk to them.” Prior to this unit, Farshad did not have much knowledge on individuals with disabilities, but afterwards, he gained a better appreciation of their experiences. However, Farshad did not really talk about what he learned from the readings. The students read about numerous disabilities, yet Farshad only mentioned the guest speakers when relating what he learned and did not discuss what he had learned from reading about these disabilities.

Another project in the ESL class was giving an oral book report. Farshad was the first student to give his book report because he had his done in advance. Farshad's book report was on *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe.* He was very prepared and confident in giving his oral book report. Farshad utilized a template that Mrs. Blake had provided and filled it all out so that he was reading the script he had prepared (see Figure 7).



You can prepare your oral book report on this sheet if you like:

Questions:

1. Have you ever read a book about a magical place?
2. Have you ever read the book and then wached its movie?
3. Do you like adventure and mystery books?

The title of my book is The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

The author of this book is C.S. Lewis

Now I will tell you about the plot…

Lucy is the first to find the secret of the wardrobe in the professor's mysterious old house. When she went to tell her brothers and sisters about the secret of the wardrobe, no one believed her. Later, Edmund and Peter and Susan discovered the magic. Then they met Aslan the Lion and believed Lucy. All of them went to Narnia and their adventure began. In narnia, they met animals and knights.

Now I will read to you from my book. (Put a post-it note in your book marking the spot.)

My favorite character is Peter **because…**

he becomes a knight and fights the enemies. I think he is very brave.

I recommend you read this book because…

its an adventure book and it takes you to a unknown place.

Figure 5a. Farshad's completed book report template.

Questions:

1. Have you ever read a book about a magical place?

2. Have you ever read the book and then watched the movie?

3. Do you like adventure and mystery books?

The title of my book is The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe

The author of this book is C.S. Lewis

Now I will tell you about the plot…

Lucy is the first to find the secret of the wardrobe in the professor's mysterious old house. When she went to tell her brothers and sisters about the secret of the wardrobe, no one believed her. Later, Edmund and Peter and Susan discovered the magic. Then they met Aslan the Lion and believed Lucy. All o them went to Narnia and their adventure began. In Narnia they met animals and knights.

My favorite character is Peter because he becomes a knight and fights the enemies. I think he is very brave.

I recommend you read this book because it's an adventure book and it takes you to [an] unknown place.

Figure 5b. Key to Figure 5a.

One part of the book report entailed him reading a favorite section of the book, and Farshad read it fluently, even using different character voices. This is an example of a task that Farshad completed successfully because it was well scaffolded. The template gave Farshad a structure to follow and some ideas on how he could engage the audience.

The discussion above provided descriptions of instructional activities in Farshad's content-area classes and illustrated that Farshad was able to demonstrate minimal ability to construct meaning from texts. I illustrated how the use of worksheet packets did not facilitate Farshad's understanding of concepts in his math and science classes. In

addition, I showed that even though Farshad exhibited more interest in his ESL class, his products do not show multiple opportunities in which he constructed meaning from texts. In the succeeding section, I describe Farshad's participation in social interactions in the ESL classroom environment.

Social Interactions

During my early classroom observations, I did not notice Farshad as much compared to the other ESL students. I mostly interacted with the female Muslim students, who were eager for attention. In contrast, many of the Muslim boys did not readily make connections with the volunteers in the ESL classroom. Often when I would go to the left side of the room where they were clustered and asked if any of them needed help, they would immediately say they did not. Farshad, in particular, was fairly quiet and never requested help on any of his assignments during the early part of the semester. It was only when he became a focal student that he wanted to work individually with me on his assignments during the fifth-period.

In terms of social interactions in the ESL classroom, there was a definite divide between the male and female Muslim students. This is understandable given that in the Muslim religion, there is little gender interaction even in school settings (Sarroub, 2005; Zine 2001). During sixth-period when all the ESL students were present, the males sat next to one another and the female students sat close to each other. When the students had to work in pairs for the vocabulary activities, females worked with females and males worked with males. It must be highlighted that out of the fourteen ELLs in Mrs. Blake's class, eleven of them were Muslim, although they came from different countries. The ESL students were the ones who upheld the Muslim practice of social distance between

males and females (Zine, 2001) in their classroom. Even though Farshad was not as overtly concerned with religious issues compared to the other Muslim students, the ESL classroom context ensured that Farshad enacted some of the religious customs with regard to social interactions.

In terms of his social circle, Farshad had many friends, composed of both boys and girls, and a mix of former ELLs and American students. During the weekends, he and his friends hung out, and they typically went to the mall and shopped or watched a movie. Farshad stated he and his friends never talked about books.

In the classroom, the primary reason that Farshad engaged in social interactions around texts was to get answers for his reading assignments. During the start of the semester, I observed that Farshad rarely participated in social interactions. While the pre-service students and I would help the other seventh-grade ELLs, Farshad would refuse help. He claimed he was already done with his homework. In the example below, I describe an instance wherein Farshad did not want to participate in any social interaction, and instead he and his friend found a way to obtain the answers.

> Mrs. Blake wanted to work with Adam, an ELL from Sierra Leone, on his decoding skills. Adam, a seventh-grader, read at approximately a second-grade level. Adam protested and said he needed to work on his social studies packet. To appease him, Mrs. Blake asked Sabeen and Amira if they wouldn't mind sharing their work later with Adam. They agreed. While Sabeen and Amira were working on a part of their packet, Farshad was not doing anything. He was just sitting in his chair, looking around the room. Later that afternoon, Mrs. Blake made a copy of the packet and gave it to Adam so he could review it for class. Mrs. Jenkins,

> the librarian, informed Mrs. Blake that Adam asked her to make a copy of the packet and gave it to Farshad. When Mrs. Blake found out, she reprimanded both Adam and Farshad. (Field notes, February, 2012)

This was one instance wherein Farshad was caught cheating. Instead of participating in a social interaction with Sabeen and Amira where they could all work together, along with the pre-service teachers, to complete the packet, Farshad resorted to cheating. Later in the semester, however, Farshad joined Sabeen and Amira in working on the social studies packet. Often though, he would sit there and not read the textbook. He waited for someone else to find the information and then look at the text and write down the answers. Farshad did not actively participate to complete the tasks or even look at the textbooks to find the answers. Because Mrs. Blake was typically working with other students at this time, Farshad was able to get away with this type of behavior. However, when Mrs. Blake roamed the room, Farshad made himself appear as though he was actively looking through the textbook for the answers to the questions in the packet.

Farshad admitted he enjoyed working in groups. He explained, “Cause sometimes they know the answer, and I just write what they say.” He added that another aspect of working in groups that he enjoyed was the opportunity to “socialize a lot with friends and see them again and just talk and sometimes not do work.” Farshad said he acted this way in social interactions in his other classes, particularly science. He did not typically act this way in the ESL class. However, when the seventh-grade ELLs were allowed to use the time in the ESL classroom to get support for their content-area classes, Farshad often wanted the pre-service teachers to locate the answers in the textbooks for him so he could copy the answer into the packet. During this time, Mrs. Blake was typically preoccupied

working with Tarek or Nadya on their conversational English skills, so she did not consistently monitor these social interactions.

During the sixth-period ESL class, Mrs. Blake provided structured opportunities for the students to engage in social interactions. When they discussed the daily vocabulary words, students worked with a partner and completed sentence prompts. Meanwhile, during the invisible disabilities unit, the students had to write a paper, and participate in a peer review process. The students were placed in groups of three. Farshad was in a group with Amira, a seventh-grade girl from Iraq and Nischal, an eighth-grade boy from Nepal. Farshad had noted the positive aspects of the peer review process.

> I think it was good 'cause you read about others, other people's readings and like you, kinda saw what they did and, like, fix their mistakes so they know what kind of mistakes they did. Like, I mean, it was okay. It was something good to see.

Farshad was able to identify mistakes in Amira's paper, but he was not able to provide suggestions on how to revise the paper. Meanwhile, Nischal noted on Farshad's paper that he needed to use more transitions and include more supporting details.

Despite some of these positive interactions, Farshad's perception of group work was still primarily a way for him to avoid working and instead obtain answers from either his classmates or volunteers in the ESL classroom. Farshad has gotten accustomed to using group work as a crutch for him to complete his assignments. Although Farshad has a relatively high level of self-efficacy, his actions in group settings illustrate that he relied on his peers or tutors to get his work done. For Farshad, social interactions were about completing the work and not an opportunity to learn from others.

Farshad: A Disengaged Reader

Based on the data provided in this chapter, Farshad can be classified as a long-term English learner for several reasons (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2002; Menken & Kleyn, 2009). First, Farshad has been in the U.S. for six years, yet he was still placed exclusively in an ESL class. Second, Farshad had below grade level comprehension abilities based on both QRI assessments and formative assessments such as classroom observations. Next, Farshad has similar English-speaking abilities to native English speakers, but his academic literacy skills in English are sub-par (Menken & Kleyn, 2009). Finally, Farshad has a false perception of his academic capabilities (Freeman et al., 2002). As Freeman and Freeman explained, these English learners may be given passing marks because they simply turned in their work, yet when students take exams or standardized tests, their scores are low. In Farshad's case, his high grades may be attributed to his completion of the worksheet packets that are ubiquitous in his content-area classes rather than as an indicator of his thorough understanding of the ideas, events, and topics being covered in these classes.

Given Farshad's status as a long-term English learner, it is unsurprising that he had relatively low levels of engagement. Specifically, the discussion on Farshad's lack of strategic knowledge provides a plausible explanation why he might not be engaged as a reader. Duke and Pearson (2002) stated, "Comprehension is a consuming, continuous, and complex activity, but one that, for good readers, is both *satisfying* and *productive*" (p. 206). Given Farshad's rare use of comprehension strategies and his below-grade level comprehension abilities, it is likely that he did not experience satisfaction from reading. Thus, he chooses not to read. As a result, his comprehension skills do not improve. It is a

vicious cycle. This cycle will continue unless a few areas are immediately addressed: (1) increasing Farshad's perception of the value of reading; (2) improving Farshad's overall strategic knowledge and increasing his use of comprehension strategies; (3) providing more interesting and substantive literacy tasks across all content-area classes; and (4) changing Farshad's perception of the purpose of social interactions.

Guthrie et al. (2012c) point out that motivation becomes even more crucial to adolescent development because it is likely to affect students' cognitive proficiencies.

> When motivations are negative (avoidance or disaffection), behaviors become aversive, leading to a gradual decline in cognitive proficiency. It is evident that cognitive expertise cannot be attained without sustained behaviors, and the absence of reading behaviors is a precursor to cognitive decline. (p. 605)

This statement from Guthrie and his colleagues highlight the importance of increasing Farshad's motivation, especially at this pivotal point in his schooling career. If he is unmotivated now, what will prevent him from becoming completely disengaged with his studies as he progresses through school? More importantly, how much further behind will he be in terms of his comprehension skills if he continues his habit of not reading any texts and relying on others to complete his work? Long-term English learners are also more at risk of dropping out of school (Menken & Kleyn, 2009), and thus, it is imperative that Farshad's low comprehension and engagement levels be addressed.

Farshad's inaccurate view of his reading abilities is problematic. My interpretation is that Farshad truly believed he was a good reader. He told me that when he started submitting all his assignments, he was averaging grades of As and Bs. However, it would be interesting to know what Farshad's performance was on tasks

where he needed to work independently and could not ask for support, such as formal assessments. These would be more indicative of Farshad's actual reading abilities and understanding of course content compared to homework where he could have the ESL classroom volunteers locate or provide the answers.

Farshad's case supports Monzo and Rueda's (2009) notion that when English learners try to pass themselves off as better English speakers and readers, they may eventually begin to believe the image they are projecting is true. This may be the case with Farshad. To deal with his embarrassment about still being in ESL class, he has created an image of himself as a good reader. The data gathered through classroom observations, QRI assessments, and interviews counter Farshad's self-assessment. Instead, the data points to specific instructional needs that will help to improve Farshad's reading abilities. For instance, he would likely benefit from more explicit strategy instruction as this would facilitate increased levels of understanding from texts. As well, Farshad seemed to engage with the content more fully when alternative texts and social interactions were included in the form of guest speakers. When Farshad's comprehension levels improve, he may perceive more pleasure and satisfaction from reading. Once this happens, it is plausible he would better appreciate the value of reading and, hopefully, engage in more reading rather than continuing to think that reading is "just a waste of time."

CHAPTER 6

"I Like Reading for Knowledge":

The Hidden Reading Engagement of an African ELL

In this chapter, I describe the experiences of the final focal student, Oliver, an eighth-grade student originally from the Republic of Congo who engaged in reading activities without his teachers' knowledge. A disengaged student who was extremely bored in his classes, Oliver admitted to frequently sleeping in class. In stark contrast, he avidly read informational texts on physics at home, where he read freely and of his own volition because he was genuinely interested in the topic. Oliver's positive reading habits were not known in the school setting, however, and only his family members and a few close friends knew about his interest in reading science texts.

Oliver's case highlights the disconnect between home and school reading practices of adolescent students. Researchers have noted the disparity between students' out-of-school and in-school reading habits and attitudes (Hinchman, Alvermann, Boyd, Brozo, & Vacca, 2003/2004; Kirkland, 2011; Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008; Pitcher et al., 2007; Worthy et al., 1999). Despite reports that recreational reading is on the decline for adolescents and young adults (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009), others have found that these individuals do, in fact, engage in out-of-school literacy practices (Moje et al., 2008; Pitcher et al., 2007). For example, Moje et al. (2008) found that 92% of the 716 adolescents they surveyed reported reading outside of school at least four times a week. Texts they read included websites, letters and notes, emails, magazines, and novels.

Oliver's case adds to the evidence of previous studies that have noted the disconnect between in-school and out-of-school literacy practices. Oliver had two distinct reading engagement profiles. He was a very disengaged reader at school, where he was unmotivated to read, utilized few comprehension strategies, and was uninterested in learning from academic texts. In contrast, Oliver was an extremely engaged reader in the home context when he was able to pursue texts that focused on science concepts, which were of great interest to him. When reading these texts, he exhibited the traits of an engaged reader, with the exception of participating in social interactions. In the remainder of this chapter, I describe Oliver's reading engagement in more detail.

Getting to Know Oliver

Oliver attended kindergarten in Congo but soon afterward moved to the United States with his mother and older brother. He did not remember much about his native country, but he was still fluent in French, which was the language spoken in his home. Although Oliver was African, he was sometimes mistaken for African-American because he had no strong accent and spoke fluent English. He also seemed to disassociate himself from anything related to his native country.

When Oliver arrived in the United States as a six-year-old, he had not yet learned how to read. He remembered that during his early years in the United States he spent much of his free time watching television. Because she wanted him to learn how to read in English, Oliver's mother would mute the television and turn on the subtitles. Thus, Oliver needed to learn how to read if he wanted to be able to make complete sense of what he was watching.

When Oliver was younger, he had a negative attitude about reading. He explained, "I felt it was useless, learning how to read. What would you need reading for?" As a young student, reading had no appeal for him. Rather than reading, he wanted to do something else, such as play with blocks. This lack of appeal continued for most of Oliver's years in elementary school. When he was in the fifth grade, Oliver said, he suddenly had the urge to "become smarter" and decided to start reading.

As a single parent, Oliver's mother worked long hours to support her family, leaving Oliver and his older brother to fend for themselves alone at home. She encouraged Oliver to read at home, however. "My mom told me to read all the time. When she sees me reading, she leaves me alone," Oliver said. She also provided reading materials for him. Aware of his interest in science, Oliver's mother would occasionally purchase science-related books for him despite the family's limited income.

When Oliver was at home, he spent much of his free time either sleeping or watching movies, and he usually spent 2 hours on Fridays reading his science books for pleasure. When he ran out of reading materials, he walked to the public library, which was approximately 2 miles from his home. When he became bored from staying at home, Oliver would walk to a nearby neighborhood to play basketball with friends. Oliver spent some time during the spring and summer mowing lawns for spending money because his mother did not give him an allowance.

Adjusting to Middle-School Life

When Oliver first started middle school at FMS, he said, he did not like it because it felt "too big" for him and he often got lost in the school. Overall, he considered his middle school experiences more difficult than elementary school because there was much

more homework given in middle school and stricter attendance policies. He also admitted that he was lazy in seventh grade. During elementary school, Oliver had stayed home if he did not want to go to school, but he was unable to skip school at FMS because attendance was strictly monitored. While Oliver's mother wanted him to have a good education, it seemed that she was unable to monitor Oliver and his brother consistently because of her work schedule.

Oliver attended Mrs. Blake's ESL class for vocabulary lessons, but he had a separate English class. During the sixth period, the entire class would spend approximately 20 minutes at the beginning of class learning vocabulary words, but he was one of the eighth-grade students who then went to the library. Oliver was consistently one of the first students in the classroom. He would quietly take a seat and had very little interactions with his classmates unless they were the ones who initiated the social contact. During the vocabulary lesson, Oliver would consistently not volunteer to participate unless Mrs. Blake called on him.

After the vocabulary lesson, the eighth-grade students proceeded to the school library where students were supposed to work on projects or homework, and there were typically tutors available to help them. Oliver did not utilize this time to work on projects or assignments, though; instead, when Oliver entered the library, he typically headed to the magazine rack, where he would read the latest issue of *People* magazine, which is about popular culture, entertainment, and celebrities, or a science magazine. Sometimes I observed that he was very involved with the text, whereas there were also instances when he would not read and instead observed other students in the library. Following is an excerpt of an interview in which we discussed my observation of him in the library:

Selena: I often see you here in the library, getting up and looking at books. How do you choose the books that you're reading?

Oliver: Oh, I don't really read here. I just sit here with the book and stare at the book and look [around].

Selena: You just stare at it? You're not really reading it?

Oliver: Unless it's, like, really interesting, and I'll start reading it.

Oliver admitted that although it may have seemed as if he were reading, he often was just staring at the text in front of him. This behavior was also typical of what Oliver did in the classroom. In my earliest observations in Mrs. Blake's classroom, Oliver would just sit quietly at the back of the classroom. In fact, Oliver was the only one among the focal students who I observed in another context because I wanted to see if his behavior was different in another classroom. Thus, I observed him twice in his English class with Mr. Kilian.

Oliver could be the student often overlooked by teachers in the classroom. He was not one of the rowdy students, but he admitted that his mind tended to drift in many of his classes. He was blunt about his disengagement in his classes. Typically, when Oliver arrived at the classroom he would greet some of his classmates, but then he would sit in his seat and look at the ceiling or floor. Following is an interview in which he expanded on his distractions:

Oliver: Oh yeah. I put my head on my desk a lot. I'm just lazy. I don't even listen much.

Selena: Why not? What are you thinking about?

> Oliver. Stuff. About like whether or not I should go home [and] read, or should I read first or actually go on the computer or if my brother's gonna be on the computer or how I get him off the computer.

Oliver also said he did not like to participate in classroom discussions. During our third interview in May, he said, "I really don't remember the last time I raised my hand." Even when he knew the answer, such as in science class, he said he would "just sit there and let someone else get it." In Mrs. Blake's sixth-period class, however, he could be called on even if he did not raise his hand. "That annoys me a lot," Oliver said; however, he shared that he paid more attention in sixth period because he knew there was a possibility that Mrs. Blake would call on him to answer a question. In his other classes, his teachers never required him to participate in the discussions.

When I observed Oliver in his English class with Mr. Kilian, numerous students in the class were extremely noisy and talkative; hence, the teacher's attention was focused on the students who were misbehaving. Oliver, who was very quiet, was simply overlooked in this English class of more than 20 students. There were a few moments in the school year that Oliver recalled that Mr. Kilian told him to wake up and pay attention. Most of the time, however, Oliver was not reprimanded because there were other students who were being disruptive in class, and these students were the ones on whom Mr. Kilian focused. In contrast, there were only 14 students in the sixth-period class; thus, Mrs. Blake was able to ensure that all students had a chance to participate in each class. She ensured that she called on all the students to either read one of the sample sentences or share the sentences they composed for the daily vocabulary lessons.

Oliver was more attentive earlier in the school year. He recalled, “I focused, like, really hard at the beginning of the year. I was, like, hyper or something. I was raising my hand, doing everything. Like once a day, I would raise my hand.” Oliver talked about how he was more conscious about participating in all of his classes. The only exception was Mr. Kilian’s English class, which was his least favorite subject. Oliver found this subject to be boring because he did not appreciate the assigned texts. Nonetheless, Oliver indicated that he was more participative in his other classes, which contradicted the behavior that I had been regularly observing in his ESL and English classes.

I asked Oliver why he did not participate in classroom discussions during the second semester. He answered, “Don’t you just get bored?” His posing of the question to me was sincere; he thought this behavior was typical. Although I found it encouraging that Oliver had the capacity to be more engaged in class discussions and willing to participate, it was also disheartening that he was unable to sustain his interest in his middle-school classes.

Freeman and Freeman (2002) identified the following four pedagogical factors that contributed to the academic success of older English learners:

- engage students in challenging, theme-based curriculum to develop academic concepts;
- draw on students’ background—their experiences, cultures, and languages;
- organize collaborative activities and scaffold instruction to build students’ academic English proficiency; and
- create confident students who value school and value themselves as learners (Freeman & Freeman, 2002, p. 16).

Based on my classroom observations, Mrs. Blake was able to draw on students' backgrounds and provide opportunities to build on students' academic proficiencies by working specifically on ELLs' vocabulary knowledge. Meanwhile, based on my two observations in Mr. Kilian's class, he engaged his students in challenging curriculum and looked for ways to engage them. For instance, when working on metaphors, he asked students to bring lyrics of their favorite songs. Neither teacher was able to meet all four of Freeman et al.'s criteria for ensuring ELLs' academic success. For instance, Oliver's native language was not utilized or acknowledged in either of these instructional settings. Also, from Oliver's perspective, the instructional strategies utilized did not really engage him with the class content.

Unlike the other focal students, Oliver did not have a set group of friends. Instead, he said, he had a "wide variety of friends" from different classes, most of whom were his friends from elementary school. Overall, Oliver did not seem to be bothered about his status as an ELL, perhaps in part because it was not obvious that he was an ELL. Many people probably assumed that Oliver was an African-American male who was born and raised in the United States and did not realize he was actually from another country. In terms of his English-speaking abilities, Oliver was very fluent, but he tended to mumble. He was also very quiet, and it was often difficult to hear what he was saying.

Oliver did not acknowledge his ELL status. Unlike the three other focal students, who explicitly talked about their feelings about being ELLs, Oliver did not mention this at all. He was acculturated to the U.S. setting because he had been here for approximately 8 years already. Because of the length of time that he had been in the United States and the fact that he had started his formal schooling experience in U.S. schools, Oliver is also

a long-term English learner. On the surface, his academic English skills do not match his oral speaking abilities; however, I would argue that when Oliver is truly engaged with texts, his ability to comprehend them improves, which will be addressed later in this chapter.

Oliver did not have any memories of his time in Congo. He admitted, “I really know nothing about Congo.” The only aspects of his culture that he experienced were the language, because his family spoke French at home, and their native food. Oliver said that he really appreciated when his mother would spend time on the weekends cooking their native cuisine.

There were a few instances in which Oliver acknowledged his immigrant status. When we talked about social studies, Oliver said, “I don’t really like social studies. I wasn’t even born in this country, so I don’t really care about the country’s history.” In this instance, Oliver used his ELL status to explain his indifference to not only social studies but to the history of the United States. This particular example is interesting because it seemed that Oliver was disassociating himself from the U.S. context, yet in earlier interactions, he also distanced himself from his native country. So how does he see himself in terms of his ethnic identity? This identification is also a part of Oliver that remains hidden.

In this section, I provided background information on Oliver. In what follows, I provide in-depth descriptions of Oliver’s reading (dis)engagement. I show that Oliver is a voracious reader of informational texts, although he keeps this interest hidden from the school context.

Motivation

When Oliver could pursue his own reading interests, he was intrinsically motivated to read. His motivation to read came from his strong interest in science, specifically any topic related to physics. His interest in reading science texts is related to his career goal of being either a doctor or a physicist. At the beginning of the study, Oliver stated, "I'm not quite motivated to read any book except science." In a later interview, Oliver shared, "I like reading for knowledge, that's it." When Oliver was asked to read about any other topic, his motivation waned.

Oliver's interest in informational texts began in the fifth grade. He began reading for knowledge because he "wanted to become smarter." Oliver explained, "I just woke up one day, like, I wanted to become smarter and I just started reading." As an eighth-grader, Oliver read science texts at home. These were texts he chose himself and were not connected to any of the academic texts he read in his science class.

His interest in science motivated him to explore different genres of text. For instance, Oliver noted that he read an issue of *Newsweek* magazine because the cover indicated it contained an article on "New Secrets of the Universe." When I asked him about his experience in reading the magazine article, he said, "It was fun to read. I like reading about the universe and stuff." Also, his family recently had acquired Internet access at home. Oliver said that when he was reading something in a book that did not make sense, he would go online and search for more information about the topic. During this study, Oliver's current interest was physics, although he had previously been interested in chemistry, as the following interview excerpt demonstrates:

Oliver: I used to like chemistry and stuff, but I like stuff that didn't originate from

other stuff. So like chemistry, it all came from this theory called the exclusion theory/exclusive theory. Some guy, I don't know his name. I didn't bother remembering his name, but he [had] been observing electrons or particles moving a lot and he noticed, like, their patterns of movement and stuff like that and that's the origin of chemistry so I didn't really like that I guess.

Selena: So you didn't like that chemistry wasn't the original theory.

Oliver: Yeah, I didn't like that chemistry was, at the beginning, it like came from a theory about what? Unlike physics, it doesn't really come from any theory. It's just how stuff works and everything about the world. Like, it can explain everything. Chemistry can explain the actions of a particle. It can explain how it's made and stuff.

Based on this interview excerpt, Oliver was able to clearly articulate why he had a particular interest in physics. It also illustrated the depth of thinking that Oliver has done and his extensive knowledge on this topic. Physics was not a fleeting interest for him. He was truly intrinsically motivated to know more about physics, and this motivation prompted him to voluntarily read about this topic to increase his knowledge.

In terms of academic reading, Oliver said, "Like when I'm forced to read, I usually read." But Oliver admitted that he found academic reading to be particularly boring. When I asked him about the reading he was required to complete for his content-area classes, Oliver replied, "Yeah, that's like my worst part. I'd rather do anything else, like write, than read." He admitted that reading in his English class was his least favorite academic activity. He explained, "It's boring. You try to read really fast and you just get bored and you skip a whole bunch of stuff." Oliver could not tell me the last text they had

read in his English class because he said he was asleep for half the period during the last four English classes. He usually sat at the back so that his English teacher, Mr. Kilian, would not notice. One time, Mr. Kilian did notice that Oliver had nodded off and told him to wake up.

In fact, when I observed him in Mr. Kilian's class, Oliver had his head down on his desk as the teacher was speaking. His seat mate, Molly, looked at him and said loudly, "Oh my gosh! Are you sleeping?" Oliver then sat up, smiled sheepishly at Molly, but said nothing. In a later interview, when Oliver revealed that he often slept in his free time at home, I asked, "If you sleep so much at home, why are you still sleeping in school?" He replied, "I don't know. It's just so boring, it makes me sleepy."

Oliver also revealed that he did not like to read other types of books, such as fantasy books: "I don't really have that much imagination, so I can't imagine everything so I just get bored and then start skipping, and it doesn't turn out so well," Oliver explained. He also said he did not read fiction because "why bother knowing when it's fake?" Oliver cited the popular "Harry Potter" books by J.K. Rowling as a specific example:

> Reading for information is good, but reading for the fun of it...I mean you're reading about a guy, okay, Harry Potter, you're reading about a guy with a stick that can do magic. He goes into this castle. I'm like, I'll rather just watch the movie.

Although the "Harry Potter" series is very appealing for many students, it is of no interest to Oliver. He even said, "I don't get it. It's boring and it wastes your time." Oliver said there were times he tried broadening his reading horizons. "I read one of the

books over there [pointing to the fiction section of the library] but I read the first page, and I got bored." Oliver had very strong preferences for reading, which influenced how he perceived other genres of texts, such as fantasy and realistic fiction books.

In one interview, I asked, "How do you motivate yourself to read things that you don't want to read?" "I don't," Oliver replied. In sum, Oliver's motivation to read was driven by his purpose for reading. He wanted to read to gain more knowledge about physics, and this desire fueled his motivation to read informational texts across different genres. He found texts that did not meet that purpose to be boring or irrelevant, and he had low to no motivation for these texts.

Strategic Knowledge

Oliver's strategic knowledge presented an interesting case. On one hand, he was unable to clearly articulate the strategies he used as a reader. When asked what comprehension strategies he used, he did not know what comprehension strategies were, despite admitting that Mr. Kilian had explicitly discussed these in his English class. On the other hand, Oliver exhibited a wide range of comprehension strategy use during the think-aloud component of the QRI assessments. Even though Oliver exhibited use of various strategies in the think-alouds, the results of the comprehension assessments were concerning. Based on the QRI word lists, Oliver's instructional levels for decoding were at the sixth-grade and upper middle-school level. Because I noticed that Oliver almost reached the frustration level on the sixth-grade word list by missing six out of 20 words, I decided to administer comprehension passages at the sixth-grade level rather than the upper middle-school level (see Table 6 for results of QRI comprehension assessments).

Given Oliver's interest in science texts, his poor performance with the expository passages was surprising. Although he was able to provide interesting statements for the think-aloud portion of the assessments, he was unable to correctly answer the comprehension questions. As indicated in Table 6, Oliver scored at a frustration level for both expository texts. He was able to look back for the second expository passage, but I forgot to complete the look-back portion for the first comprehension assessments, and thus it is unknown if Oliver would have been able to improve his score for the "Temperature and Humidity" passage.

Table 6

Results of Oliver's Comprehension Assessments

QRI Passage (Genre)	Without Look Backs	Level	With Look Backs	Level
"Temperature and Humidity" (Expository)	4/8	Frustration	N/A	N/A
"Clouds and Precipitation" (Expository)	4/8	Frustration	5/8	Frustration
"The Early Life of Lois Lowry" (Narrative)	6/8	Instructional	6/8	Instructional
"Abraham Lincoln" (Narrative)	8/8	Independent	N/A	N/A

Oliver performed surprisingly better on the narrative passages. Oliver scored at an instructional level for the passage on "The Early Life of Lois Lowry", and he was able to answer all questions correctly on the "Abraham Lincoln" passage even without look-backs. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, the "Abraham Lincoln" passage contained questions that could be answered even without reading it. Thus, although Oliver may have had a better understanding of this particular passage, it must be pointed out that his high score could also be due to his prior knowledge on this topic based on what he had learned about the Civil War in his social studies class. Also, I noticed that, even when he was given a chance to look back at the text, Oliver rarely took advantage of the opportunity. For the look-back portions, when I asked some of the questions again, he replied, "I'm good,"

which indicated that he was satisfied with the response he had originally given and did not want to refer back to the text.

For the think-aloud portions, Oliver had 29 instances of strategy use, and he used nine different comprehension strategies (see Table 7). The most common strategy that he used was questioning, which he typically used when reading the expository texts that dealt with topics such as clouds and precipitation, and temperature and humidity. Next, he used paraphrasing, and these instances were done mostly with the narrative passages.

Oliver showed a great deal of interest in the expository passages. For instance, when reading about clouds, Oliver asked, “Can you make a cloud?” He said it seemed the text provided instructions on how a cloud could be formed. I then asked him what needed to be controlled for him to make a cloud, and he said that the room needed to have high temperatures because heat was necessary for clouds to form. Oliver was interested in learning about how to form clouds, an idea he referred back to repeatedly while reading the “Clouds and Precipitation” passage:

> Maybe it’s warmer up there...’cause in winter, the cold air is on the bottom, so the hot air has to get to the top or something. Like maybe it’s warmer up there. That’s why the clouds are up there.

This quote provides confirmation of Oliver’s earlier statement that he liked science because he wanted to know how things worked. It also shows that Oliver was problem-solving. He used his prior knowledge (that heat rises) to think about how clouds are formed. This example shows that when Oliver was curious about something, he would continue to think about it until he found an answer that suited him.

Table 7

Frequency and Examples of Oliver's Comprehension Strategy Use

Comprehension Strategy	Number	Percentage	Example from Think-Aloud
Questioning	8	28	Why can't clouds be made of anything else and just water? Like carbon, why can't it be made with carbon?
Paraphrasing	6	21	They talk about comparing the amount of water vapor to the largest amount of moisture the air can hold at that temperature.
Making connections	4	14	I'm just thinking of "The Giver" that she wrote 'cause we read that in seventh grade.
Integrating prior knowledge	3	10	I thought the warmer the air, the less water vapor it has, but it's the other way around.
Acquiring new knowledge	3	10	Right now, I'm thinking about dew point. I didn't know the point where air or water vapor turn into water, so I didn't think there was a name for that.
Making inferences	2	7	He's wise, I guess. The way he said, that thing he said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand" was pretty cool.
Clarifying	1	3	I always thought it was colder air on the bottom and warmer air on the top. Am I right? Is that right?

Table 7 (cont'd)

Application	1	3	(Talking about instruction on how to make a cloud) Like it gives instructions right here. Put some hot water until it starts evaporating. Put some more water, like a little drop, like really small drops and let it go into the air. Just keep doing that until it gets all foggy and stuff.
Summarizing	1	3	Dew point [is] the point where the air holding 100 percent water vapor can't hold it anymore so it becomes, returns to water. It just falls.

There were also nine instances that I documented during the think-aloud portions where Oliver provided evidence that he was distracted and not really giving his full attention to the task at hand. For example, during his think-aloud when reading the passage about Lois Lowry, Oliver admitted, "I'm just really tired. I can't really think of anything right now." During the same passage, he indicated, "I'm just thinking about soccer right now. I'm sorry." During another comprehension assessment, Oliver was leaning his chair back, and the chair's two front legs were in the air:

> Oliver: And, like, if you lean back, do you get dumber? I heard this in seventh grade. It's like, it's said that if you lean back, some of the stuff that you learned goes to the back of your brain. If you lean forward, it won't come back. Do you get dumb or something?
>
> Selena: They're just telling you that so you won't lean back on your chair, I think.
>
> Oliver. So they're lying? I'm going to tell Mr. Henry that and tell him that, 'cause he've lying to me for, like, the whole year.

Oliver also was somewhat distracted when reading the passage, “Clouds and Precipitation.” During the think-aloud for this passage, he exhibited the use of several good comprehension strategies such as clarifying, integrating prior knowledge, and making connections. His mind would wander, however; for instance, after reading the last paragraph in the passage, Oliver provided the following statement:

> I just thought if you have one of those machines from those brothers that were inventing how to fly and [you] were flying, and like it was like almost about to rain, you can really drink some water from the clouds. Like, just fly through them, and just start drinking water.

Oliver’s description provides a great visualization of someone riding in one of the Wright brothers’ earliest airplanes and flying through rainclouds. However, it was really not connected to what he read about in the passage. These are just a few examples of how Oliver was distracted during the comprehension assessments, and it gives insight to how distracted he might be during his classes.

It is noteworthy that, even though Oliver employed a wider range of comprehension strategies with the expository texts compared to the narrative texts, his comprehension levels were higher on the latter. A probable explanation is that Oliver was not as focused on the expository text itself because he was so involved in making connections and inferences. In fact, he had several distracted moments when reading the “Clouds and Precipitation” passage such as the instance where he alluded to riding in one of the Wright brothers’ airplanes.

When I asked Oliver specifically if he ever had been taught comprehension strategies, he first asked what comprehension strategies were. When I explained to him what they were, he said that Mr. Kilian discussed them in his eighth-grade English class:

Selena: Did you understand when to use each strategy and why you should use each strategy?

Oliver: Yeah.

Selena: So among those strategies, what do you use?

Oliver: I don't think I use any of them.

Selena: What do you think you should be using?

Oliver: All of them.

Selena: So why aren't you using them?

Oliver: I don't really read much.

Based on this excerpt, Oliver has had some exposure to explicit comprehension strategy instruction. He claimed he knew when and how to use the strategies, but he chose not to because he "doesn't really read much." It is evident from the previous section that Oliver actually does read a great amount of science texts, however. Perhaps because the strategies were taught in Oliver's English class, which he did not enjoy and was not engaged in, he was not able to make the connection that these strategies could, and should, be applied to all types of reading. In addition, when I asked Oliver about comprehension strategies in the succeeding interview, he again asked me what they were; it seemed he neither understood nor internalized the terminology. He also reiterated that he did not frequently use comprehension strategies. For instance, he said, "I don't use

questioning much ’cause I know what’s about to come in the future. Prediction. I don’t predict much neither. I was thinking about the last time I predicted but … [long pause].”

In terms of his pleasure reading, Oliver said one of the strategies he used was rereading, especially when he was unable to understand the information in a science text. As an example, Oliver said, “The science books I read, it has information that is based on information in the past so I just go back.” However, when reading non-science texts, Oliver did not reread even when he experienced comprehension difficulties. He also said that when reading, he has gotten used to skimming the text because “it’s a lot of words so you gotta get through them fast.”

Another strategy he admitted to using when reading science texts was clarifying: “If I don’t understand something I just go up and search it up.” Since acquiring Internet access at home, he had been exploring websites to find more information about the science texts, especially when he needed clarification on ideas he encountered in his science books. When asked about the trustworthiness of the websites he explored, Oliver explained,

> Usually when I read [a science book], it tells a brief description about it (the topic) so I just reread it like four times. If I don't understand it and I go to the website and if it tells me a completely different thing about it, it's not reliable.

Based on the preceding statement, Oliver was able to use his prior knowledge on a topic to evaluate the trustworthiness of a website. The fact that Oliver even evaluated Internet resources is important to note because researchers have found that, compared to less successful learners, more successful learners were more likely to evaluate the

credibility of an Internet source (Goldman, Braasch, Wiley, Graesser, & Brodowinska, 2012).

The information presented in this section provides both positive and negative aspects of Oliver's strategic knowledge. It is troubling that Oliver, an eighth-grade student, obtained scores on the comprehension sections that indicated that sixth-grade passages were at his frustration level. Yet, data obtained from the think-aloud portions of the comprehension assessments and from interviews show that Oliver did, in fact, use numerous comprehension strategies; however, he did not consciously realize that he was able to use different comprehension strategies to make sense of texts.

Constructing Meaning from Texts

Because of his interest in science texts, Oliver realized that reading was a way to acquire information. He said, "Reading is only for one thing, to get information inside you. Learn information without another person telling you. So I think that's what reading [is] for." From this statement, Oliver addresses Baker et al.'s (2000) argument that at "the heart of engagement is the desire to gain new knowledge of a topic" (p. 2). After reading science texts, Oliver was able to share facts that he learned. For instance, in our first interview, Oliver shared that he had recently learned about dark matter:

> It's like a thing that goes out in the universe. It has its own gravity so it pulls the universe together. It's not like anything like a dark hole or something. It pulls the universe together and it keeps it from expanding too.

In a later interview, Oliver shared what he had learned about fronts: "It's like a part where, like, the air is hot on one side and on the other side, the air is cold and the

area where the air is hot *and* cold is the front." Following is Oliver's explanation from our third interview of something he had recently learned from reading:

> Oh, the article about the multi-universe [multiverse] thing. It's like a theory based on, it's not just our universe. A whole bunch of universes. A bunch of big bangs is happening at the same time. Not at the same time, but, like, you know, a bunch of big bangs is really special. It's like inflammatory theory or something. I don't really care about the name, but I just like [reading] about what happened.

Oliver said that he had gained this information from an article on quantum mechanics. Initially, he did not understand the article, so he went home and consulted a science reference book: "I have a book about everything, like every single science stuff, so I skipped a little pages to learn about quantum mechanics." These and other examples provide evidence that Oliver was indeed a voracious reader of science texts.

Admittedly, I was skeptical during the earlier parts of the data collection process. When Oliver told me he was interested in science, it seemed to contradict all of my classroom observations. As the study progressed, however, I heard all of these explanations that Oliver provided about interesting facts and ideas that he had learned through reading.

In our final interview, Oliver expanded on what he had learned about inflationary theory from the *Newsweek* magazine article he read:

> Oliver: First, it talks about the inflammatory [inflationary] theory of how the universe is actually made by something called a cosmic field. I don't really believe in this, but it's like if too much of it is put into one place of space, it would explode and create a big bang. A lot of those has been happening and the

effect of the particles is caused by this other one called string theory, which is based on strings vibrating, creating other bunch of particles, like particles that create our known particles that we know now like protons, neutrons and stuff like that. So when the big bang is created, those strings started vibrating and then creating photons, gluons, and stuff like that and that mixes up with others and creates electrons and everything. It also talks about dark energy which is...they don't really know what it is. They only know what is does. They don't know what it's made of but they know the density of it but I don't remember the exact number 'cause that's a lot of zeros (laughs). It also talks about gluons.

Selena: What are those?

Oliver: You know how a nucleus is created, right? And then the protons, neutrons are ties to each other. They're not like normally gonna come to each other unless a gluon is there to attract them to each other.

Selena: So a gluon connects a proton and a neutron?

Oliver: Yeah. And it talks about dark energy. It's a fact. It has really strong gravity, like, it's about this big. I'm not sure how big it is, but it's as strong as a sun like 10 times bigger than ours or something and like with its effect it can make the universe keep expanding. The universe is supposed to slow down by now but because of it keeps expanding, and expanding and expanding to infinity.

This interview excerpt is remarkable because, even though it had been approximately a month since he had read the article, Oliver did not need to think long before providing this information. He was able to articulate this information immediately. Also, when I asked for points of clarification when I was unfamiliar with a concept, he

was able to explain these ideas in concrete ways, such as the explanation of a gluon. I was astounded by how much he said he learned from reading the article. When I said this, he clarified, “Oh, all this stuff I learned, like I have stuff I maintained, I learned from other stuff and they helped me understand this article.” Thus, Oliver indicated that he was able to integrate his prior knowledge from other reading sources with ideas he learned in the magazine article.

It was encouraging to hear all the facts that Oliver had learned through reading. More importantly, he was passionate and motivated when relating these ideas in our interviews. In contrast, Oliver was barely able to provide any details of what he learned in his middle-school classes, especially his English class. Oliver’s lack of interest in his English class affected his construction of meaning with the texts he encountered. For example, during my second observation of Oliver in Mr. Kilian’s English classroom, students were supposed to bring song lyrics. Oliver did not bring any lyrics. Mr. Kilian provided lyrics to the students who did not bring any. For this task, students were supposed to examine the lyrics and look for metaphors within the song. I walked around the classroom during this independent work time. As I passed Oliver, I noted that he had not made any notes on his sheets. When Mr. Kilian said they had 2 minutes remaining, Oliver then picked up his pencil and started writing. When the time came that Mr. Kilian wanted to hear some examples from the class, Oliver did not volunteer to share anything.

During our interview, when I asked him about this activity and what he had learned from it, Oliver said, “I don’t really remember that.” Although Mr. Kilian tried to encourage interest on the part of his students by allowing them to choose the song they wanted to work with, Oliver was so disengaged with his English class that he did not

even take the opportunity to choose a song that interested him. He reiterated that he thought his English class was boring. Based on my two observations, Mr. Kilian used a lecture and recitation style for most of the classes, but as the earlier example illustrated, he did try to incorporate student interest for individual activities. Perhaps, had there been more opportunities for student collaboration or group discussions, Oliver may have been more engaged.

As another example, Oliver had to complete a research paper for an interdisciplinary project for his social studies and English classes. I was observing in Mr. Kilian's class when he introduced this project. He handed students a sheet of paper with different people and events from the Gilded Age or the Progressive Era and gave them time to go over the list and mark three topics in which they were interested. Oliver was the second person called, and he chose to write his paper about William "Boss" Tweed. Later on, I asked him why he chose to focus on Tweed. Oliver said, based on the nickname, he thought Tweed would be an interesting character. He further explained, "Every other thing sounds so stupid, so I just chose him."

When I asked Oliver what he learned while writing this research paper, Oliver said Tweed "was a businessman [who] stole a lot of money from the taxpayers." Oliver elaborated, "He was caught by this guy named Thomas, and he went to prison and he escaped to Cuba and he went back to prison and died in prison." When I probed for more information, Oliver said, "Oh man, it was a long time ago. I don't remember anything [else]." Thus, I asked Oliver to reflect instead on this research and writing experience:

> I didn't enjoy it much. He was boring. I thought he was like, his name was like "Boss." I think he would be bad or something. But, like, all he did was steal money and was a really good part of politics and stuff. Politics is boring to me.

In his reflection, Oliver was able to provide more information he learned through the project, but he emphasized that he did not enjoy completing it because it was boring. Oliver also said his source was Wikipedia, which is generally considered an unreliable source for academic papers, and then he backed it up with another website, but he was unable to recall the source.

This section highlighted the contrasting level of meaning that Oliver was able to construct based on his interest levels. When Oliver was able to choose what he read to pursue his reading interests, he was able to articulate a depth of understanding about physics concepts. Yet, when probed about information acquired from reading completed for his English class, Oliver was able to provide only shallow details.

Social Interactions

In all of the classroom observations in both Mrs. Blake's ESL class or Mr. Kilian's English class, Oliver rarely engaged in social interactions. Even in the hallway between classes, Oliver was often alone. When I observed him in Mr. Kilian's classroom, he was one of the first students to arrive in the classroom, sat immediately in his seat, and did not engage in any conversations with peers, even before the bell rang. When I asked Oliver about his quiet nature in classes, he shared, "I don't like to speak much. Like, just raising my hand take a whole bunch of work for me 'cause I'm really lazy."

Because Oliver does most of his reading at home, the only person he talked to about reading was his brother. He said that when he saw something interesting in a

science book, he showed it to his brother, but based on our interviews it did not seem as though they engaged in a discussion. Oliver simply shared interesting pictures with his brother.

In our final interview, in which Oliver talked extensively and passionately about what he had learned from reading physics texts, I asked him if he ever engaged in any discussions about what he read:

Selena: So all these things that you've been describing to me, have you ever engaged in any discussions with anyone about them?

Oliver: Oh no. I'm good.

Selena: You've never talked to anyone about this?

Oliver. Yeah. This is, like, the first time.

Selena: Why is that?

Oliver: I don't know.

Selena: This interest of yours in physics, does anybody know about this?

Oliver: I don't think anyone would care about what I'm saying.

When talking about sophisticated physics concepts such as the multiverse and inflationary theory, Oliver was more engaged and passionate than I had ever seen him. He came alive when he was explaining these ideas to me, and it seemed so natural for him to talk about these physics concepts. Then, he revealed that he never had discussions with anyone about these concepts. It seemed as if he was hiding much of his identity by not doing so. Physics obviously was his passion, yet no one in the school context knew the depth of his understanding about these concepts, not even his science teacher.

Oliver's stance that nobody would care what he thought about what he was reading was similar to the experience of Jake, an African-American male in Willis's (1995) study. Willis shared that Jake, despite having high writing motivation, did not know what to write about for a class paper. Willis prompted Jake to write about his amusing experiences at the barbershop, and he could share what occurs in this African-American culturally defined event. Jake insisted that "they" would not understand or care about this topic. Similarly, Oliver also assumed that people around him at school, such as his friends and teachers, would have no interest in learning about what he learned through reading.

A few of Oliver's friends did know about his science interest. Oliver explained, "They didn't know back then, and they started coming up with all these science questions. I started answering them like really quick, and so they just thought I like science, like, I know a lot." Even though they did not ask specifically about reading, Oliver's friends would sometimes ask him science questions such as "What does $e=mc^2$ mean?" Oliver answered these questions, but he did not discuss how he knew the information or initiate a discussion about more complex science concepts that he enjoyed reading about.

In the ESL classroom, Oliver was typically quiet and usually did not exhibit any behavior problems. Even in his regular English classroom, Oliver was one of the quietest students. The majority of students in the mainstream English class were very talkative, to the point that it was disruptive to the flow of the class. Meanwhile, Oliver just sat quietly in his seat, sometimes staring ahead at the teacher, other times at the table. There were also moments he laid his head on his desk. When Oliver tried these antics in Mrs. Blake's class, however, she immediately noticed. One time, she told Oliver, "I don't know why

you're so sleepy. Sit up please." She then asked him to read the next sentence on the screen.

Oliver began misbehaving in the ESL classroom when he sat next to Adam, a seventh-grade ELL from Sierra Leone. Oliver needed to sit at the front of the classroom because of his poor eyesight; Adam, meanwhile, was assigned by Mrs. Blake to sit at the front so she could monitor him because he was frequently off-task. These requirements meant that Adam and Oliver sat next to each other. Adam would initiate off-task behavior by whispering something to Oliver while Mrs. Blake was teaching the vocabulary lessons.

In February, Oliver got in trouble with Mrs. Blake. The ESL class was in the library for sixth period so students could use computers to complete their projects; thus, Adam was in the library with Oliver. Ten minutes before the bell rang, Adam and Oliver sneaked out of the library and headed home. Someone reported to the office that two students were outside of the school, and this information was passed on to Mrs. Blake. That afternoon, Mrs. Blake called Oliver's and Adam's parents to let them know this was a safety issue because they should not have gone home when school had not been dismissed yet.

Oliver and Emir, an ESL student from Turkey, also tried similar inappropriate behavior with me later in the semester. I was with the eighth-graders in the library during the latter part of sixth period while Mrs. Blake was teaching the other ESL students. Oliver and Emir told me they were going to consult with Mrs. Blake. Knowing that Oliver had a tendency to leave school early, I said, "Okay, I'll ask her later if you did go talk to her," and they left the library. Less than 2 minutes later, they reentered the library,

and Emir said, “Okay, if you’re going to ask her, then you’re right. We weren’t gonna talk to her.”

These two instances showed how Oliver could be negatively affected by peer influences. When I brought up the second incident with Oliver in an interview, he defended himself and said, “I didn’t say that. Emir said that.” Oliver said he typically did not try misbehaving like that with Mrs. Blake because “it’s hard to get past her.” Nevertheless, these two instances illustrate that, although Oliver would not typically spearhead this kind of behavior during sixth period, when a friend of his would initiate this behavior, he went along with it.

I happened to be in the library one morning when Mr. Kilian’s class was there for a work session for their research paper. I saw that 5 minutes before the bell rang, Oliver stood up from his computer and walked toward the door. When he thought no one was looking, he stepped out and headed down the hall. A few minutes later, I saw him loitering outside the library door, and once the bell rang he immediately left. This all happened without Mr. Kilian noticing because he was engaged in discussions with other students. This and the preceding examples show that Oliver has a tendency to leave his classes, and for the most part, no one noticed. These examples also highlight how Oliver tended to be overlooked in class by his teachers.

Overall, Oliver did not have any meaningful social interactions in school. When he did interact with other students, it typically was not about any reading or academic tasks. Instead, he and his friends, at least those in the ESL classroom with him, would test boundaries and see what inappropriate behaviors they could engage in. Reading, for Oliver, was an isolated activity, and it was something he did not share with others.

Oliver's Contrasting Reading Engagement Profiles

In this chapter, I discussed Oliver's reading engagement, and presented two contrasting profiles: Oliver was extremely detached from reading in the school setting even though his interests were academic in nature. Oliver found reading about physics concepts satisfying and pleasurable. This academic type of reading was his version of pleasure reading.

Oliver's complete disengagement from the school setting was troubling. His grades in most of his classes were below average, he had a tendency to skip or leave classes early, and he was unable or unwilling to provide much evidence of what he was learning in his classes. Data gathered through comprehension assessments and interviews confirm these points. When Oliver's interest in a topic or text is low, he exerts little or no effort to comprehend the material and becomes very distracted while reading. He scored at frustration and instructional levels for most of the sixth-grade passages that he read for the QRI assessments, yet he provided extensive evidence that he is able to construct meaning from complex texts as long as he is highly interested in the topic.

Oliver consistently mentioned that his purpose for reading was learning. Yet, why could he not apply this same rationale for school reading? Is not the purpose for reading for school to learn as well? He proved that he has the capacity to construct meaning and comprehend complex texts. If he could understand the ideas of inflationary theory, he could understand the information in a middle school textbook. He just chooses not to.

With previous research on reading engagement, social interactions play a huge role. For Oliver, however, his engagement is a solitary construct; his reading is not social in nature. Does that mean his reading engagement is any less valid than others who do

engage in social interactions around reading? It may be that researchers have yet to consider that individual differences, such as personalities and dispositions, would affect one's ability and inclination to participate in social interactions. Some individuals are introverted by nature, and they are inclined to use reading as a solitary activity. Are we devaluing their reading engagement by making social interactions a necessary component? Oliver's case prompts the reconsideration of the inclusion of social interactions in the reading engagement model.

Finally, it is unclear whether Oliver has unintentionally hidden his reading engagement from others. He may have truly thought "no one would care," or he may not have wanted to share the fact that he was a voracious reader because he perceived reading, as did many African- American boys, as "a passive, 'female' activity" (Tatum, 2005, p. 11). Whatever the case, it is unfortunate that no one in the school setting knew about Oliver's passion. There was a missed opportunity to build on Oliver's interest. Had his teachers known about his sophisticated out-of-school reading habits, they may have been able to recommend texts or plan tasks connected to his passion, which may have prevented Oliver's complete disengagement with academic reading.

CHAPTER 7

Discussion

In this study, I explored the reading engagement of four middle school ELLs. In particular, I examined each focal student in the context of his or her English or ESL classroom to determine how he or she engaged or disengaged with reading in school. I also investigated focal students' out-of-school reading engagement through interviews and reading activity inventories. In the preceding four chapters, I provided detailed descriptions of each focal student's reading engagement. I found that each ELL had a different reading engagement profile. The overall examination and analysis of the data suggest that each ELLs' reading engagement differed based on their purposes for reading and the situations and classroom contexts in which reading occurred. This finding confirms Guthrie and Wigfield's (2000) assertion that reading engagement is situational. For instance, Nabila and Jonathan were highly engaged when reading narrative texts for pleasure, but they were disengaged when reading academic texts. Oliver, meanwhile, was truly engaged when reading science texts he selected at home, but he was disengaged when he had to read mandatory texts for his science class. Farshad exhibited traces of engagement when he complied with reading tasks for his content-area classes, but he was completely unmotivated to read outside of school.

Another key finding of this dissertation research is that ELL reading engagement must be expanded to consider students' ethnic, cultural, or religious identities. From a sociocultural framework, reading cannot be separated from the context in which it occurs, nor can it be examined without considering the sociocultural background of the reader (Au, 1997; Rueda et al., 2001). ELLs' identities influence their reading engagement,

specifically their motivation to read and participation in social interactions. For instance, Nabila, as a Muslim female, was drawn to multicultural literature. She wanted to read about the experiences of protagonists from diverse backgrounds and experiences since she could make connections with their experiences. Jonathan, meanwhile, wanted to be more American. As a result, he only participated in social interactions wherein he could help his American friends. As such, he used his academic achievement as a way to barter acceptance into an American social group. These examples demonstrate that in order to fully understand ELLs' reading engagement, students' identities should be examined from a sociocultural perspective.

Data from this dissertation research also seemed to support the idea that the sociocultural context in which literacy activities were embedded was extremely related to their reading engagement. Specifically, other individuals in these ELLs' social contexts influenced either how they perceived themselves as readers or their participation in literacy activities. For instance, Jonathan and Nabila's desire to do well in school may stem from their parents' high expectations for them. In Nabila's case, she wanted to ensure that her family's move to the U.S. for her and her siblings' education was not done in vain. The idea of others' perceptions could also work in a negative way. Oliver, despite being a good reader when tackling high-interest texts, did not put forth much effort when reading academic texts. This may be related to his view that "no one would care."

In the remainder of this chapter, I first present a summary of the dissertation findings and relate these findings to previous research. Next, I discuss how instructional practices in classroom contexts affirmed or hindered ELLs' reading engagement. Then, I discuss the results of the study in relation to the expectancy value framework. Finally, I

provide an argument on why ELL identity should be considered an important aspect of ELL reading engagement.

Summary of Findings

In this study, I investigated five research questions: (1) What motivates middle school ELLs to read? What discourages middle school ELLs from reading? (2) What strategic knowledge do middle school ELLs draw upon when reading? (3) How do middle school ELLs construct meaning from texts? (4) How do middle school ELLs engage in social interactions around texts? and (5) How do motivation, strategic knowledge, conceptual knowledge, and social interactions interact to make up ELLs' reading engagement? In this section, I summarize the findings for the first four research questions and make comparisons across the focal students. Then, I present a discussion to address the final research question. In Table 8, I provide a summary of each student's reading engagement profile with regard to each of the components.

Motivation. Students' motivations to read texts were multifaceted (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). In other words, focal students were motivated to read for very different reasons. There were, however, a few commonalities across the focal students. Jonathan, Nabila, and Oliver were intrinsically motivated to read texts that fulfilled their personal interests, and their interests varied. Jonathan and Farshad appreciated adventure books, while Nabila enjoyed multicultural literature. Oliver was the only focal student who valued and read informational texts for pleasure. Two of the focal students, Jonathan and Farshad, were also extrinsically motivated to read. Getting high grades and fulfilling academic obligations prompted these two students to read, or skim in Farshad's case, assigned texts.

In general, all of the focal students were unmotivated to read academic texts, such as textbooks. Nabila and Oliver said academic texts were uninteresting and boring to read. Textbooks could also be intimidating to ELLs. Jonathan indicated that textbooks were difficult to comprehend, and he often had to reread assigned sections because of the complex topics and language. Farshad was the most unmotivated to read out of the four focal students and thought that "reading was just a waste of time." However, he was unable to articulate the reasons for his low reading motivation. I argue that Farshad had not experienced the satisfaction of reading because of his low comprehension levels, and this contributed to his low motivation. In addition, Farshad did not realize the value of reading. He thought reading was a school-based activity, and did not realize that reading was extremely relevant to his career goal of becoming an actor.

In sum, ELLs' motivations for reading and reasons for not reading varied greatly. The two consistent findings were the following: (1) students were motivated to read when they were able to select reading materials that met their interests; and (2) students were unmotivated to read academic texts.

These two conclusions are supported by the reading motivation literature. First, the importance of access to interesting texts has consistently been found to influence reading motivation (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Flowerday et al., 2004; Gambrell, 1996, Meltzer & Hamann, 2004). The focal students' motivation to read varied depending on the kinds of texts they were reading. Fortunately, students had access to texts through the school's extensive library, and some focal students, such as Oliver and Jonathan, also utilized the public library. Thus, when ELLs were able to pursue their reading interests, their motivation to read was high.

Second, results of this research provide additional evidence that supports recent studies which have found that secondary students are unmotivated to read academic texts (Guthrie et al., 2012b; McKenna et al., 2012; Pitcher et al., 2007; Wigfield, Cambria, & Ho, 2012). Even high achieving students are unmotivated to read informational texts, such as textbooks (Wigfield et al., 2012), which is similar to the sentiments expressed by the focal students. In particular, although Jonathan was an academic achiever, he was not intrinsically motivated to read textbooks because they were challenging; he read these textbooks only to comply with academic requirements.

Strategic knowledge. Results of this study showed that students with higher reading engagement, Jonathan and Nabila, used a wide range of comprehension strategies while those students with lower levels of reading engagement, Farshad and Oliver, demonstrated the use of fewer strategies.

Jonathan and Nabila not only exhibited the use of a variety of comprehension strategies through the think-aloud component of the QRI assessment, but they also demonstrated the use of strategies in their leisure and academic reading. These two students also used higher-order comprehension strategies such as making inferences and evaluating. They rarely used strategies such as paraphrasing because they often would be using more complex strategies when reading. For instance, when Jonathan worked on his mythology project, he was able to synthesize information across 12 websites which he used as references. He was also able to recognize that a few of the websites were secondary sources. Nabila, meanwhile, evaluated the actions of characters in the novels she read for pleasure, and she consistently provided a rationale for her evaluation. When reading academic texts, she was also able to use a multitude of strategies including

paraphrasing, making connections, and making inferences, even though these texts were of low interest.

When students exhibited lower reading engagement levels, strategic knowledge was not very evident. For instance, during QRI assessments, Farshad only used paraphrasing. In some instances, he was unable to paraphrase the text and resorted to reading the text verbatim during the think-aloud portion. Compared to Farshad, Oliver was able to demonstrate the use of a wider range of strategies. For instance, Oliver frequently used the strategy of questioning, which was unsurprising given his inquisitive nature on science topics. The informational texts Oliver read stimulated many questions for him. He also used strategies such as integrating prior knowledge and making connections when he was reading texts of interest. However, when Oliver read texts that were of low interest, his strategic knowledge differed. Specifically, he was more distracted, and he consistently resorted to paraphrasing rather than using active comprehension strategies such as questioning or integrating prior knowledge.

The findings about ELLs' strategic knowledge confirm previous research which found that successful ELL readers utilized more reading comprehension strategies (Jimenez et al., 1996). Conversely, Jimenez et al. (1996) found that less successful ELL readers did not utilize many comprehension strategies and were less likely to use higher order comprehension skills such as making inferences. Similar findings were obtained in my study on the strategic knowledge component. Jonathan and Nabila, who were more able readers, exhibited the use of numerous comprehension strategies while Farshad and Oliver, who read below grade level, did not use a wide range of strategies. An additional contribution of this dissertation research is that for seemingly less successful ELL

readers, strategy use can be increased given high interest texts, as in Oliver's case.

On another note, Jimenez (1997) had found that successful ELL readers transferred comprehension strategies they used when reading in their native language to reading in English. However, three of the four focal students were not literate in their native languages. Jonathan, the only focal student able to read in his native language, never mentioned the transfer of comprehension strategies from reading in Chinese to reading in English. Thus, practitioners and researchers cannot assume that middle school ELLs bring with them previous knowledge and experience with strategy use in reading in their native language.

Constructing meaning from texts. Based on interview data, QRI assessments, and student artifacts, students who were engaged readers had consistently high levels of comprehension of both academic and leisure texts. Jonathan and Nabila were both very verbose when they shared information from interesting texts they had just read for pleasure. Jonathan shared a substantial amount of information on what he learned from reading texts in his English classes. For example, Jonathan was able to provide an extensive response about what he learned through the mythology unit, which demonstrated his thorough understanding of the myths that he read for his English class. Although Nabila had to be prodded to explain what she learned from reading texts in her content-area classes, she was very enthusiastic to discuss ideas from pleasure reading. Artifacts from both students showed they were able to construct meaning from texts and they used the knowledge they gained from reading to fulfill their academic obligations. For instance, Nabila's English paper on the multiple meanings of the word "peace" demonstrated that she was able to synthesize information from multiple sources and write

a comprehensive paper. Although Nabila exhibited low motivation to read academic texts, she was able to comprehend and make meaning from reading these texts.

In contrast, Farshad was unable to articulate his understanding from reading, even with below grade level texts. When asked what he learned from reading, Farshad did not offer much information on what he learned. When probed, he often would simply shrug and not elaborate on any ideas. These pieces of data suggest that Farshad struggled with comprehension and constructing meaning from the texts that he read. Farshad's low level of comprehensions probably contributed to his low reading motivation level.

Out of all the focal students, Oliver was the most interesting case in this specific area. When he was asked to explain what he understood from reading in his content-area classes, Oliver did not provide any information. In contrast, when he was asked to share what he learned from texts that he self-selected on a topic of interest, Oliver was able to explain highly sophisticated and complex physics concepts. Additionally, he was able to respond to questions about these topics effortlessly.

As discussed earlier in the review of related literature, none of the studies conducted on ELL reading engagement had focused on ELLs' capabilities to construct meaning from texts. For instance, Ivey and Broaddus' (2007) formative experiment with Latino/a students who were new English readers focused primarily on decoding low-level, beginner texts rather than on increasing these students' comprehension abilities in English. Thus, my study offers evidence on how engaged and disengaged readers construct meaning and acquire knowledge from reading. Similar to the students in Fairbanks' (2000) study, the focal students in my study were able to use multiple sources to gather information for their academic requirements. Fairbanks also found that students

were more interested in the academic projects when they were given autonomy in choosing topics and how to obtain information. This is similar to Jonathan's enthusiasm for the mythology project. In the case of Farshad and Oliver, their overall disengagement influenced how much they were able to construct meaning from texts. For the most part, these two students were unable to share information about what they had learned from reading for school, which likely stemmed from the lack of relevance of academic projects to their lives and interests.

Social interactions. Participation in social interactions and the quality of participation varied greatly across the four focal students. Oliver rarely participated in social interactions. Although he was a voracious reader of informational texts, he did not share his insights and acquired knowledge with others. Sadly, he felt that "no one would care about what he was reading." For Oliver, reading was a solitary activity. On the other hand, social interactions were highly motivating for Nabila. She enjoyed discussing books with her friend, Aina. She also claimed that engaging in book discussions prompted her to read more because she had someone to exchange ideas with around reading.

Jonathan and Farshad both participated in social interactions around texts although their purposes for doing so were not ideal. Jonathan participated in social interactions where he could assume the role of the more knowledgeable student. As such, he was able to provide answers to his classmates. Although his teacher, Ms. Costa, modeled for Jonathan positive social interactions around texts, he was not able to assume a coaching stance when working with his peers. Instead, he resorted to providing answers. Farshad, meanwhile, participated in social interactions to obtain answers from

others. Generally, he did not see social interactions as a venue for co-constructed knowledge. Rather, it was an avenue for him to obtain support to fulfill his academic obligations.

Research focused on social interactions indicates that engaged readers often participated in book discussions around texts, collaborated on projects, and were included as members of a community of readers (Klauda, 2003; Protacio, 2010; Smythe & Neufeld, 2010; Strommen & Mates, 2004). Students who engage in social interactions centered on texts are more intrinsically motivated to read (Guthrie & Anderson, 1999; Guthrie & Knowles, 2001; Sweet & Guthrie, 1996). For instance, Smythe and Neufeld (2010) found that ELLs who were able to collaborate on a digital project were more motivated because of the opportunities to engage in discussions around the digital story they were creating. The collaborative nature of the digital projects afforded ELLs to have conversations with one another about their literacy practices, which might not have occurred in a more teacher-centered instructional setting. In my study, I found that only Nabila participated in positive social interactions with her peers. Engaging in discussions with her friend, Aina, even influenced her reading motivation. She wanted to read the books her friends recommended so they could engage in more discussions around texts. The three other focal students did not participate in these types of social interactions. Also, there were no opportunities for the students to collaborate on any major projects in any of the classrooms in which I observed.

Research has also found that ELLs were able to obtain academic support through social interactions (Cho et al., 2010; Cuero & Dworin, 2007). For example, Cho et al. (2010) indicated that ELLs served as translators for one another in small group

interactions whereas Cuero and Dworin (2007) found that ELLs shared resources among one another. In my study, providing and obtaining support was the primary purpose of the focal students for participating in social interactions, except for Oliver who did not participate in social interactions. Nabila consistently sought support from the pre-service teachers in the ESL class. Farshad, meanwhile, used social interactions as a way to obtain answers for his academic requirements. As a high achiever, Jonathan did not need support from his peers for his academics. Instead, he was the one who provided answers to his peers whenever they had a social interaction. When he needed support, Jonathan preferred to ask his teacher, Ms. Costa, for feedback.

In this section, I provided a summary of how the four reading engagement components were enacted in the reading experiences of the four focal students, and I also made connections to previous research. In what follows, I provide a discussion which addresses the fifth research question: How do motivation, strategic knowledge, conceptual knowledge, and social interactions interact to make up ELLs' reading engagement?

Table 8

Summary of Focal Students' Reading Engagement

	Motivation	Strategic Knowledge	Constructing Meaning	Social Interactions	Identity
Jonathan	Intrinsically motivated to read series and adventure books Read school texts out of compliance	Used higher order comprehension strategies	Able to describe in-depth what he learned from texts Able to use a multitude of texts and synthesize information gained	Participated when he is the more knowledgeable other	Wanted to be more American
Nabila	Motivated to read leisure texts (multicultural books and books of high interest) Unmotivated to read academic texts	Used higher order comprehension strategies	Able to briefly describe what she learned from academic texts Able and willing to describe in depth what she noticed from reading leisure texts	Engaged in book discussions with peers for leisure texts Looked to adults for support for reading Absence of family interactions around reading	Embraced her Muslim identity and conformed to religious customs

Table 8 (cont'd)

Farshad	Unmotivated to read most texts (academic and leisure) Had a high self-perception as a reader Read out of compliance	Unable to use a variety of comprehension strategies	Unable to describe in detail what he learned from texts	Participated in social interactions to obtain answers	Embarrassed by his ELL status
Oliver	Extremely motivated to read science texts for pleasure (out of school texts) Unmotivated to read any other texts in or outside school	Was able to use a few comprehension strategies but not many higher order comprehension strategies	Able to expand on his learning from science texts	Did not participate in any social interactions around reading	Did not identify with his status as an ELL

Reading Engagement: Collectively Looking at the Components

Overall, results of this dissertation research indicate that all four components are inextricably linked and are an integral part of ELL reading engagement. A missing component can impact the quality of students' overall reading engagement. As shown in each of the analyses of students' reading engagement profiles, each component can be analyzed separately, but collectively, each focal student's case illustrates how the interaction of these components influences each ELL's overall reading engagement. For instance, while Jonathan was intrinsically motivated to read for pleasure and consistently completed required academic reading, he did not engage in positive social interactions with his peers. A noteworthy point is that his English classroom did not offer many opportunities for collaboration. As another example, Oliver presented two very contrasting reading engagement profiles. He was a completely disengaged reader in school, but he was very engaged to read at home when given the opportunity to follow his reading interests.

These examples indicate that reading engagement is situational, and the classroom contexts, including instructional practices, influence the reading engagement of middle school ELLs. The idea that reading engagement is situational is in line with the sociocultural theory of reading (Gee, 1996, 2000; Heath, 1983). Gee (2000) posits, "A Discourse-based, situated, and sociocultural view of literacy demands that we see reading (and writing and speaking) as not one thing, but many: many different socioculturally situated reading (writing, speaking) practices" (p. 204). From this quote, a sociocultural view of literacy is composed of multiple socioculturally situated literacy practices.

Gee's (2000) view that "meaning is always situated in specific sociocultural practices and experiences" (p. 195) can be connected to the different classroom practices which either hinder

or foster ELL reading engagement. Instructional practices in classroom contexts are integral in creating a learning environment that fosters engaging and disengaging situations. In a review of the literature, Guthrie et al. (2012c) identified the following characteristics of engaging instructional contexts for reading:

- students were provided autonomy in choosing reading materials or tasks related to reading
- instructional activities were relevant to students' lives and interests
- teachers clearly explained the benefits and value of reading
- teachers emphasized collaboration and interpersonal relationships
- students were provided support in reading to increase their self-efficacy as readers (pp. 617, 625).

In their observational study of nine middle school teachers, Raphael, Pressley, and Mohan (2008) identified distinct characteristics of teachers who provided engaging classroom contexts. According to Raphael et al. (2008), highly engaging middle school teachers created "caring and positive classroom environments that emphasized both the academic and affective development of all students" (p. 67). These teachers encouraged students' self-regulation, modeled problem solving and strategy use within their content-area, scaffolded students' learning, increased expectations for students' success, and communicated the value of learning.

Given the situational nature of reading engagement, it is important to examine the instructional practices that were used in the classrooms as these situated practices influenced the focal students' reading engagement. In Table 9, I provide a summary of the engaging and disengaging instructional practices in Ms. Costa and Mrs. Blake's classrooms. Since I only observed twice in Mr. Kilian's classroom, I provide only brief comments on the instructional

practices that I observed, and I did not include him in Table 9.

Ms. Costa, a first year teacher, used some engaging practices such as providing students autonomy to choose the topic on which they would write their mythology project. She also provided scaffolding for her students as they worked on essays and major projects. In one-on-one interactions, Ms. Costa was also able to provide and model meaningful interactions, as discussed in Jonathan's chapter. Yet, she struggled to provide a classroom discussion environment which was more student-centered. In Ms. Costa's English classroom, students were allowed to work in pairs to complete worksheets, but there were no instances observed wherein students were given opportunities to participate in meaningful discussions around texts. Instead, "discussions" consisted of whole group interactions with much of the control maintained by Ms. Costa. There were a few instances where one particular student asked insightful questions, but for the most part, the classroom discourse followed the typical initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) pattern (Cazden, 2001). The lack of social interactions hindered the potential for reading engagement in Ms. Costa's classroom.

Similar observations were made in Mr. Kilian's classroom during the two observations. There were no instances wherein students were given opportunities to collaborate on the tasks assigned. Instead, students worked independently, and then a whole group discussion ensued. As depicted in Oliver's chapter, he did not work well in such a classroom environment. He spent most of the time off-task and only started work on the assigned task in the final minutes of the independent work session. When there was no accountability, Oliver did not exert much effort. Also, there did not seem to be a focus on the interpersonal relationship between teacher and students in Mr. Kilian's class. Thus, there were missed opportunities for creating situations in which students' engagement might be piqued. For instance, Mr. Kilian could have recommended

topics for Oliver for the interdisciplinary projects had Mr. Kilian known about Oliver's interest in science. Rather than choosing to write about William "Boss" Tweed, Oliver could have chosen to focus on one of the inventions during that period since this is more closely related to his interests.

There were several engaging aspects of Mrs. Blake's ESL classroom. She formed interpersonal relationships with many of her students although observations indicated that she had stronger relationships with the female students compared to the male students. Students were provided much support in the ESL classroom, but the support was mostly from the pre-service teachers who needed to complete field hours in classrooms. As Nabila indicated, some of these pre-service teachers were very helpful whereas some were not very committed to helping the students with their academics. Another engaging aspect of Mrs. Blake's classroom is the opportunity to work in pairs or small groups around vocabulary. However, modifying the task could allow these small group interactions to be more engaging. The vocabulary discussions always centered around completing sentence prompts, yet there are numerous pedagogical alternatives to this format which could still provide students an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of vocabulary terms. When working with her ESL class, Mrs. Blake also utilized different instructional techniques. For instance, she brought in community members to speak to the class about their disabilities when they were discussing invisible disabilities. She also chose reading materials that were short and easily accessible to the ELLs' varied reading levels.

There were also several practices which hindered students' reading engagement. Mrs. Blake's focus was more on the newcomer ELLs who were still learning how to speak English. Thus, there were instances wherein she did not monitor students who were off task because she was preoccupied in working with the newcomer ELLs. Farshad, for instance, was consistently

off task at the beginning of the semester. He was very unproductive during these classes, yet Mrs. Blake did not address his off task behavior. Oliver was also consistently unproductive during the period he spent in Mrs. Blake's classroom and in the school library during sixth-period. Both of these students would have benefited from a more structured routine wherein they had accountability. Mrs. Blake allowed them to use time in her classroom to work on their projects for other content-area classes, but these two students typically indicated they had already completed the work. Their female classmates, who were more diligent, consistently used the time in the ESL class productively. They completed assignments for their other classes during these work sessions. One factor that may have helped the female students, Nabila included, is that they asked one another for help or clarification. Finally, Mrs. Blake did not explicitly address strategy use in her classroom. Her main focus was on vocabulary knowledge, but as indicated in Farshad's case, he could have benefited from explicit comprehension strategy instruction in his ESL class as this may have influenced both his motivation to read and his ability to construct meaning from texts.

Table 9

Summary of Instructional Practices which Affirm or Hinder Reading Engagement

	Ms. Costa	Mrs. Blake
Engaging practices	• Students were given autonomy in choosing topics for projects • Interpersonal relationships were formed with students • Explicitly discussed strategy use • Scaffolded students' learning and completion of projects and papers	• Celebrated student success • Interpersonal relationships were formed with students • Students were provided support (preservice teachers and classroom volunteers) • Clearly explained the value and benefits of reading • Used a variety of instructional strategies to relate content (e.g., guest speakers)
Disengaging practices	• Students had required readings • Readings were not relevant to students' lives • Compliance with projects and assignments were emphasized • Collaboration was not emphasized	• Minimal attention was given to students who were already proficient in English • Did not discuss strategy use since the focus was more on vocabulary • Did not monitor students during work sessions

Overall, the discussion on the different classrooms highlights instructional practices that undermine reading engagement by promoting reading as an isolated activity because of the absence of social interactions around reading. Middle school teachers find it difficult to maintain order in the classroom when collaborative activities are offered, yet middle school students' dedication to read increases when they are given opportunities to collaborate and have

discussions with their peers (Guthrie, Klauda, & Morrison, 2012). In my study, Oliver and Nabila's cases provide contrasting views about the importance of social interactions to ELL reading engagement. Nabila attributed her high reading motivation to her opportunities to engage in book discussions, whereas Oliver was motivated to read self-selected texts because reading was a solitary activity for him. Oliver's case demonstrates that his engagement in reading physics texts was still high despite the lack of social interactions. However, Oliver's case also indicated that he was very detached from the school context. He felt that not even his teachers would care about his reading interests. Perhaps had Oliver been given opportunities to collaborate and participate in discussions, he may have been more invested in his academics because of the social relationships that he may have formed with his teachers and peers.

Jonathan and Farshad's experiences also indicate that mere participation in social interactions was not sufficient. The quality of these interactions must also be taken into consideration. With these two particular cases, social interactions presented a venue where answers could be provided and obtained instead of being contexts where meaning could be constructed through thoughtful and meaningful book discussions. While social interactions can certainly be used as venues for support, especially for ELLs, Jonathan and Farshad's cases highlight the unintended consequences of social interactions--receiving and providing answers--which do not promote higher levels of reading engagement.

In this section, given the finding that reading engagement is situational, I pointed out the instructional practices that were engaging and disengaging for the focal students. In particular, I note that from a sociocultural perspective, students need opportunities for social interactions in the school setting to foster their reading engagement.

Reading Engagement from an Expectancy Value Framework

A consistent finding across all four ELLs was their disengagement when reading academic texts. Previous research has found that ELLs' reading motivation is linked to their perceived competence (Cho et al., 2010; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007). The qualitative data from this dissertation supports this notion. Nabila and Jonathan, who were reading at or above grade level, were engaged readers compared to Farshad and Oliver, whose reading proficiencies were below grade level according to the QRI-5. In considering the expectancy value framework (Eccles et al., 1983), Farshad's perceived competence level was higher than his actual comprehension abilities. He stated that reading was easy, yet comprehension assessments indicated that he comprehended sixth-grade level texts at an instructional level. This finding highlights the importance of gathering actual assessment data on students' comprehension abilities and not relying solely on self-efficacy reports as ELLs' perceived competence may not be indicative of their actual reading abilities. Monzo and Rueda (2009) said that, in fact, struggling ELL readers may have inaccurate views of their English reading abilities. Thus, while high self-efficacy is important in light of the expectancy value framework, Farshad's case indicates that students' expectation for success does not necessarily translate to higher reading engagement.

One plausible reason behind Farshad's low motivation was that he had not yet realized or acknowledged the value of reading. The other focal students realized the value of reading. Both Jonathan and Oliver mentioned that reading was an avenue for learning. Nabila, meanwhile, experienced the satisfaction of reading high-interest texts. Farshad was the sole focal student who needed to understand the value of reading. For instance, Farshad did not acknowledge the benefits of the vocabulary initiative even though, unconsciously, he was able to use the new vocabulary he had learned in his content-area classes. In order for Farshad to become a more

engaged reader, he needs to become motivated to read, and one way in which this can occur is if he both believes he can succeed as a reader and if he can see the relevance of reading to his life.

Overall, one factor that leads to students' disengagement with academic texts is the disconnect between the broad range of topics and texts that students are exposed to at the middle school level and their lives outside school. In this respect, the focal students did not find the content of their textbooks relevant to their lives and experiences. Guthrie et al. (2012b) indicated that for young adolescents, texts that are relevant are ones for which they could draw connections to their own personal experiences, knowledge, goals or interests. As Brophy (2009) argues, however,

> I believe that much (probably most) school content is not perceived as highly self-relevant…Learners who are determined to do so for extrinsic reasons can master certain content domains thoroughly even if they have little interest in the content and do not identify with it. (pp. 152-153).

Brophy's statement raises the important point of extrinsic factors to student learning. As he argued, students do not necessarily need to be interested in a topic in order for learning to occur. Oftentimes, it is the promise or external reward or the possibility of punishment and failure that prompts students to achieve in schools. This idea was supported by Jonathan's case since he was the focal student who was most motivated because of the external factor of grades. As Jonathan asserted, "You don't have to like the book, but you just have to have the heart to learn it." Extrinsic factors are inherent in the school system (Pressley, Dolezal, Raphael, Mohan, Roehrig, & Bogner, 2003), especially if grades are considered. Grades are the most ubiquitous extrinsic reward in schools. Thus, it is unsurprising that some of the focal students, Jonathan and Farshad, were motivated out of a sense of compliance in order to obtain higher grades. In this

sense, the value or relevance of the school tasks was associated with grades, which are what these students valued. However, Brophy (2011) would argue that teachers cannot rely exclusively on external rewards or extrinsic factors to engage students. Rather, students must be shown the value of what they are learning. This is especially pertinent in Farshad's case, as earlier discussed.

Students' reading engagement also depended on their reading abilities or perceived competence when it came to reading. Those students who were more competent readers, Jonathan and Nabila, were more likely to read compared to Oliver and Farshad, whose reading abilities were below grade level. Specifically, Nabila and Jonathan consistently had reading materials with them and regularly read for pleasure whereas Farshad could not even remember the last book he had completed. The difference between the engaged and disengaged readers provide further credence to the Matthew effect (Stanovich, 1986), which posits the gap in the reading abilities of good and poor readers widens as these students progress through school. In other words, the good readers become better, and the poor readers fall further behind their higher achieving peers unless the factors that affect their reading engagement are addressed. Most of the attention has focused on reading motivation as the key to improving reading ability (e.g., Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000), yet results of my study show that all aspects of reading engagement must be attended to with regards to ELL reading achievement. As the different focal student cases illustrated, reading engagement is essential to reading comprehension, and by extension to reading achievement and academic success (Guthrie et al., 2012; Mucherah & Yoder, 2008). Students who had higher levels of reading engagement, such as Jonathan and Nabila, consistently used more reading comprehension strategies and were able to discuss their learning from reading with more ease compared to Farshad, who was a very disengaged reader. Oliver's case is

interesting to highlight. His case, in particular, illustrates that an engaged reader stance helps facilitate comprehension. When he was reading science texts, he was able to recall more information from what he read, whereas he was unwilling and unable to do so when asked to relate what he learned from low interest texts.

In sum, results of this dissertation research point to the importance of ELLs being competent readers, but more importantly, they need to recognize the value and relevance of what they are reading to be fully engaged. In what follows, I argue that ELL reading identity needs to be considered as an important factor to ELL reading engagement.

Identity Matters with ELL Reading Engagement

Identity is essentially one's answer to the question "Who am I?" (Eccles, 2009; McCaslin, 2009). Researchers have focused on identity as a way to understand how immigrant students have negotiated their ethnic identity in school contexts where they are minorities (Kanno, 2003; Park, Goodwin, & Lee, 2003; Saito, 2002). However, none of these studies have focused specifically on how ELL identity has influenced reading engagement. Below, Kaplan and Flum (2009) emphasize the importance of identity to reading engagement.

> Students' engagement in school – their choices, struggles, and negotiations – is clearly affected by, and in turn influences, who they think they are, who they think they want to be, and who they actually become. Engaging deeply in a certain topic, or striving to achieve high grades in a subject matter are precursors for, or perhaps already manifestations of, students' self and identity commitments that could have implications for their future. The reciprocal relations and the integration of academic motivation and identity are apparent in the social-cultural dynamics of students' lives. (p. 76)

Kaplan and Flum (2009) recognize that considering identity is essential to examining

student engagement. This was certainly apparent in the experiences of the focal students. The four focal students' identities as ELLs are closely related to their engagement in reading. For instance, Nabila rejected pressure from her sisters to conform and become more Westernized. Although she previously considered her sisters her reading role models, their contrasting beliefs about assimilating affected the social relationship that Nabila and her sisters had around reading. Also, Nabila's identity as a Muslim female who strictly adhered to her faith ostracized her from mainstream peers. Thus, although she enjoyed participating in discussions around texts, she only talked with her fellow Muslim female friends about books, thereby limiting the social interactions in which she could participate. Farshad and Jonathan, meanwhile, were similar in that they had assimilated or had a desire to assimilate with the mainstream population. Jonathan, in particular, admitted he was trying to become more American. He dismissed his native culture and language in the school setting because he wanted to be like his mainstream friends. This de-ethnicalization stance has influenced what and how he engages his peers around texts. Jonathan's experiences were similar to those of Chinese students in Zhang's (2008) study. Zhang found these Chinese students wanted to fit in and become Americanized in terms of dress and food at the school setting. Jonathan, thus, only participated in social interactions with American peers and did not seek out any opportunities to interact with other ELLs. Farshad, meanwhile, had assimilated well into the American culture, but he did not seem to overtly reject his native culture nor did he embrace the American culture. Farshad was preoccupied with his ELL status; he wanted his status as an ELL to remain hidden. This shame of being an ELL affected his demeanor in his ESL class. He was unmotivated to be in the class because he felt that his English abilities and reading abilities were more suited to a mainstream English classroom. Finally, not much information was obtained about Oliver's ELL identity. He had fully integrated into the

American culture. He had spent two-thirds of his life in the U.S., and he knew more about the United States than he did about Congo and was fully integrated to America. Oliver also tried to keep his home life and school life separated. This separation affected his lack of involvement in reading and social interactions in school. It also explained his tendency to hide his strong interest in science texts.

Focal students' stances on their ELL identities influenced primarily the social interaction component. It affected not only who they interacted with, but it also influenced the quality of interactions. For instance, Nabila engaged in a positive type of social interaction in that she engaged in book discussions. However, these discussions were limited to her Muslim friends as Nabila's outsider status prohibited her from interacting with mainstream students about what she was reading. Jonathan, meanwhile, engaged in social interactions wherein he could be the more knowledgeable other. Jonathan used social interactions as a way to connect with his American peers who needed his academic support. These group interactions provided him an opportunity to have intellectual currency which increased his worth in the larger social dynamic.

Hence, students' cultural, ethnic, and religious backgrounds should be considered in relation to ELL reading engagement. More importantly, practitioners should explore how particular aspects of ELLs' sociocultural backgrounds, including labeling in school as an ELL or as an ESL student, might influence their engagement with specific texts or specific reading situations.

In sum, in this chapter, I presented a summary of the findings of the dissertation research. I found that all four reading engagement components must be considered in relation to ELL reading engagement. Collectively, all four components interact and determine whether or not ELLs will be engaged or disengaged with reading English texts. Additionally, I explained that

ELL reading engagement is situational in nature. Students' engagement with reading may vary depending on the situation and instructional contexts in which the reading is completed. Next, I explored the expectancy value framework's role in ELL reading engagement. Finally, I discussed the importance of considering ELL identity in relation to reading engagement.

CHAPTER 8

Implications for Reading Engagement Research and Practice

In the preceding chapter, I provided a summary of the findings of this dissertation research. I also emphasized three key points. First, I discussed the need for a holistic view of reading engagement. Second, based on the finding that reading engagement is situational, I focused on the instructional practices which foster or hinder reading engagement. Finally, I argued that ELLs' cultural, linguistic, and religious identities must be considered in relation to ELL reading engagement. In this chapter, I first address the pedagogical implications based on the study's findings. Then, I discuss the implications of this dissertation study for reading engagement research.

Pedagogical Implications

Results of this dissertation study indicate that all four components are essential to ELL reading engagement. Hence, attention must be given to all components in order to foster reading engagement among middle school ELLs. In what follows, I describe ways in which practitioners could address each of the components in their classrooms.

Motivation. Middle school practitioners must incorporate more practices that will likely increase the reading motivation of their students. Previous research has documented the fact that middle schoolers' reading motivation declines in the middle school setting (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Kelly & Decker, 2009; McKenna et al., 2012; Unrau & Schlackman, 2006). Adolescent students have negative perceptions of reading at the secondary level (Pitcher et al., 2007) and find academic texts to be challenging and uninteresting (Guthrie et al., 2012b; Wigfield et al., 2012). The different cases demonstrated that focal students had very low motivation to read academic texts such as textbooks. Middle school teachers recognize the importance of

motivation in working with ELLs, but they need more information on how to effectively incorporate motivation in their content-area classrooms (Hansen-Thomas & Cavagnetto, 2010).

There are several strategies that practitioners could use in their classrooms to address reading motivation. First, Guthrie and Klauda (2012) recommend the use of supplementary texts, such as short articles or websites, to help students better understand the complex content often found in textbooks. Hence, middle school teachers should not rely solely on the textbook. Students need access to a variety of texts at different reading levels. Struggling ELL readers may choose not to read the textbook at all because of the complex language and vocabulary. Providing access to diverse texts may ensure that students will have more opportunities to read a text successfully rather than trying to force students to read textbooks which may prove to be too challenging for ELLs.

Second, several studies have shown that middle school students seek autonomy. In other words, students are more motivated when they are given an opportunity to choose texts to read or tasks associated with reading (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001; Lapp & Fisher, 2009; O'Brien & Dillon, 2008). Students need to feel a sense of control in their learning (Turner & Paris, 1995). For instance, Jonathan was very motivated to find information on his paper on the Fates because he was able to choose the topic of his paper. Nabila also was more motivated to write her English paper wherein she elaborated on the meanings of the word "peace" because she was able to choose what reading resources she could consult. Thus, ELLs may be more motivated if they are able to have choices in either the texts they read for class or a choice in the way they can demonstrate their understanding. The choices may be limited, but nevertheless having options to choose from may increase students' motivation. For instance, students may be given a choice of whether or not they would like to write a paper or perhaps create a PowerPoint

or Prezi instead. Providing students choices also increases the likelihood that students' interests are addressed.

Next, students want opportunities to be able to read in their classrooms (Gallagher, 2009; Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). Oftentimes, students are not afforded the opportunity to engage in independent reading. As demonstrated through observational data in Ms. Costa's classroom, oral reading practices were used wherein the teacher and students alternated in reading the text aloud. Yet, many researchers and practitioners have recommended that more time in the classroom should actually be spent reading (Allington, 2011; Allington & Gabriel, 2012; Fisher, 2007; Gallagher, 2009, Miller, 2012). ELLs may especially benefit from this practice. Nabila consistently carried around reading materials. There was one instance when Mrs. Blake had to tell Nabila to put away her reading materials because Nabila was distracted and unable to concentrate on the vocabulary lessons because she wanted to read the magazine she had just borrowed from the library. The only time students could engage in independent reading was on Fridays for Drop Everything and Read time. For disengaged readers like Farshad, DEAR time was the only moment when he actually admitted reading something he enjoyed since he did not have access to books at home. Providing more opportunities for self-selected reading in school may encourage more students, not just ELLs, to actually engage in reading.

Strategic knowledge. Findings from this study, specifically Oliver and Farshad's cases, highlight the importance of explicit strategy instruction in middle school classrooms. Farshad, in particular, was unable to use comprehension strategies, which may have influenced his inability to construct meaning from texts. Oliver, meanwhile, was able to use comprehension strategies, but he tended not to be strategic when he was reading low-interest texts. In contrast, Nabila and Jonathan were able to use comprehension strategies across all situations. Whether or not they

were reading high-interest texts, Nabila and Jonathan used comprehension strategies.

Teaching comprehension strategies is the responsibility of all secondary teachers, not just English or ESL teachers. The use of comprehension strategies differs based on the genre of texts being read, and students need explicit instruction on different text structures (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012; Duke & Roberts, 2010). ELLs may need additional support in recognizing and comprehending unfamiliar genres. For example, Perry (2009) found that members of refugee families needed support in navigating unfamiliar genres. Similarly, young adolescent ELLs may need explicit instruction in both reading and writing unfamiliar genres of texts. It would be beneficial for ELLs if each of their content-area teachers modeled the use of different comprehension strategies through the use of think-alouds when working with content-area specific texts.

Constructing meaning from texts. ELLs need exposure to a variety of pedagogical strategies to help them construct meaning from texts. For instance, Farshad consistently completed packets in his content-area classes, but he did not learn the content from this instructional practice. In contrast, Farshad was able to learn about disabilities in his ESL class through reading short texts, viewing a related film, and listening to guest speakers. The variety of instructional strategies is in line with Rubinstein-Avila and Johnson's (2008) suggestion that ELLs' comprehension of course content could be increased by the use of different strategies such as reading related texts, viewing films, or exploring websites.

Data also showed that students were able to comprehend the most when they were able to pursue their own interests. In connection to the idea of choices in the motivation section, teachers should consider how they could design classroom activities or projects which students could use to pursue their interests and have a sense of autonomy. The example of the interdisciplinary

project in Nabila and Oliver's social studies and English classes is a good example of how content can still be addressed while simultaneously providing students autonomy. In Oliver's case, however, this project did not help in getting him as motivated because he did not choose a high interest topic. In such cases, teachers should have enough background knowledge about their students such that they could make recommendations of topics which may be of interest to their students.

Social interactions. As demonstrated throughout the data chapters, there were minimal positive social interactions in the ESL and English classrooms in which I observed. Incorporating more social interactions around texts may encourage ELLs to become engaged with reading. These social interactions will provide opportunities for students to co-construct meaning with their peers and allow them to delve deeper into texts. It will also allow for students such as Oliver to be less detached from the school setting. For Oliver, school seemed to be very isolating. Oliver's teachers could have explored reasons behind his disinterest in social interactions, and they could have designed collaborative activities which addressed his disinterest. Had there been more opportunities for Oliver to engage in discussions with his peers or teachers, he may have become more invested in the school setting.

Teachers also have to be very mindful of how students are grouped. Nabila's case demonstrated that she felt out of place with her mainstream peers. Kanno's (2003) study also showed that ELLs may need support in integrating themselves into the mainstream social groups. Keeping these ideas in mind, teachers should then plan to create heterogeneous discussion groups rather than having students always choose their own groups. Having groups composed of students from different backgrounds also ensures that all students are exposed to diverse perspectives as they engage in discussions around texts.

Addressing ELLs' Expectancies and Values toward Reading

Based on the expectancy value framework, students' low motivation to read academic texts may be due to low self-efficacy as a reader or a low value placed on reading. Farshad's case, in particular, demonstrated that although he had a high self-perception as a reader, this did not translate into higher reading abilities. Farshad's high perception of his reading ability was likely shaped by the adequate grades he received in his classes. However, these grades are likely a reflection of the completion of tasks rather than his comprehensive understanding of the course content. In addition, Farshad did not recognize the value of reading, and he insisted that "reading is just a waste of time."

Middle school practitioners, therefore, have to address two important factors. First, they must help ELLs with their reading abilities. While there were ELLs such as Nabila and Jonathan who were reading at grade level, there were also students such as Oliver and Farshad who needed additional support for their literacy skills. These students were also the ones whose reading engagement was generally lower. ESL teachers, in particular, should realize they are not only language teachers, but they are also literacy teachers. As ELLs become more proficient with their English speaking skills, they need instruction on how to become better readers and writers in English. Mrs. Blake realized after our first and only formal interview that she did not know much about the focal students' reading abilities. Rather, she was focused more on their oral language development. Thus, ESL teachers must also allot time to work on reading instruction. Aside from working on vocabulary, which understandably seems to be a primary focus, attention must also be given to strategic knowledge in order to foster ELLs' comprehension abilities and help them have higher self-efficacies as readers.

Middle school teachers also need to make texts and tasks relevant to students' lives.

Students are disengaged with reading academic texts because these texts are so disjointed from their interests and experiences (Wigfield et al., 2012). Teachers can assist ELLs to recognize the value of reading. For example, teachers can share how reading is essential to ELLs' academic success in U.S. schools. Many immigrant families value academic achievement (e.g., Li, 2007; Zhou, 2001), and thus, this is one concrete example of how teachers can share the value of reading with their disengaged students. There are many other ways in which teachers can show the relevance of the text. Burke (2010) proposed that teachers have to examine the big themes in texts and make them relevant to students' lives. For example, when studying *Romeo and Juliet*, the focus could be on the theme of relationships. Through this theme, relationships in the book could be examined, but then students are also allowed to make connections and explore relationships in their own lives. Relevance to students' lives are added by connecting students' interests and backgrounds to what they are studying (Guthrie et al., 2012b, 2012c), and doing so would increase the likelihood of having engaged readers.

Incorporating Engaging Instructional Practices

The results of this study point to the need for engaging classrooms. The finding that ELL reading engagement is situational points to the fact that ELLs' reading engagement can be increased given a classroom context which employs engaging instructional practices. Verdugo and Flores (2007) noted that ELLs, in particular, need learning environments wherein teachers show respect and care for their students while concurrently holding students to high expectations. Research has shown that in engaging classrooms, students are provided autonomy in choosing texts and tasks (Guthrie et al., 2012c; Turner & Paris, 1995). Modeling of strategy use and problem solving skills are also frequently used in engaging classrooms (Raphael et al., 2008). In addition, students are given opportunities to engage in discussions with peers around texts

(Guthrie et al., 2012b). Aside from these affirming practices, teachers should also be able to recognize existing instructional practices that actually *undermine* reading motivation and engagement and avoid using instructional practices that hinder ELLs' reading engagement.

Teachers who use engaging instructional practices would create a classroom environment wherein students would have autonomy in the texts they read, have opportunities for in-depth discussions with peers, and asked to complete open tasks that increase their understanding about interesting topics. This is in contrast with a classroom that utilizes a lecture-based format where mundane tasks such as worksheets, or a packet of worksheets, are consistently used, which is what was frequently done in Farshad's content-area classes. Teachers should consider using these engaging practices to foster increased reading engagement among ELLs.

Addressing Identity Matters

An important aspect that emerged from the data is the idea that ELL identity influenced the focal students' reading engagement. Thus, middle school teachers need to take the time to get to know their ELLs by asking them questions about their cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. Teachers can also draw upon ELLs as cultural resources in the classroom as way to encourage their participation, but also to expose all students to diverse perspectives (Cummins et al., 2005; Yoon, 2007). Thus, middle school teachers not only need to create an engaging environment, but they must also create classrooms that are accepting of diversity. There should not be a color-blind approach to teaching. Doing so neglects the rich cultural, linguistic, and religious knowledge that ELLs bring to the mainstream classrooms. For instance, Ms. Costa indicated that prior to my research she was unaware that Jonathan was an ELL. She could have utilized Jonathan's unique experiences as a student from a different cultural background to add depth to classroom discussions.

In sum, there are numerous strategies which could be utilized to address each of the reading engagement components. Teachers must keep in mind that one component should not be privileged over the others. Each of the components is an essential aspect of ELL reading engagement. Neglecting to address all components will decrease the possibilities of encouraging ELLs to become engaged readers.

Implications for ELL Reading Engagement Research

Results of this dissertation research point to the importance of a sociocultural lens to reading engagement. While sociocultural theory has been emphasized throughout the dissertation, it must be noted the original reading engagement model developed by Guthrie et al. (1996), from which the four reading engagement components emerged, utilized a sociocognitive perspective. Previous research has focused solely on the sociocognitive aspects of reading engagement (Guthrie et al., 1996; Guthrie et al., 2004; Guthrie et al., 2012b), primarily because their work focused on mainstream student populations. However, the current study has found that both sociocognitive and sociocultural lenses need to be used with ELL reading engagement research.

As discussed earlier, it is extremely important for the sociocultural lens be used given the importance of ELL identity to ELL reading engagement. However, given the importance of all the reading engagement components, among them strategic knowledge and constructing meanings from texts, the sociocognitive approach is also very relevant to ELL reading engagement. A focus on strategic knowledge and ability to construct meaning from texts is crucial to ELL reading engagement. Given the paucity of research focusing specifically on ELL strategic knowledge, it is even more important this component not be dismissed or overlooked in connection with ELL reading engagement. Rather, sociocultural and sociocognitive theories

could complement and inform one another in future research about ELL reading engagement.

A related implication from this study is that additional research should be conducted to investigate further how ELL identity is connected to reading engagement. It seems from the case studies examined that ELL identity is constructed not only through the individual but how the individual is perceived and accepted by those around him or her. Adolescence is when students typically undergo a major shift in their identity formation, and this is compounded even more for ELLs who are trying to determine where and how they fit in to their new culture (Kanno, 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Zhou, 2001). Based on this study, the formation of ELL identity impacts the kinds of texts that ELLs read, their attitude and demeanor in their ESL and mainstream classes, and the social interactions in which they participate. However, more research needs to be done to look more closely at other ways in which ELL identity impacts reading engagement.

Practitioners and administrators may also need support to develop classroom and school environments which accept and embrace diversity. Given previous research that has found that ESL program segregate ELLs from native English speakers (Kanno, 2003) considerations must be given on how to support ELLs to be included in mainstream students' social networks. ELLs not only need additional academic support, but they may also need guidance on how to make connections with their native-English speaking peers. Nabila, in particular, felt excluded from the mainstream population. Hence, if ELL identity is linked to reading engagement, how can support be provided for ELLs to increase their sense of self? How can ELL identity be used as a way to foster reading engagement? These are some questions that both the practitioner and research fields have to grapple with and reconcile.

Directions for Future Research

Given the paucity of research in the area of ELL reading engagement, the results of this qualitative study provide much needed empirical foundation for future studies in this field. There are several possibilities for research which would extend this dissertation study.

First, additional case studies of different classroom contexts are a natural extension of this work. These qualitative research studies could provide more authentic, in-depth accounts of ELL reading engagement in different classroom contexts and levels. For instance, to my knowledge, a case study has yet to be conducted on ELLs' reading engagement at the high school level.

Second, observational studies have been conducted looking specifically at engaging classroom environments for mainstream students (Pressley et al., 2003; Rapahel, 2008), yet no studies have been conducted looking specifically at how ESL classrooms foster reading engagement among ELLs. What are the instructional practices used in these highly engaging classrooms? The results of such a study would provide needed information for practitioners to help create engaging classrooms for ELLs.

One of the strengths of this dissertation is that it was a classroom-based, in-depth examination of ELL reading engagement. A natural extension of this work would be a formative experiment, which is an investigation employing mixed methods to observe changes brought about by an intervention in a classroom setting (Brown, 1985). Proponents of formative experiments have argued this research design is more responsive to the needs of teaching and learning in the classroom as adjustments are made to the interventions being implemented (Baumann et al., 2007; Reinking & Bradley, 2004; Reinking & Watkins, 1998, 2000). Hence, through a formative experiment design, researchers and practitioners can work with one another to try to increase ELL reading engagement levels in the classroom. One study has already used a

formative experiment design to investigate ELL reading engagement (Ivey & Broaddus, 2007); nevertheless, more studies should be conducted using this methodology to investigate different aspects of ELL reading engagement.

Finally, and perhaps, most importantly, the results of this dissertation revealed that focal students were highly disengaged with academic texts, providing additional evidence to previous research which reported that secondary students were unmotivated and disengaged with academic literacy (Guthrie et al., 2012; McKenna et al., 2012; Pitcher et al., 2007). Thus, a major research question which has to be investigated is "How can ELL reading engagement with academic literacy be fostered?" The disengagement with academic texts is a pervasive problem in secondary schools (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Gallagher, 2009; Guthrie et al., 2012; McKenna et al., 2012). It is a timely question which needs to be addressed by both the research and practitioner communities.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I described the reading engagement of four middle school ELLs. I presented varying reading engagement profiles and highlighted three key findings. First, all four components are essential to consider and address with ELL reading engagement. Second, I found that ELL reading engagement is situational. In connection to this, instructional practices must be used in classroom contexts in order to foster ELL reading engagement. Finally, results of this dissertation revealed that ELL identity is also an essential component of ELL reading engagement.

It is my hope the results of this dissertation research bring to light some aspects of the reading processes of ELLs and second language readers that have been overlooked. After all, in order to fully understand second language reading processes, second language reading

engagement must also be examined (Taboada & McElvany, 2009). Armed with this understanding, practitioners may be in a better position to plan instruction with the cultivation of reading engagement in mind. On a more theoretical level, through this dissertation research, a more complete model of reading engagement can be formed. A model of ELL reading engagement would involve the fusion of the sociocognitive and sociocultural perspectives on reading engagement. By addressing both the sociocognitive and sociocultural aspects of ELL reading engagement, my hope is that more ELLs will realize the value and joy of reading and become truly engaged readers.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Interview Protocol with New Focal Students

Introduction: Hi, I'm Selena, an international student from MSU. Through this interview, I hope to find out more about your reading engagement and reading habits. Like you, I am from another country, the Philippines. Have you ever heard of it? (Talk about this a bit). I was born in the Philippines, and I came here to the United States when I was a kid, and so like you, I had to learn English and I also went to elementary school in the US. Do you have any questions for me? Now that you've learned more about me, I want to learn about you.

Background

1. Tell me about yourself (if not provided, ask questions about where students are from, family background, how long they've been in the United States).
2. Can you tell me about your native country?
3. Did you go to school in your native country? Can you tell me about your experience in school over there? Did they teach English over there?
4. Can you describe your experience when you first got to the United States and had to go to school here? What were your experiences when you learned how to speak and read English?
5. What was it like for you to start reading in English? What were some challenges you had to face?
6. Can you tell me what you like about middle school? What do you like about it? What don't you like?
7. Tell me about your favorite classes. Why do you like them?
8. What kinds of reading do you do in middle school? What can you say about the reading that you do in middle school?

Motivation

9. What makes you want to read?
10. What are some things that you don't like about reading? When do you not like to read?
11. What's your favorite book? Who is your favorite author?
12. What are the kinds of texts that you like to read? Why? What is it about these texts that make them appealing?

13. What are the texts that you don't like to read? Why not?
14. Can you tell me about a time in middle school when you were very interested in what you were reading? Why did you feel that way?
15. Can you tell me about a time in middle school when you didn't want to read something? Why did you feel that way?

Conceptual Understanding

16. How do you use reading to learn new information?
17. What do you want to learn through reading?
18. What have you learned recently from reading something?
19. How do you use reading to learn in your ESL/English class?

Strategic Knowledge

20. What makes someone a good reader?
21. How do you know you are reading something well?
22. What do you do when you don't understand something when you're reading?
23. What are some strategies you use to help you understand?
24. How did you learn to use these strategies when reading?

Social Interactions

25. Who do you talk to about what you are reading? What do you usually talk about?
26. Do you and your friends talk about reading? If you do, how often? What do you and your friends usually talk about when it comes to reading?
27. What are some good things about talking with others about what you are reading? What are some disadvantages?
28. Is there anything you want to say that I did not ask you about?

Closing: Thank you so much (Name). I have enjoyed talking to you and learning more about you.

Appendix B

Interview Protocol with Previous Focal Students

Introduction: Hi [Name]. It's so good to see you again. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.

Background

1. Tell me what has been going on with you since we last talked.
2. Can you tell me what you like about middle school? What do you like about it? What don't you like?
3. Tell me about your favorite classes. Why do you like them?
4. What kinds of reading do you do in middle school? What can you say about the reading that you do in middle school?

Motivation

5. When we last talked, some of the books that you mentioned that you had been reading were _____. What are some books that you have read recently that you have liked? Why did you like these books? What other things have you been reading?
6. How do you decide what you are going to read?
7. What are some things that you don't like reading?
8. Can you tell me about a time in middle school when you were very interested in what you were reading? Why did you feel that way?
9. Can you tell me about a time in middle school when you didn't want to read something? Why did you feel that way?

Conceptual Understanding

10. How do you use reading to learn new information?
11. What do you want to learn through reading?
12. What have you learned recently from reading something?
13. How do you use reading to learn in your ESL/English class?

Strategic Knowledge

14. What makes someone a good reader?
15. How do you know you are reading something well?

16. What do you do when you don't understand something when you're reading?

17. What are some strategies you use to help you understand?

18. How did you learn to use these strategies when reading?

Social Interactions

19. Who do you talk to about what you are reading? What do you usually talk about?

20. When we last talked, you told me that you liked to talk with your friends about what you were reading. Do you still do that a lot? What do you and your friends usually talk about when it comes to reading?

21. What are some good things about talking with others about what you are reading? What are some disadvantages?

22. Is there anything you want to say that I did not ask you about?

Closing: Thank you so much (Name). I have enjoyed talking to you and learning more about you.

Appendix C

Interview Protocol for Teachers

Introduction: Hi [Name]. Thanks for agreeing to participate in this study and for allowing me to observe in your classroom. Through this study, I would like to know more about ELLs' reading engagement.

1. First of all, I'd like to get to know you a bit better. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
2. I would also like to know more about your teaching background. How long have you been teaching? Where? Aside from what you are currently teaching, what else have you taught?
3. What are some of the things you focus on specifically in connection with reading instruction?
4. What are some ways in which you support ELLs in general in your classroom?
5. Let's turn our attention to the student(s) I am focusing on for my study. Can you tell me a little bit about [Name of Focal Student]?
    a. How is [Name of Focal Student] doing in your class? What are his/her strengths in terms of reading? What are his/her areas of improvement?
    b. What can you say about [Name of Focal Student]'s motivation to read?
    c. Can you tell me what you have noticed about [Name of Focal Student]'s comprehension strategy knowledge? What about his/her use of comprehension strategies?
    d. Have you noticed whether or not [Name of Focal Student]'s work indicates a good understanding of the topics you are studying?
    e. How does [Name of Focal Student] do when working in groups? Can you describe some things you have noticed about his/her participation in these social interactions around reading?
6. Is there anything you want to say that I did not ask you about?

Closing: Thank you so much. I have enjoyed talking to you and learning more about you and your students.

Appendix D

Reading Activity Inventory

Name: _____ Date: _____

READING ACTIVITY INVENTORY

Directions: We are interested in knowing about your reading activities and in finding out how much you read different kinds of texts. You will circle the answers to some of the questions, and write the answers to the others.

Practice Question

1. Do you watch television? (Circle only one)

No…… 1 Yes…….. 2

If yes, write the title of your favorite television show.

Favorite television show: _____

2. How often do you watch this television show? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

Questions About Reading For Your Own Enjoyment

Directions: In this section, think about texts that you read for your own interest that are not assigned for school or homework.

1. **Did you read a mystery book anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)**

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide something you learned from that text and other comments you may have.

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

2. How often do you read a mystery for your own interest? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

3. Did you read an adventure/suspense book anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide something you learned from that text and other comments you may have.

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

4. How often do you read an adventure/suspense book for your own interest? (Circle only one.)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

5. Did you read a fantasy book anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide something you learned from that text and other comments you may have.

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

6. How often do you read a fantasy book for your own interest? (Circle only one.)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

7. Did you read a science book anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide something you learned from that text and other comments you may have.

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

8. How often do you read science books for your own interest? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

9. Did you read a humorous book anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide something you learned from that text and other comments you may have.

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

10. How often do you read humorous books for your own interest? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

11. Did you read any other kind of book in the past two weeks for your own interest that was not mentioned? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide something you learned from that text and other comments you may have. I have included three spaces below in case you have read books from a variety of genres in these past two weeks.

Genre: _____

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

Genre: _____

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

Genre: _____

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Topic: _____

Main idea: _____

Other comments: _____

12. Did you read a magazine anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide other comments you may have.

Magazine title(s): _____

Article Topic(s) you read about: _____

_____

Other comments: _____

13. How often do you read magazines for your own interest? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

14. Did you read online in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the names of the websites you typically visit and specific topics you read about. Please also provide something you learned from what you read online and other comments you may have.

Website(s): _____

Topic(s) you read about: _____

_____

Something you have learned from reading online: _____
_____

Other comments: _____

_____

15. How often do you read online for your own interest? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1

About once a month….. 2

About once a week…… 3

Almost every day…… 4

16. Did you read a text in your native language anytime in the past two weeks for your own interest? (Circle only one)

No……. 1 Yes…… 2

If yes, write in the title, author, or the specific topic that you read about. Please also provide other comments you may have.

Title(s): _____

Topic(s) you read about: _____

_____

Other comments: _____

17. How often do you read materials in your native language for your own interest? (Circle only one)

Almost never…….. 1 About once a week…… 3

About once a month…..... 2 Almost every day…… 4

(Adapted from Guthrie & Wigfield, 1997)

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

Agar, M. (1996). *Language shock: Understanding the culture of conversation*. New York: HarperCollins.

Allington, R L. (2011). Best practices with struggling readers. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (Fourth edition. pp. 96–116). New York: Guilford Press.

Allington, R. L. & Gabriel, R. E. (2012). Every child, every day. *Educational Leadership* 69(6), 10 – 15.

Almasi, J. F., & Fullerton, S. K. (2012). *Teaching strategic processes in reading* (Second edition). New York: Guilford Press.

Alvermann, D.A. (2005). Literacy on the edge: How close are we to closing the literacy achievement gap? *Voices from the Middle*, *13*, 8–14.

Arzubiaga, A., Rueda, R., & Monzo, L. (2002). *Family matters related to the reading engagement of Latina/o children. CIERA Report #1-015*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.

Au, K. (1997). A sociocultural model of reading instruction: The Kamehameha Elementary Education Program. In S.A. Stahl & D.A. Hayes (Eds.), *Instructional models in reading* (pp. 181–202). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Au, K. (2006). *Multicultural issues and literacy achievement*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Au, K. H. (2007). Culturally responsive instruction: Application to multiethnic classrooms. *Pedagogies: An International Journal, 2*(1), 1–18.

Baker, L., Afflerbach, P., & Reinking, D. (1996). *Developing engaged readers in school and home communities.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Baker, L., Dreher, M. J., & Guthrie, J.T. (2000). Why teachers should promote reading engagement. In L. Baker, M. J. Dreher, & J.T. Guthrie (Eds.), *Engaging young readers: Promoting achievement and motivation* (pp. 1–16). New York: Guilford Press.

Baker, L., & Wigfield, A. (1999). Dimensions of children's motivation for reading activity and reading achievement. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *34*, 452–475.

Biancarosa, G., & Snow, C. (2004). *Reading next: A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy*. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York and Alliance for Excellent Education.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bokhorst-Heng, W., & Pereira, D. (2008). Non-at-risk adolescents' attitudes towards reading in a Singapore secondary school. *Journal of Research in Reading, 31,* 285–301.

Brophy, J. (2009). Connecting with the big picture. *Educational Psychologist, 44*, 147–157. doi:10.1080/00461520902832400

Brophy, J. (2011). *Motivating students to learn* (Third edition). New York: Routledge.

Brown, A. L. (1982). Design experiments: Theoretical and methodological challenges in creating complex interventions in classroom settings. *Journal of the Learning Sciences, 2,* 141-178.

Burke, J. (2010). *What's the big idea? Question-driven units to motivate reading, writing, and thinking*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calderon, M. (2007). *Teaching reading to English Language Learners, Grades 6-12*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Casey, H. K. (2008/2009). Engaging the disengaged: Using learning clubs to motivate struggling adolescent readers and writers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52,* 284-294. doi: 10.1598/JAAL52.4.2

Cazden, C. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning* (Second edition). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cho, S., Xu, Y., & Rhodes, J. A. (2010). Examining English Language Learners' motivation of, and engagement in, reading: A qualitative study. *The Reading Matrix, 10,* 205–221.

Chun, C. W. (2009). Critical literacies and graphic novels for English-Language Learners: Teaching *Maus*. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 53,* 144–153. doi:10.1598/JAAL.53.2.5

Conchas, G. C. (2006). *The color of success: Race and high achieving urban youth*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts. (2010). Washington, D.C.: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (Second edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (Third edition). New Jersey: Pearson.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Literacy and intrinsic motivation. *Daedalus*, *119*(2), 115–140.

Cuero, K. K., & Dworin, J. E. (2007). Lessons from Jeniffer: Addressing common assumptions regarding "former" English Language Learners. *Voices from the Middle, 14*(4), 15–25.

Cummins, J., Bismilla, V., Chow, P., Cohen, S., Giampapa, F., Leoni, L., Sandhu, P., & Sastri, P. (2005). Affirming identity in multilingual classrooms. *Educational Leadership, 63*(1), 38–43.

Cunningham, P. (2005). Struggling readers: "If they don't read much, how they ever gonna get good?" *The Reading Teacher*, *59*, 88–90.

Dole, J. A., Duffy, G. G., Roehler, L. R., & Pearson, P. D. (1991). Moving from the old to the new: Research on reading comprehension instruction. *Review of Educational Research, 61*, 239-254.

Dornyei, Z. (2003a). Introduction. *Language Learning*, *53*(1), 1–2.

Dornyei, Z. (2003b). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research, and applications. *Language Learning*, *53*(1), 3–32.

Dornyei, Z. (2009). Individual differences: Interplay of learner characteristics and learning environment. *Language Learning*, *59*, 230–248.

Duke & Pearson, P. D., N. K. (2002). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. In S.A. Stahl. & A.E. Farstrup (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (Third ed., pp. 205–242). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Duke, N. K., Caughlan, S., Juzwik, M. M., & Martin, N. M. (2012). *Reading and writing genre with purpose in K-8 classrooms*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Strachan, S. L., & Billman, A. K. (2011). Essential elements of fostering and teaching reading comprehension. In S. J. Samuels & A. E. Farstrup (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (4th ., pp. 51–93). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Duke, N. K., & Roberts, K. M. (2010). The genre-specific nature of reading comprehension. *The Routledge International Handbook of English, Language, and Literacy Teaching* (pp. 74–86). London: Routledge.

Dyson, A. H., & Genishi, C. (2005). *On the case: Approaches to language and literacy research.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Eccles, J. (2009). Who am I and what am I going to do with my life? Personal and collective identities as motivators of action. *Educational Psychologist*, *44*, 78–89. doi:10.1080/00461520902832368

Eccles, J. S., Adler, T. F., Futterman, R., Goff, S. B., Kaczala, C. M., Meece, J. L., et al. (1983). Expectancies, values, and academic behaviors. In J.T. Spence (Ed.), *Achievement and achievement motivation* (pp. 75-146). San Francisco, CA: W.H. Freeman.

Eder, D., & Fingerson, L. (2002). Interviewing children and adolescents. In J.F. Gubrium & J.A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 181–201). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fairbanks, C. M. (2000). Fostering adolescents' literacy engagements: "Kid's business" and critical inquiry. *Reading Research and Instruction, 40,* 35-50.

Feger, M.V. (2006). “I want to read”: How culturally relevant texts increase student engagement in reading. *Multicultural Education*, *13*(3), 18–19.

Flowerday, T., Schraw, G., & Stevens, J. (2004). The role of choice and interest in reader engagement. *Journal of Experimental Education*, *72*, 93–114.

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2000). The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 642–675). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Freeman, D. E., Freeman, Y. S., & Mercuri, S. (2002). Older struggling English Learners. *Closing the achievement gap: How to reach limited-formal-schooling and long-term English Learners* (pp. 1–21). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Fry, R. (2007). *How far behind in math and reading are English Language Learners?* Washington, DC: Pew Hispanic Center.

Gabriel, R., Allington, R. L., & Billen, M. (2011). Middle schoolers and magazines: Results of a longitudinal study. Paper presented at the Literacy Research Association Annual Conference. Jacksonville, FL.

Gallagher, K. (2009). *Readicide: How schools are killing reading and what you can do about it*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Gambrell, L. B. (1996). Creating classroom cultures that foster reading motivation. *The Reading Teacher*, *48*, 662–673.

Garcia, E. E., Jensen, B. T., & Scribner, K. P. (2009). The demographic imperative. *Educational Leadership*, *66*(7), 8–13.

Gardner, R. C., & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second-language learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers.

Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in Discourses* (Second. Ed). New York: NY: RoutledgeFalmer.

Gee, J. P. (2000). Discourse and sociocultural studies in reading. In M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Ed.), *Handbook of Reading Research, vol. III* (pp. 195–207). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Goldenberg, C. (2008). Teaching English Language Learners- What the research does-and does not-say. *American Educator*, *32*(2), 8–23, 42–44.

Goldenberg, C., & Coleman, R. (2010). *Promoting academic achievement among English Learners: A guide to the research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Goldman, S. R., Braasch, J. L. G., Wiley, J., Graesser, A. C., & Brodowinska, K. M. (2012). Comprehending and learning from Internet sources: Processing patterns of better and poorer learners. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*, 356–381.

Guthrie, J.T. (2008). *Engaging adolescents in reading*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Guthrie, J.T. (2011). Best practices in motivating students to read. In L. M. Morrow & L. B. Gambrell (Eds.), *Best practices in literacy instruction* (4th edition, pp. 177–198). New York: Guilford Press.

Guthrie, J. T., Alao, S., & Rinehart, J. M. (1997). Engagement in reading for young adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *40*, 438–446.

Guthrie, J. T., & Anderson, E. (1999). Engagement in reading: Processes of motivated, strategic, knowledgeable, social readers. In J.T. Guthrie & D.E. Alvermann (Eds.), *Engaged reading: Processes, practices, and policy implications* (pp. 17–45). New York: Teachers College Press.

Guthrie, J. T., & Davis, M. H. (2003). Motivating struggling readers in middle school through an engagement model of classroom practice. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *19*, 59–85. doi:10.1080/10573560390143030

Guthrie, J. T., & Klauda, S. L. (2012). Making textbook reading meaningful. *Educational Leadership*, *69*(6), 64–68.

Guthrie, J. T., Klauda, S. L., & Ho, A. N. (2013). Modeling the relationships among reading instruction, motivation, engagement, and achievement for adolescents. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *48*, 9–26. doi:10.1002/rrq.035

Guthrie, J. T., Klauda, S. L., & Morrison, D. A. (2012a). Motivation, achievement, and classroom contexts for information book reading. In J. T. Guthrie, A. Wigfield, & S. L. Klauda (Eds.), *Adolescents' engagement in academic literacy* (pp. 1–51). College Park, MD: University of Maryland.

Guthrie, J. T., & Knowles, K. (2001). Promoting reading motivation. In L. Verhoeven & C. Snow (Ed.), *Literacy and motivation: Reading engagement in individuals and groups* (pp. 159–176). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Guthrie, J. T., & McCann, A. D. (1997). Characteristics of classrooms that promote motivations and strategies for learning. In J.T.Guthrie & A. Wigfield (Eds.), *Reading engagement: Motivating readers through integrated instruction* (pp. 128-148). Newark, DE: International Reading Association

Guthrie, J. T., McRae, A., & Klauda, S. L. (2007). Contributions of concept-oriented reading instruction to knowledge about interventions for motivations in reading. *Educational Psychologist*, *42*, 237–250.

Guthrie, J. T., Meter, P. Van, McCann, A. D., Wigfield, A., Bennett, L., Poundstone, C. C., Rice, M. E., et al. (1996). Growth of literacy engagement: Changes in motivations and strategies during concept-oriented reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *31*, 306–332.

Guthrie, J. T., & Wigfield, A. (1997). *Reading engagement : Motivating readers through integrated instruction* (p. ix, 243 p.). Newark, Del.: International Reading Association.

Guthrie, J.T., & Wigfield, A. (2000). Engagement and motivation in reading. In M.L. Kamil P.B. Mosenthal, P. D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Ed.), *Handbook of reading research, vol. III* (pp. 403–422). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., & Klauda, S. L. (2012b). *Adolescents' engagement in academic literacy*. College Park, MD: University of Maryland. Retrieved from http://www.corilearning.com/research-publications/

Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., Metsala, J. L., & Cox, K. E. (1999). Motivational and cognitive predictors of text comprehension and reading amount. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, *3*, 231–256.

Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., & Perencevich, K.C. (Eds.). (2004). *Motivating reading comprehension: Concept-oriented reading instruction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., & You, W. (2012c). Instructional contexts for engagement and achievement in reading. In S. L. Christenson, A. Reschly, & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 601–634). New York: Springer Science. doi:10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7

Hall, L. A. (2005). Struggling readers and content area text: Interactions with and perceptions of comprehension, self, and success. *Research in Middle Level Education, 29*(4), 1–19.

Hall, L. A., Burns, L. D., & Edwards, E. C. (2011). *Empowering struggling readers: Practices for the middle grades*. New York: Guilford Press.

Hansen-Thomas, H., & Cavagnetto, A. (2010). What do mainstream middle school teachers think about their English Language Learners? A tri-state case study. *Bilingual Research Journal 33,* 249- 266. doi: 10.1080/152358882.2010.502803

Harvey, S., & Goudvis, A. (2007). *Strategies that work: Teaching comprehension for understanding and engagement* (Second edition). Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Henk, W. A., Marinak, B. A., & Melnick, S. A. (2012). Measuring the reader self-perceptions of adolescents: Introducing the RSPS2. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 56,* 310–311. doi:10/1002/JAAL.00144

Hinchman, K. A., Alvermann, D. E., Boyd, F. B., Brozo, W. G., & Vacca, R. T. (n.d.). Supporting older students' in-and-out-of-school literacies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 47,* 304–310.

Hughes-Hassell, S., & Rodge, P. (2007). The leisure reading habits of urban adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 51,* 22–33. doi:10.1598/JAAL.51.1.3

Hynd, C. (1999). Instructional considerations for literacy in middle and secondary schools: Toward an integrated model of instruction. In J.T.Guthrie & D. E. Alvermann (Eds.), *Engaged reading: Processes, practices, and policy implications* (pp. 81-104). New York: Teachers College Press.

Ivey, G., & Broaddus, K. (2001). "Just plain reading": A survey of what makes students want to read in middle school classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly, 36*, 350–377.

Ivey, G., & Broaddus, K. (2007). A formative experiment investigating literacy engagement among adolescent Latina/o students just beginning to read, write, and speak English. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *42*(4), 512–545.

Jimenez, R. T. (1997). The strategic reading abilities and potential of five low-literacy Latina/o readers in middle school. *Reading Research Quarterly, 32*, 224–243.

Jimenez, R. T., Garcia, G. E., & Pearson, P. D. (1995). Three children, two languages, and strategic reading: Case studies in bilingual/monolingual reading. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*, 67–97.

Jimenez, R. T., Garcia, G. E., & Pearson, P. D. (1996). The reading strategies of bilingual Latina/o students who are successful English readers: Opportunities and obstacles. *Reading Research Quarterly, 31*, 90–112.

Kanno, Y. (2003). *Negotiating bilingual and bicultural identities: Japanese returnees betwixt two worlds*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Kaplan, A., & Flum, H. (2009). Motivation and identity: The relations of action and development in educational contexts: An introduction to the special issue. *Educational Psychologist, 44*, 73–77. doi:10.1080/00461520902832418

Kelley, M. J., & Decker, E. O. (2009). The current state of motivation to read among middle school students. *Reading Psychology, 30*, 466–485. doi:10.1080/02702710902733535

Kirkland, D. E. (2011). Listening to echoes: Teaching young black men literacy and the distraction of ELA standards. *Language Arts, 88*, 373–380.

Krashen, S. D. (1988). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. New York: Prentice Hall International.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Lapp, D., & Fisher, D. (2009). It's all about the book: Motivating teens to read. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52*, 556–561. doi:10.1598/JAAL.52.7.1

Lau, K.-L., & Chan, D. W. (2003). Reading strategy use and motivation among Chinese good and poor readers in Hong Kong. *Journal of Research in Reading, 26*, 177-190.

Leslie, L., & Caldwell, J. S. (2011). *Qualitative reading inventory-5*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Li, X., & Zhang, M. (2004). Why Mei still cannot read and what can be done. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 48*, 92–101.

Loera, G., Rueda, R., & Nakamoto, J. (2011). The association between parental involvement in reading and schooling and children's reading engagement in Latino families. *Literacy Research and Instruction, 50*, 133–155. doi:10.1080/19388071003731554

Marinak, B. A., & Gambrell, L. B. (2010). Reading motivation: Exploring the elementary gender gap. Literacy Research and Instruction, 49, 129-141. doi: 10.1080/19388709902803795

Masgoret, A.-M., & Gardner, R. C. (2003). Attitudes, motivation, and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. *Language Learning*, *53*, 123–163.

McCaslin, M. (2009). Co-regulation of student motivation and emergent identity. *Educational Psychologist*, *44*, 137–146. doi:10.1080/00461520902832384

McKenna, M. C., Conradi, K., Lawrence, C., Jang, B. G., & Meyer, J. P. (2012). Reading attitudes of middle school students: Results of a U.S. survey. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*, 283–306. doi:10.1002/RRQ.021

McKenna, M.C., Kear, D.J., & Ellsworth, R.A. (1995). Children's attitudes toward reading: A national survey. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *30*, 934–956.

Meltzer, J., & Hamann, E. T. (2004). *Meeting the literacy development needs of adolescent English Language Learners through content area learning. Part one: Focus on motivation and engagement*. Providence, RI: Brown University.

Menken, K., & Kleyn, T. (2009). The difficult road for long-term English learners. *Educational Leadership*, *66*(7). Retrieved from: http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/apr09/vol66/num07/The_Difficult_Road_for_Long-Term_English_Learners.aspx

Merriam, S. B. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (Second. Ed). New York: Sage.

Moje, E. B., Overby, M., Tysvaer, N., & Morris, K. (2008). The complex world of adolescent literacy: Myths, motivations, and mysteries. *Harvard Educational Review*, *78*, 107–154.

Mokhatri, K., & Sheorey, R. (2002). Measuring ESL students reading strategies. *Journal of Developmental Education*, *25*(3), 2–10.

Monzo, L., & Rueda, R. (2009). Passing for English Fluent : Latino Immigrant Children. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *40*(1), 20–40. doi:10.1111/j.1548-1492.2009.01026.x.20

Morgan, P. L., & Fuchs, D. (2007). Is there a bidirectional relationship between children's reading skills and reading motivation. *Exceptional Children*, *73*(2), 165–183.

Mucherah, W., & Yoder, A. (2008). Motivation for reading and middle school students' performance on standardized testing in reading. *Reading Psychology*, *29*, 214–235. doi:10.1080/02702710801982159

National Endowment for the Arts. (2009). *To read or not to read: A question of national consequence*. Washington, D.C.: Author. Retrieved from http://www.nea.gov/research/ToRead.pdf

O'Brien, D. G., & Dillon, D. R. (2008). The role of motivation in engaged reading of adolescents. In K. A. Hinchman & H. K. Sheridan-Thomas (Eds.), *Best practices in adolescent literacy instruction* (pp. 78–96). New York: Guilford Press.

Palincsar, A. S., & Brown, A. L. (1984). Reciprocal teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension monitoring activities. *Cognition and Instruction, 2*, 117-175.

Paris, S. G., Wasik, B. A., & Turner, J. C. (1996). The development of strategic readers. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research, vol. II* (pp. 609–640). New York: Longman Publishing Group.

Park, C., Goodwin, A. L., & Lee, S. J. (Eds.). (2003). *Asian American identities, families, and schooling*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

Pearson, P. D., & Dole, J. A. (1987). Explicit comprehension instruction: A review of research and a new conceptualization of instruction. *The Elementary School Journal, 88*, 151-165.

Pearson, P. D., & Gallagher, M. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 8*, 317–344.

Peregoy, S. F., & Boyle, O. F. (2000). English learners reading English: What we know, what we need to know. *Theory into Practice*, *39*, 237–247.

Perry, K. H. (2009). Genres, contexts, and literacy practices: Literacy brokering among Sudanese refugee families. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *44*, 256–276. doi:dx.doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.3.2

Peshkin, A. (1988). In search of subjectivity-- one's own. *Educational Researcher*, *17*(7), 17–21.

Pitcher, S. M., Albright, L. K., Delaney, C. J., Walker, N. T., Seunarinesingh, K., Mogge, S., Headley, K. N., et al. (2007). Assessing adolescents' motivation to read. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *50*(5), 378–396.

Portes, Alejando, & Rumbaut, R. (2001). Conclusion. In R. Rumbaut & A. Portes (Eds.), *Ethnicities: Children of immigrants in America* (pp. 301–317). University of Chicago Press.

Portes, Alejandro, & Rumbaut, R. (2006). Learning the ropes. *Immigrant America* (Third., pp. 205–243). University of California Press.

Pressley, M., Dolezal, S. E., Raphael, L. M., Mohan, L., Roehrig, A. D., & Bogner, K. (2003). *Motivating primary-grade students*. New York: Guilford Press.

Protacio, M.S. (2010). “You just want to keep on reading”: Examining the factors that motivate ELLs to read. Unpublished doctoral practicum study. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University.

Protacio, M. S. (2012). Reading motivation: A focus on English learners. *The Reading Teacher*, *66*, 69–77. doi:10.1002/TRTR.01092

RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Raphael, L. M., Pressley, M., & Mohan, L. (2008). Engaging instruction in middle school classrooms: An observational study of nine teachers. *The Elementary School Journal, 109*, 61–81.

Reinking, D., & Bradley, B. A. (2004). Connecting research and practice using formative and design experiments. In N. K. Duke and M. H. Mallette (Eds.), *Literacy research methodologies* (pp. 149-169). New York: Guilford Press.

Reinking, D., & Watkins, J. (1998). Balancing change and understanding in literacy research through formative experiments. In T. Shanahan & F. V. Rodriguez-Brown (Eds.), *National Reading Conference Yearbook 47*. Chicago: IL: National Reading Conference.

Reinking, D., & Watkins, J. (2000). A formative experiment investigating the use of multimedia book reviews to increase elementary students’ independent reading. *Reading Research Quarterly, 35*, 384-419.

Robinson, J.L. (2010). *English Language Learners’ motivation to engage in reading.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Washington State University: Pullman,WA.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1969). Towards a transactional theory of reading. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, *1*(1), 31–49.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1994). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In R. B. Ruddell, M. R. Ruddell, & H. Singer (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (4th ., pp. 1057–1092). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Rubinstein-Avila, E. (2003/2004). Conversing with Miguel: An adolescent English Language Learner struggling with later literacy development. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *47*, 290–301.

Rubinstein-Avila, E. (2003). Facing reality: English Language Learners in middle school classes. *English Education*, *35*, 122–136.

Rueda, R., MacGillivray, L., Monzo, L., & Arzubiaga, A. (2001). *Engaged reading: A multilevel approach to considering sociocultural factors with diverse learners*. Ann Arbor, MI.

Saito, L. T. (2002). *Ethnic identity and motivation: Sociocultural factors in the educational achievement of Vietnamese American students*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC.

Saldana, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sarroub, L. K. (2005). *All American Yemeni Girls: Being Muslim in a public school*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Schiefele, U., Schaffner, E., Moller, J., & Wigfield, A. (2012). Dimensions of reading motivation and their relation to reading behavior and competence. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*, 427–463. doi: 10.1002/RRQ.030

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Shanahan, T., Callison, K., Carriere, C., Duke, N. K., Schatschneider, P. D., & Torgesen, J. (2010). *Improving reading comprehension in kindergarten through 3rd grade: A practice guide* (NCEE 2010-4038). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance.

Shanahan, T., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2012). The challenge of challenging text. *Educational Leadership*, *69*, 58–62.

Smythe, S., & Neufeld, P. (2010). "Podcast time": Negotiating digital literacies and communities of learning in a middle years ELL classroom. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *53*, 488–496. doi:10.1598/JAAL.53.6.5

Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. London: Sage.

Strommen, L. T., & Mates, B. F. (2004). Learning to love reading: Interviews with older children and teens. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *48*, 188–200. doi:10.1598/JAAL.48.3.1

Sturtevant, E. G., & Kim, G. S. (2010). Literacy motivation and school/non-school literacies among students enrolled in a middle-school ESOL program. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *49*, 68–85. doi:10.1080/19388070802716907

Sue, S., & Okazaki, S. (1990). Asian-American educational achievements. A phenomenon in search of an explanation. *The American psychologist*, *45*(8), 913–20. Retrieved from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2221563

Sweet, A., & Guthrie, J.T. (1996). How children's motivations relate to literacy development and instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 49*(8), 660–662.

Taboada, A., & McElvany, N. (2009). Between the skill and will of extensive reading: L2 learners as engaged readers. In A. Cirocki (Ed.), *Extensive reading in English language teaching* (pp. 179–202). Warsaw, Poland: Polish Scientific Publishers.

Taboada, A., Tonks, S. M., Wigfield, A., & Guthrie, J.T.(2009). Effects of motivational and cognitive variables on reading comprehension. *Reading and Writing Quarterly, 22*, 85–106. doi:10.1007/s11145-008-9133-y

Turner, J. C. (1995). The influence of classroom contexts on young children's motivation for literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly, 30*, 410–441.

Turner, J. C., & Paris, S. G. (1995). How literacy tasks influence children's motivation for literacy. *The Reading Teacher, 48*, 662–673.

Unrau, N., & Schlackman, J. (2006). Motivation and its relationship with reading achievement in an urban middle school. *Journal of Educational Research, 100*(2), 81–101.

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, Albany.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walqui, A., Koelsch, N., Hamburger, L., Gaardner, D., Insaurralde, A., Schmida, M., & Weiss, S. (2010). *What are we doing to middle school English learners? Findings and recommendations from a study on California EL programs*. San Francisco: WestEd.

Wigfield, A. (1997). Reading motivation: A domain-specific approach to motivation. *Educational Psychologist, 32*(2), 59–68.

Wigfield, A., Cambria, J., & Ho, A. N. (2012). Motivation for reading information texts. In J. T. Guthrie, A. Wigfield, & S. L. Klauda (Eds.), *Adolescents' engagement in academic literacy* (pp. 52–102). College Park, MD: University of Maryland.

Wigfield, A., & Eccles, J. S. (2000). Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 68-81.

Wigfield, A., & Guthrie, J.T. (1997). Relations of children's motivation for reading to the amount and breadth of their reading. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 89*, 420–432.

Willis, A. I. (1995). Reading the world of school literacy: Contextualizing the experience of a young African-American male. *Harvard Educational Review, 65*, 30–49.

Worthy, J., Moorman, M., & Turner, M. (1999). What Johnny likes to read is hard to find in school. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *34*, 12–27.

Yin, R. K. (1989). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Revised Edition). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Yoon, B. (2007). Offering or limiting opportunities: Teachers' roles and approaches to English-Language Learners' participation in literacy activities. *The Reading Teacher*, *61*(3), 216–225.

Zhang, D. (2008). *Between two generations: Language maintenance and acculturation among Chinese immigrant families*. El Paso, TX: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC.

Zhou, M. (2001). Straddling different worlds. In R. Rumbaut & A. Portes (Eds.), *Ethnicities: Children of immigrants in America* (pp. 187–227). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Zhou, M. (2009). Rethinking assimilation. *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, ethnicity, and community transformation* (pp. 222–235). Temple University Press.

Zine, J. (2001). Muslim youth in Canadian schools: Education and the politics of religious Identity. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *32*, 399–423. doi:10.1525/aeq.2001.32.4.399