A MULTI-CASE STUDY OF SUPPORTING ADOLESCENT NEWCOMERS' LITERACY
DEVELOPMENT

A Capstone Project

Presented to

The Faculty of the Curry School of Education

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Doctor of Education

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Introduction

Adolescent newcomers are a subgroup of English Learners that have been in United States public schools for less than two years (Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006). They are the fastest growing segment of the sixth- to twelve-grade population, yet there has been little research regarding their skills (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). In order to learn content and graduate from public schools in the United States, adolescent newcomers must continue to develop their literacy knowledge. ESL teachers usually work with adolescent newcomers when they first arrive (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 1999). However, these teachers often do not have a strong understanding of early literacy and instructional practices to support reading development (Bialystock & Peets, 2010; Chan & Silva, 2015; Cross, 2011; Malsbary and Applegate, 2016). It is imperative that adolescent newcomers get appropriate literacy instruction in order to support literacy development while they are also building their English proficiency.

Purpose

The research suggests that students reading develops in phases (Ehri, 1999; 2005; Spear-Swerling, 2013) and that specific component literacy skills are essential for reading development (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). In a report to the National Literacy Panel, August and Shanahan (2006) cite evidence that EL's literacy development in English follows the same general path as that of their monolingual peers, which has also been more recently studied (Chiappe & Siegel, 2006; Lesaux & Rupp, 2007; Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux, 2017). Transfer of specific literacy skills across languages has been documented with elementary students (Baker, Stoolmiller, Good, and Baker, 2011; Goodrich & Lonigan, 2017; Melby-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011; Proctor,

August, Snow, & Barr, 2010). There have also been studies regarding professional development for ESL teachers to better support literacy outcomes of English learners (Babinski, Amendum, Knotek, Sanchez, & Malone, 2018; Ivey and Broaddus, 2007; Montero, Newmaster, and Ledger, 2014). The purpose of this study was to learn more about how to support ESL teachers as they build knowledge of literacy development and instruction as well as to examine the literacy development this instruction had on a class of adolescent newcomers.

Methodology

This was an exploratory case study (Yin, 2017) using a formative experiment to better understand ESL teachers' navigation of instructional practices based on literacy theory as well as the literacy development of adolescent newcomers within ESL Reading classes. The participants of this study were two ESL teachers as well as adolescent newcomers in ESL Reading classes. Data in the form of classroom observations, conversations with teachers, and classroom artifacts was collected over four microcycles of time. This data was then coded and analyzed both to better understand the context of the classroom as well as the ESL teachers' navigation of the use of new literacy instruction. The study was designed to address credibility by using data triangulation as well as to address validity by extensive observations over a four-month period of time.

Findings

The results of the analysis point to three main findings:

Finding 1: ESL teachers benefit from ongoing, sustained professional development with a focus on students' literacy instruction and assessment.

        a. Certified ESL teachers have varied knowledge bases with regards to literacy instruction

b. *Teachers gain pedagogical content knowledge of literacy through practice.*

c. *Reflection is an essential aspect of both developing literacy knowledge and transferring that knowledge into practice.*

Finding 2: Students at WIDA levels I and II have a wide array of literacy skills and ranges.

a. *Students' component literacy skills vary greatly.*

b. *Students' reading ranges vary greatly.*

Finding 3: Modifying the ESL Reading curriculum to differentiate by student literacy skills and ranges supports students' literacy development.

a. *Instruction is more structured and purposeful.*

b. *Students have more opportunities to read on their own.*

Implications and Recommendations

The implications of the findings led to three main recommendations. These recommendations are specific to Blue Ridge High School and continue to build on the professional development and instructional practices that were developed during the course of this study.

1. Increasing the ESL teachers' literacy knowledge and instructional practices through the use of ongoing professional development in the form of literacy coaching.

2. Improving the use and record-keeping of formative assessments for classroom instructional purposes in the ESL Reading classroom as well as to serve as data to help monitor growth of adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School.

3. Implementing differentiated instruction within the ESL Reading classroom to better support students' reading and writing development.

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APPROVAL OF THE CAPSTONE PROJECT

This capstone project, ("A Multi-Case Study of Supporting Adolescent Newcomers' Literacy Development"), has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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Name of Chair (Latisha L. Hayes, Ph.D.)

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Committee Member (Peter Youngs, Ph.D.)

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Committee Member (April S. Salerno, Ph.D.)

_____ Date

DEDICATION

This capstone project is dedicated to Kate Shrum, one of the most passionate teachers with

whom I have worked. Her sense of purpose and social justice were incomparable. She is missed.

This project is also dedicated to my many students over the years. Thank you for showing me

your determination, confidence, and sincerity. I am so lucky to have been your teacher.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As with most things worth doing, completing this capstone project has been a long and, at times, difficult path. A path that would not have been possible without the support and dedication of several people who I would like to acknowledge.

First, to the teachers and students who participated in my capstone project, thank you so much for giving of your time, answering my endless questions, and welcoming me into the classroom to learn from you.

When I first began my coursework at the University of Virginia, Dr. Mike McKenna was my advisor. It was through his help and guidance that I began to narrow my research from the world of adolescent literacy into a more strategic focus on supporting adolescent English learners. Dr. McKenna was a master in his field, and I feel extremely lucky and privileged to have had the opportunity to learn from him.

My second advisor, Dr. Marcia Invernizzi, thank you for graciously supporting me through my preliminary exam, coursework, and comprehensive exam. Your expertise was critical, and your support was essential in guiding me to strategically plan my path forward and helping me see the end goal. Thank you also for encouraging me take the nugget of an idea of how to support emergent adolescent newcomers and create a workable study.

Dr. Tisha Hayes, thank you for becoming my advisor this last year and helping me complete my study. I could not have asked for a kinder and more gracious advisor to guide me through the process of proposing, researching, and defending this project. Thank you for always being willing to help me figure things out whether it was logistics and signatures, appropriate books for emergent adolescent newcomers, or ideas about instruction that would best support students. You are a wealth of knowledge, and I am so glad to have gotten to learn from you.

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To my parents, who have supported my education from my birth. To my mother, Leslie Payne who sat for hours and hours with me when I couldn't figure out why "The bus ran" made any logical sense. To my father, Kim Payne, who has patiently listened on our morning runs to me repine about "the system" and the need for good reading instruction. To my in-laws, Bart and Andy Pfautz, who have been extremely supportive throughout this journey. Thank you for your countless offers to cover childcare, your questions about my project, and your excitement in next steps for our family.

And, most of all, thank you to my husband, Bart Pfautz. Thank you for your continual support that ranged from solo bedtime duty three nights a week while I was taking and teaching classes to disappearing with the children on day-trips to DC so that I could spend hours on undisturbed writing. Thank you for your steady support in my endless quest to learn more.

Lastly, to my children, Barton and Amelia, who have yet to know a time when your mother was not both a student and a teacher. Thank you for your constant joy, curiosity, and your sweet smiles. I am beyond excited to continue learning from you.

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Chapter One: Introduction

We begin with a story. A story of Jackson and Rose.[1] Jackson and Rose are adolescent refugees whose family lived in Burundi after fleeing the Democratic Republic of the Congo when they were small. When Jackson and Rose came to the United States, they spoke French and Swahili and could speak a few phrases in English. In Burundi, their family could afford to send only their older children to school. Jackson and a female sibling were able to attend school, but Rose was not. Jackson began his first school year in the United States reading on a first-grade level in English, and, after one year in high school, Jackson was reading on a sixth-grade level and had exited the English as a Second Language (ESL) program based on his performance on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs test. Four years later, he was a senior taking advanced classes. His engineering teacher said that Jackson was one of the brightest students the teacher had encountered and encouraged him to apply to competitive university engineering programs after high school.

In contrast, Jackson's sister, Rose, had been attending high school for the same amount of time. When she began school in the United States, having had no formal schooling in Burundi, she could read four words from an English pre-primer word list. After four years, Rose improved her reading to a second-grade level. In the past year, after a long period of observations, interventions, and support, Rose was found eligible for special education services with a specific learning disability in reading. Rose was given this diagnosis due to her low phonemic awareness and decoding skills. Yet Rose was in school in the United States for three years before she was diagnosed with this disability. Rose, at 18, had little possibility of graduating from high school with the appropriate literacy skills or even graduating at all.

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[1] All names are pseudonyms

Research suggests that having a strong first language literacy and consistent schooling helps students transfer literacy skills to a second language (August & Shanahan, 2006; Cummins, 1979, 1981). Jackson was able to improve his literacy by five grade levels in one year. He had literacy in his first (Swahili) and second (French) languages and had consistent schooling before coming to the United States. There is also research that supports the idea of specific component reading skills needed for literacy development (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008; National Reading Panel, 2000; Paratore, Cassano, & Schickedanz, 2011; Spear-Swerling, 2013; Stanovich, 1986; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). These component skills, the skills that Rose needed to develop, are neither unknown nor necessarily unattainable. Why then, in Rose's case, was the school unable to better support her literacy development?

While Jackson and Rose's story is particular to their context, their story is also indicative of education of English Learners (ELs) across the country. The term EL is an umbrella term for a diverse group of students. ELs in United States public schools speak dozens of different languages, immigrate from all over the world, and come with a range of skills, motivation, interests, and backgrounds (Carhill, Suárez-Orozco, & Paez, 2008; Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006). Some ELs were born in the United States and have grown up speaking one language at home and one at school. Many American Indians and Alaskan natives are also considered ELs (Carjuzaa & Ruff, 2016). These ELs often have literacy in English but may not have, or continue to build their, literacy skills in their first language. Other groups of ELs come to the United States with a firm foundation of literacy in their first language as well as a basic understanding of English. Still other ELs are students who have recently arrived in the United States with little to no formal education in their country of birth. Though these students have gaps in their formal education, they come to the United States with other strengths. In order to

support this diverse group of adolescents, schools need to provide differentiated and quality literacy instruction appropriate for each individual student (August & Shanahan, 2006).

One positive feature of the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB; 2002) is that it requires states to report their reading data not only in terms of broad percentages of student passing rates but also disaggregated by race, socioeconomic status, disability status, and language proficiency. In many states, the disaggregated results reveal a wide disparity in reading scores across different groups. These disparities have continued in the nearly 20 years since the NCLB legislation was enacted.

ELs are a specific group for which high-stakes assessments, such as end-of-course high school reading and writing tests, continue to pose a barrier to graduation. In Virginia, the passing rate for ELs in 2017 was 58% on the writing test and 59% on the reading test (Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), 2017). In contrast, the passing rate for L1 (first language) English students on the writing test was 85% and on the reading test was 89% (VDOE, 2017). The Commonwealth of Virginia, much like the rest of the country, continues to struggle with appropriately instructing ELs. Yet, the number of ELs enrolling in U.S. public schools is growing. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2018) in the 2014-2015 school year, ELs made up 9.5% of the population throughout the U.S., which is an increase from 8.1% in 2000.

Statement of the problem

Having the ability to read and write in English will help ELs meet with success in school and also support them in their future career goals. In an effort to ensure that schools are meeting the unique skills and needs of this population of students, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* requires that states annually evaluate their ELs' proficiency in English within the four domains

of reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Bunch, 2011; Mitchell, 2015; Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2018). Several states created the WIDA consortium in 2003 in order to follow this mandate (Fox, 2011). ELs are labeled on a WIDA proficiency scale from I to VI with ELs who have little English proficiency labeled as Level I students. Students are at a Level IV to V when they exit most required ESL programs, and those who are at a Level VI proficiency are considered to have native-like proficiency in English.

As previously stated, ELs are a diverse group of students with different languages, backgrounds, and schooling experiences. One subgroup of ELs is adolescent newcomers. The term "adolescent newcomer" is defined by Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2006) as an adolescent EL who has been in the United States for two years or less and who has not received English language schooling in his or her previous country. While adolescent newcomers have varying literacy experiences in their native language, most start public schooling in the United States as emergent to beginning readers and writers in English. Though many adolescent newcomers arrive with education in their native country, if they want to graduate from a United States public high school, they face an immensely challenging hurdle of learning the English language while also learning course content in English within a limited timeframe. Adolescent newcomers can be further defined as students who score as Level I or II on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs test.

According to Mitchell (2015), states that are in the WIDA consortium tested 2 million ELs from 2015-2016. This is almost half of the school-age ELs in the country. One problem, however, is the limited number of adolescent newcomers with which to field test (Mitchell, 2015). This makes it difficult to know what a normal language acquisition and literacy development pattern for these specific students is. However, according to Bunch (2011), the

WIDA consortium should be able to provide normative data along with demographic descriptors but currently does not. This information, used with other data points, would help give teachers a clearer picture regarding adolescent newcomer reading development. However, without this normative data, it is important, then, to look within the context of a school to understand better the literacy development of adolescent newcomers.

When adolescent newcomers enroll in school in the United States, one option that schools have is to place these students in a sheltered class with other ELs, and the privilege and responsibility of teaching foundational literacy skills in English is given to the ESL teacher. In many cases, sheltered classes follow the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) model where the ESL teachers are charged with both teaching academic content while also improving ELs' English language proficiency (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 1999). Certified ESL teachers are considered experts in second language acquisition but often do not have a strong understanding of early literacy and the instructional practices recommended for teaching students how to read (Bialystock & Peets, 2010; Chan & Silva, 2015; Cross, 2011; Malsbary and Applegate, 2016). Yet, ESL teachers are challenged to support adolescent newcomers' reading development while at the same time supporting language acquisition.

What often happens in secondary ESL classes is that students are taught vocabulary and content knowledge in English with the assumption that either foundational literacy skills are already in place or that these skills will strengthen in tandem with student language acquisition (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014). This assumption ignores the fact that reading develops in phases and that each phase is significant and essential to building a strong foundation in literacy (Ehri, 1999; Spear-Swerling, 2013). Students like Rose who have not yet developed foundational reading skills, such as decoding and phonemic awareness, in their first language

will continue to lag behind. For adolescent newcomers who have few years available to them to earn graduation credits in public schools before they age out, there is no time to waste. Adolescent newcomers must receive appropriate second language literacy instruction in order to help high school graduation as well as college and career options become possible.

Research Questions

1. How would ESL teachers navigate the use of literacy instruction to support adolescent newcomers?

2. In what ways can literacy theories be a model for literacy instruction of adolescent newcomers?

   a. In what ways do empirical observations in the class align with theoretical ideas?

   b. How would instruction informed by literacy theories affect the ESL Reading class?

Study Description

This study is a formative experiment in which design-based research is used to gather information to answer the research questions. During the course of this study, I worked closely with two ESL teachers. The ESL teachers and I were in continual conversations during this study to help understand their perspectives about literacy theoretical ideas informing practice. In designing this study, Walqui's (2008) framework was used to consider the development of ESL teacher understanding.

The conversations between the ESL teachers and I were analyzed using the lens of three of Walqui's domains for the development of teacher understanding: 1) knowledge, 2) practice, and 3) reflection. These three domains were chosen as a focus because knowledge and practice are the domains in which there would be a likelihood to see change in the short time period of

the study. The focus of the study was to modify the curriculum based on literacy theories, and to build on teachers' knowledge and practice as a result of these modifications alongside discussions regarding instruction in the class. The ESL teachers went through a reflective process during the curricular conversations and the debriefs; therefore, this reflection was also important to consider. By focusing on these distinct aspects of the ESL teacher's practice as curriculum was developed and modified, information was gleaned regarding the nature of how ESL teachers feel literacy supports work in a high school adolescent newcomer classroom.

For this formative experiment, theories regarding reading phases (Ehri, 1999, 2005; Spear-Swerling, 2013) as well as Storch and Whitehurst's (2002) model regarding component literacy skills were used as a foundation for considering instructional modifications. One of the strengths of using a formative experiment was that these theories could be used as foundational knowledge when modifying the curriculum and lesson plans within the ESL reading classes.

For the duration of this study, the ESL teachers had continual reflections on the curriculum and the modifications that were made. They also formed ideas and instructional practices regarding appropriate literacy for adolescent newcomers. Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, and Schaube (2003) describe the purpose of design-based research as "develop[ing] a class of theories about both the process of learning and the means that are designed to support that learning" (p. 10). In this way, this study takes an iterative approach to support literacy development in the class by continuously pausing and reflecting on instruction and the literacy outcomes of the students.

Conceptual Framework

For this study, the following conceptual framework (see Figure 1) was used as a basis to better understand ways to support adolescent newcomers' literacy development. Adolescent

newcomers come from a variety of different contexts and backgrounds. Some student aspects that affect their English literacy development are their first language literacy, motivation, prior schooling, parents' education, interrupted education, and English language proficiency. These different aspects play a role in how they experience English literacy instruction (Fairbairn & Fox, 2009; Garcia, 1991; Habib, 2016; Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006; Lesaux, Siegal, & Rupp, 2007; Nachmani, 2015). The teacher and his or her background also play a role in student learning (Babinski, Amendum, Knotek, Sanchez, & Malone, 2018; Farrell, 2013; Walqui, 2006).

Figure 1.1

Conceptual Framework

The Classroom:
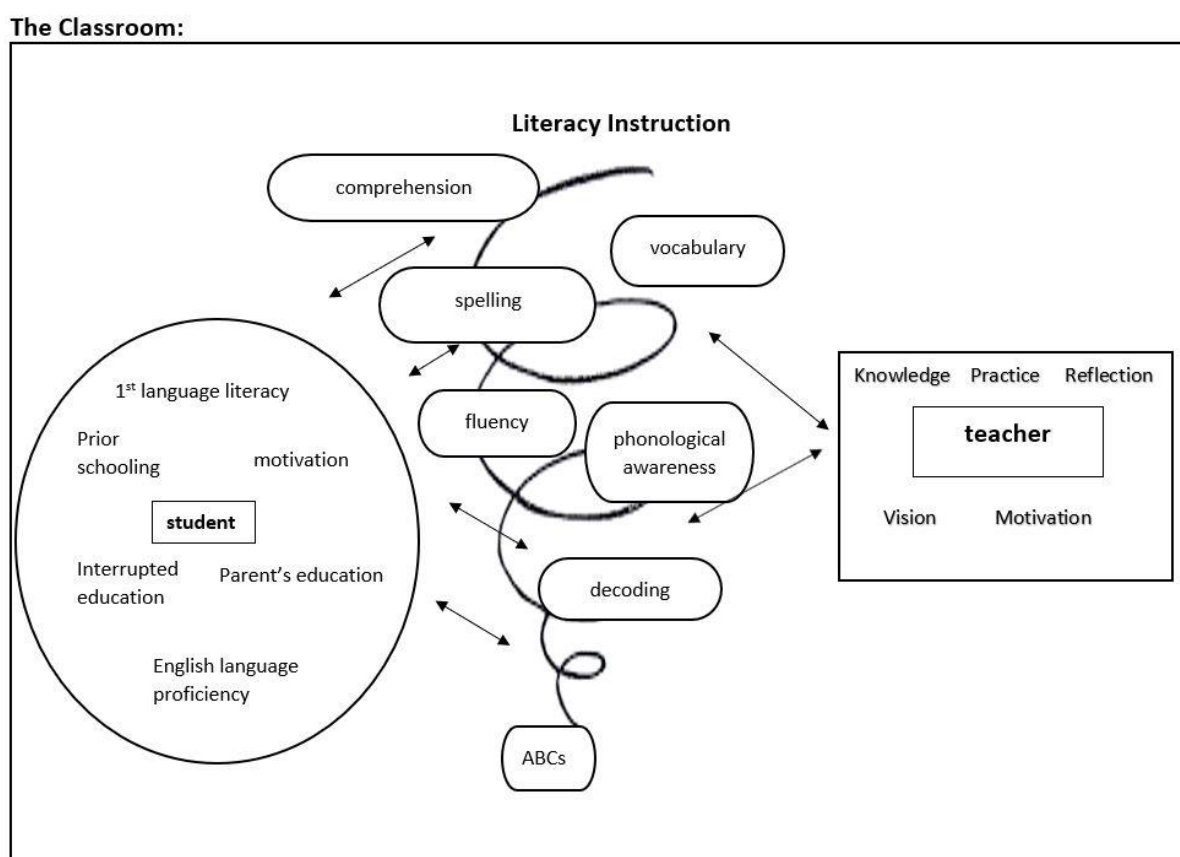
Building on Walqui's (2008) framework of ESL teacher knowledge, the teacher's knowledge of literacy theory, second language acquisition, and ESL pedagogy, as well as the teacher's motivation, vision, practice, and reflection, all play important roles in his/her instructional decision-making.

Component literacy skills are essential to literacy development and should be included in instruction of adolescent newcomers. These skills begin with knowledge of letters and sounds, decoding, and phonological awareness and continue to increase in difficulty and breadth as they become less constrained (Paris, 2005). Stahl's (2011) continuum of these component literacy skills was used in this conceptual framework to help organize the skills based on constraint (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2

Continuum of Constraint (Stahl, 2011)

		High-frequency word list	Phonological awareness	Oral reading fluency	Vocabulary and comprehension
Writing name	Alphabet				

⟵──⟶

Highly constrained   Unconstrained
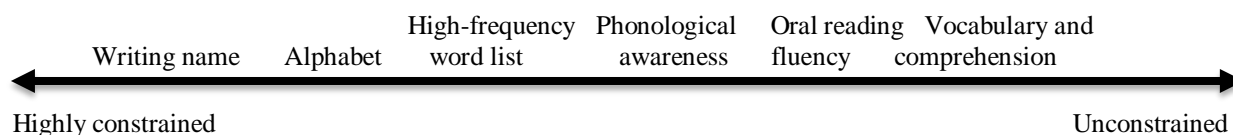
Both language-independent and language-based skills are eventually essential to the end goal of reading comprehension (Storch and Whitehurst, 2002). An example of a language-independent skill is the knowledge of the Latin alphabet, which is used for many different languages. There are 26 letters in the English alphabet. Mastery of those 26 letters is a constrained skill that can be taught directly and can be used across many languages. An example of a language-based skill is vocabulary. Apart from knowledge of some cognates, knowledge of vocabulary in one language does not directly support knowledge of vocabulary in another language.

At the emergent literacy level, monolingual English kindergarten students come into the class with various levels of both language-based and language-independent skills. However, adolescent newcomers usually enter the class with little to no language-based skills in English. Furthermore, their language-independent skills in their native language and in English vary depending on their schooling background. Knowledge of student's language-independent skills is essential as they are foundational in reading success. Adolescent newcomers who have a literate background in their first language can use these language-independent skills to support their second language regardless of their oral language proficiency in English (Goodrich & Lonigan, 2017; Melby-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011). Spelling, vocabulary, and comprehension are more difficult skills for students to master. The spiral in the conceptual framework is meant to show that foundational literacy knowledge, such as the symbols of print, is more constrained, and as students move toward becoming proficient readers, the skills needed become less constrained. The spiral is also a visual representation of both how students' literacy development as well as the teacher's instructional practices are cyclical but still move upwards toward mastery.

In their report to the National Literacy Panel regarding language-minority children and youth, August and Shanahan (2006) cite evidence that ELs' literacy development in English follows the same general path as that of monolingual English speakers. If the process of learning to read in a second language is similar to that of learning to read in a first language, and if decoding and listening comprehension are of equal importance in terms of building a strong literacy foundation, then it is incumbent upon teachers and schools to not only assess ELs' reading abilities from the first time they are enrolled but also to teach them using reading instruction that has been found to have positive results with native English-speaking populations.

In their review of the research, August and Shanahan (2006) found evidence that "literacy programs that provide instructional support of oral language development in English, aligned with high-quality literacy instruction, are the most successful" for ELs (p. 4). With this information in mind, it is important to understand the research-base for early literacy of ELs as well as appropriate assessment and instructional practices that should be used with adolescent newcomers.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Emergent readers who have been surrounded by literacy-rich environments are able to use the skills they have developed to aid them in their early reading development. One essential aspect of early reading is learning how to read words. Ehri (2005) describes a person's process of learning how to read words as a series of four phases. In the first phase, the pre-alphabetic phase, students know little about the alphabetic system. Students in this phase may use visuals or other symbols to help them know a word such as the golden arches for McDonalds. From here, according to Ehri, students move into the partial alphabetic phase, learning names and sounds of certain letters. At this stage, students can often use beginning and final letters to guess what they are reading, but they have not yet developed a full understanding of vowels. Students then move into the full alphabetic phase where they have the ability to begin to build their sight word bank and are connecting their knowledge of pronunciation with spelling. They then move into the consolidated phase, where their sight word memory continues to increase, and they are able to consolidate word parts into larger units. While these phases do overlap, Ehri (2005) suggests that these phases are foundational and essential for building decoding skills.

Spear-Swerling (2013) describes similar phases of reading development in her model. The first three phases map onto those of Ehri's, and then Spear-Swerling (2013) continues with strategic reading, which she describes as when readers increase morphological awareness and use reading as a tool to get information. The final phase in Spear-Swerling's (2013) model is proficient reading, which is when readers develop higher order comprehension abilities.

Adolescent newcomers who have not had literacy instruction in their first language and do not have knowledge of a written text would be at the pre-alphabetic phase. Those who have a beginning grasp of word knowledge in their first language might be able to transfer some of

those skills to reading in English. However, this transfer of skills is a complicated process. In order to understand more about literacy skills that transfer from one language to another, it is first necessary to think more broadly regarding second language acquisition.

Linguistic interdependence hypothesis

Cummins, an influential voice in second language and literacy development, posits a framework to help understand second language learning. According to Cummins (1979, 2000), humans have skills and a metalinguistic knowledge base that supports learning a new language. He calls this idea the *linguistic interdependence hypothesis*. When we learn a new language, he argues, we use information and understanding of our first language to support learning of the second. The linguistic interdependence hypothesis suggests that students with a strong academic background in their first language will be able to transfer that knowledge and skills, and thus will be able to meet with success more rapidly than those with limited formal literacy education in their first language.

Literacy skills that transfer across languages

There is evidence that literacy skills can transfer from one language to another (Baker, Stoolmiller, Good, and Baker, 2011; Goodrich & Lonigan, 2017; Melby-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011; Proctor, August, Snow, & Barr, 2010). MacSwan, Thompson, Rolstad, McCakister, and Lobo (2017) in its evaluation of theories that affect English as a Second Language (ESL) policy, describe transfer theory as "simply a metaphor for the accessibility of conceptual knowledge through the various languages people may know" (p. 224). If literacy is considered a form of conceptual knowledge that requires specific skills that are similar and can be transferred across languages, then an understanding of these skills is vital. MacSwan et al. (2017) go on to describe that "multilingual speakers have an underlying integrated language system, with both shared and

discrete linguistic resources" (p.224). This recognition of shared and discrete linguistic resources is key to understanding transfer of literacy skills from one language to another as there are language-independent and language-dependent component literacy skills.

Much of the research regarding transfer of literacy skills from one language to another shows that language-independent, the often code-based and more constrained skills, are more likely to transfer from one language to another. There is little evidence that shows language-dependent skills, such as vocabulary knowledge and comprehension, transferring from one language to another.

Reading comprehension and fluency.

MacSwan et al. (2017) describe Cummins's (1979) linguistic interdependence hypothesis as an example of a transfer theory as it posits that there is an interdependence of literacy knowledge that can be used to read in different languages. Baker, Stoolmiller, Good, and Baker (2011) used Cummins's linguistic interdependence hypothesis as a framework when designing their study regarding the effects of reading comprehension on fluency in both English and Spanish. The researchers conducted a study with 96 second grade students in a bilingual program in school. They were interested in understanding better if reading comprehension affected fluency in similar ways in English and Spanish. Their results showed that reading comprehension in both Spanish and English had a significant effect on passage fluency. Baker, Stoolmiller, Good, and Baker (2011) argue that the results support the linguistic interdependence hypothesis as they indicate an underlying metacognitive skill that is used when reading in both languages. The component skill of fluency was affected similarly by reading comprehension both in English and Spanish. The study gives evidence to the idea that the component skills in literacy acquisition work similarly across languages. It is also important to also note that English and

Spanish both use the Latin alphabet, though the English language has a more complicated letter-sound relationship than that of Spanish. The researchers also acknowledge that the study shows a correlation between skills in both languages but does not explain a skill transfer across languages or how that transfer occurs.

Component literacy skills transfer.

In an effort to better understand which component literacy skills transferred across languages, Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr (2010) conducted a study using structural equation modeling to test a path model for what they called an "interdependence continuum." The interdependence continuum, according to Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr (2010) is the idea that these component literacy skills fall on a continuum from being interdependent across languages and transferring easily to being less dependent and not transferring.

In their study, Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr (2010) looked at both Spanish and English reading assessment results of 91 bilingual fourth grade students. They wanted to better understand how Spanish and English language and literacy skills worked to predict reading comprehension across languages. Their results showed a strong Spanish-English interdependence for alphabet knowledge. This interdependence of alphabet knowledge is not surprising because Spanish and English both use the same alphabet. However, Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr (2010) did find moderate Spanish-English interdependence for reading comprehension and mild interdependence with Spanish oral language and English reading comprehension. The results of their study support prior research suggesting that decoding skills transfer easily with similar orthographies.

Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr (2010) conclude that native language and literacy development can aid English literacy acquisition. However, there is stronger transfer of alphabet

skills and less transfer of vocabulary and comprehension. This interdependence and transfer of language skills is important as Cummins describes having native language (L1) skills that are well-developed allows for likely transfer to a second language (L2), which, in turn, will improve educational outcomes (1979). When considering language and literacy interdependence and development, Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr (2010) suggest that practitioners should focus on language and literacy development in both languages in order to best support their students' literacy development.

Constrained literacy skill transfer.

To further the research regarding skill transfer across languages, in 2011, Melby-Lervåg and Lervåg conducted a meta-analysis looking at studies from 1975 to 2009 that researched what they termed, "cross-linguistic transfer," or literacy skills that transferred across languages. Their meta-analysis consisted of 47 studies with a total of 4,413 ELs. The use of a meta-analysis allowed the researchers to look at the correlational evidence that was given across the different studies. They hypothesized that there would be a stronger correlation between first and second language language-independent skills as these skills were more constrained than language-based skills, and thus would transfer more easily.

The results of this meta-analysis showed several different correlations between first and second language literacy skills. The strongest was phonological awareness with a correlation of .60 from first to second language. First language decoding skills were also strongly correlated with second language decoding skills, at .54. Only one construct, decoding, was measured in the first language and correlated to second language reading comprehension. The decoding construct was also moderated by age, with younger students having a higher correlation of first language decoding skills to second. The correlations for language-based skills, such as oral language, was

weaker. A student's oral language in his or her first language correlated to second language oral language at .16. Melby-Lervåg and Lervåg (2011) state that these correlations, while certainly demonstrating a relationship between the two languages, still do not show us what causes this transfer of skills. These correlations do, however, support Cummins's (1979) linguistic interdependence hypothesis in that they show skills transfer from one language to a second. One limitation they put forth is while their inclusion criteria was preschool to adult, their sample was mostly six to ten-year-olds. Therefore, there is a need to conduct similar research with adolescents.

Code-based skills transfer.

Goodrich and Lonigan (2017) also tested whether literacy skills transferred and found evidence that even for emergent readers, certain literacy skills transfer more easily than others across languages. They divide these skills into language-based and code-based skills. The study consisted of 858 Spanish-speaking preschoolers in 102 different preschools. They used different phonological awareness, print knowledge, and oral language measures to determine student knowledge in these specific skills. Goodrich and Lonigan concluded that there is evidence for a transfer in some code-based but not in language-based skills. Phonological awareness is the skill with which they found the strongest support for transfer, but there was also support for print knowledge especially if the alphabet overlapped across languages.

The cited studies give evidence to support skill transfer (Baker, Stoolmiller, Good, and Baker, 2011; Goodrich & Lonigan, 2017; Melby-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011; Proctor, August, Snow, & Barr, 2010). More specifically, they point to evidence that code-based literacy skills transfer easier from one language to another while language-based literacy skills show a much

smaller correlation between languages. This information is important to consider when analyzing the current language literacy.

Second language literacy

There is general consensus with regard to the emergent literacy processes monolingual students go through as well as the essential skills needed to become competent readers (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008; National Reading Panel, 2000; Paratore, Cassano, & Schickedanz, 2011; Spear-Swerling, 2013; Stanovich, 1986; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). However, when focusing on early literacy skills for adolescent newcomers, it is important to first consider how one reads in one's native language and the foundational skills involved in this process. The *simple view* of reading posits that reading is equal parts word reading and listening comprehension (Gough & Hoover, 1990). If one of those skills is missing, then a person cannot read. There is general agreement that reading involves the component skills of word identification, phonemic awareness, comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary (National Early Literacy Panel, 2008; National Reading Panel, 2000; Paratore, Cassano, & Schickedanz, 2011; Spear-Swerling, 2013; Stanovich, 1986; Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). A helpful way to think about these skills is to divide them into two distinct categories (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002) depicted in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1

Language-Independent and Language-Based Skills

Language-Independent Skills	Language-Based Skills
Alphabet knowledge (sometimes)	Vocabulary
Decoding	Listening Comprehension
Print concepts	
Phonological awareness	

These categories separate code-based skills, which are usually language-independent, and language-based skills, which are language-dependent. Decoding, for example, is a language-independent skill as the process of decoding is similar across languages. Language-independent skills relate directly to the text and are somewhat constrained (Paris, 2005). Language-based skills are skills such as vocabulary and listening comprehension. These skills are much less constrained and continue to develop over time. Returning to Gough and Hoover's (1990) *simple view* of reading, code-based skills help students decode while language-based skills aid in listening comprehension. While one cannot completely separate code-based and language-based skills, as these skills undoubtedly interact with each other, thinking about them in terms of their unique aspects and the knowledge needed to master them is helpful. This is especially helpful when considering adolescent newcomers who are emergent readers in English.

First versus second language literacy acquisition.

There is limited research regarding whether reading processes are similar or different for ELs. Chan and Sylva (2015) in their literature review regarding emergent literacy and ELs, suggest that in order to conduct such a study, research on second language acquisition as well as research on emergent literacy need to be considered together. Building on Storch and Whitehurst's (2002) two-domain emergent literacy model, they argue that when considering second language emergent literacy, the interplay between first and second languages is a factor that needs to be examined.

Hoff, Core, Place, Rumiche, Señor, and Parra (2012) conducted a study of children's bilingual vocabulary development and considered the interplay of both Spanish and English on children's unique vocabulary knowledge. In their study, they measured vocabulary knowledge of 47 simultaneous bilingual in English and Spanish children and 56 monolingual in English

children. Hoff et al. (2012) measured children's vocabulary knowledge at three different times (1 year, ten months; two years, one month, two years, six months). Bilingual children were assessed in both Spanish and English. Hoff et al.'s results showed that monolingual children were significantly more advanced in their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar when the researchers considered only English language comparisons. However, when both English and Spanish vocabulary scores were added, there was no difference between the vocabulary knowledge of the monolingual and bilingual children.

Hoff et al. (2012) also found that bilingual children's vocabulary growth in each language was relative to the amount of input they received from each language. This research provides evidence that language development is a function of exposure and also that bilingual children will appear to lag behind in language-based skills, such as vocabulary, if they are not assessed in both languages that they are learning. While the children in Hoff et al.'s study were at the emergent stage of literacy, their study is important to remember when considering language-based skills, such as vocabulary, and children's expected literacy growth rates.

Reading phases in second language literacy.

Chiappe and Siegel (2006) also conducted a study comparing literacy skills of ELs and monolingual students. This study focused on skills in the first and second grades. Specifically, Chiappe and Siegel wanted to know if ELs showed similar achievement and growth as monolingual students, went through the same reading stages as monolingual students, and if literacy predictors for ELs and monolingual students were the same. In this study, they focused on specific literacy skills such as students' knowledge of high-frequency words, pseudoword reading, environmental print, and phonological processing. Chiappe and Siegel found that ELs' and monolingual students' word reading, pseudoword reading, phonological awareness and

processing, developed similarly; monolingual students did perform better on an oral cloze task of reading comprehension, though the authors suggest this was probably due to the fact that monolingual students had higher English language proficiency than their EL peers at that time of this study.

When considering the reading phases of children, Chiappe and Siegel (2006) found similarities but also some differences between monolinguals and ELs. For example, they found that ELs were more likely to try to read unfamiliar words by using grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules. Literacy predictors were the same for both ELs and monolinguals. Also, students made similar errors that predicted reading performance at the second grade. Chiappe and Siegel's study gives specific information regarding the fact that ELs' language proficiency does not interfere negatively with word-reading skills in English, but they recognize that these findings do not apply to the skill of reading comprehension.

However, one consideration that the authors did not address is that of code-based versus language-based skills. The specific skills that Chiappe and Siegel (2006) focused on are code-based skills and would most likely be easier to transfer if students had literacy in their first language. Code-based skills are more constrained then language-based skills, and might also be mastered more quickly as ELs would not need to depend on language proficiency. However, the oral cloze task, a measure of comprehension through vocabulary knowledge, would be much more difficult for ELs because vocabulary knowledge is not constrained and is a language-based skill.

The threshold hypothesis.

Grabe and Stoller (2011) explain that understanding one's own native language literacy and orthography can help students while they learn how to read in a second language. However,

second language oral proficiency plays a very important role in the foundation of second language literacy. This is because of the importance of attaching meaning to text. As Gough and Hoover (1990) would argue, if one cannot understand (listening comprehension) the words when they are read, it does not matter if one can decode because meaning will not be made. In fact, Grabe and Stoller posit that second language knowledge is more important than first language literacy. They go on to describe the *threshold hypothesis* that argues the need for a certain amount of second language knowledge in order to transfer first language reading strategies and use them efficiently to help with comprehension. The premise of this argument is that if students are not at a certain threshold of language acquisition, their cognitive resources will be used for translating each word as they are reading, and comprehension will suffer.

Lesaux Seigel, and Rupp's (2007), longitudinal study of ELs from K-12, found evidence that supports Grabe and Stoller's (2011) description of the threshold hypotheses with regards to reading comprehension. Lesaux, Siegel, and Rupp's (2007) longitudinal data showed that though ELs in the study may have been behind with regard to early literacy skills at the kindergarten level, the differences between ELs and native speakers were negligible at fourth grade. There were still ELs who were struggling readers at the fourth grade, but there were a similar number of struggling readers across language groups.

Reading skills as predictors.

A recent study by Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux (2017) looks specifically at elementary level literacy skills in an effort to define early indicators of later reading comprehension. In this longitudinal study, Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux used information from a previous study of students in Pre-K through second grade and then reassessed those same students in fifth and eighth grades. Manicalla-Martinez and Lesaux based their study on the *simple view of reading*

(Gough & Hoover, 1990), which they explain has been tested often with monolinguals, to see if ELs' specific early literacy skills are predictors for later reading comprehension. The ELs in this study were born in the United States and received all of their schooling in the United States. Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux were interested in learning more about single-year predictors of future reading comprehension as well as the relative prediction of average performance on Spanish and English literacy skills on English reading comprehension. The results showed that while code-based skills were better predictors for reading comprehension at the fifth grade, language-based skills were better predictors for eighth grade reading comprehension. Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux state that the results of their study should caution practitioners from evaluating ELs language-based skills as predictors of reading outcomes in adolescence as students might not have the language proficiency in English as they are still building their skills.

Research regarding vocabulary knowledge as an emergent literacy skill (Hoff, Core, Place, Rumiche, Señor, & Parra, 2012) as well as research giving evidence towards ELs having similar reading phases and growth as monolinguals, (Chiappe & Siegel, 2006; Lesaux & Rupp, 2007; Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux, 2017) suggest that there is enough evidence to point practitioners towards appropriate instruction for ELs. When considering instruction for ELs, practitioners could look at strong practices that are used for monolinguals with the caveat that English language acquisition and proficiency are also important factors to keep in mind. Another consideration is the use of appropriate assessment to guide instruction. In what ways should this assessment look different for ELs than it does for their monolingual peers?

Second language literacy assessment

Ongoing assessment of component literacy skills is important for making instructional decisions, yet it is also essential to consider the unique attributes that adolescent newcomers have

when assessing their literacy. Peña and Halle (2011) argue that when assessing ELs, cultural, linguistic, and contextual factors first need to be considered. Though Peña and Halle describe the assessment of preschool students and their literacy development, adolescent newcomers who arrive with emergent literacy skills should also have the same factors considered for an assessment. One cultural factor that Peña and Halle describe involves practitioners in U.S. school systems; we need to remind ourselves that our instruction is a reflection of cultural norms and societal values that might be different from the student. Peña and Halle also argue that practitioners should pay attention to linguistic factors, such as students' language acquisition stages in both languages that they know. Finally, Peña and Halle point out that contextual factors, such as student exposure to English, also affect the quality of the assessments that are used. Two studies regarding ELs and specific reading skills, word reading and fluency, explain these factors more in-depth (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Ford, Caball, Konold, Invernizzi, & Gartland, 2013).

Ford, Caball, Konold, Invernizzi, and Gartland (2013) explored the diversity of skills of Spanish-speaking ELs in kindergarten. They wanted to know if this distinct group of students had homogenous early literacy skills and found that they do not. Of the 2,300 kindergarten ELs that they assessed, 98% of them had WIDA proficiency scores at level I and II. These findings have implications for practice as it indicates practitioners need to focus on literacy assessment results rather than just a student's English language proficiency level to guide practitioner's instructional decisions regarding literacy. Ford et al.'s (2013) results also give evidence to the case that early literacy skills play a bigger role in predicting later literacy than English language proficiency does. This study supports the importance of using early literacy assessment results to inform instruction. Though, again, this research focused on students at the elementary level.

However, adolescent newcomers who are going through the same reading phases would also benefit from instruction that was tied to assessment results, as the results of these assessments would help practitioners know the students' unique literacy skills.

Crosson and Lesaux's (2010) study regarding fluency and its correlation with comprehension of text for ELs also reflects the importance of appropriate assessments to guide instruction. In their study, they looked at fifth grade Spanish-speaker's text-reading fluency in English, an important assessment practice to review as current research regarding fluency excludes ELs or does not disaggregate their data in the results (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010). For monolingual students, both word reading and text reading fluency have been found to have a strong relationship with comprehension. However, Crosson and Lesaux's research results indicate that this relationship differs for ELs. While ELs' fluency performances were close to the national norms, their reading comprehension scores were more than one standard deviation below the national norms. For ELs, their word and text reading fluency predicted just 20% of the variance of reading comprehension. Crosson and Lesaux compare these results to that of Jenkins et al. (2003) of monolinguals that found word and text reading fluency predicted 71% of the variance of reading comprehension. This study raises questions about the use of word-reading tasks as determinants for ELs' reading comprehension. Therefore, when considering appropriate assessments to monitor skills and development, practitioners should be cautious about using fluency results without other measures of comprehension.

Unique Support for Adolescent Newcomers

Adolescent newcomers bring with them specific attributes as well as needs with regards to second language literacy. Many adolescent newcomers have had limited or interrupted formal education in their first language. However, schools in the United States rarely assess or instruct

in students' first language literacy, which makes it difficult for teachers to know students' first language literacy skills. This practice impedes the development of first language literacy and has negative effects on second language literacy acquisition (Menken, 2013). Other variables that impact adolescent newcomers' literacy are their prior knowledge, vocabulary, specific reading skills in both languages, and parents' education (Fairbairn & Fox, 2009; Garcia, 1991; Habib, 2016; Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006; Lesaux, Siegal, & Rupp, 2007; Nachmani, 2015). Students who have a strong first language literacy often move quickly toward acquiring literacy in English as they have foundational code-based skills that transfer easily across languages. However, for adolescent newcomers who do not have a strong literacy background, the challenges of building literacy and content knowledge at the secondary level are compounded by the structure and instruction in secondary schools (Menken, 2013). Most secondary schools are structured for content area classes, with literacy or ESL support in a separate class from the content. Adolescent newcomers are expected to both gain proficiency in the English language while also learning grade-level content through the language itself.

Though first language literacy affects that of the second language, there have also been several studies that show evidence that ELs have similar patterns in second language literacy development as monolinguals (August & Shanahan, 2006; Chiappe & Siegel, 2006; Lesaux, Koda, Siegel, & Shanahan, 2006; Lesaux & Rupp, 2007; Lesaux and Siegal, 2003). However, studies regarding emergent and early literacy development of ELs have not been conducted at the secondary level. There continues to be a dearth of research focusing on adolescent newcomers' literacy development, which makes it difficult for teachers to know how to best support these students. While considering secondary students' unique contexts, much of the instructional

practices found to be effective for those in elementary school could also be applied at the secondary level.

ESL Teacher Literacy Knowledge

ESL, as a class, can be thought of as a content with the ESL teacher's content expertise in language acquisition. Walqui (2008) provides a helpful model for considering ESL teachers' professional growth in their content area. Walqui's model consists of five domains of professional growth. These domains are: 1) reflection, 2) vision, 3) motivation, 4) practice, and 5) knowledge. While in her model these domains are divided, she shows through arrows the interconnectedness of each domain. All of which, she explains, are surrounded by a greater context, such as the class or geographical location. Walqui defends the separation of these domains as a way to help us better understand aspects of growth in individual teachers. For the purposes of this study, knowledge, practice, and reflection will be focused on more intently. These domains will be the focus as they are domains that will most likely have shifts or changes due to the class modifications that are utilized during the course of this study, while motivation and vison are domains that will probably have less change over the short period of this study.

In 2013, Farrell conducted a multiple case study on three experienced ESL teachers, reflecting on their years of experience. Through this two-year longitudinal study, Farrell consolidated five main characteristics of teacher expertise. Knowledge of both the learners and the learning, Farrell (2013) found, was the most frequent characteristic brought up in interviews, discussions, and ESL teacher journal entries. The teachers in this case study were able to draw on their knowledge of both pedagogical imperatives as well as their students' unique characteristics in order to design appropriate lessons to support their students' language acquisition. In contrast, Malsbary and Applegate (2016) conducted a case study on one beginning ESL teacher. Through

interviews and observations, they found evidence that policies, such as NCLB, pushed the ESL teacher to focus on her students' results on tests rather than effective instructional practices and curriculum standards. In this way, the teacher's lack of knowledge and adequate supports had a negative effect on both her experience as an ESL teacher as well as her students' knowledge. Malsbary and Applegate posit that if the ESL teacher had support in terms of professional development as well as clear curriculum that took into account ELs' unique characteristics, then she would have had a more positive experience and been able to support her students more.

There is no federal guideline for ESL teacher preparation, and states vary greatly with regard to their programs (Bialystok & Peets, 2010; Malsbary & Applegate, 2016). Preservice ESL teacher programs are designed to help teachers learn appropriate techniques to improve students' language acquisition. As ESL content specialists, many ESL teachers do not have a strong knowledge of emergent and early literacy instruction. ESL teachers in the United States are similar to other content teachers at the secondary level in the United States who also have a lack of pedagogical training in teaching reading (Sargent, Ferrell, Smith, & Scroggins, 2018). Other countries have similar lack of literacy training at the secondary level.

Goldfus (2012) conducted a survey of Israeli English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction and found that while in-service teachers had better literacy instruction knowledge than pre-service teachers, there was still overall low performance regarding literacy knowledge. Though this survey was conducted with teachers outside of the United States, the results echoed Moats' (1994) and Bos, Mather, Dickson, Podhajski, and Chard's (2001) earlier findings that elementary teachers in the United States did not have appropriate knowledge for teaching children how to read. In 2018, a study was conducted in the United States regarding secondary teachers' sense of efficacy in teaching literacy. The results of

this study indicated that secondary content teachers have a low sense of efficacy with regards to their knowledge of teaching literacy to secondary students (Sargent, Ferrell, Smith, & Scroggins, 2018). It is clear that like other content teachers at the secondary level, many ESL teachers would benefit from knowledge regarding literacy acquisition and appropriate instruction.

Farrell (2013) also found that expert ESL teachers talked often about the importance of reflection in their practice. He describes this reflection as a tool that teachers used to be aware of concepts. However, he also points out that the teachers with whom he did this research felt that there was little time to reflect within the school day and that the research project gave them the opportunity as it created a space for reflection. This critical reflection allows teachers to examine their practice, as well as to discuss the different ways they learned through experience.

One way to promote more reflection regarding teaching practices that has been gaining traction over the years is the use of instructional coaching as a model to support teachers. Babinski, Amendum, Knotek, Sanchez, and Malone (2018) conducted a randomized control trial using professional development sessions and instructional coaching as a way to support elementary teachers in their literacy instruction of ELs. The professional development focused on instructional design, planning, and content knowledge to strategically develop student's phonemic awareness. This professional development was conducted through instructional coaching, and the researchers observed the class three times a year. The results showed evidence that there was a positive impact of the intervention group's use of specific instructional strategies as well as an effect on students' literacy outcomes. Specifically, students who had lower overall English proficiency benefited more from teachers' participation in the professional development and subsequent phonemic awareness lessons. Feedback from the teachers indicated their interest in more in-service support, such as coaching, to further their skills. Instructional coaching as a

means to support teachers' instruction, as well as their reflection on their practice is a promising structure with the need for more research.

Having reviewed research regarding emergent and early literacy as well as second language literacy learning, it is even more evident of the great need to learn ways to support adolescent newcomers' literacy development. Adolescent newcomers arrive in U.S. schools with unique contexts, attributes, and struggles. It is incumbent on ESL teachers to better support adolescent newcomers' literacy development, which will only be possible if the ESL teachers themselves receive more targeted support with regard to second language literacy acquisition and instruction. This targeted support could be ongoing professional development with an instructional coach, such as in Babinski, Amendum, Knotek, Sanchez, and Malone's (2018) study, or it could mean support through graduate-level classes designed to teach ESL teachers more in-depth information regarding foundational literacy skills that are essential for all ELs to master.

Second language literacy instruction

Knowing the complexities regarding second language literacy development, what are the instructional implications? Practitioners need to remember the varied contexts with which ELs are coming to school and pay attention to the specific literacy instruction that students need. ESL teachers should be assessing and documenting student reading development both through progress monitoring and with specific, purposefully selected, assessments for literacy (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Ford, Caball, Konold, Invernizzi, & Gartland, 2013; Peña & Halle, 2011). If at all possible, these literacy assessments should include an assessment in the student's first language literacy as well as in English. The results of these assessments should be used for instructional purposes and to provide appropriate reading instruction. When considering reading

instruction for adolescent newcomers, teachers should be strategic in their instruction of code-based and language-based skills and differentiate instruction and practice of these skills based on students' prior literacy in both languages, as well as their current English language proficiency (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014). When possible, schools should give adolescent newcomers the opportunity to use their native language and literacy as a way to support their second language literacy and to encourage engagement (Bigelow, Vanek, King, & Abdi, 2017; Goldenberg, Hicks, & Lit, 2013; Ivey & Broaddus, 2007; Valdés, Bunch, Snow, Lee & Matos, 2005).

Adolescent newcomers need appropriate literacy instruction that matches their current skills. For some, that might mean instruction in emergent literacy skills. Farver, Lonigan, and Epps (2009) conducted an experimental study of preschool Spanish-speaking students and an emergent literacy intervention. They randomly assigned Head Start preschool class to a control or an intervention group both using preschool-designed curriculum that consisted of 20-minute emergent literacy interventions four times a week. The control group used the High/Scope curriculum. For the intervention group, the researchers used *Literacy Express* in English and also modified the curriculum by translating some of the small-group instruction materials into Spanish. The intervention group was also divided into students who received English-only intervention and students who received transitional intervention moving from Spanish to English during the school year.

The results from this six-month intervention showed that those in the experimental group made greater gains in emergent literacy skills of oral language, print knowledge, and phonemic awareness. Students in the transitional model outperformed the English-only model on English definitional vocabulary as well as English print knowledge. The transitional group was also the

only group to show growth in their Spanish literacy scores. These results support the linguistic interdependence hypothesis in that the students who were first receiving Spanish literacy instruction and then transitioned to English instruction did better than those in the English-only class both in their English and Spanish literacy skills (Cummins, 1979). These results also give evidence to the idea that students' emergent Spanish skills help their emergent English skills. Farver, Lonigan, and Epps (2009) found similar results regarding monolingual students with regards to the importance of emergent literacy skills and give evidence toward the effectiveness of emergent literacy interventions for ELs. Though this intervention was given to preschool ELs, the results indicate that emergent literacy skills can be taught strategically. An extension of this work to secondary adolescent newcomer classes is needed. The results suggest that emergent ELs benefit from emergent literacy intervention. It follows, therefore, that adolescent newcomers at the emergent literacy phase would also benefit from such an intervention.

Montero, Newmaster, and Ledger (2014) conducted a promising study focused on adolescent newcomers and the use of guided reading as an instructional practice to support their unique emergent and early literacy characteristics. In their study, they focused on professional development of ESL teachers to help teachers know how to conduct running records as well as use guided reading practices in their ESL classes. Montero, Newmaster, and Ledger followed one teacher and her group of eleven adolescent newcomers over a five-month period in order to learn more about the students' literacy development. The running records that the teacher gave indicated strong literacy gains of 3 to 13 reading levels (as measured by Fountas and Pinnell, 1996) with an average of an 8.3 reading level gain over this period of time. They compared this growth to a former group of students the teacher had taught without the use of guided reading practices. The average growth of the former group in a five-month period was 1.2 reading levels

with a range of 0-3 reading level gains. Though this research was a small study focusing specifically on eleven students and one teacher, the results have important implications toward teaching adolescent newcomers reading skills at their level and differentiated by their individual skills.

Montero, Newmaster, and Ledger (2014) describe the students in this study as having little to no English proficiency and either nonliterate or semi-literate in their first language. However, the use of strategic guided reading practices built students' foundational literacy skills while they were also gaining English language proficiency. This study refutes, in part, the threshold hypothesis, as students were making strong gains in their English literacy without strong English proficiency.

In 2007, Ivey and Broaddus, acting as participant observers, conducted a formative experiment regarding emergent literacy and engagement in an adolescent ESL class. The purpose of their study was to monitor engagement during the reading and writing time within the class. This formative experiment used a two-part intervention focusing on both student engagement during independent reading, as well as teacher-directed reading and writing activities. They worked with the teacher both in and outside of class time to help strengthen student engagement with regard to reading. As this was a formative experiment, Ivey and Broaddus modified the lessons to better support student engagement. Their modifications included expanding the range and volume of texts available to students, identifying instructional support for difficult texts, and scaffolding writing experiments. They also found that while the instruction in the class was first conducted as whole-class or small-group lessons, the modifications that they made within the class resulted in most of the instruction being given to pairs of students or to individual students

in order to support their unique skills. They describe how their study was multifaceted and fluid in order to reach students and support their literacy engagement.

Ivey and Broaddus's (2007) study gives evidence to the idea that adolescent newcomers can be engaged in literacy activities in English without first having a strong proficiency in the language itself. This finding has implications for literacy instruction of adolescent newcomers and supports the idea that literacy instruction should begin as soon as adolescent newcomers are in school.

A final consideration in instruction of adolescent newcomers is using their first language and literacy as a support toward building their second language literacy. Goldenberg, Hicks, and Lit (2013) argue for the need to promote language development in English as well as in a student's first language. Bigelow, Vanek, King, and Abdi (2017) used the premise of the importance of acknowledging and using students' first language and literacy in their study regarding social media practices of refugee youth. In their study, Bigelow, Vanek, King, and Abdi wanted to encourage refugee youth to use their native language across reading, writing, speaking, and listening modalities. They did this by creating a private Facebook group that students used to write and organize texts explaining their cultures. Nineteen students with WIDA levels 2-4 participated in this five-day curriculum over a three-week summer ESL course.

The researchers found evidence of high engagement and enthusiasm in the project. They also saw many instances where students engaged in using multiple languages within one context both in written and oral form. The results of this study showed evidence that when students used their native languages along with English, they were able to develop critical academic skills in an engaging and interesting way. Though the researchers note in their limitations that the length of the study made it impossible to gather appropriate pre and post literacy assessment data, the

study is an important first step in research regarding the use of native language to support English in adolescent newcomer class.

Adolescent newcomers are the fastest growing segment of the 6th to 12th-grade population, yet there has been little focus on this group of students when it comes to research (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000). In fact, research regarding second language literacy for any age group is sparse (August & Shanahan, 2006; Thibeault & Kuhlman, 2010). The little research that has been done with regard to second language literacy is usually conducted at the elementary level (Menken, 2013) and has not focused on the interplay of language and literacy (Grabe & Stoller, 2011) nor has it described ESL teachers' understanding of literacy and their instructional choices (Cross, 2011; Lesaux, Siegel, & Rupp, 2007). The work of Montero, Newmaster, and Ledger (2014) along with that of Bigelow, Vanek, King, and Abdi (2017) are an exciting step for research regarding specific groups of adolescent newcomers, such as refugees.

Garcia, Jenson, and Scribner (2009) describe the gap between ELs and monolingual students not as an achievement gap but as an implementation gap. They believe that we do have the research and expertise to better support ELs in schools but that we are not implementing that research. In considering the research that we know, if at the early stages of literacy, there is a stronger relationship between code-based skills and reading development. If code-based skills are language-independent, then adolescent newcomer literacy instruction should take advantage of student attributes that transfer and have little relationship to language proficiency.

Adding a strategic literacy component to the ESL curriculum for adolescent newcomers is an appropriate use of instructional time and focuses on foundational skills that may already be present but need to transfer from the first language to the second. Finding ways to incorporate students' native language and literacy also shows potential for building their literacy skills. A

focus on these emergent and early literacy skills builds a strong foundation to support adolescent newcomers' literacy development as they continue to gain language proficiency. Thoughtful and strategic instruction for adolescent newcomers should be a priority for schools in the United States. Adolescent newcomers deserve nothing less.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

This project was an exploratory case study (Yin, 2017) using a formative experiment to test theory regarding literacy development within three classes of adolescent newcomers. Reinking and Bradley (2011) in their support of formative experiments, write that "we continue to need methodologies that acknowledge the complexities of class teaching and that align with the day-to-day management of that complexity" (p. 191). Addressing the complexities of classroom teaching means getting involved not only with the class instruction on a curricular level but also being in the class observing and working with teachers. The participatory nature allows the researcher to better understand why learning is happening and under what sort of circumstances this learning is taking place. It also means recognizing the various pressures that the structure of the school, time for planning, and other outside sources might have on teachers. Discussing these pressures with the teachers help formulate appropriate ways to create balance. Using a formative experiment to support literacy in a classroom setting, and considering different modifications that could further enhance adolescent newcomers' literacy development, will help teachers become active participants in considering ways to support adolescent newcomers, and studies such as the current study will help to further theory regarding adolescent newcomers' literacy development.

To help structure this study, Reinking and Bradley's (2004, 2011) framework for a design experiment was used. A design experiment is a broad term under which formative experiments fall. The first aspect of Reinking and Bradley's framework is to define a pedagogical goal to investigate. The goal of this study is to improve adolescent newcomers' English literacy development through supporting and developing their literacy skills. The instructional decisions that the ESL teachers made were guided in part by theories regarding reading phases (Ehri, 1999,

2005; Spear-Swerling, 2013) as well as Storch and Whitehurst's (2002) model regarding component literacy skills. The intervention, therefore, was an attempt to infuse instruction regarding appropriate literacy skills into the current ESL Reading curriculum, assess students' reading levels in English using appropriate literacy assessments, and make modifications to the curriculum based on an iterative process of reflection on the lessons themselves and observations of the class.

Reinking and Bradley (2008) explain that formative experiments attempt to use "instructional interventions grounded in theory and guided by systematic data collection and analysis" (p. 6) to accomplish practical and useful educational goals. In order to obtain information regarding the instructional interventions, the data gathering and analysis was a constant process. Reinking and Bradley suggest analyzing data for a formative experiment into "microcycles within classrooms." A microcycle is a short-term length of time that can be used to gauge change based on instructional interventions. By both looking at distinct microcycles as well as reflecting on the instructional interventions (labeled modifications) and decisions as a whole, I was able to better understand the information gathered in the class through observations and through teacher debriefs regarding both the curriculum we created and how it worked in the classes. Defining my time in the class in specific microcycles also helped to create boundaries around specific instructional decisions and reflections on those decisions by the practitioners.

Sample

Participants

This research was a multiple-case study of two ESL teachers in a high school setting. The first teacher, Amy, has been working at Blue Ridge High School for almost 15 years. She holds an undergraduate double major in music and French, and she has a Masters of Arts in Teaching

with a focus on ESL. She is also certified to teach French and Spanish. She has taught ESL in a variety of settings and taught Spanish both in the elementary and secondary setting. Throughout her time at this school, she has been integral in developing and watching the ESL program grow from a handful of students and two teachers to around 100 students and four full-time ESL teachers. Amy teaches one of the three ESL Reading classes. This is Amy's first year teaching the ESL Reading A class.

Maria, the second teacher, is also a veteran teacher with 12 years teaching experience. However, this is her second year teaching at Blue Ridge High School. Maria has a Bachelor of Arts in teaching ESL from Puerto Rico. She also studied in Austria and received a teaching certificate there. She has taught in the Cayman Islands, Puerto Rico, and North Carolina across the subjects of English, ESL, and Spanish. She also worked with students in a school for Spanish speakers with special education needs. This is Maria's second year teaching the ESL Reading B class.

The students in the ESL Reading classes were all Level I and II ESL students based on their results on the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs assessment. Student scores are shown in Table 3.1. Usually, students in this setting are designated ESL I if their scores range between 1.0 and 1.9 and ESL II if their scores range between 2.0 and 2.9. However, as this table shows, there are three students that were placed in the Level II class that have scores lower than 2.0.

Table 3.1

ESL I and II Overall WIDA Scores: Spring 2018

Student	WIDA Score	ESL Content Class	Reading Class
Bina	1.7	I	A
Adama	1.7	I	A
Veeda	1.8	I	A
Aryo	Fall screener (1)	I	A

Tela	Fall screener (1)	I	A
Santiago	Fall screener (1)	I	A
Ara	1.8	II	B
Said	1.9	II	B
Asad	1.9	II	B
Edwin	2	II	B
Christian	2	II	B
Nassimeh	2.1	II	B
Tanya	2.1	II	B
Narges	2.2	II	B
Mohamed	2.2	II	B
Max	2.2	II	B
Aziz	2.3	II	B
Matteo	2.4	II	B
Elvia	-	II	B

* all names are pseudonyms

Setting

These ESL Reading classes are situated within one high school in a Southeastern state. This school has an ESL population of 11.7% as reported at the beginning of the 2018-19 school year (Virginia Department of Education, 2018). Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, and Schaube (2003), in an overview of design experiments, explain that the purpose of such experiments is to "develop theories that target domain-specific learning processes" (p. 9). In this specific case study, literacy is the domain that was examined. Specifically, theory guided instruction to support literacy skills of adolescent newcomers in the ESL Reading class.

The goal of the ESL Reading classes was to serve ELs who are WIDA Level I and II by focusing on supporting their English literacy development as one aspect of the larger ESL program. Students received an elective credit for these classes. Students also attended an ESL I or ESL II content class with a focus on language arts in preparation for their high school English classes. Students received an English credit for the ESL I and II content classes.

Teachers determine student placement using both students' WIDA scores as well as other informal measures regarding their growth, time in school, and other aspects of their education. ESL I and II students are in mostly sheltered content classes. Some of these classes are taught by the ESL teachers and others are taught by content teachers with support from the ESL team. Some students in ESL II are in a higher reading class taught by the reading specialist. The students in Amy and Maria's classes were considered in need of the foundational support of a language expert while also needing reading instruction.

The students in this study ranged from having just arrived in the United States to having been in U.S. public schools for up to three years. They were placed in the ESL Reading classes based on teacher recommendations using WIDA scores as well as any supplemental reading assessment data that was available. These students varied widely in terms of their educational backgrounds. Some students had little formal education in their first language while others had a strong foundation of literacy in their first language and some knowledge of the English language as well. The students were between the ages of 14 and 19. Table 3.2 is a descriptive chart that outlines the background education as well as first language instruction for the students in this study. The information from this chart was taken from student home language surveys (given by the school), and in several instances there was incomplete information on the survey. This chart gives more information regarding when individual students arrived in U.S. public schools as well as their former education, first language, country where they received their education, and current reading class. Amy, one of the ESL teachers, informed me that it is very common for students from Central America to have only completed upper elementary school or early middle school before stopping their formal education in order to get jobs.

Table 3.2

Student Background Information (all names are pseudonyms)

Student Name	Age	Enrollment in U.S. Public Schools	Former Education before U.S. Schooling	First Language	Country of former education	Current ESL Reading Class
Bina	16	11/30/17	Unknown	Pashto	Afghanistan	A
Veeda	15	3/8/18	Completed 7th grade	Dari	Afghanistan	A
Adama	14	1/12/17	7 years of schooling in a refugee camp, but only completed 4th grade	Mai Mai	Kenya	A
Aryo	16	11/29/18	Attended private school in Kabul t10/18 IEP equiv. retained Not literate in Farsi	Dari	Afghanistan	A
Tela	15	11/29/18	Attended private school in Kabul 10/18	Dari	Afghanistan	A
Santiago	17	11/29/18	Completed 6th grade in 2015 2-3 years of interrupted education	Spanish	Honduras	A
Asad	15	8/23/17	Completed 8th grade	Dari	Afghanistan	B
Narges	16	8/23/17	Completed 8th grade	Dari	Afghanistan	B
Aziz	15	11/-/16	Completed 6th grade	Arabic and Turkish	Iraq and Turkey	B
David	15	8/23/16	Completed 6th grade	Spanish	El Salvador	B
Christian	14	11/9/16	Completed 8th grade in 2014. Two years of interrupted education	Spanish	El Salvador	B
Ara	17	3/8/18	Completed 9th grade	Dari	Afghanistan	B
Elvia	15	-	-	-	-	-
Alexandra	14	8/26/16	Completed 6th grade	Spanish	Honduras	B
Nassimeh	14	2/28/17	Completed 4th grade	Farsi/Dari/Turkish	Turkey	B
Max	18	1/12/17	Completed 9th grade in 2015 1.5 years of interrupted education	Spanish	Mexico	B
Mohamed	14	12/13/16	Completed 6th grade	Dari	Afghanistan	B
Said	15	8/25/17	Completed 8th grade	Dari	Afghanistan	B
Matteo	19	3/10/16	Attended school until 11/15 (no grade noted)	Spanish	El Salvador	B
Edwin	18	1/14/16	No notes about schooling	Spanish	-	B
Tanya	15	9/9/16	Completed 7th grade	Spanish	El Salvador	B

Class Schedule

The ESL Reading A and B classes met four times a week. Throughout the course of this study, the classes were observed a total of 66 times with the usual schedule of three observations per week. Refer to Appendix A for a table detailing the observation, curricular conversation, and debrief schedule.

<div align="center">Class and Student Data Collection</div>

A formative experiment is an iterative process attempting to learn more regarding how literacy instructional practices support adolescent newcomers in the class. Several forms of data were used in this process in order to have a fuller understanding of the context of the class. Teacher debriefs, classroom observations, and student assessment data were all gathered for analysis.

Teacher Debriefs

One data collection strategy used was to meet with each teacher at the end of the four microcycles for a 45-minute debrief and reflection regarding the lessons that were implemented. These debriefs were recorded for coding purposes. During each debrief, the teachers were asked a series of guiding questions to help them both reflect on the lessons that had been taught during the microcycle as well as to consider steps moving forward and any changes to be made. These debriefs were supplemented by quick conversations regarding the students, lessons, and any other concerns and questions as they came up during the scope of instruction within the class as well as during the teachers' planning time.

Class Data

Another form of data collection was through participatory observation. The three different ESL Reading classes were observed for a total of over 80 hours. As an active

participant-observer in the class, I also co-taught some with the teachers, and worked in small

groups or with individual students as appropriate. My active participation in the class resulted in

brief notes taken during the class sessions and extensive memo writing immediately following

each day of observations.

Student Reading Data

This research is interventionist in that the teachers were constantly reflecting on the

lessons, student engagement, and student literacy development, and adjusting the instruction to

fit both the teachers' and students' skills. The target element, therefore, was the adolescent

newcomers' literacy development as measured by several formative and benchmark assessments

including an informal reading inventory (Bader, 2005), a primary spelling inventory (Bear,

Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012) as well as assessments that were previously adapted

from the elementary "Book Buddies" program for use with adolescent newcomers (Johnston,

Invernizzi, Juel, & Lewis Wagner, 2009) . These assessments helped to gather useful information

regarding reading ranges as well as specific reading and writing skills, such as decoding, fluency,

and spelling.

The Bader Reading and Language Inventory (Bader, 2005) is an informal reading

inventory created for use with children through adults with a specific focus on assessment of

ELs. The purpose of the Bader inventory, along with other Informal Reading Inventories (IRI), is

to measure a student's instructional level of reading with the use of a set of passages (Spector,

2005). This information can then be used to inform instruction. Reliability and validity aspects of

the Bader inventory have been measured, though Spector (2005) would argue that more research

is needed. Alternate form reliability was measured on the passages, with a score of .83, which is

considered within an appropriate range (Bader, 2005; Spector, 2005). Researchers also measured

construct validity of the passages by assessing students with the Bader inventory and then comparing those scores with the scores on other reading assessments. The correlation between the two results was .93, which is considered a strong correlation (Bader, 2005; Nilsson, 2008). However, it is not clear from the description what other reading assessments were used as a comparison.

One reason for using an IRI, such as the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005), is that it can provide teachers with vital information with regards to specific aspects of a student's reading that are strengths or areas of potential growth (Gandy, 2013). However, there is still a concern with linguistic and cultural bias that may be present in this assessment. These concerns could be addressed if the Bader inventory went further with its modifications and created a pilot specifically with ELs. In the absence of such research, having used this assessment, I have noticed several instances of bias or inattention to language that negatively affect ELs without modification. For example, a comprehension question asked following a passage reading on the Bader inventory asks, "What was the matter with the little girl?" (p. 58). The phrase, "the matter" has proven to be problematic for adolescent newcomers I have assessed. Changing the question to read, "What was wrong with the little girl?" allows for language proficiency to play less of a role. Students' specific background knowledge might also have an effect on their performance using this assessment. For example, one of the pre-primer passages is about a cat. The passage describes how he is a "good pet." This passage may be confusing to adolescent newcomers as the idea of a "pet" very well could be a foreign one. Because of this potential for incorrect assessment results, Gandy (2013) cautions the use of IRIs for high stakes decision making.

These concerns were taken into consideration; however, the need for information regarding adolescent newcomers' reading development is too important to ignore (Gandy, 2013). Measuring reading skills of adolescent ELs is essential so that teachers can identify appropriate reading and other instructional material as well as help students who are having difficulty with a specific aspect of reading, such as reading fluency (Fairborn & Fox, 2009; Habib, 2016; Koda, 2007)

The qualitative spelling inventories that were used in this study were originally developed in 1992 (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012). For this study, the *Primary Spelling Inventory* was used to assess students ranging from the letter name spelling stage to early features found in the syllables and affixes spelling stage. An analysis of the three spelling inventories in *Words Their Way* was conducted in 2006, and the *Primary Spelling Inventory* was found to be both a valid and reliable measure to assess student spelling (Sterbinsky, 2007). Sterbinsky (2007) found the *Primary Spelling Inventory* to have an overall reliability coefficient of .9341. Sterbinsky also measured the predictive validity, which ranged from .540 in reading comprehension to .744 for Word Analysis, as well as concurrent validity with a low of .486 for Reading Comprehension and a high of .744 for Word Analysis.

Other assessments used to learn more about student reading competent skills assessed students alphabet knowledge, word reading in isolation, concept of word, and word reading in context. These assessments were taken from the *Book Buddies* (2009) tutoring framework and had been modified from the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) which were designed at the University of Virginia (Invernizzi, Juel, Swank, & Meier, 2007). Though the assessments were created for elementary students, they are also appropriate for measuring component reading skills of adolescent newcomers who are emergent and early readers.

Analytic Strategies

For data analysis, the research questions were first considered to help determine the best analysis process. The data was separated into four distinct microcycles of time (Reinking & Bradley, 2008). By gathering the data in these microcycles, data regarding each teacher and class at a distinct moment in time was able to be analyzed changes over the unique microcycles were able to be determined.

To answer the first research question regarding the ESL teachers' navigation of literacy instruction, each recorded debrief was transcribed and coded using Dedoose, a qualitative research tool. Initial codes of knowledge, practice, and reflection, based on Walqui's (2008) framework for the development of ESL teacher expertise were used to analyze the teacher Debriefs and Curricular Conversations. Constant comparison was used to compare the teacher Debriefs, Curricular Conversations, and observations in order to group information conceptually around three of Walqui's (2008) domains of teacher expertise (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

To answer the second question, regarding reading theory and the instruction of adolescent newcomers, the conceptual framework was used as a starting point. During each observation in the class, limited notes were taken and were then developed into longer descriptions immediately following a day of observations. After each microcycle, the descriptions were re-read and organized into distinct documents based on each of the four microcycles. Each microcycle write-up had a detailed description of the individual ESL Reading classes A and B, notes regarding any assessments given, and modifications that were made within the class.

Data gathered and how its relationship to the conceptual framework was then coded with the goal to begin matching empirically observed moments with those theoretically predicted. See Table 3.3 for the codes used, with each microcycle document coded individually. After coding the data, the specific codes were re-read, with the goal to notice ways the modifications in the ESL Reading class had changed the structure of the class as well as instances where empirical data from observations matched with theoretical ideas regarding reading phases and component literacy skills.

Table 3.3

Codes to Analyze Research Question #2

Code	Number of times applied
Class A	
Assessments	11
Connected Text	18
Vocabulary	3
Differentiation	19
Independent Reading	30
Phonics Work	36
Writing	2
Class B	
Assessments	10
Fluency	8
Independent Reading	27
Small Group Reading	25
Whole Class Reading	9
Word study	
Assessments	17
Practice	48
Differentiation	44
Warm-up	36

In order to help organize the data, a design matrix (Yin, 2017) was used to organize information about data sources and the relationship to the research questions. This design matrix helped to create a visual representation of which data would be used to answer the specific

research questions. This design matrix also helped ensure that the different data gathered was being collected in order to serve a specific purpose.

Figure 3.1

Design Matrix for Analysis

	From Individual	**From Class**	**Research Question**
About Individual	Teacher Debriefs Curricular Conversations	Observations Artifacts	2. How would ESL teachers navigate the use of early literacy instruction to support adolescent newcomer students?
About Class	Teacher Debriefs Curricular Conversations Artifacts	Specific Modifications Observations Student Assessment Scores	3. In what ways can early literacy theories be a model for literacy instruction of adolescent newcomers?

Modifications

The ESL teachers and I met before the study started to discuss possible ways to adapt their current curriculum while considering literacy theory. At the beginning of each microcycle, a plan was made for an instructional focus. When the microcycle was complete, the ESL teachers reflected on the instruction in the classroom context as well as the academic results from the informal and assessments that were used within the class. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 show the modifications that were made within each class during the specific microcycles.

Reinking and Bradley (2008) state that one goal of a formative experiment is to reduce the gap between research and practice by building collaborative relationships between

researchers and practitioners. It is my hope that during this study, the teachers and I built a

collaborative relationship that we will continue to grow.

Figure 3.2

ESL Reading A Modifications

Microcyle One
Connected Text
Decodable Texts

Microcycle Two
Go! Emerge books

Microcycle Three
Differentiation within class based on literacy skills

Microcycle Four
Informal spelling and reading assessment given for adjusting groups
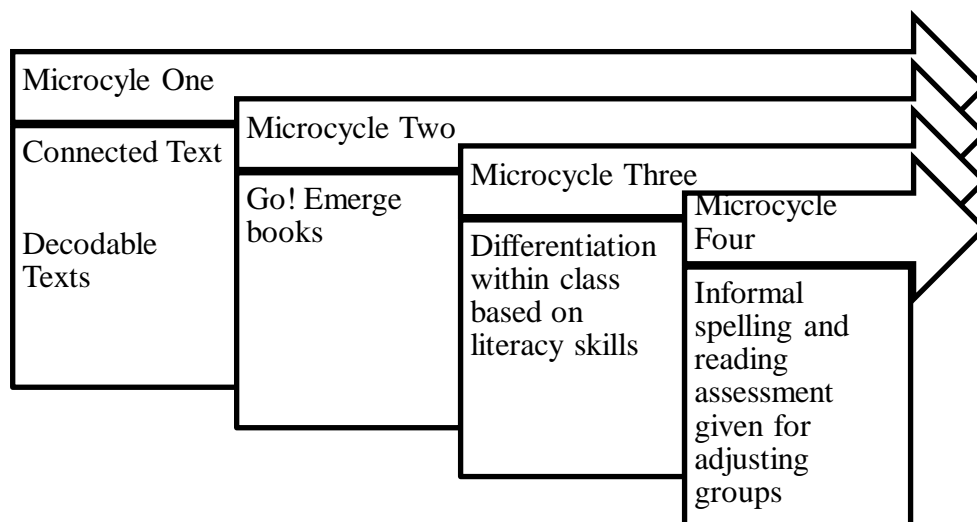
Figure 3.3

ESL Reading B Modifications

Microcyle One
word study groups

Microcycle Two
fluency practice
reading groups

Microcycle Three
Students in two reading groups reading fiction books within their range

Microcycle Four
Informal spelling and reading assessment given for adjusting groups

.
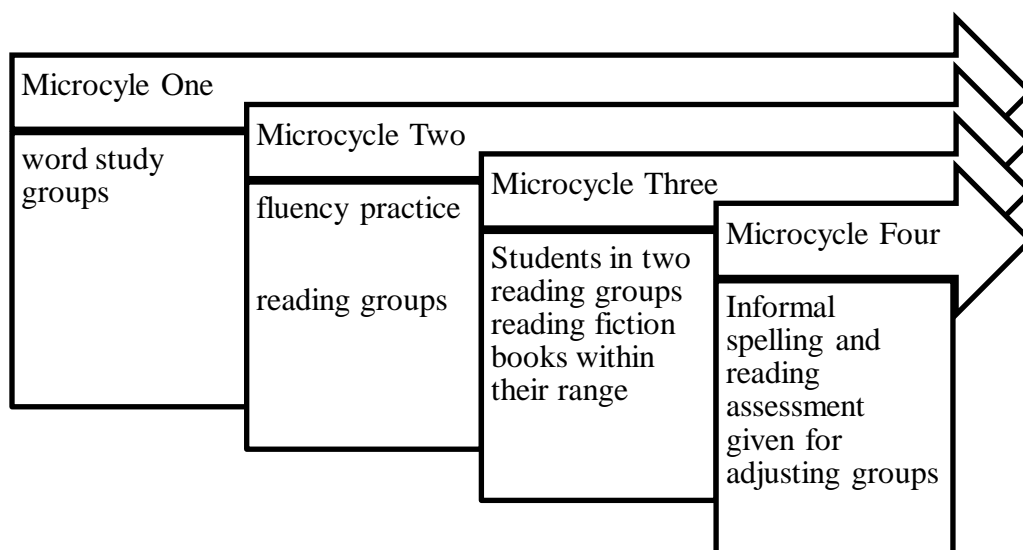
Establishing Credibility and Validity

In order to establish credibility, data triangulation was used by analyzing multiple sources of data, such as debriefs, observations, and artifacts (Yin, 2017). As the ESL teachers were an integral part of this process, member checking was used by sharing the transcripts of each debrief. The teachers then had a chance to read through the transcript and clarify anything they felt was misrepresentative. However, they did not report any concerns after receiving the transcripts. Theoretical triangulation was also used, looking at the student data through the lens of Storch and Whitehurst (2002) component literacy skills and Ehri (2005) and Spear-Swerling's (2013) reading phases. Internal validity was attempted through multiple observations as well as through explanation building regarding the data that was collected (Yanzan, 2015).

Researcher as an Instrument

Throughout the course of this study, I, the researcher, was involved not only in the instructional planning but also in the implementation of the instructional modifications. I was a participant-observer (Creswell, 2002) in the class and participated in the debriefing sessions with the teachers as we worked together to modify curriculum to support the literacy development of the adolescent newcomers. I wrote extensive notes as well as analytic memos throughout the course of the study and used these reflections in the data analysis.

It is important, when considering my role in this study, to also consider my professional background. I come to this research with 10 years of classroom experience as an English and ESL teacher as well as a Reading Specialist. My teaching background and the knowledge I have

gained through my teaching experience impacted my role as a participant-observer within this study. Though my first language is English, I have had three different and distinct opportunities living outside of the US and being a language learner myself, which plays into my perspective on language learning. This perspective, along with my professional experience working with adolescent language learners both in the United States and in other countries allowed for me to work within the ESL Reading classes as a collaborative teacher rather than an observer. This experience I brought with me also helped the teachers be comfortable working with me as they saw me as their peer and not as an outsider.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Findings

This study began with two questions:

1. How would ESL teachers navigate the use of literacy instruction to support adolescent newcomers?

2. In what ways can literacy theories be a model for literacy instruction of adolescent newcomers?

2a. In what ways do empirical observations in the class align with theoretical ideas?

2b. How would instruction informed by literacy theories affect the ESL Reading class?

Through the 16-week course of this study, observations, Debriefs, Curricular Conversations, and artifacts were analyzed in order to gather evidence towards specific findings related to the original research questions. The results of this analysis point to three main findings.

Finding 1: ESL teachers benefit from ongoing, sustained professional development with a focus on students' literacy instruction and assessment.

      a. *Certified ESL teachers have varied knowledge bases with regards to literacy instruction*

      b. *Teachers gain pedagogical content knowledge of literacy through practice.*

      c. *Reflection is an essential aspect of both developing literacy knowledge and transferring that knowledge into practice.*

Finding 2: Students at WIDA levels I and II have a wide array of literacy skills and ranges.

      a. *Students' component literacy skills vary greatly.*

      b. *Students' reading ranges vary greatly.*

Finding 3: Modifying the ESL Reading curriculum to differentiate by student literacy skills and ranges supports students' literacy development.

a. Instruction is more structured and purposeful.

b. Students have more opportunities to read on their own.

The first finding is related to the first research question, and the second and third findings relate to the second research question. This chapter will be organized by information regarding these three findings, using the context of the ESL Reading class as well as teacher conversations to explain in detail these findings.

Finding 1:

ESL teachers benefit from ongoing, sustained professional development with a focus on students' literacy instruction and assessment.

In this study, the teachers benefited from building their knowledge of instructional practices that support literacy development. They also benefited from having the time to reflect on the instruction in the classroom as well as consider modifications to better support adolescent newcomers. The ESL teacher's professional growth will first be considered as separate cases followed by cross-case analysis.

Case One: Amy

During the course of this study, I worked with Amy in her ESL Reading A class for 21 class sessions. Throughout our time both discussing students, making plans, and teaching in the class, Amy has been a gracious host, welcoming me into the class, happy to give me time to ask her questions and willing to try new strategies in the class to help support her students' literacy development. However, because of the structure of the school day and both of our individual schedules and commitments, Amy and I were not able to have consistent Curricular Conversations outside of the class time and were only able to hold three in-depth Debrief Conversations. This lack of time is noted in the limitations of this study.

Throughout the course of the class, we also made instructional decisions while teaching. These decisions were documented in my notes after each class, but because they were very short discussions and decisions in the class rather than during a planning time, I did not label these Curricular Conversations. Amy and I did not have the opportunity to discuss the class regularly during her planning period due to scheduling conflicts. The following Table 4.1 is a record of extended conversations we had surrounding instruction in the ESL Reading A class. Due to our limited face-to-face time to plan together, we also communicated often through email to plan instruction and share resources for this class.

Table 4.1

Curricular Conversations and Debriefs with Amy

	Number	**Type of Conversation**
Microcycle One	2	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief
Microcycle Two	0	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief
Microcycle Three	0	Curricular Conversation
	0	Debrief
Microcycle Four	2	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief

Amy's navigation of curricular change will be described first in the three different microcycles of time that were used to organize class modifications. Then, her overall navigation of the modifications that we used will be discussed using Walqui's (2008) framework of *knowledge, practice,* and *reflection* as a lens.

Microcycle One. During the first microcycle, I brought in decodable texts that used the same beginning sounds that Amy was using with the *ESL Phonics* book. Students had the opportunity to use these books during independent reading time at the beginning of the class. One thing Amy shared during the first microcycle debrief was her historical knowledge of the

ESL program at this school. She recognized that though this year might be an anomaly in that there were only five Level I students in the ESL Reading A class and that most of them are on similar levels when it comes to their literacy and background, that is not usually the case. She went on to describe Ricardo, a student who came in the fall, stating, "Ricardo's a new arrival, so his vocabulary is very basic, but he clearly has strong literacy skills in Spanish. So, he's transferring those." (Debrief 1.1) Not only does Amy have a strong understanding of the individual student abilities, but she also has an understanding of the literacy development of the students, as she describes their phonics work:

> Even after just a couple more (here she is discussing more beginning consonant sounds), it (referring to the book) will start going into blends, and so at that point I think we could incorporate those (referring to word sorts) that are initial consonant just a consonant and do that, a little bit of that. Then do the rest of the initial consonants that are blends and do, and then do some of the others (Debrief 1.1).

Amy has been working with Level I students for a long time, which helps her to consider student development and how the curriculum does and does not meet their specific skills.

Amy described the engagement of the ESL Reading A group as high when she stated, "So, I think engagement has been strong in this group. Again, it is so we can be a bit more casual with the group, really focusing on encouraging and, you know, sometimes I have one or two teaching assistants who are students who help" (Debrief 1.1). While Amy described the casual nature of this small class, there have been several occasions that the description of high student engagement was not accurate. For example, there were instances during observations where students were navigating to different tabs on their computers when they were supposed to be reading silently (OBS 2.5).

In continuing to consider the modifications that we made to the curriculum, Amy explained, "and, at least for that one story, the materials we had were actually, there were even more choices for differentiation than we needed. Yeah, but in a different year with a more different, you know, a more varied group, then it, it'd be handy to have those other ones" (Debrief 1.1). Here she is considering how her practice might need to change depending on the student and that student's different strengths and needs in the class.

During the first debrief, Amy described the *ESL Phonics* book she has been using that works through two initial consonants a week. She considered moving forward with using results from the students' spelling inventory to use varied word sorts to both build word and vocabulary knowledge. However, she ultimately chose not to go that route. She explained:

> I think the ESL phonics series is helpful for that initial word study. It might be more efficient, more targeted if we did start with a spelling inventory, what we did that earlier and focused on the particular, let's say for initial consonants, just the initial consonants they needed instead of all of them because I'm sure that some are easier than others. And then that would allow us to move faster to blends into final consonants and then into vowels. I'm just even thinking pacing through the year. Although there's something to be said when sometimes if the sound is easier than they can focus on building the vocabulary and building confidence. So, I mean I don't, I don't feel like any of them have been a waste of time either (Debrief 1.1).

Here she was grappling somewhat with phonics work she is familiar with and has used in the past and was also considering using word study in a different way, focusing both on spelling patterns and meanings in a more strategic and specific manner.

Microcycle Two. During this microcycle, one modification that was made was to offer more printed books as an option for students to read during independent reading time. Along with the decodable texts, we introduced the *Go! Emerge* books as another option that students could choose to read during independent reading time. During this microcycle, Amy and I continue to talk and think about ways to better support Adama in her decoding work. We noticed in class that Adama struggled with certain aspects of decoding, such as differentiating between long and short vowel patterns. During the debrief, Amy specifically spoke about things she has noticed when Adama was reading. For example, she described when Adama was reading writing that she had produced, she sounded out each individual sound before putting the word together and saying it. She also guessed at many words. Based on this conversation, we made a plan to have Adama receive one-on-one decoding support during independent reading time.

Amy described her strong understanding of the obstacles that Adama faces when learning how to read in English. She explained:

Because again, I mean, she, her first language is Maay Maay, which doesn't have a written form. So, we have seen it in other Somali Bantu's that, you know, the decoding comes a lot more slowly than the oral fluency and sometimes where they really get kind of stuck because if you don't, they don't have enough, you know, really targeted instruction early on. They, they develop strategies that are involve a lot of guessing. If she has a context and she can look at the first couple of letters and sort of guess at the word from the context, which, you know, that's a great skill to have too. But then it doesn't necessarily lead to improvement on actually being able to decode (Debrief 1.2).

We discussed how the rest of the class is on very similar levels in terms of both their language proficiency as well as their reading level. And, so, there has not been a need to differentiate a

great deal within the class in terms of supporting their literacy development. However, as commonly seen in ESL class, student enrollment fluctuates. Amy explained:

> Now that could also shift very soon because we have two new students enrolling from Afghanistan who are probably going to be at level one, one of them already is identified with some sort of special needs and the other one not. And then I understand there's also a student from Honduras who is going to, who's just enrolling. So that can shift the class a lot given on, given not knowing what exposure they have so far (Debrief 1.2).

When considering how the class is going with the current modifications, Amy felt that the pace of the class and that the activities we were doing were appropriate for the students. She discussed how with this group they were not progressing as quickly through the *Razkids* levels, which she thought was good, as she stated, "But they're actually trying to figure out, you know, taking time and figure it out and they're not overly fast, but they are advancing and so that at least they are getting, you know, that daily reading practice with, with feedback" (Debrief 1.2).

During one class observation when Amy was having students practice their words by spelling them (OBS 2.10), she explained to me that she was strategic about giving students words they could spell in order to help them meet with success. For example, she gave Adama some of the simple, single-syllable words and gave Veeda more difficult words from the list. This differentiation is an example of Amy bringing her knowledge of Adama's word knowledge difficulties into her class practices. However, Amy still seemed hesitant to move away from using the *ESL Phonics* book in the class rather than use word study as a way to differentiate more for students' individual need. Part of the reason she might be hesitant was because of her recognition of students' need for routine at this level. However, she might also not have the time

to consider shifting the curriculum more than we already have as she teaches four different classes that include four different daily preparations.

Amy also reflected on the pacing of the class as well as the different modifications that have been made. She stated:

I mean it's, it's a matter of always striking a balance. But I think having these components of the. …. you know, having that independent reading time, but then again with the feedback that they, each are working, you know, very much at their level where they're moving along. You know, balancing that with something that we work on as a group so it can be slightly higher instructional level and then with the phonics for the spelling because I've also wondered should we start doing some more actual sorting (Debrief 1.2).

As with the conversation during the first microcycle, Amy was interested in building student word knowledge more strategically; however, she has not followed through with this idea. Her lack of follow-through might be because the dynamics of the class changed with three new students joining during the third microcycle or it could be due to her lack of planning and reflecting time for this class.

Walqui (2008) explains that anticipatory reflection helps ESL teachers reflect on their students and class. Amy engaged in this anticipatory reflection when she considered things that might need to shift as new students come into the class:

The stories we keep starting over and it's building skills and patterns. But with this, with the phonics kind of going through systematically. I mean I guess on a philosophical level the ideal is really, you know, for all students to do a kind of assessment like this (pointing to the decoding survey) to see where they're at so that if they're. I mean, I guess and I'm thinking more for future years as well because it's the first time that I've taught this

particular class that it makes sense I think to do assessments but regardless to start with that first phonics book, to kind of get in the process the process of how to do it. But then if we find that all the students have their beginning consonants down to just sort of push through faster and then maybe start picking and choosing following that. But so likewise with the new students so you know, if they have some down, maybe it makes sense to keep everyone in the same book. But if they clearly need, you know, even those basics then yeah, we need to start doing groups (Debrief 1.2).

Through this microcycle, as with the first, Amy continued to think about how she was using the *ESL Phonics* material within the class and whether it needed to be adapted in order to differentiate better for students in the class. Despite this reflection, she remained hesitant to move towards differentiating to a greater degree.

Microcycle Three. During microcycle three, the modification for the ESL Reading A class continued to be printed books for students to read during independent reading time. These decodable books aligned with the beginning consonant sounds that students are using in their phonics work in class. A new modification was to begin to split the class more regularly based on student need. This modification was put in place as three new students joined the class. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances before winter break, Amy and I were unable to have a debrief conversation regarding this microcycle and the modifications we put in place.

Microcycle Four. The modification regarding use of printed books during independent reading time continued during this microcycle. These decodable books aligned with the beginning consonant sounds that students are using in their phonics work in class. Another modification was to adjust the class to differentiate more as two of the three new students need more strategic literacy support than the rest of the class. For the final debrief conversation,

considers the entire course of the study with regards to the modifications that were made in the ESL Reading A class.

Amy discussed how she used the materials in the *ESL Phonics* book and how she adapted the lessons to allow for more student engagement:

And you know, what ended up happening with the phonics books because of the way they are laid out. I went ahead and had them cut them out into cards. They weren't designed as card but we have made them cards and that made a difference. I mean if you really just take the book and just go through and write the initial letter in each thing, there's nothing but because they are all really common sight words and we made the cards out of them. We did different things. We developed routines around them. I thought that was, it was good to be building sight vocabulary along with the target sounds so it wasn't just the target sound, and you know, and then we'd have these words and try to make a connection since I do teach ESL I and could make connections when the words connected to things that we were studying or had studied in the core class, which is neat. And then we got to the point where they're making, they're making sentences with one, but then we got to the point of trying to make sentences with two, combining them so at least there was more semantic work going on because we're still using the cards and we could sort them (Debrief 1.3).

Amy discussed how her practice continued to change based on her reflection of how the *ESL Phonics* book was supporting students' word knowledge. She described how she built upon students original understanding of the structure of the phonics lesson. She then was able to extend the lesson for students who were ready for it by asking them to write sentences using the

words they had learned. Amy incorporated ideas of differentiating more by student level within the context of the *ESL Phonics* book.

In thinking more broadly about the ESL Reading A class as a whole, and the different modifications that were made over the course of this study, Amy continued to think about her use of the *ESL Phonics* books and the possibility of using them in a different way or differentiating the group more strategically. She stated:

> So, you know, I had this thought of using the phonics books and I think that has been useful. I think it is gone well, you know, we have sort of been shifting over time and it is possible I might change things up in the future. I think ideally, ideally if we did some sort of assessment and then had groups, you know, like word study groups, but based on, okay, they're working on initial consonants and they're working on final consonants and know if I had let's say teaching assistants like I do this year, they could actually be working on different books, different pages at the same time, but they could be doing different books (Debrief 1.4).

During this reflection, Amy seemed to have convinced herself that more differentiation within this aspect of the class would be helpful, and she was reflective regarding next steps. In reflecting further on the use of the phonics books, Amy discussed how she also found the need to differentiate for the higher group of students because the tasks they were asked to do might not have been appropriate.

Amy's Navigation of Curricular Changes

To learn more about Amy's navigation of literacy instruction to support adolescent newcomers, individual microcycles of time were first considered to highlight the choices she

made within the class as well as her reflections on these choices. Now, Amy's knowledge, practice, and reflection over time will be examined.

Knowledge. Walqui (2008) separates ESL teacher knowledge into five different broad categories. These are 1) general pedagogical knowledge 2) subject-matter knowledge 3) pedagogical content knowledge 4) knowledge of students, and 5) knowledge of self. In Amy's case, as shown in the first debrief and repeated in the others, Amy had strong general pedagogical knowledge as well as subject-matter knowledge in terms of supporting ELs in the class. During the first debrief conversation, in describing the ESL I group, she noted:

> One thing about Level I [students] that's very different from a Level II is routines are just so crucial, and that anywhere where you can have, like you said, less explaining and more doing, there can be more, you know, then they're more clear on what to do. They're more confident and there's more focus on the actual, you know, learning of the material rather than, the content, rather than the process. So, it's nice to, you know, get some routines going and then you can add in a new element. And then we still have a nice flow, and they kind of know what to expect and what it's like." (Debrief 1.1)

Her pedagogical content knowledge with regards to reading was also strong, as she understood the component literacy skills that were needed for students to meet with success. In describing Adama's needs, she observed:

> Because again, I mean, she, her first language is Maay Maay, which doesn't have a written form. So, we have seen it in other Somali Bantu's that, you know, the decoding comes a lot more slowly than the oral fluency and sometimes where they really get kind of stuck because if you don't, they don't have enough, you know, really targeted instruction early on. They, they develop strategies that are involve a lot of guessing. If

she has a context and she can look at the first couple of letters and sort of guess at the

word from the context, which, you know, that's a great skill to have too. But then it

doesn't necessarily lead to improvement on actually being able to decode (Debrief 1.2).

She also showed that through her 15 years of experience teaching ELs that she had a strong

knowledge of her students and their unique skills and needs as well as a knowledge of her own

strengths. Throughout the different microcycles, there was no evidence of a large change in

pedagogical content knowledge with regards to literacy. However, part of this could be due to

the fact that Amy was already very knowledgeable at the beginning of the study.

Practice. Walqui (2008) describes practice as the skills and strategies that teachers use to

transfer their understanding into their teaching in the class. She writes, "Understanding alone is

not enough but needs to be combined with the ability to act on it in effective ways (p. 121).

Throughout the three debriefs, Amy kept discussing and rationalizing her use of the *ESL Phonics*

book while at the same time questioning aspects of this curricular decision. In the initial meeting

before the study began, I suggested three aspects of the curriculum that we modify: 1) adding

decodable texts for students to read, 2) bringing in connected texts with the *Very Easy True*

Stories, and 2) adding word study into the class. Amy was hesitant regarding the word study as

she felt that the *ESL Phonics* books might be more appropriate with regards to also building key

vocabulary for the students. However, in each debrief, she discussed the possibility of including

word study or using a spelling inventory to get a better gauge of student knowledge. Yet, this

knowledge of a possible different way to differentiate for students' word knowledge needs did

not directly transfer into practice. There were some instances where she modified the *ESL*

Phonics book instructional materials to better support her students. One example (OBS 2.10) was

when she explained her strategic choice to give students words they could spell during practice

time to help them be successful. She also discussed other ways she supported the students by modifying the instructional materials, such as simplifying the questions for certain students (Debrief 1.3).

     Reflection. Amy was able to reflect on the class as a whole during each of the three debrief conversations. One theme that came up several times during the discussions was the varied literacy levels of the students and how to choose instruction that is appropriate for them while at the same time building a connected class environment. Striking the balance of direct support for students' development along with the use of whole-class instructional activities is something with which Amy was still grappling. In the first debrief, she stated the difficulty of, "trying to find the right balance between independent reading time with the feedback from *Razkids*, the word study and that you know, that the spelling work, that close reading work and then working through texts together and with extensions, and how to fit that in." (Debrief 2.1)

     So, how did Amy navigate the use of literacy theory in the class? She was open, receptive, and willing to try any material that was introduced to her. She recognized the need to differentiate for students based on different literacy strengths and needs, and she had ideas for how to change her practice for the future. Much of the knowledge regarding adolescent newcomers and literacy, she knew without support. However, in the future, she could benefit from more time with other teachers both implementing this knowledge base and reflecting on how the lessons are going. A teacher's knowledge base plays an important role in supporting student learning (Babinski, Amendum, Knotek, Sanchez, & Malone, 2018; Farrell, 2013; Walqui, 2006). However, knowledge is not enough to create strong literacy instruction for adolescent newcomers. According to Walqui, (2008), the transition from knowledge to practice is the most difficult step for teachers. Yet, with more time for planning, conversation, and

reflection, this transition is an essential step for Amy, and one that she is capable of doing with supports.

Case Two: Maria

During the course of this study, I worked with Maria in two ESL Reading B classes for a total of 45 class sessions. I was able to work with her in two different ESL Reading B classes as well as plan and discuss curriculum, concerns, and student progress one to two times a week during her planning. Maria graciously made time for me in her busy schedule, and was always a willing participant, asking questions, and interested in learning as much as should could to help her students. I was fortunate that the schedules worked out where I could spend time reflecting and learning with Maria. As a result, we were able to have conversations multiple times regarding the curriculum when considering Maria's navigation of literacy instruction.

There were four Debrief Conversations and a large number of informal Curricular Conversations. As a participant observer in Maria's ESL Reading B classes, we also often made instructional decisions in the class together, which I was unable to document well because of my participant observer role. Table 4.2 is a record of extended conversations that Maria and I have had regarding instruction in the ESL Reading B class.

Table 4.2

Curricular Conversations and Debriefs with Maria

	Number	Type of Conversation
Microcycle One	3	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief
Microcycle Two	5	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief
Microcycle Three	5	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief
Microcycle Four	4	Curricular Conversation
	1	Debrief

The ESL Reading class schedule allowed for me to be in Maria's class during one of her planning periods two days a week. I was also in her class for two different reading classes on the days I observed. This opportunity allowed for many Curricular Conversations regarding the ESL Reading B class. We also communicated through email to plan instruction and share resources.

Maria's navigation of curricular change will be described first in the three different microcycles of time that were used to organize class modifications. Then, her overall navigation of the modifications that we used will be discussed using Walqui's (2008) framework of *knowledge, practice,* and *reflection* as a lens.

Microcycle One. The modification that was introduced for the first microcycle was word study. Using the results from the informal spelling inventory, we created groups two to three groups of students per class to differentiate their word knowledge work. This microcycle only captured the initial stages of this curricular change.

In the first Debrief, Maria shared her interest in building knowledge regarding student spelling ranges. She explained, "And the fact that you already kind of tested them and know what words they need, that, that's helpful. That, reading teachers…I mean, I am an ESL teacher, what they do is incredible." We also spent time discussing student reading ranges and levels that would be appropriate for them to read using *Razkids* as a resource. Maria was not familiar with the leveling system that is used on *Razkids* and how it could be utilized with her students. As we navigated the website and went through the process of assigning specific books to students, Maria caught herself a few times assigning books without thinking about the students' reading levels and then corrected this error.

When reflecting on how the lessons had gone, Maria said that she thought they were going well. She also discussed how she liked having students work on their speed sorts, trying to

sort their words into the correct categories fast each time. She said that if she had first introduced it, she might have tried to have them "compete with each other, that would have been something I would've done. And I think that it's better to probably leave it like that. Like just practice on your own and compete with yourself." She also described how she felt students needed to be reading out loud more. She stated they need to "read aloud, like David did today, and I, you know, wanted to see other people offer, I wouldn't want to pick on them, you know, leave the volunteers, but if you don't want to read, I don't want to make you either" (Curricular Conversation 2.3). Based on this concern, Maria and I explored using short passages on *Razkids* to have students practice their fluency as one way to have them read out loud.

Microcycle Two. During this microcycle, word study was continued as a way to support both student knowledge of spelling patterns as well as to build student vocabulary knowledge. Students also began to record their oral reading, and Maria and I were able to review their speed and accuracy as well as their understanding of the passages that they are reading. The main modification made during this microcycle was to separate the students into distinct groups based on their reading ranges. Students were grouped based on their assessment results on the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005).

As classes continued and students recorded their oral reading, Maria and I also spent significant time navigating the *Razkids* website learning how to listen to and analyze students' oral reading. "It's pretty awesome" Maria stated as we listened to the passages, recorded errors, and discussed the use of these fluency recordings to collect data on students (Curricular Conversation 1.5). Specifically, we noticed while listening to Asad's running record that he was reading a passage that was too difficult for him. So, we adjusted the leveling of his next passage.

Maria expressed interest in learning more about using *Razkids* in general, as another way to support students' reading differentiation (Curricular Conversation 1.6).

In reflecting on the fluency passages, Maria noticed though many students were reading the passages with prosody and accuracy, many of them were unable to retell the story when prompted. She noted, "It's really good tricks…they trick us all the time, and then they are lost in space" (Debrief 2.2). Here she was referring to how many of the students may be able to sound like they are reading well but still have trouble understanding what they have read.

During the second Debrief, Maria talked about the end goal as she saw it for the students in the ESL Reading B class. "It's really comprehension that's the part we're pushing and pushing and pushing and pushing because I think the vocabulary, comprehension, and spelling, I see improvement in that so quickly" (Debrief 2.2). She then compared the structure of the reading class to other secondary classes describing it as something different that both the students and teacher need to adjust to for success:

> They're so used to teachers being in front of the class and lecturing (here, she mimics lecturing) we're going to do these and then this is going happen, and this. And they just sit there and listen to you and then you try to get them to speak right. But since everybody's doing something different…. But the classes must stay small, you think, because it's almost like the amount of work that you and I have done to try to find their reading level to pick up those words that they actually mean. I mean, that stuff takes a long time to do (Debrief 2.2).

Both during the Curricular Conversations as well as the Debrief, Maria talked about the groupings of students based on assessments with regards to reading text as well as word study. During one brief interaction (Curricular Conversation 1.6), Maria told me that she was working

with two students in the lower reading group, Edwin and Said. While she was working with them, they asked if they could try reading the next chapter of *Playing Hardball* on their own. Maria was excited when she told me this because she said that in the past Edwin wouldn't read anything. Now he is willing to work with Said as well as on his own, reading the story and answering questions.

Maria also discussed how her understanding of placing the students in different reading groups has changed as she stated, "And that was, that's kind of like the most difficult part for me, like, the lower students to read and having them comprehend, you know, it's so hard for them like when we do it, but at the same time they are reading out loud, they're getting some information. So even though it is not the whole thing perfectly, they have an idea" (Debrief 2.2). She also explained how she felt the small group has allowed students to be more engaged:

> I think that the fact that they get a chance, it's such a small group and then we get a chance to read out loud and nobody's feeling intimidated by it. Like Edwin and Said working together when I was working with William, and the two of you were reading out loud, Edwin was. He didn't want to do that and because I think it's a small group, Said is in his same level. It works beautifully, you know. So that part I really like (Debrief 2.2).

Maria reflected on how she felt the word study aspect of the class was going, commenting, "And did you notice how much they like testing each other's knowledge and helping each other" (Debrief 2.2). She went on to explain:

> So, the fact that they are doing the job themselves, they're asking each other questions, they are testing each other's knowledge. It's not me teaching them constantly. They're teaching themselves and that's a beautiful thing when they're that independent, you know,

and now that we have them in a groove and they know that they have to grab this bag

(referring to their words) and you know (Debrief 2.2).

Maria also reflected on changes with the warm ups in the class during this microcycle. She

explained how she felt the warm up was taking up too much time, so she made the instructional

shift to use word study as the warm up:

> I just thought that I need to be careful with timing. Like sometimes we have 45 minutes
>
> so sometimes we have one hour and a half so I just have to be kind of careful. So, like for
>
> example, the reading part with the lowest students, it's painful, right? So, like having
>
> more like not forgetting to pause and see what they remember, you know and kind of
>
> having time to read the story. And not rush through it, you know? And because
>
> sometimes I've messing the timing, you know, like take more time doing something or
>
> the other one. Sometimes I just feel like I have to be careful with the timing. Like I need
>
> at least my thirty, thirty good minutes to read. Forty good minutes to read and ten minutes
>
> of our warm up, you know, but I think we're doing that. It's just that consistency (Debrief
>
> 1.2).

Microcycle Three. The main modification that was implemented during the third

microcycle was to add an additional fiction book for the higher reading group to read. This

allowed for both reading groups to be reading a fiction book that fell into their appropriate

reading range. Maria and I worked with the two groups but also encouraged individual work as

the students read the chapters and answered the questions on their own.

During a Curricular Conversations, Maria expressed an interest in understanding the

different ways reading could be assessed. Blue Ridge High School's school division uses the

NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment to monitor student reading growth.

The MAP assessment gives students a score based on a RIT (Rasch unIT) scale, which measures equal intervals and can be used to track growth over time. During one conversation (Curricular Conversation, 2.9), Maria had questions about both the scores that students received as well as how this information could be used to support their reading. However, the students in the ESL Reading B class take the Reading 2-5 MAP test, which is a test measuring students' reading levels who are typically in second to fifth grade. Therefore, this assessment may not be appropriate for all students as some are not yet reading on a second grade level. Because of this difference in student reading level and what the MAP test measures, it is difficult to use the MAP assessment as a growth measure for adolescent newcomers. However, the current school plan is to test the ESL II students using this midyear assessment. Maria's interest in understanding this assessment better and how it can be useful for students in her ESL Reading B class shows her continued growth in understanding and interest in learning more about student reading development.

Maria explained her understanding of the importance of making sure students feel comfortable and safe in their surroundings before they are able to learn well.

I think that when you play a game or make it fun, that affective filter goes down quite a bit and I experienced it myself. It's a real, real thing…. Like it's a real thing that if you experience a lot of stress you won't learn. And I think that a lot of teachers sometimes forget that. Like I had a one, (referring to what the teacher said) "oh Matteo, Matteo doesn't try, you know," and I almost lost my mind like, yeah, like he does try, you know, even when you take him out once a month to talk with a counselor that he doesn't really know that well, you know, he and if he doesn't trust you, he doesn't know you very well, he completely shuts down, you know? Yeah. So, I think that, you know, that's something

that everybody and then I think, yeah, we can learn so much by playing a game, by acting

out a story, you know, and I think that's also all teachers should be doing that because

that will help with behavior issues and a lot of them have a lot of behavioral issues. I

think that we have it timed, you know, and we have rituals and procedures in place so

they come in and I tried to do that in every class that they know. Okay. You come in and

you have to do certain things as soon as or warm up or sorting out their words. Right? So,

I think it's not keeping them busy because I don't want to give them busy work either, but

a structure that they know, okay, I'm learning and I am being timed, you know, we are

going to move on from this. I think when they have a structure, they have some rituals,

procedures in place. (Debrief 2.3).

Here, Maria demonstrated her strong knowledge not only of ESL pedagogy but also her

knowledge of her students and the different needs and strengths they bring with them each and

every day. She recognized that the structure of the class, the processes, and the comfort level that

students have within a class all play important roles when considering student learning.

Both during the Curricular Conversations as well as the Debrief, Maria showed ways in

which she practiced the information she was learning about students and reading. During one

conversation (Curricular Conversation 2.9), Maria discussed how she introduced a new round of

word study words on her own. She explained to me that she went through the steps that we had

done together in terms of introducing the words to students as she helped students understand the

categories and spelling patterns that they were learning and supported them in their initial

understanding of the meaning of the words.

During the third Debrief, Maria explained how she felt that having the students work in

small groups had been very successful, stating, "But when, for example, you're sitting there with

three of them and they're all reading quietly and you're reading with them, you know, that's magical for me because they're trying to do it on their own, trying to understand on their own and makes everybody a little bit more independent. I think that's important" (Debrief 2.3). She continued explaining how she had noticed students take initiative while they were learning, "So when I see them take a dictionary out that helps because that's what they should be doing in other classes and they're getting, they're getting that strategy kind of met in that sense" (Debrief 2.3).

Maria recognized that though her classes are small, the amount of differentiation that students need to meet with success is high. She explained:

I have control over a few things. You know, what's happening inside my class what I'm teaching, how I present the information, but everything else that goes around, I don't have all the control in that sense. You know. So, I think that everybody should be in the same boat that because they think we have small classes and you are fine, you know, but it is really, it is really exhausting. Everybody is on a different level. I have the amount of scaffolding sometimes we do it's a lot, you know? And that scares me to be honest, sometimes a lot of scaffolding scares me a little bit. You have to correct everybody and make sure everybody has the right thing. And so, it is double the work, you know (Debrief 2.3).

Here, she acknowledged the difficult work that goes into differentiating for students as well as scaffolding in different ways to meet student need. Though she admitted that it is a lot of work, she did not shy away from this difficult work in the class.

Maria also described how she sees students helping each other in the class, "you know, somebody told Max now Max said, 'Crow has milk. The Crow has milk, right? That's a perfect sentence' Max yelled, you know, from one corner. And then the end that, 'no, that's not right,'

you know, so they are arguing in a nice way but correcting each other and that they are working independently. I'm hearing all these wonderful things. They are testing each other" (Debrief 2.3).

Maria also teaches the ESL II class as well, and said that, "I'm even bringing some of what I've learned here to my other classes, you know, more sorting. I'm doing a little bit more sorting with ESL II and it works, you know" (Debrief 1.3). This is an example of Maria transferring the knowledge she was learning through the modifications in this study and trying some of these strategies with other classes. To do this, she adapted the strategy and rather than having students sort words by spelling pattern, she has introduced concept sorts as a visual way to help students compare and contrast ideas in her content classes.

Maria reflected on the tension between having students work individually on something, giving them time to struggle, fail, and meet with success rather than being right there with them and helping them through it.

> Some of them (referring to students in the reading class) are so low in their reading, you know, that I always need to have it projected and we have to look at it and we have to read it in the front, they have to read it out loud. But I also, I think when you reminded me was have them finish on their own or try to do a little bit on their own. I don't have to be right there all the time. Right? Asad is one example. Like he, I know he wants to have you or he wants to have me right next to him, you know? And I always try to. So, he doesn't feel alone and yeah, we're here. *Yeah. That word. How do you spell it?* Or *you read it this way*. But the fact that it's a good reminder *that here's your worksheet. Here's the next part of this story try, you know that part* I, I kind of have forgotten a little bit, you know, because I always want to be there. Like *what are you doing and how do you say that?* Then *what did you understand?* You know, but sitting, and I saw you too, like

you do it, you know, it's easier when there's another adult for sure …. I think I've learned
to calm down. I don't have to be there all the time. Like I can be there but I can let them
be, you know, and I think I used to, I used to do that much more often than now. Because
it's so small. You have small classes. So, it's like *sit with me, tell me what you know, let's*
read it together right now and it's good. *Just read it on your own* (Debrief 1.3).

Maria continued to reflect on how she gave students information, as well as students' ability to
work on difficult assignments without direct instruction. "You really reminded us to lecture less
and have students work more independently to read and have them give them the confidence to
finish work on their own. And that's something that I think we all need to be reminded,
especially with ESL students because we know those so low, we feel like *I'll grab you by the*
hand and we'll make this, you know, we'll go through this together. And we have to remember
like they, they have to also do it on their own" (Debrief 2.3).

       Microcycle Four. During the fourth microcycle, no additional modifications were added
to the class curriculum. Students continued to use word study as a way to learn both spelling
patterns as well as the meaning of words. Students also continued to work in differentiated
reading groups to read their assigned story. Maria and I worked with the two groups but also
encouraged individual work as the students read the chapters and answered the questions on their
own. In our final Debrief, Maria thought more holistically about the 16-week time period of the
study rather than focusing only on the last microcycle of time.

       During the Debrief, Maria first talked about the results from the different assessments
that we had used with the ESL Reading B class. She stated, "I mean that data helps so much to
see it the way you have written it. I mean to see how they are and where they have moved up.
The spelling inventory we have done. I mean that helps so much to where to place them"

(Debrief 2.4). This is an important moment to note Maria's knowledge building as she recognized the purpose of these informal assessments was to inform instruction rather than only as a tool for monitoring growth.

In talking about grouping students, she also returned to a conversation we had before regarding students taking charge of their own learning and working on reading and writing independently with guidance from the teacher.

But at the same time, you know, they also have to learn how to do it independently. So, it's also a good practice if they're on their own and make them feel responsible. Like you don't need to have a person there all the time. You have to be more independent (Debrief 2.4).

Maria described the importance of balancing independent work with support from the teacher so that students don't feel overwhelmed.

Maria discussed how one aspect of the class she thought went well was due to the structure of using the word study words as students' initial task when they come into the class. She stated, "I think that, I mean the great thing is the students come in knowing what to do and I usually they, you know, they usually have their warm up. So, I think I love the part that, they just know what to do. They know that the warm up now is the sorts. So that helps them out a lot" (Debrief 2.4).

In the final Debrief, Maria spent time thinking about the different modifications that were made in the last several months. She reflected on her confidence in discussing student progress and the results of student assessments with her ESL team. She stated:

The things that I have, you know, that, that we have talked about it and I kind of like, I really had dared to say them or write them down, you know like *hey guys*, you know like,

but it is also because I've been able to brainstorm with you, I think a little bit more, you know, like I, I dare to *say I know let's do this instead of that* or, *and then see* . I feel like sometimes with our emails and our conversations, you know we are thinking more or less the same way so it is almost like you gave me a little more confidence to write an email or say it, you know, without being afraid because I always thought well a native speaker will always be much better than any foreigner. Right? Like, and that is not true really, after a while you realize, well that is not always the case, you know…... So, I think the fact that I just got more confidence on how to say things and not be afraid to say them, you know, because I thought, well if the "PhD woman", is thinking this, I could say it too, you know, with no problem. That is kind of like where I am (Debrief 2.4).

At this point, Maria explained the confidence that she gained from building her pedagogical knowledge regarding reading in the ESL context. She now felt more comfortable speaking about her concerns and offering opinions and solutions in her team meetings.

Maria's Navigation of Curricular Changes

To learn more about Maria's navigation of literacy instruction to support adolescent newcomers, individual microcycles of time were first considered to highlight the choices she made within the class as well as her reflections on these choices. Now, as with Amy, Maria's knowledge, practice, and reflection over time will be examined.

Knowledge. Walqui (2008) describes teachers' knowledge as knowledge of English language development subject knowledge as well as pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge. She also explains that this could be knowledge of the students and knowledge of self. Maria's pedagogical content knowledge in reading showed many instances of growth throughout the different microcycles both in the class as well as during the Debriefs. For

example, when she discussed reading assessments during the first Debrief, Maria stated, "And the fact that you already kind of tested them and know what words they need, that, that's helpful. That, reading teachers…I mean, I am an ESL teacher, what they do is incredible" (Debrief 2.1). Here she described how she felt that reading teachers know how to use assessments well, and she defined herself as an ESL teacher and *not* a reading teacher.

As she continued to work in the class using modified curriculum, Maria's knowledge increased. During the second Debrief, she discussed her view of how the reading class should look different than other content classes:

For example, like they're so used to teachers being in front of the class and lecturing (here, she mimics lecturing) *we're going to do these and then this is going happen, and this*. And they just sit there and listen to you and then you try to get them to speak, right? But since everybody's doing something different….. specifically, different techniques, and then we'll all come together and do something as a group of six or seven (Debrief 2.2).

Maria's recognition that in separating the students by their spelling and reading ranges, she also needed to change the structure of the class, and that the class would not look the same as some of students' other classes.

During the final Debrief, Maria reiterated the need to keep the structure of the reading class different in order for students to meet with success.

But at the same time, you know, they also have to learn how to do it independently. So, it's also a good practice if they're on their own and make them feel responsible. Like you don't need to have a person there all the time. You have to be more independent. You know, that's something that I thought you reminded me too, you know, you can do it too

alone for a few minutes, for maybe a day and try it on your own and I think that that's important, you know, but we have to have a good balance. That's it. That's the key that they're, they can do it on their own, but we also have some support in the class (Debrief 2.4).

This is an example of how her knowledge of student reading and spelling ranges shifted her decisions about how she structured the class and the amount of independent work students did. This was a change from the first microcycle, where students were engaging in whole-group reading and instruction.

Practice. Walqui (2008) describes a difficulty she has seen in ESL teacher professional growth as the transfer of knowledge into practice in the class. Maria spent a lot of time talking and thinking about the ESL Reading B classes, and this knowledge building shows evidence of transfer into practice in a few ways. Maria admitted during the first microcycle that she did not have a strong knowledge of student reading and spelling ranges nor did she have knowledge about how to support students reading on different levels. As the modifications that were made happened within the class, Maria was able to see the benefits for the students. She noted, "And so the fact that they are doing the job themselves, they're asking each other questions, they are testing each other's knowledge. It's not me teaching them constantly. They're teaching themselves and that's a beautiful thing when they're that independent, you know" (Debrief 2.2).

Seeing students meet with success gave Maria more of a reason to continue to try these instructional modifications in the class. During the third microcycle, she was able to present students with their new words as well as talk with small groups about the features of their words on her own. She explained how she went through the steps we had done together for other rounds

of words and that she was able to discuss the spelling patterns with individual students and felt comfortable doing so (Curricular Conversation 1.9).

Reflection. Walqui (2008) ties successful transfer of knowledge to practice with the need for in-depth reflection. The fact that Maria and I were able to meet so often to discuss curriculum and make plans helped create time to reflect on the class and the modifications. This reflection, in turn, led to practice.

In Maria's reflection, she continued to think about how her knowledge and practice had changed the structure of the class and how students were now working more independently on their reading and writing in the class. Maria's reflection on the class modifications and the use of informal assessment data with students also built her confidence in other aspects of her professional life. She said that she was more comfortable with ideas surrounding literacy and sharing these ideas with others. She noted, "The things that I've, you know, that, that we have talked about it and I kind of like, I really had dared to say them or write them down" (Debrief 2.4).

Cross-Case Findings

The previous descriptions of both Amy and Maria's separate navigation of newly learned literacy instruction in their ESL Reading classes serve as a starting point to answer questions regarding their individual growth over the course of the study. The information above led to the first finding, which is. *ESL teachers benefit from ongoing, sustained professional development with a focus on students' literacy instruction and assessment.* This finding can be further parsed into three distinct aspects of teacher expertise to further understand *how* this professional development was beneficial to the teachers.

Finding 1.a: Certified ESL teachers have different knowledge bases with regards to literacy instruction

Amy and Maria have similar pedagogical knowledge with regards to teaching ESL students' language acquisition. They have taught a commensurate number of years and both have worked with different levels of students in different capacities and subjects. However, teaching Reading as a content class is relatively new for both of them. Maria started teaching the ESL Reading B class in 2017 and this is Amy's first year teaching the ESL Reading A class.

When comparing Amy and Maria's pedagogical content knowledge of literacy within the class at the beginning of the study, Amy seemed confident regarding her knowledge as well as the structure of the class while Maria seemed to experience more stress and uncertainty with regards to teaching the class.

Amy, specifically talked about her deliberate effort to have the ESL Reading A class look different than the ESL I course she also teaches. She did this by structuring the class with independent reading and phonics work. As the study continued and as more modifications were added, Amy shifted the structure of the class somewhat to account for students reading decodable texts and whole-class connected texts. There was not a large change in Amy's pedagogical content knowledge of literacy throughout this study. One reason for this lack of change is likely because through the course of the study, Amy and I were only able to meet four times for Curricular Conversations and three times for Debriefs. Though we shared informal assessments and instructional materials through email, we did not have extended time to discuss the class curriculum.

Maria, however, at the start of the study seemed have a difficult time separating the ESL II content that she teaches in the afternoon with the ESL Reading B class. The warm ups that

Maria used initially were often related to dictionary tasks and grammar, concepts that would fit better in a class building language acquisition rather than reading. However, Maria built her pedagogical content knowledge of literacy greatly throughout the course of this study. Maria and I are able to meet nineteen times for Curricular Conversations as well as four times for Debriefs. The Curricular Conversations occurred one to two hours a week and appeared to be crucial as they provided instances for in-depth conversations about informal assessments, grouping students, choosing books, and creating instructional materials for the class.

Finding 1.b: Teachers gain pedagogical content knowledge of literacy through practice

Walqui (2008) describes teacher practice as involving the enactment of learning as well as contingent scaffolding based on ongoing assessment. The movement from knowledge of a subject matter to putting that knowledge into practice is crucial to create better instruction for ELs. It is also, according to Walqui, the most difficult aspect in building teacher expertise. Amy and Maria were both open to new instructional strategies that I suggested would help support their students' literacy development. They also both implemented this instruction with the exception of word study in the ESL Reading A class.

At the beginning of the study, Maria and Amy both used new instructional practices with a bit of blind faith, happy they were provided with more materials for the class. For example, in the ESL Reading A class, *Very Easy True Stories* was used as a whole-class text with differentiated literacy activities that went along with the individual stories. And in the ESL Reading B class, *Playing Hardball* and *Hitting the Road* were used for instructional level texts while dividing the class into two different levels of reading groups.

This implementation of new instructional strategies looks different than is typical of using an instructional coach model. Usually, the coach would come in and help the teacher think

through ideas but with a less prescriptive intent than in this study. However, in this study, the teachers were given the instructional strategies to use with the understanding that these strategies would help with literacy development of their adolescent newcomers. Rather than building on knowledge that she already possessed, Maria's practice of these instructional strategies helped increase her knowledge. In both cases, the teachers seemed satisfied with the results and interested in continuing to use resources such as those provided in their instruction in the future. The structure of the study also allowed for opportunities for both teachers to continue practicing this new instruction both with and without my guidance.

Finding 1.c: Reflection is an essential aspect of both developing literacy knowledge and transferring that knowledge to practice

Through the course of this study, Amy and Maria both were able to try new instructional practices in their ESL Reading classes. The time to reflect during the Debriefs as well as the Curricular Conversations. In his work with expert ESL teachers, Farrell (2013) noted that the teachers he worked with felt they had little time to reflect and discuss their instructional practices with colleagues. Babinski et al.'s (2018) study also showed that the reflection time that teachers had with instructional coaches played a factor in increasing their knowledge and transfer of knowledge to practice. Though teachers often reflect about their practice on their own, this additional support and reflection with others seems to help support knowledge and move it towards action (Babinski et al., 2018; Farrell, 2013).

Amy and I, unfortunately, did not have the opportunity to have very much time together other than in the class itself due to scheduling conflicts. Though we did find time to talk sporadically, it was never in an extended way besides during the debriefs. Amy and I have known each other for over five years, leading to a stronger working relationship and comfort

level together at the beginning of this study. Our previous work together helped to mediate this issue, but our limited time for collaborative work during curricular conversations was still a limitation.

Maria and I were able to have many instances of reflection time throughout the course of this study. In contrast, Amy and I were not able to reflect together to the same extent. Walqui (2008) states that this lack of collaborative reflection time for ESL teachers makes it difficult for them to further develop their expertise. Though Amy was likely reflecting on her own with regards to instruction in the class, it is that collaborative reflection that Walqui (2008) and others discuss as essential to practice (Babinski et al., 2018; Farrell, 2013).

Maria's schedule allowed for a consistent time for us to meet. Taking advantage of her schedule gave us time to reflect in a collaborative manner, which helped us build our relationship while at the same time provided ample space for conversations surrounding instruction. This personal relationship is also important because, just as the affective filter affects students' ability to learn in the class, it does the same for teachers. Teachers need to be in a comfortable environment and not feel intimidated when trying new things and reflecting on lessons. Maria and I were able to spend a significant amount of time together, which led to a level of comfort with reflecting and sharing her thoughts regarding her instructional practice.

Amy and Maria's time reflecting had positive effects on both their knowledge as well as their practice in the class. However, the drastically different amounts of time they were able to spend in collaborative reflection may have impacted their overall professional growth throughout the study. This finding provides some evidence for the need of time for regularly scheduled collaborative reflective within a school setting.

Finding 2: Students at WIDA levels I and II have a wide array of literacy skills and ranges

The second research question for this study aimed to understand better how using theories regarding reading phases (Ehri, 2005; Spear-Swerling, 2013) to guide instruction would help in an adolescent newcomer reading class. Using informal measures, such as the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005) and the Informal Spelling Assessment (2012), allowed for a more nuanced look at the literacy skills of the adolescent newcomers within these ESL Reading classes. Previous research studies have given evidence to the fact that ELs who have the same English language proficiency will often have different reading ranges (Ford et al., 2013). The findings of this study support that assertion: 2.a) students' component literacy skills vary greatly and 2.b) students' reading ranges vary greatly.

Finding 2.a: Students' component literacy skills vary greatly

In order to better understand instruction of adolescent newcomers through the lens of literacy theories, this study attempted to look at empirical observations within the ESL Reading class to see if they aligned with theoretical ideas. Drawing on Storch and Whitehurst's (2002) concept that component literacy skills (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) play significant roles during different times of reading development, the component literacy skills of the Reading Class were analyzed.

Case One: Amy's ESL Reading A Class and Component Literacy Skills

In Amy's class, the component literacy skills of Aryo and Santiago were of interest because they both started U.S. public schooling in late November; however, their progression through, and knowledge of, these component literacy skills differed greatly.

Beginning in microcycle four, Amy and I addressed Aryo and Santiago's individual component literacy development specifically during independent reading time. However, during this three-week period, Santiago continued to progress more quickly than Aryo and to need less

support. For example, during independent reading time, (OBS 2.22) Aryo was reading level AA books on *Razkids*; however, though the books had heavy picture support and were repetitive, Aryo could not decode them. Instead, he listened and looked at the pictures.

Amy and I discussed the difficulty that Aryo was having reading, (CC 2.2), and I offered to add decodable texts to his *Razkids* account to help him work on the specific phonics skills that he needed. During the next class (OBS 2.23), I worked with Aryo, moving him from just listening to stories into the "assignments" section of *Razkids* where he could read decodable text. *He first listened to* Nan and Pap *once then attempted to read it. He then listened to it again as he was unable to read it at first. He said the individual letter for each word first and then attempted to sound the word out, but he was not successful we most words. We practice several different words during reading time.* Here we can see how a literacy-specific instructional decision helped to build his decoding skills, a component literacy skill (i.e., phonics). Otherwise, he would have continued to listen to stories, building his oral vocabulary in English, but not building his decoding skills.

During this same class (OBS 2.23), the students worked in small groups on their assigned words with beginning sounds /h/, /s/, and the digraph /sh/. *I continued to work one-on-one with Aryo. I first introduced to him and wrote down familiar words that started with an /*h/*. I then introduced to him words that started with an /*s/*. I wrote a list of these words down on the whiteboard as well. I then had Aryo practice reading each one of these words. I then showed him the /*sh/ *digraph and explained that these two letters combined made a new sound. We then looked at the example words and pictures in his handout and I had Aryo spell the words I said while he looked at his paper to find the picture and then copy down the appropriate word. He was unable to spell the words without first finding the word and copying it.*

While Aryo and I were working together, other students in the class were able to practice the new words by reading them, hearing them, and writing sentences using the words. However, this task would have been beyond Aryo's reach. During this microcycle, a new student aide (a current high school student assigned to the class) also began to work in Amy's class, and Amy had the new aide work one-on-one with Aryo as he read decodable books and engaged with whole-class activities (OBS 2.25, 2.26).

Santiago had similar instances of needing differentiated literacy support within the ESL Reading A class. However, he was able to grasp some of the component skills more quickly than Aryo. For example, when Amy was giving the rest of the class an assessment to determine their knowledge of beginning sounds (OBS 2.25), I worked individually with Santiago, reading the words to him as he wrote the beginning sounds for each word. *He was unable to write the beginning sounds for digraphs and blends. He also confused the /b/ and /v/ sounds as well as the /*sh*/ and /*ch*/ sounds but was able to write the beginning sounds for most other words.*

In early January, students' reading skills were again assessed using an informal reading inventory. Comparing Santiago and Aryo's skills as well as their development during this short period of time showed a significant difference as noted in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Aryo and Santiago: Informal Reading Inventory

Student	11/29/18 Reading Level	1/14/19 Reading Level
Aryo	Emergent	Emergent
	16/26 letter names	18/26 letter names
		13/26 letter sounds
Santiago	Beginning	Beginning
	26/26 letter names	Pre-primer passage:
	14/20 pre-primer word	87% accuracy
	list	29% comprehension

Santiago's reading development makes sense when considering that upon his arrival in November, he was able to decode short words in English. In the following month, not only did he improve his understanding of the sounds in the English language, but he was able to read a short text on the pre-primer level and answer two questions correctly regarding the text. Aryo, however, was able to learn two more letter names as well as begin to understand the concepts of the letter sounds in the English alphabet but this did not transfer to decoding words or reading connected text.

When considering component skills, it is important to look at students' educational history as well as literacy in their first language. Aryo, according to the information provided by his family, had limited literacy in Farsi. Therefore, without those specific skills of alphabet knowledge and decoding in his first language, he was unable to transfer skills. He will, instead, have to learn those component skills for the first time in English. There was not any information regarding what first language literacy instruction looked like in previous schools for either Aryo or Santiago. The notes in Table 4.4 give limited information regarding previous schooling.

Table 4.4

Aryo and Santiago: Education History

Student	Grade Completed	Notes:
Aryo	Unclear. But there is a note that he was retained at least one year.	IEP equivalent developed in Afghanistan for learning accommodations and sped classes. Should include speech therapy. Oral instructions needed due to limited fluency in native language.
Santiago	Completed 6th grade in Honduras in 2015	2-3 years of interrupted education

With the information that was provided, it became apparent that Aryo was having a more difficult time learning some of the more constrained, language-independent component skills both because his first language does not share a similar orthography as English (Proctor, August,

Snow, & Barr, 2010) and also because his literacy skills in Farsi were not adequate for his schooling in Afghanistan. Aryo and Santiago, both newly arrived adolescent newcomers, have very different component literacy skills that need to be taken into account in order to better support their literacy development in the school setting.

Case Two: Maria's ESL Reading B Class and Component Literacy Skills

The component literacy skills and reading ranges of the students in the ESL Reading B classes also proved to be different regardless of their language proficiency in English. When considering the component skills that are needed for reading, one skill that varied greatly within the ESL Reading B class was reading fluency. Table 4.5 shows that students fluency scores do not always appropriately match their reading level. For example, Ara and Tanya both read quickly, though they are reading a first-grade level text. Aziz, however, can comprehend text on a fourth-grade level but has a difficult time reading the text fluently, which negatively affects his time reading the specific text.

Table 4.5

Fluency Rates and First Language: ESL Reading B

Student	Accuracy	WCPM	First Language	Reading Level
Ara	99%	160	Dari	1st grade
Tanya	100%	129	Spanish	1st grade
Said	94%	63	Dari	2nd grade
Max	98%	100	Spanish	2nd grade
Elvia	98%	103	Spanish	2nd grade
Narges	90%	45	Dari	3rd grade
Matteo	94%	57	Spanish	3rd grade
Christian	97%	69	Spanish	3rd grade
Asad	94%	79	Dari	3rd grade
David	98%	81	Spanish	3rd grade
Aziz	93%	56	Arabic	4th grade
Alexandra	98%	150	Spanish	4th grade
Nassimeh	99%	135	Dari	4th grade
Mohamed	94%	115	Dari	4th grade

In their 2010 study, Proctor, August, Snow, and Barr found evidence to support a strong Spanish-English interdependence for alphabet knowledge. They went further to suggest that decoding skills would transfer more easily if students' first language had a similar orthography to their second. Therefore, students who speak Spanish as a first language are at an advantage in terms of decoding and fluency skills due to the shared Latin alphabet. Students who speak Dari or Arabic as a first language must first learn the Latin alphabet as well as the sounds associated with the letters before they begin to read in English. However, constrained skills are usually learned rather quickly (Paris, 2005). It is notable, therefore, that several of the students in the ESL Reading B class appeared to have a need for more decoding practice.

The low fluency scores of Said, Narges, Matteo, and Aziz also align with the lower scores these students received on the spelling inventory, with three out of four students scoring in the letter-name alphabetic range. Table 4.6 shows the fluency scores and spelling ranges of students who read slowly and with lower accuracy compared to their peers.

Table 4.6

Students with Low Fluency Scores

Student	Accuracy	WCPM	Spelling Range	First Language	Reading Level
Said	94%	63	Mid LN	Dari	2nd grade
Narges	90%	45	Mid LN	Dari	3rd grade
Matteo	94%	57	Mid LN	Spanish	3rd grade
Aziz	93%	56	Mid WWP	Arabic	4th grade

The fluency and spelling scores of Said, Narges, Matteo, and Aziz are concerning when considering that they will be moving into unsheltered content classes for science, history, and math the following school year. Once they have moved into these core classes, they will receive less English language and literacy support. In Mancilla-Martinez and Lesaux' (2017) study of students' early literacy skills, the researchers learned more about early indicators for later

reading comprehension. The results of their study indicated that students' code-based skills (measured by word reading and spelling), which are constrained skills, were predictors of their reading comprehension scores in fifth grade.

The results of the fluency and spelling assessments of Said, Narges, Matteo, and Aziz support the need for further targeted instruction with regards to these students' decoding and phonics skills. It is notable, also, that of the students flagged, only one of them is a Spanish speaker, and he has been going through testing to determine if he has a specific disability in the area of reading. The other students are Dari and Arabic speakers, and their first language script is Arabic. Therefore, it is possible that they need more support with component literacy skills of phonics. Throughout the course of the interventions in Maria's class, these students did receive support through word study; however, the level of support should be increased beyond tier one class instruction.

Not all of the students, however, fell into this same pattern of fluency scores possibly related to their first language. Ara, Nassimeh, and Mohammed, for example, all had appropriate fluency scores with Nassimeh and Mohammed's overall reading level the highest in the class. Thus, this disconfirming evidence points to the idea that Though certain component skills are easier to learn within languages of similar orthographies (Proctor, August, Snow, & Barr, 2010), first language literacy also plays a strong role in the development of second language literacy. Therefore, this data suggests that Ara, Nassimeh, and Mohammed all had stronger first language literacy than those students in need for further phonics intervention.

Finding 2.b: Students' reading ranges vary greatly

In an attempt to better understand how literacy theories could be a model for instruction for adolescent newcomers, Part B of the second research question is concerned with ways that

empirical observations in the class might align with literacy theoretical ideas. Drawing on Ehri (1999, 2005) and Spear-Swerling's (2013) phase models of reading, observations were used to better understand how these phases of reading would look in an adolescent newcomer class. There is evidence that ELs have similar reading phases and development as monolinguals (Chiappe & Siegel, 2006; Lesaux & Rupp, 2007; Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2017). However, these studies were conducted with elementary ELs. With this in mind, what would the distinct reading skills of adolescent newcomers who range from WIDA Levels I to II look like? These ranges and skills are important for instructional purposes in the class. If elementary studies regarding reading development are applicable to adolescent newcomers, then knowledge of the reading skills and ranges of adolescent newcomers will help give indications of how their reading skills will progress as they spend more time building both their literacy skills and language proficiency.

Case One: Amy's ESL Reading A Class and Reading Phases

The students in Amy's ESL Reading A class are all considered ESL I students based on their overall WIDA scores. Three of these students enrolled in U.S. public schools for the first time at some point during the 2017-2018 school year while the remaining for enrolled at some point during the 2018-2019 school year. The students who enrolled in the 2018-2019 school year had not completed a formal WIDA ACCESS assessment. However, when they enrolled in the school, they are given a WIDA screener to help teachers place them in the correct class. The information in Table 4.8 is from their Spring 2018 WIDA ACCESS scores or their WIDA Screener scores.

Table 4.7

ESL Reading A WIDA Scores and Enrollment Dates

Student	WIDA Scores	Screener or 2018	Enrollment Date
Adama	1.7	2018	1/12/17
Bina	1.7	2018	11/30/17
Veeda	1.8	2018	3/8/18
Ricardo	1	Screener	8/22/18
Aryo	1	Screener	11/29/18
Tela	1	Screener	11/29/18
Santiago	1	Screener	11/29/18

Ehri (1999, 2005) described four phases of beginning reading: pre-alphabetic, partial alphabetic, full alphabetic, and consolidated. Based on the results of an informal reading inventory that appear in Table 4.8, the students span Ehri's reading phases. Aryo is in the partial alphabetic phase; he is learning the names and sounds of letters in the English language. In the full alphabetic phase, students are beginning to build their sight words and connect their pronunciation of words with specific phonics patterns. Santiago and Ricardo, based on their ability to decode words as well as to begin to build their sight word bank, are in the full alphabetic stage. Adama, Bina, Veeda, and Tela are continuing to build their sight word knowledge while also comprehending the text they are reading. Ehri's final reading phase is the consolidated phase, in which students are able to read multisyllabic words with more ease. Adama, Bina, Veeda, and Tela are consolidating their knowledge of words and, also, based on their performance on the comprehension aspect of the informal reading inventory, are able to demonstrate a level of comprehension while reading.

Table 4.8

ESL Reading A WIDA Scores and Reading Levels

Student	WIDA Scores	Fall 2018 Reading Level	Ehri's Reading Phase	Notes
Aryo	1	Emergent	Partial alphabetic	16/26 letter names No letter sounds 0/20 on pre-primer word list
Santiago	1	Beginning	Full alphabetic	26/26 letter names 20/26 letter sounds 14/20 pre-primer word list 81% accuracy on pre-primer story with 14% comprehension
Ricardo	1	Beginning	Full alphabetic	100% accuracy on pre-primer story 43% comprehension.
Adama	1.7	Pre-primer	Consolidated	84% accuracy 40 wcpm 86% comprehension
Bina	1.7	Pre-primer	Consolidated	93% accuracy 67% comprehension
Veeda	1.8	K	Consolidated	89% accuracy 56 wcpm 63% comprehension
Tela	1	K	Consolidated	100% accuracy 63% comprehension

While the WIDA screener and ACCESS test give practitioners general information regarding students' language proficiency, it does not provide enough information to use for instructional purposes in a reading class. For example, Tela, Aryo, and Santiago, all began their schooling in the U.S. at the same time; however, the information provided by the informal reading inventory allowed Amy to differentiate based on student need within the ESL Reading A class. Table 4.10 shows Aryo, Santiago, and Tela with their specific range of reading scores. Though these students are all considered Level I for ESL proficiency labelling, their scores span Ehri's (2005) beginning reading phases.

Table 4.9

Reading Levels of Late Arrival Students

Student	November 2018 Reading Level	Ehri's Reading Phase	Notes
Aryo	Emergent	Partial alphabetic	16/26 letter names No letter sounds 0/20 on pre-primer word list
Santiago	Beginning	Full alphabetic	26/26 letter names 20/26 letter sounds 14/20 pre-primer word list 81% accuracy on pre-primer story with 14% comprehension
Tela	K	Consolidated	100% accuracy 63% comprehension

Based on the data provided by these scores, Amy was better able to make instructional decisions and differentiate instruction. This data also allowed me to assist Amy in differentiation and targeted instruction opportunities for Aryo and Santiago. During their second week in the class (OBS 2.17), I was able to work specifically with Santiago and Aryo on letter identification. *They first sorted five different letters that are in varied fonts into piles and practice saying the letter names. They then move on to work with an additional five letters.* Since Tela's reading scores were more commensurate with other students in the class, she could already access much of the material that other students were using.

Another instance of differentiating student work based on reading levels occurred during the first class after the winter break (OBS 2.20). *Amy worked with the majority of the class to discuss the New Year's holiday. She then had students read about the New Year in small groups with support from the teacher aides. Santiago, Aryo, and I worked on letter knowledge. I first had them look at the alphabet and name the letters. After that, I called out a letter, and Santiago and Aryo each wrote the letter on a small white board. If they did not know the letter, Aryo and*

Santiago both would wait to see if the other person knew it, and, if so, copy it. After practicing

the letters, I spelled out New *and had them write it down. I then asked them to read the word*

New. *Santiago was able to read the word but Aryo was not. I then spelled out* Year *and had them*

write it down. Santiago was having difficulty hearing the difference between a/e/i *and writing the*

correct vowel. Aryo usually hesitated and then checked on Santiago's answer unless Santiago

hid it. This lesson demonstrates how Amy differentiated instruction with Aryo and Santiago

working on targeted skills aside from the whole group lesson.

Case Two: Maria's ESL Reading B Class and Reading Phases

In the fall of 2018, Maria and I assessed students' reading skills using by the Bader

Reading and Language Inventory (Bader, 2005) with the results in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10

ESL Reading B Bader Reading and Language Inventory: Fall, 2018

Student	Accuracy	WCPM	Comprehension	Reading Level
Ara	99%	160	75%	1st grade
Tanya	100%	129	75%	1st grade
Said	94%	63	70%	2nd grade
Max	98%	100	60%	2nd grade
Elvia	98%	103	70%	2nd grade
Narges	90%	45	60%	3rd grade
Matteo	94%	57	70%	3rd grade
Christian	97%	69	60%	3rd grade
Asad	94%	79	70%	3rd grade
David	98%	81	90%	3rd grade
Aziz	93%	56	67%	4th grade
Alexandra	98%	150	78%	4th grade
Nassimeh	99%	135	67%	4th grade
Mohamed	94%	115	100%	4th grade

The results of the informal reading assessments showed that, again, while students had

similar WIDA scores, their reading levels varied drastically. At the beginning of the year,

students ranged from reading on a first to fourth-grade level. The WIDA ACCESS for ELLs

assessment measured students' overall proficiency along with their specific skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When comparing students WIDA reading subtest scores from the spring of 2018, which played a large roll in their class placement, it is notable that their reading scores did not give as detailed information regarding their reading level as compared to the informal reading inventory. Table 4.11 shows both students' spring 2018 WIDA reading subtest scores along with their fall 2018 reading scores as measured by the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005).

Table 4.11

ESL Reading B: WIDA Reading and Informal Reading Inventory

Student	2018 WIDA Reading	Reading Level
Ara	1.7	1st grade
Tanya	1.8	1st grade
Said	1.7	2nd grade
Max	2	2nd grade
Elvia	-	2nd grade
Narges	1.8	3rd grade
Matteo	1.8	3rd grade
Christian	1.8	3rd grade
Asad	1.8	3rd grade
David	-	3rd grade
Aziz	1.8	4th grade
Alexandra	1.9	4th grade
Nassimeh	1.7	4th grade
Mohamed	1.8	4th grade

Comparing the WIDA reading subtest scores with the informal reading inventory scores gave evidence towards the idea that the informal reading inventory can give practitioners more information regarding students' reading levels than the WIDA reading subtest. Granted, a major objective of the WIDA ACCESS test is to measure student language proficiency and growth over time. With that objective, it is reasonable to have an overall score that measures students'

reading at a single point in time. However, for instructional purposes, teachers need more information regarding adolescent newcomers' reading skills in order to provide targeted instruction that supports these students' reading development.

Another aspect of students' literacy skill that was measured throughout the course of this study was word knowledge through spelling. *The Primary Spelling Inventory* (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012) was used to assess students' word knowledge and create differentiated *word* study groups within the ESL Reading B class. Table 4.12 shows student assessment results on the *Primary Spelling Inventory* along with student reading levels.

Table 4.12

ESL Reading B Primary Spelling Assessment and Reading Level

Student	Spelling Stage	Reading Level
Said	Mid LN	2nd grade
Matteo	Mid LN	3rd grade
Narges	Mid LN	3rd grade
Elvia	Early WWP	2nd grade
Asad	Early WWP	3rd grade
Ara	Mid WWP	1st grade
David	Mid WWP	3rd grade
Aziz	Mid WWP	4th grade
Mohamed	Mid WWP	4th grade
Max	Late WWP	2nd grade
Alexandra	Late WWP	4th grade
Nassimeh	Late WWP	4th grade
Tanya	Early SA	1st grade

According to Bear, Johnson, Invernizzi, and Johnston, (2012), monolingual students reading in the first-grade are usually late emergent to within word pattern spellers. Students in the second grade typically fall into the late letter name to early syllables and affixes stage, while students in the third and fourth grade range from within word pattern to syllables and affixes spellers. These ranges are tied to grade placement and not necessarily reading level, but are

helpful when comparing the ESL Reading B students' reading and spelling ranges. Most of the students in the ESL Reading B class fall into the assumed categories. However, there are a few students that don't fit into that profile exactly.

Ara, as a first-grade level readers also scored within the mid within word pattern range on the spelling assessment. During the informal reading inventory, she read a first and second grade passage. Her accuracy was 99% and words correct per minute were 160 on this passage, with her comprehension 75%. However, it is possible that Ara should have been given a higher passage in the fall. Her winter scores on a second-grade passage were 98% accuracy with 98 words correct per minute and 70% correct on the comprehension portion. This score more appropriately reflects a student in the within word pattern stage.

Max and Tanya's spelling and reading levels also do no align as well as other students. Both of their spelling ranges higher than might be expected based on their reading. Both have been in the country for two years, but they have not been here significantly longer than other students. Their oral language proficiency in English may be positively affecting their word knowledge.

The results of the spelling and reading assessments indicate that the students in the ESL Reading B class have moved from Ehri's (2005) highest reading phase (consolidated). Spear-Swerling's (2013) phases continue to strategic and proficient reading, which is where students in the ESL B Reading class fall. Within these phases, students still have specific individual reading strengths and weaknesses that are highlighted in the informal reading inventory as well as the spelling assessment. Using these assessments within the class helped create focused instruction to support students' individual literacy development.

Finding 3: Modifying the ESL Reading curriculum to differentiate by student literacy skills

and ranges supports students' literacy development.

If instruction supported by literacy theories were introduced to the ESL Reading class, what would be the effect of these changes be? The third finding of this study was that modifying the ESL Reading curriculum supported adolescent newcomers' literacy development. This support happened in two ways. First, by adding instructional strategies that aligned with literacy theory, the classes themselves became more structured and purposeful. This happened because the teachers had a clearer goal of curriculum to cover that was specific to reading and differentiated from general language proficiency. Second, structuring the class based on literacy theory and placing students in groups based on their reading ranges gave students more opportunity to read on their own. In-depth description of Finding 3 will be detailed in the subsequent pages.

Finding 3.a: Instruction is more structured and purposeful

Adding the word study component into the ESL Reading B classes changed the structure of the classes. During the first microcycle, (OBS 1.1-.5 and 3.1-3.3), Maria was using the warm-up time in the class as a way to further students' language acquisition through grammar practice as well as practice with dialogues and other speaking activities. However, these warm-ups did not directly relate to other aspects of the ESL Reading B class. During microcycle two (OBS 1.6-1.11 and 3.4-3.11), Maria shifted into using the warm-up time for word study work. This shift continued through microcycle three and four.

Observations in the ESL Reading B class started in mid-October. The following observational note was from one of the first sessions observed. *As the bell rang (OBS 1.1), Maria directed students to start the class with independent work. Their options were to read a book*

from the class or use their computers to read articles on Razkids*, work on grammar support*

using IXL *or practice their English on* Duolingo*. Most students used several minutes of class*

time to get settled and do a lot of "fake reading" by navigating to different tabs on their

computers, covertly listening to their headphones, or holding the book but not specifically

engaging in it. After 15 minutes or so, Maria directed students to their warm-up, which was to

answer questions about their dictionary such as "What is the name of your dictionary?" "How

many pages are in the dictionary?" and "What other part of speech can the word head *be?"*

Students wrote down their answers on their warm-up sheet and discussed the differences

between a verb and noun as a class with Maria's direction. Some students are using English-

English dictionaries and others are using English-Dari and English-Spanish dictionaries for this

warm-up. There is a higher engagement doing the warm-up than there was for the independent

reading time, and students complete the warm-up without difficulty. At this point there was ten

minutes left in the 48-minute period.

Maria's class, based on this observation, had a specific structure of reading time, warm-

up, and instructional time. However, within this structure, much more time had been allotted for

the reading time and warm-up than for the instructional time in the class. This, paired with the

fact that most students did not read during their reading time at the beginning of class, left little

time for practice in connected text. Maria's second ESL Reading B class, followed a similar

structure during the observation (OBS. 3.1).

The warm-up took a significant amount of time the first few sessions of class that were

observed, and it did not directly relate to the work in the class regarding preparation for reading

The Aztec Ring Mystery. During the duration of microcycle one, the warm-ups continued to be

general grammar practice to support student English language development but, in general, were

not directly connected with the story that the students were reading as a class (OBS 1.3, 1.5).

Moreover, the warm-ups usually took at least 20 minutes of class time, which was nearly half of

the period.

During microcycle two, however, Maria shifted towards using students' word study time

as a way for the class to start. This shift did not happen immediately. For the first several

observations (OBS 1.6, 3.4, 3.6), Maria continued with the same grammar focused warm-ups.

However, Maria began to shift the warm-ups towards targeted word study time during

microcycle two. *Maria had students start the class (OBS 1.7) by sorting the words that they had*

completed the quiz for last session. They then glue the sorted words into their notebook. Most

students began to work sorting and gluing their words, but there were several students who

needed the directions repeated to them and some one-on-one help to remind them of what they

should be doing. Maria walked around to the individual students, checking in with them, asking

them the meanings of words, and helping them sort their words by the appropriate features as

needed. However, during the afternoon class, (OBS 3.7) Maria returned to a more traditional

warm-up, asking students the questions*, "What sport do you prefer? Soccer or baseball?"*

Maria began to consistently use the word study time as a warm-up in during microcycle

two (OBS 3.8). *Maria had students get their new word study words from their folders and sort*

them into three piles (words they knew, words they had seen, and words that they did not know).

Maria and I walk around the class, checking in with individual students and helping them learn

the meanings of words. Maria then worked with the group studying beginning blends. There

*were two students working on sorts with long-*a *patterns, and I discussed the meanings of the*

words with them. During the next class, (OBS 1.9) *Maria started the class by having students do*

a speed sort with their new words. Students sorted their words three different times, competing

with themselves and trying to improve their time each round. Students who have the long-e *sort are having a difficult time with the oddballs in this sort (*heard *and* learn*). They sort them into the regular "*ear*" column, and I discuss with them the* short-e *sound that these words make regardless of their spelling.* During another class, (OBS 3.9) *Maria used the warm-up time to have the students do a blind writing sort.*

During the debrief at the end of microcycle two, Maria reflected on the changes that she has made in the warm-ups this microcycle. She explained her thinking when she stated, "And I was going to ask you … you know like they were so used to the warm up, the warm up which is taking some time, so I thought we could do those (word study practice) as warm ups" (DBF 1.5). Maria acknowledged here that the warm-ups were taking valuable class time, so she suggested the conscious decision to shift the instruction in the class and use the warm-up time for word study work with the students. This structure continued through microcycles 3 and 4, and the students come to expect getting their Word study words as their initial task when they come into the class.

During microcycle three, it was evident by how students started that they were used to Word study as the warm-up and came to expect it. *Students began the class by (OBS 3.12) sorting out their words. Students first sorted their words out on their desk, focusing on the different spelling patterns. They then worked in pairs and practiced spelling the words out loud to prepare for the quiz. Maria spent this time working specifically with Aziz, and I work with Alexandra to review words, put them in sentences orally, and practice spelling them.* During another class session (OBS 1.14) *students started out the class working with their word study words. Ara was sorting and writing her words in her notebook. Jalil was gluing his old words in his notebook. Max and David were sorting their words on their own. Alexandra was cutting her*

words out and sorting them. This excerpt is an example of students taking initiative and also working on their individual Word study practice. Maria and I were available for student support when needed, and students were able to be strategic with the kind of practice they needed to support their word learning.

In microcycle four, Maria continued to consistently use Word study as students' warm-ups. This microcycle was immediately following a two-week break from school, so the initial reintroduction took some time (OBS 1.22). *I worked with Tanya and Max and explain to them their sort (*double, nothing, e-drop*). At first Max said that he didn't understand, but as we looked at examples, he was able to show that he understood by sorting several words into the correct columns. Then, we talked about the meaning of the words and they wrote down a translation of each word in Spanish. Maria worked with the two other groups, explaining to them the pronunciation of their new words. Students then spend time on their own translating the words and looking at pictures of the words on their computer.*

Students had a similar experience starting their new word sorts the following week (OBS 1.23). *Maria started class by directing students to the target that she had projected on the whiteboard: "*I can name, sort, and use my vocabulary words.*" She then told students to sort their words, write three more sentences, and then get in partners to spell their words.* Maria continued to start the warm-up with a Word study target during the following observation (OBS 3.20). Throughout microcycle four, Maria kept the structure of using the warm-up as a time for word study (OBS 1.24, 3.21).

Using word study in the class is a way to support students' word knowledge and spelling. Assessment data showed that students in the ESL Reading B class spanned spelling stages from Letter-Name Alphabetic spellers to Syllables and Affixes spellers. Maria's intentional use of the

warm-up as a time for word study allowed her to be more strategic with her class time. There was also a shift in expectations from the students, as they moved from disconnected warm-ups to consistent warm-ups that built student knowledge. This shift provided for both strategic time to work on spelling and vocabulary as well as a way to structure the class for more intentional reading instruction.

Finding 3.b. Students have more opportunities to read on their own.

A modification that was made in the ESL Reading B class was to differentiate the text that students were reading based on results of the informal reading inventory. Using this information, the class was divided into two distinct reading groups with reading levels ranging from first to fourth grade as shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13

ESL Reading B: Fall 2018 Informal Reading Inventory

Student	Accuracy	WCPM	Comprehension	Reading Level
Ara	99%	160	75%	1st grade
Tanya	100%	129	75%	1st grade
Said	94%	63	70%	2nd grade
Max	98%	100	60%	2nd grade
Elvia	98%	103	70%	2nd grade
Narges	90%	45	60%	3rd grade
Matteo	94%	57	70%	3rd grade
Christian	97%	69	60%	3rd grade
Asad	94%	79	70%	3rd grade
David	98%	81	90%	3rd grade
Aziz	93%	56	67%	4th grade
Alexandra	98%	150	78%	4th grade
Nassimeh	99%	135	67%	4th grade

In order to understand the types of reading that were happening in the class, the reading time in the ESL Reading B class was coded in three ways: whole class reading, small group reading, and independent reading. Whole class reading was defined as when the entire class was reading the

same text at the same time. Small group reading, for the most part, consisted of when the class was split into two groups and these groups were reading the same text together. Independent reading was when students were reading a text on their own. When looking across the microcycles at the type of reading students were engaging in, it is notable that the class moved from more whole class reading instruction (i.e., everyone reading the same text) towards independent reading (i.e., text choices based on determined reading levels) as seen in Figure 4.1

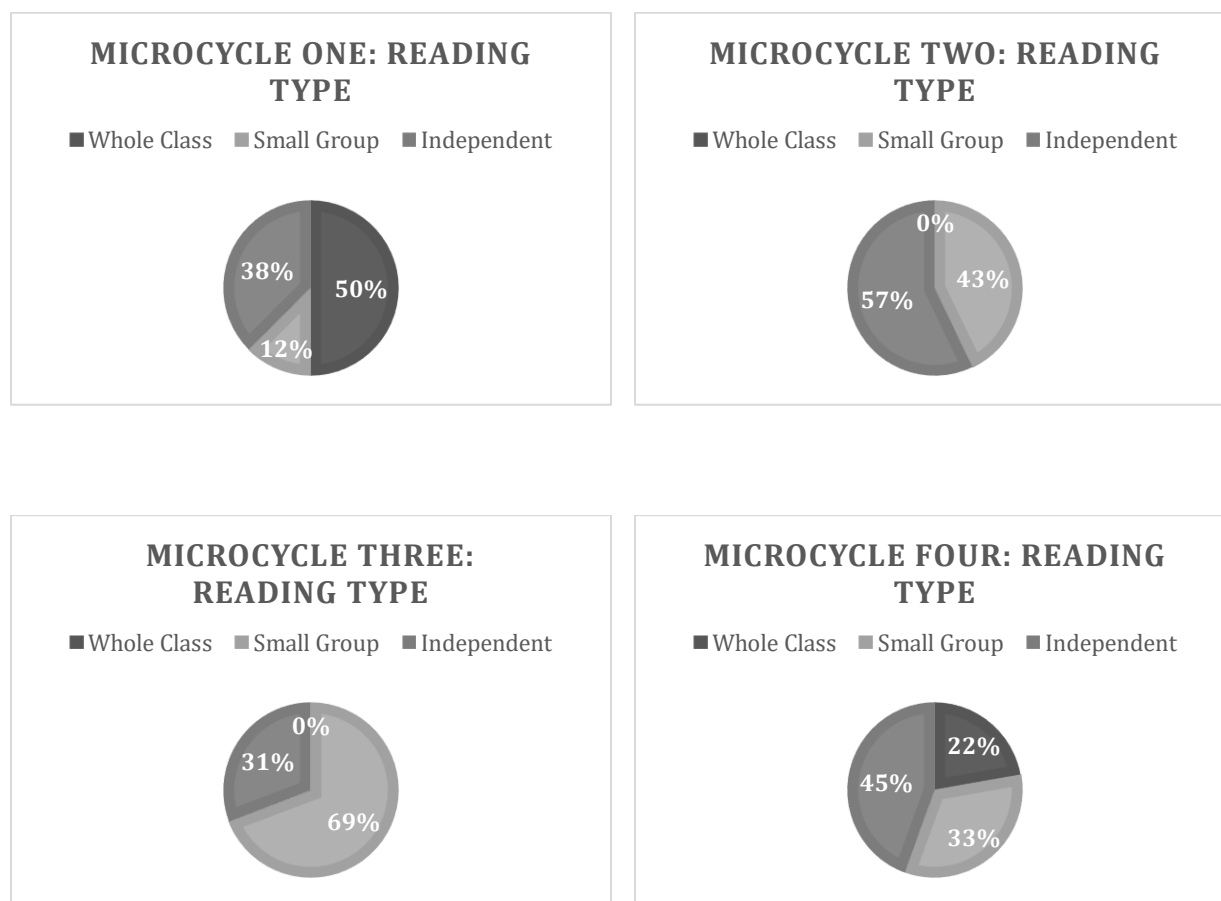Figure 4.1

Microcycle and Reading Type

Figure 4.1 shows the different types of reading in each microcycle and how the type of reading changed over time. It is notable that once students were reading texts at different levels, the whole-class reading time decreased significantly. This observation is likely due to Maria prioritizing reading time in appropriately leveled text based on the data from the Bader Reading and Language Inventory. To supplement the charts in Figure 4.1, observation data as well as assessment information help create a more complete picture of the reading in the ESL Reading B class for the duration of this study.

Microcycle One Reading Type

During the first microcycle, three instances of independent reading, one instance of small group reading, and four instances of whole class reading were coded over eight different observations within the two ESL Reading B classes. The instances of independent reading all occurred at the beginning of class where Maria had students choose from a variety of different options to start the class. During one observation (OBS 1.1), *students started the class by reading. Their options were to read a book or use their computers to reading on* Razkids, *practice grammar on* IXL, *or practice English on* Duolingo. *Most students used several minutes of class time to get settled and do a lot of "fake reading" by navigating to different tabs on their computers, covertly listening to their headphones, or holding the book but not specifically engaging in it.* Similar engagement was observed during two other independent reading times (OBS 3.1, 1.2) with students either not choosing to read at all, or moving around on their computer with little engagement.

During microcycle one, Maria and the class were reading *The Aztec Ring Mystery*, a short novel published by Saddleback Educational Publishing. The Saddleback website notes that this novel is on a second-grade reading level but with content appropriate for adolescents. The rest of

the instances of reading time during this microcycle were when students were engaged reading *The Aztec Ring Mystery* both as a whole class as well as in a small group. The whole class reading of the story usually consisted of Maria projecting the story on the board and reading it to them out loud. Students had access to the text on their computers as well. During one instance (OBS 1.4), *Maria asked volunteers to help read* The Aztec Mystery *story. David volunteered to read out loud, and reads for several pages. Asad then reads for a short bit, though he had noticeable difficulty reading the story fluently as several words were difficult for him to decode. After Asad read for a few paragraphs, Maria continued to read out loud until the end of the chapter. There was high engagement when Maria read as she often used gestures and other body language to help explain the story. She changed her voice to match the characters and used students in the class as characters by speaking directly to them as if they were part of the story. At one point during class, she stopped reading to explain that the owner was taking his things, and at this point she started gathering up things in the class and pretended to leave.* Other instances of whole group reading were similar; however, Maria did not have student volunteers and chose to read the book out loud herself during those times (OBS 1.2, 1.3, 1.5). Another time, Maria split the class into two small groups (OBS 3.2) *and has them read chapter 1 of The* Aztec Ring Mystery *as a small group. Students took turns reading one page out loud. They read chapter one twice in each group and then spend the remaining time answering questions about the characters in the story.*

Throughout the first microcycle students engaged in mostly listening during whole-group reading time with some instances where students read out loud to the class. Students showed a high level of engagement in the whole-group reading, as Maria was excellent at explaining the

story while she read, but this whole-class reading did not give students the opportunity to practice reading skills, such as decoding or building their reading stamina in more difficult text.

Microcycle Two Reading Type

During the second microcycle, there were 12 instances of independent reading and nine instances of small group reading over 14 observations over the two ESL Reading classes.

Table 4.14

ESL Reading B Book Groups

Groups	Current Book	Book Information
Ara, Elvia, Max, Tanya (2nd) Said, Matteo, Edwin(5th)	*Playing Hardball*	"Caught Reading" series published in 1995 Grade: 1st-2nd Fiction
Asad, David (2nd) Narges, Christian(5th)	*Lost Cities*	Accessed on www.www.razkids.com.com Fountas & Pinnell: N Lexile: 651L-690L Grade: 3rd Nonfiction
Nassimeh (2nd) Alexandra, Mohamed, Aziz(5th)	*Teotihuacan*	Accessed on www.www.razkids.com.com Fountas & Pinnell: Q Lexile: 771L-800L Grade: 4th Nonfiction

The main modification that was made this microcycle was to separate the students into distinct groups based on their reading ranges. This modification allowed for students to read text more closely aligned to their reading levels, which allowed for further differentiation within the class. Table 4.14 shows the students in the different reading groups by class along with information about the books read.

The groups on the lower reading range began the book, *Playing Hardball*, which was written on a first-grade level. The groups that read on a higher reading range read a series of

nonfiction books that were located on *Razkids*. These books range from third to fourth-grade level reading material. Maria chose the topic of 'Ancient Civilizations" for the higher group to read as that topic was in alignment with what they were concurrently learning about in ESL II.

The student groups reading the books on *Razkids* read them independently. However, to start out, the students reading *Playing Hardball* read much of their story in a small group to allow Maria to provide more support. Therefore, for many of the observations, there were a set of students reading in a small group as well as a set of students reading independently. The following excerpt described the initial time students were separated based on their reading ranges (OBS 3.6). *Maria then divided students up into three different groups based on their previously assessed reading level. Group one read a nonfiction passage about baseball. This passage was preparation, building their background knowledge around baseball before they staredt their story,* Playing Hardball. *For this class, only Said is present for this group. He first reads the passage out loud, and we orally discussed both the passage and answers to the comprehension questions. Said then works on his own to match vocabulary words from the story to pictures on his handout. Group two began to individually read* Lost Cities *on* Razkids. *Group three began to read* Teotihuacan *on* Razkids. *Both groups that are reading on* Razkids *independently began by listening to the story while reading along on their computers. Students then began to complete information on a graphic organizer, while listening to the story. They took notes and wrote down facts that they thought might be important during this initial reading. Most students were engaged with this work, and all students had individual computers with headphones. Aziz was listening to music while reading the story, but he stopped when Maria told him to refocus and continue with his work.*

As students continued to read these stories both in small groups and individually, the process and steps became more familiar, and the classes continued in a similar structure. An excerpt (OBS 1.9) described the general structure of the reading instruction in the class throughout microcycle two. *Maria worked with the group reading* Playing Hardball. *They were reading chapter one and two and answering questions about the book together. Maria talked with the students about the answers and checked to see what they wrote. Nassimeh and Asad worked on their own to read their individual stories on* Razkids. *As they read, they wrote down the main idea of the story and five details that support the main idea.* The groups reading the stories individually had a summary activity to complete, while the group reading *Playing Hardball* had a series of questions to answer for each chapter. Students usually answered these questions together while reading often with Maria's support.

As students shifted into reading more on their own or in small groups rather than reading as a whole class, the amount of work that students began to do increased as well. Students were answering questions, completing graphic organizers, and writing summaries. These instructional activities allowed for students to engage more with the text, which, in turn, allowed them to practice their reading skills actively.

Microcycle Three Reading Type

During the third microcycle, there were four instances of independent reading and nine instances of small group reading over seven different observations of the two ESL Reading B classes. As with microcycle two, there were instances during reading time that some students were participating in small group reading while others were reading independently concurrently. The main modification that was made during the third microcycle was to add an additional fiction book for the higher reading group to read. Now, both groups were reading a fiction book

that fell in their appropriate reading range. Maria and I worked with the two groups but also encouraged individual work as the students read the chapters and answer the questions on their own or in small groups that are shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

ESL Reading B Book Groups (2)

Groups	Current Book	Book Information
Ara, Elvia, Max, Tanya (2nd) Said, Matteo, Edwin(5th)	*Playing Hardball*	"Caught Reading" series published in 1995 Grade: 1st-2nd Fiction
Misael, David, Max (2nd) Aziz, Alexandra, Narges(5th)	*Hitting the Road*	H.I.P. Books, 2002 Grade: 3.2 Fiction

During observations, Maria usually worked with the group reading *Playing Hardball* while I worked with the group reading *Hitting the Road.* Because of my active participation in this aspect of the class, I was unable to have as detailed description of Maria's small group, though I did attempt to observe it when possible. The group reading *Hitting the Road* began to read their story in late November. Following is a description of one class during their first time reading the story (OBS. 1.14). *Students then continued to read their assigned stories. The* Playing Hardball *group re-read chapter two so that they could answer the appropriate questions. David, Misael, and Asad began* Hitting the Road. *With my guidance, they first discussed key vocabulary needed to help them comprehend the text. Students then made predictions about what the story was going to be about based on the vocabulary that we discussed. We then read most of chapter one together, discussing and answering comprehension questions* (see appendix) *together as we read. I first read several pages out loud to them, and they followed along.*

Students then took turns reading paragraphs each. We continued to stop, answer questions, and clarifying any confusion as we read. Though students were reading individually or in small groups, there were still instances where they had a difficult time focusing on their work even with the added support.

During one afternoon, (OBS 3.14) students began to read in their groups. *The group reading* Hitting the Road *completed chapter one and the corresponding questions on their own. Alexandra was focused and read quickly, working through the questions. Narges was looking at the story, but she seemed distracted. After a few minutes she asked for a pass to the bathroom. Aziz also has a hard time focusing on his work, first walking around, but after a few minutes he sat down and began to work.* However, there were also instances of high engagement as in the next time the same class was observed (OBS 3.15). *Students began to read their stories on their own. Maria and I worked with individual students as needed. First Maria discussed with Tariq what the phrase "throw the game" meant, which is used in the story. I worked with Narges to help her understand the term "border" and what it meant for the characters to be trying to cross the border. Maria also worked with Aziz as he was reading the story on his own. I then began to work with Angel as he was reading chapter 11* of Playing Hardball *and answering the questions. Alexandra worked on her own during the class. Students were all engaged and working independently or one-on-one with either Maria or myself.*

During this microcycle, students continued to engage in both small group and independent reading. Students showed various levels of engagement depending on several factors, such as the reading task, their current interest in the text, and various distractions that might take place in a high school classroom. Students continued to answer questions and discuss chapters while they read with teacher support.

Microcycle Four Reading Type

During the fourth microcycle, there were eight instances of independent reading, six instances of small group reading, and four instances of whole group reading over 12 observations in the two ESL Reading B classes. Students continued to read their assigned texts both in small groups and individually, though more students chose to read individually during this cycle. On one occasion while the group reading *Hitting the Road* did so independently (OBS 1.23), I was able to observe Maria's small group instruction without distraction. They were discussing vocabulary words for the chapter. *When I joined, they were discussing the word* revenge *and Maria was explaining it meant "to get back at". She told students to write it in Spanish if it helped. They then started answering the questions first before they read. For one question she pointed out that the students already know that answer from other parts in the story. They then move onto reading chapter 13. She had them reading on their own this time, but they were all sitting together in a group and could ask questions. Maria reads a portion of chapter 13, but stopped after only a few lines. Students were all engaged reading.*

During the fourth microcycle, there were instances of whole group reading again. However, this reading was not related to the text students were reading but, instead was review of the midterm exam students took at the end of microcycle three. For the midterm, students read independently an article on different levels using www.newsela.com as the article source. The articles were written on a third and fifth-grade level. However, during the fourth microcycle, because she wanted to review the midterm whole class, she pulled up the article written on an eighth-grade level. Maria told me that her intent here was to read the article out loud to students, and, since they had already read it once, they would have some understanding of the article. However, students had a lot of trouble reading the article on this high of a reading level.

She first read the article out loud, (OBS 1.19) *Maria reads the first paragraph and then asks Misael what he understood. He explained that the student is not going to a real school, but instead he is in a camp. Maria continued to read the article and then summarize for the students. Then she had Asad start reading the next paragraph. Asad stood up and moved closer to the board to see. Maria helped him pronounce the words* crises *and* emergencies. *Tanya then begins reading. Maria helped her with the word* desperately. *David then read a paragraph. Elvia started to read, and Maria helped her sound out the following words:* rebuild, society, desire, catastrophes. *Ara read and needed help with the word* affected. *Misael then read and gets could not sound out* developmental.

In the second ESL Reading B class (OBS 3.16), a similar scenario took place. However, there was more off-task behavior during this class. *Maria projected the midterm article on the board and discussed with students how to answer the multiple-choice questions. Narges and Aziz had their heads down. Matteo, Alexandra, and Said were all listening and attentive. Maria read the text and paused between sentences to explain further the meaning of the sentences to students. Narges then read out loud, and Maria helped her pronounce the word* desperately. *Alexandra read next and got help from Maria with the word* violence. *Said continued to read aloud with support from Maria on the following words:* able, development, and institute. *Aziz and Narges participated when Maria asks them to read but then put their heads down when not. Matteo reads out loud and got support from Maria for the following words:* crises, supplies, well-trained. *When Matteo was reading Narges tried to talk with Said until she is told to refocus. Matteo stood by the computer to read the screen rather than the projected text, so that he could read more clearly. Alexandra followed along on her paper. Said and Narges continued to listen. Aziz appeared to be sleeping. When it is Alexandra's turn to read, she reads very fluently and*

has the text before her from her midterm. Said then reads a few lines and receives support from Maria for the words: choice, broken, and community.

Overall, the type of reading that students did in the ESL Reading B class shifted drastically after student informal reading assessment scores were taken into account and used as a basis for placing students in appropriate reading groups. Naturally, whole class reading dropped to basically nonexistent for several microcycles, as students read independently or were engaged with small groups. Time in text is important as it is this grappling with text and trying to understand a story on their own that is most helpful in developing reading skills.

During the fourth microcycle when Maria reviewed the midterm with students, this was a notable difference from the type of reading they had been doing. This review of the midterm as well as the sheer amount of words that students had trouble reading on their own while the class read and discussed the midterm, pointed to the problem with having students read a text that is too difficult for them. According to the winter informal reading assessment results, students in the ESL Reading B class read in ranges from second to fourth grade, and so while a fifth-grade text is not out of the range some of these students could handle, one written on an eighth-grade level is moving into a frustration threshold. This frustration was observed (OBS 1.19, 3.16) when many students were unable to decode the words that they were reading on the board as well as when others were putting their heads down and zoning out when they were not directly asked to participate (OBS 3.16).

The goal of this study was to further explore how ESL teachers, when supported with sustained professional development, would navigate instruction to support the literacy development of adolescent newcomers. The results described above point to the continual need of sustained professional development in literacy for ESL teachers. The results also point

towards a need to assess students using multiple informal measures throughout the school year in order to better support adolescent newcomers' literacy development through differentiation. Before moving on to the implications and recommendations with regards to these findings, I will first discuss the limitations of the study itself.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study that might have inhibited the effectiveness of the classroom modifications or affected the findings. The first limitation was time, including time in the classroom and time needed to create instructional materials. I was able to spend significantly more time planning and reflecting on the lessons with Maria than I was with Amy. I was also in Maria's classroom more frequently than Amy's. Amy and I had limited talk time due to scheduling conflicts. Throughout the course of the study, Amy was also absent several times, which gave us less opportunity to talk during class.

My relationship with the teachers as well as my role as a participant-observer in the classroom could also be viewed as a limitation. I have known Amy for over six years and Maria for nearly two years. While I have not worked with Amy in a coaching role, we did work in the same school several years ago. Maria and I also worked together last year during my internship. Therefore, my relationships with the teachers might have affected the results of the study. Even though Maria and I had known each other less, she seemed to become more comfortable and talkative throughout the course of the study. My role as a participant-observer also could have affected the findings. In this role, I worked with students and helped instruct the classes. The classes, therefore, would have functioned differently without my presence or if I had not interacted with the students or teachers. However, one purpose of participatory observation within a study is to help effect change while also learning more about the object of study. In this

way, my role did not negatively affect the study, but it likely changed aspects of the study more than if I had taken an observation-only approach.

Another limitation of this study is that there are no published norms for a growth model of second language literacy for adolescent newcomers. Therefore, we observed how the students were growing and building their literacy skills but did not have a norm with which to compare their growth. This knowledge of normative literacy growth for adolescent newcomers would have been helpful as it would give an indication of how adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School were developing their skills as compared to their peers.

A final limitation in this study was the absence of student voice. When this study was originally proposed, my assumption was that most of the students in the ESL Reading classes would be Level I newly arrived students. I would not have wanted to interview students at this level without having an interpreter in order to accurately document student voices. Moreover, there were several languages represented and finding interpreters for the range of languages would have been difficult. I, therefore, decided not to include interviews in my study. Upon reflection after the study's completion, I now realize that many of the students in the ESL Reading B class, Level II students, could have answered simple questions in English without the need for an interpreter. The addition of student voice regarding the ESL Reading classes would have allowed for more opportunity to share student perspective of the classroom practices.

Chapter 5: Implications and Recommendations

The overall goal of this study was to find ways for practitioners and schools to better support adolescent newcomers' literacy development. I aimed to more deeply understand this problem of practice by asking two research questions. The first research question was meant to better understand how ESL teachers would learn from and navigate the use of instructional strategies in the classroom that were based on theories regarding literacy and reading growth. I wanted to learn if teachers would find it feasible and doable to introduce additional instructional strategies, such as grouping by reading ranges or differentiating class instruction by distinct component literacy skills. The second question was an attempt to better understand the context of the ESL Reading classrooms at Blue Ridge High School. Would instruction informed by literacy theories work in these adolescent newcomer classrooms? If so, in what ways would this instruction help develop students' literacy? What empirical observations might align with these theoretical ideas regarding literacy? The findings of this study have specific implications for practice which, in turn, inform recommendations for continuing to strengthen the literacy of adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School.

Implications

The three findings in this study have implications for professional development of the ESL teachers, classroom instructional practices within the ESL Reading classes themselves, and support for adolescent newcomers in the ESL reading class and other contexts.

Finding 1: ESL teachers benefit from ongoing, sustained professional development with a focus on students' literacy instruction and assessment.

Finding 2: Students at WIDA levels I and II have a wide array of literacy skills and ranges.

Finding 3: Modifying the ESL Reading curriculum to differentiate by student literacy skills and

ranges supported students' literacy development.

In the remainder of the chapter, the implications for each finding will be summarized and then recommendations regarding the findings will be detailed.

Summary of Finding One

The ESL teachers at Blue Ridge High School benefited from ongoing, sustained, embedded professional development with a focus on students' literacy assessment and instruction. Research that has been conducted in the past measuring ESL teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction both as pre-service teachers as well as in-service teachers was low (Goldfus, 2012). Finding one elaborated on *how* teachers benefited from literacy knowledge in terms of the changes observed in their knowledge and practice. The ESL teachers in this study started out with different knowledge with regards to literacy instruction. This is not surprising based on the fact that in the Commonwealth of Virginia there are several different paths to ESL teacher licensure. One path is to graduate from an approved teacher education program in English as a second language, another is to take the recommended 24 credit hours of classes and then add on an endorsement to an already active teacher license, and a third path is to seek alternative licensure and complete the 24 credit hours on one's own (8VAC20-23-350, 2018). All paths originally required some form of literacy background, such as courses in reading or writing. The teachers in the current study both received ESL endorsements as add-on endorsements after being originally endorsed as language teachers, English in one case and French and Spanish in the other.

However, in 2016, the Virginia Department of Education added another path, which required teachers to pass the Praxis ESOL (5362) test in order to receive an add-on endorsement (Staples, 2016). This additional path required a test, but teachers who are already licensed in

another area no longer needed to have taken literacy courses. The Praxis test does address literacy as a specific topic. Of the six topics covered by the assessment, literacy falls under the topic "Planning and Implementing Instruction" and is one subtopic out of 23 in this section (Praxis Study Companion (5362), 2018). Therefore, considering Virginia's current state of ESL teacher licensure, it is likely that ESL teachers will continue to have a wide range of knowledge with regards to teaching literacy to adolescent newcomers.

Throughout the course of this study, the ESL teachers gained pedagogical content knowledge of literacy through the modifications that were made in the classroom. Babinski et al. (2018) recommended the use of instructional coaches to support ESL teachers when implementing new literacy strategies. They also suggested the need for more research on this topic. Implications from this current study support Babinski et al.'s suggestion. In contrast, Malsbary and Applegate (2016) painted a bleak picture of an ESL teacher not getting needed professional development. They instead found teachers focusing on high-stakes, summative assessments during professional development opportunities rather than instructional practices informed by formative assessments.

The ESL teachers in this study varied in their ability to transfer their pedagogical content knowledge of literacy into practice within ESL Reading classrooms. This may be because of the different amounts of time they were able to set aside for reflection. Farrell (2013) described reflection as a tool that can be useful in a teacher's practice. However, the time that is needed to consciously reflect on practice is often not readily available.

Implications for this first finding point to a continued need in literacy focused professional development with in-service ESL teachers. When considering this professional development, it would need to be differentiated by current ESL teacher knowledge of literacy

instruction as well as focused on moving that knowledge into practice within the class. The process of moving knowledge to practice would be supported by incorporating time for teacher reflectionboth with other ESL teachers and also with instructor of the professional development.

Summary of Finding Two

The students in the ESL Reading classes were all Level I and II as measured by the ACCESS for ELLs WIDA assessment. However, these students had a wide range of literacy skills as well as reading levels, ranging from emergent readers to students who were comfortable reading fourth-grade level text. Students WIDA reading scores did not give teachers in-depth information regarding students' reading ranges or skills. These findings are similar to the study by Ford et al. (2013) of kindergarten ELs, which found a wide range of component literacy skills within this specific group studied.

In the current study, for example, some students in the ESL Reading A class came to the class with strong foundational literacy skills, while others did not. The students with strong literacy skills in their first language showed evidence of transferring those skills both in alphabet recognition as well as decoding. This is not surprising as several researchers have looked at the transfer of language-independent component literacy skills among ELs (Goodrich & Lonigan, 2017; Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Melby-Lervåg & Lervåg, 2011; Proctor, August, Snow, & Barr, 2010). This transfer of skills suggests the importance of knowing about students' former schooling in order to better help address individual student needs. Teachers need to be aware of students' first language literacy as well as their component skills in reading in English. Knowledge of students' WIDA levels is not enough information to plan literacy instruction for them.

Along with an awareness of component literacy skills, the findings in this study pointed to a wide range of reading levels within the ESL Reading classes. Some students began the classes still learning their letters in English while others were reading within a fourth-grade range as measured by the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005). Implications of this are important as teachers need to be aware of their students' reading ranges so that they can appropriately plan for strategic instruction. Secondary teachers often do not receive as much in-service training surrounding how to teach reading as elementary teachers do, yet this study shows there are students at the secondary level in need of reading instruction. It is also important to note that the informal measures used to assess students reading and spelling informed instruction more specifically than the scores on the WIDA reading subtest.

Summary of Finding Three

The ESL teachers were able to modify the ESL Reading curriculum, which led to greater differentiation by student literacy skills and reading ranges. The modifications of the curriculum allowed for instruction that was more structured and purposeful relative to students' unique literacy development. This current study was an effort to use instructional coaching to better support ESL teachers and adolescent newcomers with regards to literacy growth (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014). By separating the students into groups based on their reading ranges as well as their spelling skills, the ESL teachers were able to provide targeted instruction. This differentiation led to more purposeful lessons. Implications of this finding led to less whole-class work as students engaged in instructional activities that were more closely aligned with their assessed needs. Instruction aligned with students' assessed needs would better allow for student engagement as students would be working in small groups to complete reading and writing tasks appropriate for their current literacy stage. The teachers, therefore, could work with

different groups of students as needed to support their development strategically. This structure is similar to one that would be found in a literacy block at the elementary level and provides for differentiation within the class while also allowing for strategic support as needed.

Differentiating the reading groups in the ESL Reading classroom allowed for students to read on their own without direct support from the teacher. This shift in the classroom structure gave students more time for independent reading and to do the difficult work of comprehending a text on their own. Ivey and Broaddus (2007) had a similar experience in terms of expanding the volume of text students read when they began to look more strategically at matching students with appropriate text. By having students engage in independent reading, students were also able to read for longer periods of time than they had been at the start of the study. This reading time translates to reading volume, which is essential for literacy development.

Implications regarding this finding are that students are more likely to be engaged in the actual process of reading and be able to do independent work with the text if they are given text within their instructional range as well as more freedom to choose the types of reading that they are interested in. Texts should be about topics that related to adolescents as well as show cultural sensitivity. The text could vary in terms of fiction, nonfiction, articles, online, and offline reading. What is important to note is that the text is appropriate for adolescents and within their general reading range. This does not mean that all text should be simplified but that an awareness of the text and the scaffolds that need to be provided is present and used when creating instructional plans.

Summary of Implications

The findings from this study, that ESL teachers need ongoing, embedded professional development, that students who are WIDA Level I and II have a wide array of literacy skills and

ranges, and that modifying the curriculum supported student literacy development are important. They provide key implications regarding literacy instruction for adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School. First, needed continued professional development should continue with the ESL teachers. Second, adolescent newcomers' knowledge of the component skills of literacy in English as well as reading ranges should continue to be assessed informally. And, further, the ESL teachers should continue to implement differentiated instruction.

<div align="center">**Recommendations**</div>

The findings in this capstone study suggest particular recommendations for Blue Ridge High School in order to better support the literacy development of adolescent newcomers within the ESL Reading classrooms. These recommendations address the need for:

1. Increasing the ESL teachers' literacy knowledge and instructional practices through the use of ongoing professional development in the form of embedded literacy coaching

2. Improving the use and record-keeping of formative assessments for classroom instructional purposes in the ESL Reading classroom as well as to serve as data to help monitor growth of adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School

3. Implementing differentiated instruction within the ESL Reading classroom to better support students' reading and writing development

Recommendation One

In order to increase the ESL teachers' literacy knowledge and instructional practices, ongoing professional development should be implemented with ESL teachers who will be teaching the ESL Reading class. This professional development should be provided by a certified reading specialist who has a strong understanding of both teaching ESL at a secondary level and

reading. The professional development should be focused to both address the teachers' needs with regards to pedagogical knowledge of literacy practices as well as give the teachers multiple opportunities to transfer this knowledge into practice. Embedded professional development such as instructional coaching has been found to build ESL teacher knowledge while also supporting literacy development of ELs at the elementary level (Babinski, et al., 2018) and the secondary level (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014)

Along with professional development using an instructional coaching model, it is essential that part of this practice include time for the ESL teachers to reflect. Teachers who have time to reflect on their instruction are able to better consider modifications and new strategies to try with their students (Farrell, 2013). This opportunity to discuss instructional practices in a low-stakes environment with a literacy expert can help ESL teachers make the difficult step to move knowledge to practice (Babinski et al., 2018). This time to reflect can also be an opportunity for teachers who teach different levels of ESL as well as other content teachers to collaborate in order to discuss literacy strategies and expectations of adolescent newcomers across contents.

Recommendation Two

In order to improve the use and record-keeping of formative assessments for instructional purposes in the ESL Reading classroom, teachers must first use assessments that informative. These assessments need to measure students' component literacy skills in order to help teachers plan differentiated instruction. These assessments also need to provide ways for measuring growth of the adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School. The ESL teachers should be assessing and documenting student reading growth both through progress monitoring specific

component skills as well as using benchmark literacy assessments to monitor growth (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Ford, Caball, Konold, Invernizzi, & Gartland, 2013; Peña & Halle, 2011).

An overview of assessments that would be appropriate for ESL Reading is provided in Appendix B. The use of an informal reading inventory, such as the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005), would help ESL teachers better understand students' ability to read and comprehend connected text. Using a spelling inventory, such as the Primary Spelling Inventory (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2015), would help teachers know how to help develop student individual word knowledge. There are also several other assessments listed that could be of use for specific students and will be familiar to a certified reading specialist. Collaboration with a reading specialist would be key to building the assessment knowledge of the ESL teachers.

Along with assessing students to monitor growth as well as provide strategic instruction within the classroom, it is important that Blue Ridge High School have a way to document and follow students' literacy scores. This can be achieved using a form such as the "ESL Reading Assessment Data Sheet" provided in Appendix D. This sheet should be kept both in students' ESL and cumulative file and be used as a resource to help ESL teachers target instruction as well as communicate skillsets to content teachers.

Recommendation Three

The third recommendation to implement differentiated instruction within the ESL Reading classroom to better support students' reading and writing development. Teachers should be differentiating the materials students used as well as the instruction in the class. This can be accomplished both through the use of the strategies implemented under cyclical instructional coaching with a reading specialist as well as by taking a careful look at the overall structure of

the classroom to ensure that students' component literacy skills are being addressed. When building the curriculum for this class, special attention should be made to ensure that students are receiving appropriate code-based and language-based instruction to support their literacy development. (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014).

Students should also be reading texts that that fall into an appropriate range based on their current literacy development, which will likely result in small-group, pair, or individual lessons based on student reading range. Students also need targeted word knowledge instruction both to support their decoding and spelling. When grouping students, it is important to have flexible grouping based on formative assessments while also having specific targets and objectives for each group in order to continue to build their literacy needs (Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2018). As noted by the reading development of students in the ESL Reading A class, informal assessments are integral in planning for instruction as students' literacy skills develop at different rates. While this study focused on learning to read in English, effort should also be made, when possible, to have students continue to read and write in their first language when appropriate (Goldenberg, Hicks & Lit, 2013) in order to build engagement while also developing academic skills.

Challenges

There are several challenges to the implementation of the recommendations. First, finding time to allow for instructional coaching with a reflective component. Second, student scheduling conflicts and the continual resources needed to support the ESL Reading classes. Third, the dearth of books written for an adolescent newcomer population both in students' first language and in English. In order for the ESL Reading to benefit the adolescent newcomers whom they were created to serve, it is vital that the teachers get the appropriate support that they

need. This support, in turn, will help the adolescent newcomers in the ESL Reading classrooms

have the opportunity to continue develop their literacy (Menken, 2013).

Conclusion

The findings of my capstone study as well as the implications have led me to create three

main recommendations for supporting adolescent newcomer needs at Blue Ridge High School:

Increasing ESL teachers' literacy knowledge and practice, improving the use and record-keeping

of formative assessments, and continuing to implement differentiated instruction in the ESL

Reading classroom. I recognize that both teacher time and student scheduling make these

recommendations difficult. The lack of appropriate classroom texts both in English and students'

first languages are also difficult considerations. I also acknowledge the limitations of my study,

which affect the findings. The following chapter will be an action communication to the assistant

principal of the school, describing my findings as well as recommendations for the school.

Chapter Six: Action Communication

To: Assistant Principal
Blue Ridge High School

From: Jeannie Pfautz, M. S.
Doctoral Candidate
University of Virginia
1415 Briarcliff Avenue
Charlottesville, Virginia, 22903

Dear Assistant Principal:

I am writing to describe to you the findings and recommendations of my 16-week study of ways to support adolescent newcomers' literacy development in the ESL Reading classes. I was a participant-observer in the ESL Reading A and B classes a total of 66 times and conducted debrief and curricular conversations with two ESL teachers on a weekly basis over the course of this study.

The overall goal of this study was to find ways for practitioners and schools to better support adolescent newcomers' literacy development. The findings and recommendations may be useful for the school as you continue to think about ways to support adolescent newcomers' literacy development within the high school context.

The findings of this study are as follows:

1. ESL teachers benefit from ongoing, sustained professional development with a focus on students' literacy instruction and assessment.
    a. Certified ESL teachers have varied knowledge bases with regards to literacy instruction
    b. Teachers gain pedagogical content knowledge of literacy through practice.
    c. Reflection is an essential aspect of both developing literacy knowledge and transferring that knowledge into practice.
2. Students at WIDA levels I and II have a wide array of literacy skills and ranges.
    a. Students' component literacy skills vary greatly.
    b. Students' reading ranges vary greatly.
3. Modifying the ESL Reading curriculum to differentiate by student literacy skills and ranges supports students' literacy development.
    a. Instruction is more structured and purposeful.
    b. Students have more opportunities to read on their own.

Based on these findings, I have the following recommendations for Blue Ridge High School.

Recommendation One: *Increase the ESL teachers' literacy knowledge and instructional practices through the use of ongoing professional development in the form of embedded literacy coaching*

In order to increase the ESL teachers' literacy knowledge and instructional practices, ongoing professional development should be implemented with ESL teachers who will be teaching the ESL Reading class. This professional development should be provided by a certified reading specialist who is also knowledgeable about secondary ESL and should be focused to both address the teachers' needs with regards to pedagogical knowledge of literacy practices as well as give the teachers multiple opportunities to transfer this knowledge into practice. Embedded professional development such as instructional coaching has been found to build ESL teacher knowledge while also supporting literacy development of ELs at the elementary level (Babinski, et al., 2018) and the secondary level (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014)

Along with professional development using an instructional coaching model, it is essential that part of this practice include time for the ESL teachers to reflect. Teachers who have time to reflect on their instruction are able to better consider modifications and new strategies to try with their students (Farrell, 2013). This opportunity to discuss instructional practices in a low-stakes environment with a literacy expert can help ESL teachers make the difficult step to move knowledge to practice (Babinski et al., 2018). This time to reflect can also be an opportunity for teachers who teach different levels of ESL as well as other content teachers to collaborate in order to discuss literacy strategies and expectations of adolescent newcomers across contents.

Recommendation Two: *Improve the use and record-keeping of formative assessments for classroom instructional purposes in the ESL Reading classroom as well as to serve as data to help monitor growth of adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School*

In order to improve the use and record-keeping of formative assessments for instructional purposes in the ESL Reading classroom, teachers must first use assessments that are appropriate. These assessments need to measure students' component literacy skills in order to help teachers plan differentiated instruction. These assessments also need to provide ways for measuring growth of the adolescent newcomers at Blue Ridge High School. The ESL teachers should be assessing and documenting student reading growth both through progress monitoring specific component skills as well as using benchmark literacy assessments to monitor growth (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Ford, Caball, Konold, Invernizzi, & Gartland, 2013; Peña & Halle, 2011).

An overview of assessments that would be appropriate for ESL Reading is provided in Appendix B. The use of an informal reading inventory, such as the Bader Reading and Language Inventory (2005) would help ESL teachers better understand students' ability to read and comprehend connected text. Using a spelling inventory, such as the Primary Spelling Inventory (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2015), would help teachers know how to help develop student individual word knowledge. There are also several other assessments listed that could be of use for specific students and will be familiar to a certified reading specialist. Collaboration with a reading specialist would be key to building the assessment knowledge of the ESL teachers.

Along with assessing students to monitor growth as well as provide strategic instruction within the classroom, it is important that Blue Ridge High School have a way to document and follow students' literacy scores. This can be achieved using a form such as the "ESL Reading Assessment Data Sheet" provided in Appendix D. This sheet should be kept both in students' ESL and cumulative file and be used as a resource to help ESL teachers target instruction as well as communicate skillsets to content teachers.

Recommendation Three: *Implementing differentiated instruction within the ESL Reading classroom to better support students' reading and writing development*

The third recommendation to implement differentiated instruction within the ESL Reading classroom to better support students' reading and writing development. Teachers should be differentiating the materials students used as well as the instruction in the class. This can be accomplished both through the use of the strategies implemented under cyclical instructional coaching with a reading specialist as well as by taking a careful look at the overall structure of the classroom to ensure that students' component literacy skills are being addressed. When building the curriculum for this class, special attention should be made to ensure that students are receiving appropriate code-based and language-based instruction to support their literacy development. (Montero, Newmaster, & Ledger, 2014).

Students should also be reading texts that that fall into an appropriate range based on their current literacy development, which will likely result in small-group, pair, or individual lessons based on student reading range. Students also need targeted word knowledge instruction both to support their decoding and spelling. When grouping students, it is important to have flexible grouping based on formative assessments while also having specific targets and objectives for each group in order to continue to build their literacy needs (Wong Fillmore & Snow, 2018). As noted by the reading development of students in the ESL Reading A class, informal assessments are integral in planning for instruction as students' literacy skills develop at different rates. While this study focused on learning to read in English, effort should also be made, when possible, to have students continue to read and write in their first language when appropriate (Goldenberg, Hicks & Lit, 2013) in order to build engagement while also developing academic skills.

I hope that these recommendations are useful for you and others at Blue Ridge High School. Thank you, again for allowing me to work with your teachers and students this year. It has been a rewarding experience, and I have learned a great deal through this process. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Pfautz

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Appendix A

Observation (OBS), Curricular Conversation (CC), and Debriefing (DBF) Schedule

Microcycle		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Microcycle One	Week 1: October 1			OBS 2.1 CC 2.1 CC 1.1		
	Week 2: October 8	OBS 1.1 OBS 2.2 OBS 3.1		OBS 1.2 OBS 2.3 OBS 3.2		
	Week 3: October 15	OBS 1.3 CC 2.2 OBS 2.4		OBS 1.4 OBS 2.5 CC 1.2 OBS 3.3 CC 2.3	OBS 1.5 OBS 2.6 DBF 2.1 DBF 1.1	
Microcycle Two	Week 4: October 22	OBS 1.6 CC 2.4 OBS 2.7 OBS 3.4		OBS 3.5	OBS 2.8 OBS 3.6	
	Week 5: October 29	OBS 1.7 CC 2.5 OBS 2.9 OBS 3.7		CC 2.6 OBS 1.8 OBS 2.10 OBS 3.8	OBS 1.9 OBS 2.11 OBS 3.9	
	Week 6: November 5			OBS 1.10 OBS 2.12 OBS 3.10	DBF 2.2	
	Week 7: November 12	OBS 1.11 CC 2.7 OBS 2.13 OBS 3.11 CC 2.8				
Microcycle Three	Week 8: November 19	OBS 1.12 CC 2.9 OBS 2.14 OBS 3.12 DBF 1.2	OBS 2.15	*Thanksgiving Holiday*		
	Week 9: November 26	OBS 1.13		OBS 1.14 CC 2.10 OBS 2.16 OBS 3.13		
	Week 10: December 3	OBS 1.15 CC 2.11		OBS 1.16 OBS 2.17 OBS 3.14		CC 2.12 OBS 1.17 CC 2.13 OBS 2.18

Microcycle	Week					
						OBS 3.15
	Week 11: December 10	*Snow Storm Dec 10-12*	CC 2.14 OBS 1.18 OBS 2.19 CC 2.15			
	Week 12: December 17			DBF 2.3		
Microcycle Four	Week 13: January 7	OBS 1.19 CC 2.16 OBS 2.20 CC 1.3 OBS 3.16		OBS 1.20 OBS 2.21 OBS 3.17	OBS 1.21 CC 2.17 OBS 2.22 OBS 3.18	
	Week 14: January 14				OBS 1.22 OBS 2.23 OBS 3.19	OBS 2.24
	Week 15: January 21			OBS 1.23 CC 2.18 OBS 2.25 CC 1.4 OBS 3.20	OBS 1.24 CC 2.19 OBS 2.26 OBS 3.21	
	Week 16: February 11	DBF 2.4 DBF 1.3				

OBS = Observation 1 (2nd) Observation 2 (4th) Observation 3 (5th) CC = Curricular Conversation (1=Amy, 2=Maria)

DBF = Debrief (1=Amy, 2=Maria)

Appendix B

Reading Assessment Overview

The following assessments should be used in the ESL Reading classes to help guide instruction as well as monitor progress. Detailed instructions for these assessments can be found in each suggested text. However, this document can be used as an overview regarding appropriate assessments and when to use them.

Benchmark assessments

Students should receive benchmark assessments at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. The results of these assessments should be used to help determine student placement in a reading resource class as well as to inform instruction within the class.

- Spelling Assessment

    - Words Their Way primary spelling assessment

        - Used to determine an appropriate instructional focus for word study.

- Informal Reading Inventory

    - Bader Reading and Language Inventory

        Or
    - Qualitative Reading Inventory

        - Used to assess student comprehension level and fluency.

Additional Assessments for new emergent students (from *Book Buddies*):
- Alphabet Knowledge (Forms B and D.1)

    - Letter names

    - Letter sounds

    - Letter production

        - Used to determine instructional need with regards to letter identification, formation, and letter/sound connection.

- Concept of Word (Form C.2)

    - Word recognition in isolation

        - Used to determine whether the student has a Concept of Word or not.

- ● Note: The fact that a student may know how to decode the words on the list does not necessarily mean that he or she understands the meaning of the words. This task is not necessary if students have first language literacy

- ● Comprehension
  - ○ QRI or Bader passages (preprimer and up)
    - ■ Two levels of preprimer text that help clarify instructional need with regards to student's reading level. Once students are able to read on a preprimer level, and informal reading inventory such as the Bader or QRI is appropriate.

- ● Spelling
  - ○ Form C.1 (10 word spelling assessment)
    - ■ This assessment will give you information with regards to appropriate word study grouping without completing the entire *Words Their Way* assessment. This is useful for when students arrive mid-year.

Additional Assessments to gather more information:
- ● Phonological Awareness
  - ○ Informal Decoding Inventory

Appendix C

Recommended Books:

Spelling:

Helman, L., Bear, D. R., Templeton, S., Invernizzi, M., & Johnston, F. R. (2012). *Words their way with English learners: word study for phonics, vocabulary, and spelling*. Boston: Pearson Education.

Useful resources: Primary Spelling Inventory, Individual Student Assessment Sheets, Class Assessment Sheet

Assessment: whole group

Time: 20 minutes

Comprehension and Fluency:

Bader, L. A., & Pearce, D. L. (2013). *Bader reading and language inventory*. Boston: Pearson.

Leslie, L., & Caldwell, J. (2017). *Qualitative reading inventory*. Boston: Pearson.

Useful resources: word lists, pre primer to high school level texts both of fiction and nonfiction passages. Comprehension and fluency (accuracy and words correct per minute) can both be assessed using this tool.

Assessment: individual

Time: 10-20 minutes per student

Emergent Assessments:

Johnston, F. R., & Johnston, F. R. (2009). *Book buddies: a tutoring framework for struggling readers*. New York: Guilford Press.

Useful resources: alphabet recognition, sound recognition, concept of word, spelling, comprehension

Assessment: individual

Time: 20-30 minutes per student

Other Assessments:

McKenna, M. C., & Stahl, K. A. (2015). *Assessment for reading instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.

Useful resources: informal phonics inventory, informal decoding inventory, reading attitudes survey, concepts of print checklist, phonological awareness test,

Assessment: varied

Time: varied

Appendix D

ESL Reading Assessment Information

Name:

Initial Assessment Date:

Initial Assessment

The initial assessment should be conducted within the first two weeks of the student's enrolment.

Alphabet Knowledge	Comprehension Level:
Letter Names: **Letter Sounds:** **Upper:** **Upper:** **Lower:** **Notes:** **Notes:**	**Text Level:** **Errors:** **Questions Correct:** **Accuracy:** **Words Correct Per Minute:** **Notes:**
Letter Production: **Upper/Lower/Both**	
Concept of Word	**Spelling Stage:**
Notes:	**Correct Words:** **Feature Points:** **Total Points:**

Other Notes:

Benchmark Assessments

Benchmark assessments should be conducted that the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

Date:	Comprehension Assessment:
	Text Level: Errors: Questions Correct: Accuracy: WCPM:
	Text Level: Errors: Questions Correct: Accuracy: WCPM:
	Text Level: Errors: Questions Correct: Accuracy: WCPM:

Date:	Spelling Assessment
	Correct Words: Feature Points: Total Points: Spelling Stage:
	Correct Words: Feature Points: Total Points: Spelling Stage:
	Correct Words: Feature Points: Total Points: Spelling Stage:

Date:	Other: alphabet, COW, IPI, IDI, MAP, as appropriate

Reading Level:

Based on the assessments used, track the student's overall reading level three times a year.

Date:	Reading Level:

Appendix E (ESL Reading A sample work to go with *Very Easy True Stories*)

Name:

An Expensive Vacation

Prereading: Look up and draw pictures for the following words:

vacation	skiing	mountain
cold	fire	money

During Reading: Answer the following questions.

1. Who is in the story?

2. Is it hot or cold?

3. What time of day do they get lost?

4. What do they need to start the fire?

5. What do they burn?

After Reading

Imagine that you are on vacation. Where do you go? What are you doing?
Draw a picture here:
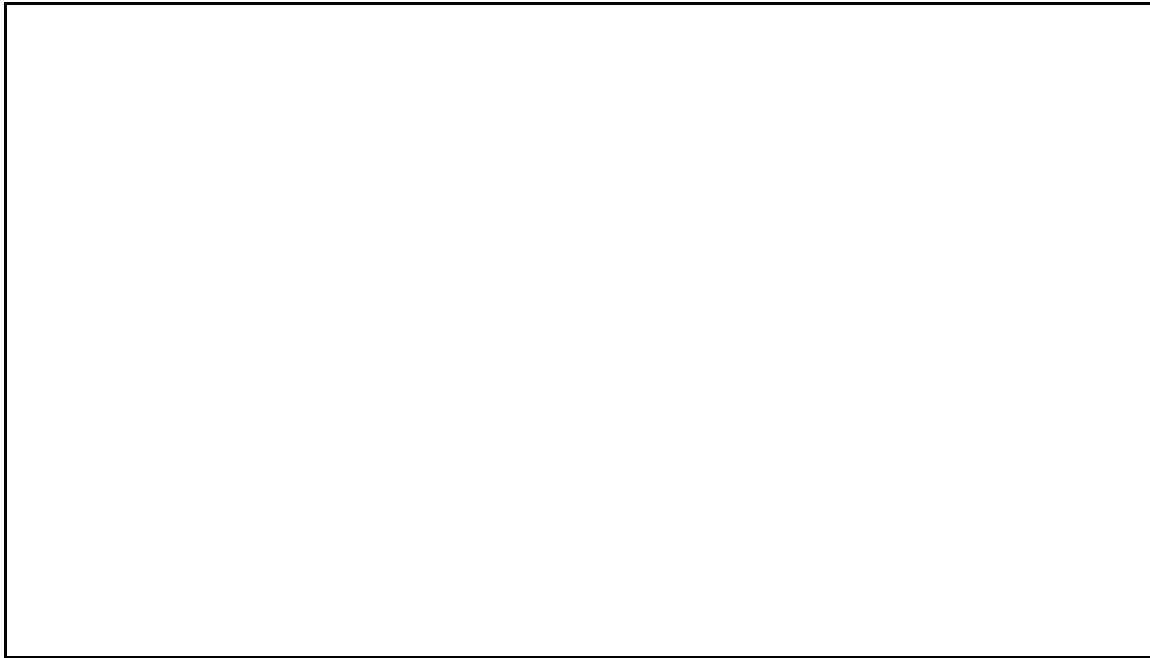
Write where you are and what you are doing.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Appendix F (ESL Reading B Sample work to go with *Hitting the Road*)

Chapter 2: *Hitting the Road*

Before Reading:
Write a synonym and draw a picture or write a sentence for the following words or phrases.

survive	hitchhiking	ditch
booze	enormous	Chalk outlines

During Reading: Answer the following questions as you read.

1. What did Cody and Matt bring with them when they ran away?

2. Why does Matt hide in the ditch when Cody tries to hitchhike?

3. Matt says the guy giving them a ride was "bad news". Why does he think that? Do you agree with him?

4. What are some things the driver does that are dangerous?

5. Why did Matt lie about seeing a police car? What would you have done to try to get out of this dangerous situation?

After Reading: Answer these questions on your own, and then discuss them with a partner.

1. Matt and Cody are now far from their house and on their own. What do you think they should do?

2. What would you do if you were in this situation?

3. What are ways that Cody and Matt are the same? What are the ways they are different? Complete this chart about Cody and Matt.

Matt   Cody