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CHOICE OF READING MATERIAL AND EFL LEARNERS' MOTIVATION TO READ

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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       This study explores the impact of providing choice of reading material on the emergence of EFL reading motivation in four university students using the Complex Systems Theory (CST). Qualitative research design and grounded theory were employed to explore the effects of the intervention. The population is university students taking English as a Foreign Language (EFL) courses in a private Lebanese university. The sample included four participants with a specified English language proficiency that allowed them to appropriately and sufficiently express themselves in interviews. For that reason, non-random purposeful sampling method was used. The main instruments of data collection were interest and motivation questionnaires. In addition, open-ended interviews, and classroom observations were carried out in order to address the study questions. One-hour teaching sessions were held from Mondays till Thursdays over a period of three weeks. Students were interviewed at the end of each week, observation notes were taken in class, and teacher reflections were written after each session. In-depth, iterative reading of the textual data was done to trace the motivational outcomes of choice provision. The process involved coding segments in the texts and sorting the codes into hierarchical categories. Through repeated and iterative processes of sorting the categories, themes were generated and supported with selected evidence from the data. The findings show that the participants' reading motivation was not affected by choice, but by the reading material themselves. That is, providing choice of reading material did not in itself influence the students' reading motivation, however, it was the conditions under which choice was provided.

Keywords: EFL, reading motivation, choice of reading material, CST, grounded theory

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background

Reading skills like phonemic awareness, phonics, word recognition, and vocabulary, are important factors in reading comprehension. However, one cannot become proficient in reading without the motivation to read (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010). Reading motivation can be defined as the beliefs, values, and behaviors related to reading. Such motivation has a great role in determining how widely and frequently students read, and whether they enjoy reading and benefit from it. Choice has been identified as a powerful factor that increases reading motivation by giving students a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning (Gambrell, 1996; Gurthie & Cox, 2001).

Rationale and Statement of Purpose

An extensive body of research suggests that all people, especially students, may be more motivated when they are allowed to make choices and express their preferences (Patall, 2013). Teachers report that one of the most common ways to increase students' motivation and engagement is providing chances for decision making and choosing (Flowerday & Schraw, 2000). However, despite teachers' intuitions and research results, there is a controversy concerning the efficiency of providing choice in the classroom (Katz & Assor, 2007; Patall, 2013). Some studies found that the provision of choice leads to positive effects on motivation (Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002; Gomez, 2016), while

others reported that choice has neutral (D'Ailly, 2004) and sometimes even negative

effects (Flowerday, Schraw, & Stevens, 2004; Iyengar & Lepper, 2000) on motivation.

Another aspect of the controversy about the efficiency of choice provision is the

suggestion that the positive effects on motivation reported in some studies did not result

from choice itself, but from the conditions under which it was provided (Katz & Assor,

2007). For example, in a study testing the role of interest and choice in reader

engagement, Flowerday et. al (2004) found that situational interest rather than choice, led

to reading motivation and engagement. Similarly, Gomez (2016) suggested that material

relevance is one possible reason behind positive effects of choice on motivation.

Katz and Assor (2007) reviewed some of the literature on choice and motivation

and proposed possible reasons to explain the inconsistency in research results. They

suggested that in some previous studies, choice yielded negative or neutral results due to

several factors like provision mode (atmosphere and circumstances of providing choice),

choice structure (content and number of choices offered), and a misconception between

choosing and picking. Whereas "choosing" allows for a meaningful realization of

students' individual desires and preferences, "picking" does not entail the expression of

such constructs because the choices provided would not be personally relevant to the

students. Consequently, some studies found negative impacts of choice because students

were asked to "pick" instead of "choose".

The theoretical framework most commonly used to describe conditions that make

choice beneficial is the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Katz & Assor, 2007).

According to the SDT, choice is motivating when it meets the three needs of autonomy,

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competence, and relevance. Autonomy-enhancing choices encourage students' ownership of form, environment, and learning. Competence-enhancing choices are matched to the students' age, cognitive abilities, and perceived competence in the domain in which the choice is offered. That is, the number of choices offered and the difficulty of the task should neither overwhelm nor fail to impress students. As for relevance-enhancing choices, they are aligned with the students' cultural values, interests, and goals.

Conditions that make choice beneficial can be identified by combining the SDT framework, the results of a meta-analysis done by Patall, Cooper, and Robinson (2008), and the reviews of literature done by Katz and Assor (2007) and Thompson and Beymer (2015). Based on the previous sources, the effect of choice on intrinsic motivation is stronger when:

1. Choices are relevant to students' personal interests, values, and goals

2. Choices are optimally challenging to students and matched to their abilities and Zone of Proximal Deficiency (ZPD)

3. Offering two to four successive choices that are similar in difficulty level but different in terms of their importance to the student (so that he/she finds at least one of them to be more interesting, relevant, or important)

4. Opportunities for choice minimize social comparison and maximize peer acceptance and empathy.

5. Rewards are not given after choice

Taking the above conditions into consideration, a reading choice unit was designed and taught to students with the aim of increasing their reading motivation and enjoyment.

A good example that was followed is Morgan and Wagner's (2013) three-week choice reading unit which was implemented in two high-school classes with a total of fifty four students. Being done on university students, the study would be an attempt to go against the contradiction that teachers in general decrease chances for choice and autonomy as students advance in their grade levels despite the notion that intrinsic motivation decreases as they grow older (Thompson & Beymer, 2015). That is, working with university students, the study will be addressing this contradiction by applying the choice reading unit to enhance their intrinsic reading motivation.

Most of the studies about reading motivation and choice are done in contexts where English is the first language (Flowerday, Schraw, Stevens, 2004; Hall, Hedrick, & Williams, 2014; Jones & Brown, 2011; Miller, 2015; Palmer, Codling, & Gambrell, 1994; Schraw, Flowerday, & Reisetter, 1998). Similarly, the greatest majority of these studies target elementary students (Hall, Hedrick, & Williams, 2014; Jones & Brown, 2011; Miller, 2015; Palmer, Codling, & Gambrell, 1994) and middle school students (Ivey & Broaddus, 2001). Only a few studies address secondary grades (Myrow, 1979) and college students (Schraw et. al. 1998). Literature on EFL reading motivation and choice is very scarce; only Lao and Krashen (2000) and Wolf (2013) did related studies. Stemming from this gap, the current study explores the reading motivation of college students in an EFL context.

Most of the research done on motivation in language learning classrooms was in the form of large scale quantitative studies which held reductionist views of motivation (Pigott, 2012; Sampson, 2015). According to Sampson (2015), such studies provide a limited understanding of classroom language learning motivation for two main reasons.

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First, the collection of responses using quantitative methods like questionnaires is limited by the imagination of the researchers who develop the scales and thus ignores the multi-faceted nature of second language (L2) motivation. Second, studying groups of students after removing them from the natural learning contexts disregards motivation as being shaped by the group itself. Given that recent approaches to motivation view it as contingent on interpersonal interaction and social contexts (Pigott, 2012), it is necessary to do research on the naturally-occurring day-to-day experiences of learners in their classrooms and to qualitatively explore the complex conditions operating in EFL classrooms.

To address these limitations and highlight how motivation *emerges* and interacts with students in context, there is a need for a bottom-up approach investigating particular individuals in particular contexts (Pigott, 2012). More specifically, what is needed is adopting an understanding of motivation as a dynamic, contextual construct that integrates various factors related to learners, learning tasks, and learning environments, into one complex system (Sampson, 2015). One way to do this is to study motivation in light of the Complex Systems Theory (CST) (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

A complex system is large network of components which involves complex collective behaviors, sophisticated information processing, and adaptation through learning or evolution (Mitchell, 2009 as cited in Sampson, 2015). Such complex system constitutes of multiple agents constantly interacting and co-adapting, whereby a change in one system leads to a change in another (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). Most importantly, complex systems are "open" because they receive and give energy in interaction with their environment, therefore, we have to consider agents within the

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context and not separately. From a CST perspective, language learning motivation is, to an extent, the function of context, because there is a contextualized, shared formation of motivation across learners in learning groups (Sampson, 2015). Moreover, few current studies of language learning motivation apply CST to seek to understand the emergence of motivation in students (Sampson, 2015).

Several quantitative and qualitative studies have approached reading motivation with an understanding that it constitutes of several dimensions (Schiefele & Schaffner, 2016; Schiefele et. al, 2012; Unrau & Quirk, 2014; Wigfield et. al, 2008). Given that the study is qualitative in nature and that one of the data collection tools to explore the participants' reading motivation is weekly interviews, there is a need to formulate suitable interview questions to serve the study's purposes. Extensive literature on the nature of reading motivation and how it was studied over the years led to the conclusion that interview questions should be formulated based on dimensions of reading motivation and that what can be considered as genuine reading motivation dimensions are the following seven constructs: curiosity, involvement, competition, recognition, grades, compliance, and work avoidance (Schiefele & Schaffner, 2016; Schiefele, Schaffner, Möller, Wigfield, Nolen, & Baker, 2012). However, given that students' performance in this study was not to be graded, the dimension of Grades was removed. This dimension is part of extrinsic reading motivation, and with its removal, the remaining six dimensions are split into only two dimensions of intrinsic reading motivation and four under extrinsic. Thus, to create more balance, another dimension of intrinsic reading motivation, preference for challenge, was added. Preference for challenge is included as

one of the basic dimensions of reading motivation in Wigfield and Guthrie's MRQ (1997) and another highly cited article by Wang and Guthrie (2004).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the effect of choice on the emergence of reading motivation in four university students in an EFL context. Unlike previous quantitative research on motivation, this study employs a qualitative approach using the Complex Systems Theory (CST) to allow for a deeper exploration of the emergence of reading motivation.

Research Questions

This study is exploratory in nature, and thus the purpose is to explore the emergence of the EFL reading motivation of four university students as a result of providing choice of reading material. The theoretical framework of this study is the Complex Systems Theory, which enables the investigation of the phenomenon as it occurs in natural EFL contexts and provides extensive data for thorough analysis. As such, the research questions are:

1. How does providing choice of reading material affect the EFL reading motivation of four university students?
2. How does the reading motivation of each student develop/change when working with self-chosen reading material?

Significance of the Study

Studying the emergence of motivation in light of the CST adds to the knowledge base about reading motivation as a multifaceted construct that emerges as a result of multiple, complicated factors and that is better understood in context; as opposed to previous common views of motivation as a single-faceted construct which can simply result from a cause-effect equation. In addition, it adds to the knowledge base about the efficiency of providing choice of reading material. Practically, the study helps teachers understand that motivating students to read is not simply an outcome of employing some motivational teaching practices. It draws their attention to the different factors that must be taken into consideration to increase reading motivation. Also, it presents them with a practical method of providing choice of reading material to foster reading motivation without ignoring course syllabi.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a review of pertinent psychological research on choice and motivation. First, it reviews studies about the relationship between choice and motivation in general; not reading motivation specifically. Next, it summarizes studies which yielded negative and/or neutral effects of choice on motivation. After this, it presents literature about effect of choice on first language and EFL reading motivation. It also provides a review of the conditions which render a positive effect of choice on motivation. Finally, it explains motivation from a Complex Systems Theory perspective.

Choice and Motivation

Decades of psychological research suggest that motivation, performance, competence, and sense of control improve when all kinds of people, particularly students, are given chances to express their preferences and make choices (Patall, 2013). Similarly, provision of choice is a common strategy used to motivate individuals in a variety of work, therapeutic, and educational contexts. According to Flowerday and Schraw (2000), teachers report that one of the most popular methods they use to enhance their students' motivation and learning is providing opportunities for choosing and decision making within the classroom or for school tasks in general.

In a phenomenological study that examined teachers' beliefs about instructional choice in the classroom, Flowerday and Schraw (2000) specifically investigated the kind of choices teachers give to students and when, to whom, and why they are given. Thirty six teachers of different subject matters at a large Midwestern university were

interviewed in depth. The types of choices were grouped into six categories formed based on teachers' responses, and these are: topics to study, reading materials, assessment activities, social configurations, and procedural sequencing. Choices of topics for study and of reading materials were mentioned most frequently. Topics were chosen for research papers, in-class projects, and presentations. Choice of reading materials included type of genre (fiction or biography) and choice of authors.

Teachers' criteria for providing choice were divided into student-related and teaching-related (Flowerday & Schraw, 2000). Student-related factors are age, ability, and knowledge, while teaching-related factors are content, management, and efficacy. Furthermore, it was found that teachers give students choices for three main reasons: to increase their self-determination, enhance their interest, and provide opportunities to practice decision-making skills. Also, it was reported that all the teachers held the common belief that providing students with opportunities for personal choice improves learning and motivation. Likewise, most teachers believed that choice provision empowers students personally, helps them in building learning skills like self-regulation, and motivates them to spend more time and effort on learning tasks.

However, despite teachers' beliefs and research findings on the benefits of choice, there has been an intensified controversy about the motivational advantages and disadvantages of choice provision in classrooms (Katz & Assor, 2007; Patall, 2013). While some studies yield positive effects of choice on motivation outcomes, some others show neutral or even negative effects. The following section will summarize a few studies which found negative or neutral impacts of choice on motivation.

Negative and Neutral Choice Effects

Under the framework of the Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Reeve, Nix, and Hamm (2003) proposed a model to explain the role of perceived self-determination in intrinsic motivation by investigating its most commonly cited qualities in the literature which are: locus of causality, volition, and perceived choice. *Perceived locus of causality* reflects the individual's perception of what initiated and regulated his/her behavior. It is understood as a continuum extending from internal to external locus of causality. An internal locus means the behavior is initiated by personal factors and reflects high self-determination; while an external locus means the behavior is initiated by external environmental factors. *Volition* is "a sense of unpressured willingness to engage in the activity" (Deci, Ryan, & Williams, 1996, p. 165). It is about how free versus forced people feel while doing what they want to do and refraining from what they do not want to do. There is high volition when actions are completely approved by the self whereby the person experiences high freedom and little or no pressure. A third quality of self-determination is *perceived choice*, which represents exposure to opportunities to choose among options and flexible interpersonal environments. To the extent that individuals experience self-determination as a perception of choice, any social situation that provides perceived choice is expected to increase perceived self-determination and intrinsic motivation. This study was an attempt to answer the question of to what degree people experience these three qualities as overlapping, or as independent, or even as epiphenomenal.

To answer the research question, Reeve et. al (2003) conducted three studies, exposing participants in each to different combinations of the three previously explained qualities. The aim was to study how these factors influence self-determination and in turn intrinsic motivation. In study 1, the external variable used to affect the level of perceived self-determination was exposure to an autonomy-supportive or controlling teacher. The external variable in study 2 was the provision of choice versus task assignment, and that in study 3 was exposure or not to a series of ongoing choices about what to do (action choices). In all three studies, it was found that internal locus and volition, but not perceived choice, are valid indicators of the experience of self-determination in intrinsic motivation.

In study 1, participants were asked to learn how to solve a series of puzzles from a tutor who adopted either a relatively autonomy-supportive or a controlling motivating style (Reeve et. al, 2003). 60 pairs of same-gender undergraduate students in the School of Education at a large Midwestern university were randomly assigned to the role of either teacher or student. Teachers were separately introduced to the puzzles and given time to develop a teaching strategy. Then, students were brought to the teachers and were asked to learn how the puzzle worked to try to find as many solutions as possible, with the assistance of the teacher. Three variables were measured: autonomy-support of the teacher's style, through ratings of videotapes, students' perception of self-determination in its three qualities (perceived locus of causality, volition, and perceived choice), through questionnaires, and students' intrinsic motivation toward the puzzle, through a self-report interest–enjoyment measure. The findings implied that only locus and

volition; but not perceived choice, constitute the core experience of perceived self-determination in intrinsic motivation.

Study 2 aimed at explicitly manipulating participants' perceptions of choice to see how they might refine the conclusions from Study 1; that the experience of self-determination includes internal locus and volition but excludes perceived choice (Reeve et. al, 2003). 186 students from an introductory psychology course at a large Northeastern university were randomly assigned into one of three experimental conditions to solve SOMA puzzles: choice condition, assignment condition, and a control group,

In the choice condition, each participant was offered six different SOMA puzzles and was asked to choose the one he or she most wanted to work with during the 10-minute session (Reeve et. al, 2003). In the assignment condition, the experimenter assigned the participant to work on one particular puzzle of the six available options. In the control group, only one puzzle problem was presented to the participant, and it was the same puzzle chosen by the "yoked" choice-condition participant in the choice condition and assigned in the assignment condition. Following the 10-minute puzzle-solving experimental manipulation, the same post-experimental questionnaires used in study 1 were administered to all of the participants to assess the qualities of self-determination and self-report measure of intrinsic motivation. Again, results showed that the model which included locus and volition; but not perceived choice, allowed for the construction of a conceptualization of perceived self-determination that fit the observed data well. Surprisingly, the choice manipulation failed to influence internal locus, volition, or intrinsic motivation. The provision of choice clearly and strongly affected participants' perception of choice, but neither the environmental provision of choice nor

the subjective experience of perceived choice correlated in a meaningful way with internal locus, volition, and intrinsic motivation.

Because the findings of study 2 suggested a problem about choice, study 3 was carried out for the purpose of testing whether all choices have the same effects on intrinsic motivation (Reeve et. al, 2003). 66 undergraduate students from an educational psychology course at a large Midwestern university were randomly divided into three groups with three different conditions: action choices, option choices, and assignments (control group). Participants were run each at a time. Action-choice participants were allowed to choose one option out of four and then choose to change it if it did not work. Option-choice and control group participants were treated as in studies 1 and 2. Findings in study 3 replicated the pattern of findings in the previous two studies and are further significant because the "action choices" manipulation affected internal locus, volition, and intrinsic motivation, while "option choices" did not. Thus, the results confirm, at least in the context of the study's laboratory conditions, that there are types of choices, and that participants' experience of self-determination in intrinsic motivation is influenced by action and not option choices.

Reeve et. al (2003) concluded that as a motivational concept, choice involves the capacity to act or not, that is action choice, rather than the presentation of an array of teacher- determined options, or option choice. In addition, for provision of choice to influence the experience of self-determination in intrinsic motivation, it needs to be coupled with internal locus and volition. In these studies, the option choice experiment demonstrates a negative case because participants were offered choices from previously set options, while action choice manipulation illustrates a positive case because it offered

participants choices about the initiation and regulation of their behavior. Another important conclusion drawn from the study is that the provision of choice by itself does not necessarily lead to positive effects on perceived self-determination, whereas the provision of choice in the context of additional autonomy-supportive conditions does. This means that in practice, the provision of choice is best considered as one contributing element within a larger autonomy-supportive manipulation, relationship, motivating style, or classroom climate. The findings of this study clarify the confusion in teachers' intuition and use of choice to promote self-determination and intrinsic motivation. While teachers provide teacher-determined options believing that it will motivate their students; the findings suggest that such method increases perceptions of choice only which is not reflected as increased intrinsic motivation. That is, teachers should provide action choices and not option choices.

In an attempt to challenge the common supposition that the more choice and options presented the better, Iyegnar and Lepper (2000) did three studies to examine the possibility that there might be different motivational consequences of offering a limited, psychologically manageable, versus an extensive, psychologically excessive, number of choices. These studies were driven by the hypothesis of *choice overload*, which maintains that even though the provision of extensive choices may seem initially desirable, it may also negatively affect human motivation.

In Study 1 of Iyegnar and Lepper's (2000) investigation, consumers shopping at an upscale grocery store encountered a tasting booth that displayed either a limited (6) or an extensive (24) selection of different flavors of jam. The two dependent measures of customers' motivation were their initial attraction to the tasting booth and their

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subsequent purchasing behavior. In study 2, students in an introductory social psychology class were given the opportunity to write a two-page essay as an extra-credit assignment. Students were given either 6 or 30 essay topics on which they could choose to write. Intrinsic motivation was assessed by comparing the percentage of students who completed the assignment across the two conditions and the quality of the essays written in each condition. In study 3, participants initially made a selection from either a limited or an extensive array of chocolates. Subsequently, participants in the experimental groups sampled the chocolate of their choosing, whereas participants in the control group sampled a chocolate that was chosen for them. Participants' initial satisfaction with the choosing process, their expectations concerning the choices they had made, their subsequent satisfaction with their sampled chocolates, and their later purchasing behavior served as the four main dependent measures in this study.

All three studies provided surprising empirical evidence that the provision of extensive choices may undermine choosers' motivation and satisfaction; despite being initially appealing (Iyegnar & Lepper, 2000). Study 1 showed that although more consumers were attracted to a tasting booth when the display included 24 flavors of jam rather than 6, consumers were much more likely to buy jam if they had initially chosen the display of only 6 jams. Study 2 revealed that students in the introductory college level course were more likely to write an essay for extra credit when they were provided with a list of only 6, rather than 30, potential essay topics. Moreover, even after choosing to write an essay, students wrote higher quality essays if their essay topic was chosen from a smaller rather than a larger choice set. Finally, study 3 demonstrated that people reported enjoying the process of choosing a chocolate from a display of 30 more than a display of

6. However, despite their greater initial enjoyment in the extensive-display condition, participants proved more dissatisfied and regretful of the choices they made.

Driven by the mixed findings about the role of choice in learning and motivation and the lack of cultural and gender considerations, D'Ailly (2004) held a cross-cultural experimental study which tested the interrelationships between students' self-efficacy, interest, effort, and performance in learning, and examined how the provision of choice impacts students' learning, with a special focus on culture and gender as important moderators.

Participants were fifth and sixth graders in Canada and Taiwan. 130 students from Canada (forty males and eighty three females) and 153 students from Taiwan (eighty five males and sixty eight females) received instruction through a computerized foreign language learning program (D'Ailly, 2004). The Canadian participants were learning Mandarin Chinese while the Chinese participants were learning French. The program included three sections: an Animal-Naming task, a Color-Naming task, and a Number-Naming task. It was designed to measure each student's efficacy beliefs and interest level in the learning tasks through self-report, and to asses his/her effort and learning outcome through objective measurement.

The Animal-Naming task was used as a baseline measure and a practice to familiarize students with the program (D'Ailly, 2004). The Color-Naming task was used to test the effect of choice by randomly assigning the children to one of four conditions: 1) Self-choice group, 2) teacher-choice group, 3) computer-choice group, and 4) no-choice control group. Finally, the Number-Naming task was used to test the effect of choice in

the absence of an external pressure condition (no test), assess students' self-reported interest level, and measure the effort students were willing to put forth in the absence of tests.

Before the presentation of the learning materials, students were asked to rate their level of confidence in their ability to learn the foreign language and their level of interest in learning (D'Ailly, 2004). For the Color-Naming task, students were randomly assigned to one of the previously mentioned experimental conditions. For the self-choice group, students were presented with 12 color patches and were told, "You have a choice of which eight colors you will learn," with the sentence "You have a choice," appearing on the monitor in red. They were then directed to use the mouse to choose eight colors, which later appeared in their learning session. Students in the teacher-choice and the computer-choice condition were also presented with twelve color patches, but they were told either their home room teacher or the computer had chosen eight colors out of the twelve for them to learn. Students in the control condition were simply shown eight color patches on the monitor and were told, "These are the eight colors you will learn." Except for the self-choice group where the children selected their own eight colors, the computer program randomly selected eight out of the twelve possibilities for each individual student to learn. After the Color-Naming session, students were asked to rate their level of interest in learning the eight color names and they took a test that measured their learning outcomes. Finally, for the Number-Naming task students were explicitly told that there will be no test in this task. Students started by rating their level of interest then proceeded to learn the number names. They were in the same condition groups as in the Color-Naming task.

According to D'Ailly (2004), results of the experiments show that provision of choice did not impact students' learning outcomes, level of interest, or exerted effort. The author proposes two possible explanations of the results. One possibility is that the manipulation employed in the experiments was not strong enough to result in different levels of perceived autonomy in different students. The second possibility is that even though there is a difference in students' perceived autonomy, it does not create important differences in students' motivation. Also, the fact that most students reported high levels of interest on the computerized learning tasks mediated the effect of choice. Thus, personal choice as an intervention may only be relevant in a learning context where it is able, and the circumstance requires it, to elicit a higher level of interest in students. In short, the results from the present study cast doubt on the generalized and assumed power of making personal choices in students' learning environment.

Because previous studies on the role of choice in motivation and learning have confounded the effects of choice and interest, Flowerday, Schraw, and Stevens (2004) did a study where they tested the impact of each construct separately, to make sure that results on motivation are due to choice only and not interest instead. In the study, readers were asked to rate their interest on a variety of topics and then choose between two packets of reading materials without knowing the content. The purpose behind this manipulation was to ensure that individuals were given a choice that was not confounded by interest. Specifically, the study tested the effects of choice, topic interest, and situational interest on reading engagement, attitude, and learning. Two experiments were done and two types of interest were tested: topic interest and situational interest. While topic interest (personal interest) is stable, content-specific, based on pre-existing

knowledge, and is important to sustain attention, situational interest is short-lived, context-dependent, based on spontaneous engagement and novelty, and is important to catch attention. Thus, situational interest precedes and facilitates topic interest.

In experiment 1, participants had to complete identical tasks which consisted of the following steps: completing a pre-reading topic interest index, reading a two-page essay, completing a post-reading interest inventory, taking a multiple–choice test, writing two essays; the first a two-page response paper describing the main ideas of the text (content essay), the second a description of personal reactions and feelings caused by the readings (personal essay), and finally completing an attitude checklist (Flowerday et. al, 2004).

Ninety eight undergraduate students enrolled in an educational psychology course at a major Midwestern university were randomly divided into two groups: experimental group (choice) and control group (no choice) (Flowerday et. al, 2004). The experimental group was offered a choice between two packets of reading materials; Packets A and B, while the control group was assigned either packets directly. The content of both packets used by all of the participants was exactly the same; but participants were not aware of that. Thus, all of the participants read the same essay titled Winter Depression: A Case of being SAD. Even the other nine titles in the pre-reading interest index were distracters.

Experiment 2 was designed based on the results of Experiment 1, with the purpose of replicating it to further investigate specific aspects of the choice and interest relationship (Flowerday et. al, 2004). Two changes were made to the materials of Experiment 1. First, the text used in Experiment 2 had the same topic but was made less

technical and dry and included more interesting information. Second, the multiple-choice

test items were rewritten to add questions related to the new text. The rest of the materials

and procedures were identical to those in Experiment 1. Participants were 106 college

undergraduate students of educational psychology at a large Midwestern university.

Flowerday et. al (2004) reported that choice, topic interest, and situational interest

had no effect on the multiple-choice test of facts and main ideas because surface learning

is not affected by choice and interest. It was also found that situational interest had more

salient effects than topic interest and choice. Also, the effects of topic interest

disappeared when situational interest was considered. Most importantly, choice had little

impact on engagement and attitude while situational interest had a strong one. Further,

when students were allowed to choose a packet to work with, their performance on

content essays was poorer. The authors concluded that previous positive effects of choice

found in previous research may be due to the confounding effects of interest and not

merely choice itself.

To address the controversy surrounding the value of offering choices to increase

motivation, Katz and Assor (2007) reviewed the related literature, including the studies

summarized above.   The authors explain that the lack of positive choice effects in such

studies appear to involve the act of picking rather than choosing. While "choosing"

permits a meaningful realization of students' individual preferences and desires,

"picking" does not allow for the expression of such constructs because the choices

provided would not be personally relevant to students. That is, in the studies summarized

above, participants were provided with options that were not interesting or of personal

relevance to them; therefore, participants "picked" options but did not "choose". The

authors suggest that in order for choice to have positive effects on motivation, the options should differ in terms of their importance to the participants, so that the chooser finds at least one of them to be more relevant, interesting, or important.

Choice and First Language Reading Motivation

According to Cambria and Guthrie (2010), good reading consists of two major components: skill and will. On one hand, the skill part includes factors like phonemic awareness, phonics, word recognition, vocabulary, and simple comprehension. On the other hand, the will part is the motivation to read. Though having the skill is an important part of being able to read, a student cannot become a good reader without will power. Such will has a great role in determining how widely and frequently students read, and whether they enjoy reading and benefit from it. The writers point out a disappointing fact that despite the significance of the will part, it is often the most neglected aspect in reading instruction.

Cambria and Guthrie (2010) define reading motivation as the beliefs, values, and behaviors related to reading. They postulate that most teachers think that a motivated student is one who enjoys reading; but interest and enjoyment are only one of three aspects that the definition encompasses. In addition to interest, there is dedication, or the belief that reading is important, and confidence, or the "I can do it" belief.

Numerous interconnected factors influence students' motivation to read, but some elements have stood out in the literature (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie & Cox, 2001). Such factors include interest in reading topics and materials, access to books suitable to students' cultural identities, engaging in meaningful social

interactions with peers, and having texts that match students' instructional levels. Most importantly, providing choice of reading materials has been identified as a powerful factor that increases students' reading motivation by giving them a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning.

Several studies were conducted to study the impact of choice on reading motivation and/or engagement. Miller (2015) did a self-study to examine the relationship between small, differentiated reading groups and her fourth-grade students' reading motivation. The study focused on how students' reading motivation was influenced by the use of four basic instructional practices which are: offering opportunities for student choice, employing culturally relevant pedagogy, using homogeneous groupings which match students with texts suitable to their levels, and providing chances for social interaction about a common text. For the purpose of the study, the author examined her own process of implementing the reading groups through two cycles of action research.

The first cycle lasted for a month and examined three of the four key concepts; emphasizing culturally-relevant texts and excluding the provision of choice (Miller, 2015). The teacher worked with her students on the writings of a nationally-known Mexican-American author. She employed a daily reading workshop structure which included 20-minute mini-lessons to model reading comprehension strategies. Students were divided into four reading groups; each of which read different works of the author that are appropriate to their level. While the teacher met with each reading group, the other groups were either working independently on one of several options: their reading and assignment for their particular book club; reading an independent, leveled book that they had chosen; taking a computer quiz on their independent reading book; or

completing weekly word-study work. At the end of this cycle, the author of the books read visited the classroom and discussed the books with the students.

Based on the findings from Cycle 1, Cycle 2 emphasized social interaction and differentiation and introduced opportunities for choice as a key factor, while culturally-relevant texts were de-emphasized (Miller, 2015). The teacher selected four books for each group to choose from. Because findings from Cycle 1 suggested that students' engagement and motivation were promoted by a personal connection to the author, the teacher provided context and personal details about the authors of the four books offered. After being introduced to the books and browsing through them, each student in every group ranked three top choices and the most highly ranked book was used by the whole group.

Data were collected through several instruments (Miller, 2015). The Motivations for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) was administered to the students at the beginning and the end of the study. The teacher kept a professional journal to document the process of planning and implementing the reading groups; focusing mainly on students' motivation. At the end of Cycle 1, two students were interviewed about their experiences in the reading workshops and the reading groups. After the author's visit, the teacher collected students' written reflections. She also collected written reflections from students in two reading groups about what they thought was good and what needed to be changed. Cycle 2 was planned and refined based on these data, and at the end of it one of the groups was interviewed about their book choices. In addition, the school's principal observed the class once during each cycle.

Data analysis suggested that book choice in the second cycle was an important contributor to students' reading motivation and engagement (Miller, 2015). It was noticed that students were excited about choosing books on their own. They took it seriously and took their time to read a few pages of the books before they made their choices. The teacher concluded that choice of reading materials, when mediated by guidance from a trusted peer or mentor, was a significant factor that increased students' reading motivation.

In another study, Jones and Brown (2001) investigated the effects of reading e-books on third-grade students' reading engagement. Part of their study examined how such reading engagement is affected by providing choice of e-books. Participants were twenty two third graders at an urban school in the southeast region of the United States. Students were homogenously divided into four groups depending on their reading level, with a mixture of males and females in each group. The study proceeded in three separate phases which differed in terms of the books read and their format (print or electronic).

In Phase I, students read a traditional print version of the book The Yellow House Mystery (Jones & Brown, 2001). They read aloud in their respective groups using a process called "bump reading" through which one student reads aloud for as long as he/she wishes and then chooses another student in the group to read. After reading the first two chapters of the book, the groups were given an activity to measure their comprehension and prediction skills. Students then read chapter three silently and took another comprehension test and filled an enjoyment survey about all three chapters.

In Phase II, students accessed the website Raz-kids.com which has a library of approximately 100 titles grouped by reading level (Jones & Brown, 2001). Each title could be accessed as an audio-book or a text e-book. After teaching the students how to use the website and its features, they were asked to rejoin their reading groups and "bump-read" The Mystery Wind from the website. One student read at a time, and only the student reading was allowed to use the online features of the website while the others read along silently. Like in Phase I, students completed a comprehension test and an enjoyment survey at the end of the phase. In phase III, students "bump-read" a book of their choice form the website following the same procedures of Phase II. The survey taken after Phase III included items about the opportunity to choose books from the website.

Jones and Brown (2001) found a strong correlation between the students' preferences for a choice of books and their enjoyment of the final e-book they chose. This suggests that students' reading motivation and engagement are increased when they were offered a choice of online reading materials. Thus, when e-books are combined with the opportunity to choose books, students are highly motivated to read.

Similarly, Hall, Hedrick, and Williams (2014), designed an in-school independent reading (ISIR) project in which students were provided with opportunities to choose books, listen to music while reading, and engage in book talks. The study was conducted in a grade-three classroom at a school in the southeastern United States. Twenty one students participated. The teacher used a reader's workshop model which included time for ISIR. The teacher asked students to choose books that matched their levels of reading. The researchers adopted the premise that students are more likely to be more involved

and spend more time reading when they are offered book choices which relate to their personal interests. Consequently, they collected data about the participants' reading interests through interest inventories at the beginning of the study. Around four books were ordered for each student, with matching interests and reading levels. To keep up with the goal of providing book choices, students were not required to read the books ordered just for them, but they usually selected those books. Students were unobtrusively observed by the authors who collected field notes and cross-checked findings throughout the study.

The findings suggested that provision of choice of reading materials during ISIR enhanced students' reading motivation and involvement (Hall et. al, 2014). It was concluded that by maximizing students' opportunities to choose books and make decisions about their reading, teachers would be giving them ownership in the classroom, thus empowering them as learners. An interesting finding was that even though the classroom's library was already fairly large, students were excited about the addition of high-interest books which match their reading levels. This reinforces the importance of offering students choices that are interesting and suitable to their levels; instead of asking them to "pick" from a variety of uninteresting choices.

In a significant study, Schraw, Flowerday, and Reisetter (1998) did two experiments to investigate the impact of choice on college students' cognitive and affective engagement during reading. They aimed at clarifying the potentially separable effects of choice on affective and cognitive engagement; especially because existing research suggested that choice positively influences the former without necessarily

affecting the latter. Two experiments were conducted by using seven measures of cognitive and affective engagement.

Seventy eight college undergraduate students of educational psychology were randomly divided into three groups: unrestricted choice, denied choice, and control group (Schraw et. al, 1998). The unrestricted-choice group chose from three texts. The denied-choice group was assigned a text after being fictitiously informed that it was the only choice left since other groups elected the other two texts. The control group was assigned a text without any instructions. Because participants most frequently selected the Winter Depression story, only the data related to this story were used in the statistical analyses of Experiment 1. Also, the denied-choice and the control groups were assigned the same story about Winter Depression.

The three groups followed identical procedures (Schraw et. al, 1998). Each text used had an18-item multiple-choice test which assessed the understanding of main ideas included in the story. After receiving or choosing the packets (including the texts), individuals completed a 13-item desire-for-control scale and were then given as much time as they needed to read the text as carefully as possible. Students next completed the interest questionnaire followed by a two-page reaction essay in which they wrote about what they thought the story meant and what kind of personal thoughts and feelings it evoked. Finally, students completed a 12-item attitude checklist which assessed twelve aspects of their affective engagement including enjoyment, satisfaction, effort, deep processing, motivation, fairness, and sense of self-control.

Results showed that with respect to desire for control, interest, multiple-choice test performance, and essay responses, there were no differences among the three groups (Schraw et. al, 1998). The three groups differed on only two of the twelve items on the attitudes checklist, whereby the control group reported feeling less control than the other two groups which did not differ on any of the twelve items. These findings show that the three groups did not differ in terms of cognitive engagement. Surprisingly however, the results of the attitude checklist demonstrated that denying choice might improve attitudes compared to the control group. The authors hypothesized that maybe participants believed they were helping the researchers by reading an undesirable text.

Because Experiment 1 demonstrated few differences among the three groups, Schraw et. al (1998) conducted a second experiment to examine two aspects of the outcomes in more detail. The first aspect is related to the effect of denied-choice. In Experiment 1, some individuals might have concluded that they were providing help to the researchers by reading the only remaining packet, which could mask potentially negative effects of denied choice. Thus, Experiment 2 made denied choices more salient by dividing participants into two groups: one was allowed a choice between two different packets (texts) and the other was just assigned a text. The researchers reasoned that such manipulation would drive the denied-choice group to feel dissatisfied. The second aspect has to do with conducting a more statistically powerful study by increasing the number of participants. Thus, Experiment 2 included two groups with around sixty participants in each.

121 college undergraduate students of educational psychology participated in Experiment 2 (Schraw et. al, 1998). They were randomly selected and divided into two

groups: choice group and denied-choice group. Materials were identical to those used in Experiment 1, except for two minor changes. First, participants had to choose between two rather than three texts. Second, participants wrote two essays, Essay 1 was the same as in Experiment 1 (personal reaction) while Essay 2 was about describing personal reactions to participating in the experiment. 40% of the participants were assigned to the denied-choice group and the remaining 60% received the choice condition. In the choice group, participants were asked to select between the Winter Depression and The Burning of Kuwait stories based on one-sentence descriptors written on the cover of the packets. Henceforth, procedures were identical to Experiment 1 with the addition of writing Essay 2.

Schraw et. al (1998) found several differences between the two groups. While individuals in the denied-choice group demonstrated more negative reactions, participants in the choice group reported more interest in the story and had more positive comments about the choice format and the participation in the study. Also, individuals in the choice group reported more favorable reactions on five questions from the attitudes checklist compared with the denied-choice group. These findings demonstrate that receiving choice of reading materials enhances reading engagement.

Choice and EFL Reading Motivation

After reviewing the literature, it was noticed that a few studies directly test the effect of choice on motivation. Usually, choice is tested as an element within a wider model, like Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) for example, or it is studied just as an additional element to be tested; without being the major focus of the study. This

is especially true in the case of second language reading motivation; where studies which even tangentially test choice are few.

In one study that directly investigated the role of choice of reading material on EFL reading motivation, Gomez (2016) studied how text selection processes influenced learning and acquisition in terms of motivation, perceptions, and opinions towards reading in English. Adult students in a private language institution in Columbia were taught reading strategies and offered choices of articles to read. The reading options were set by the teachers based on the students' interests and proficiency levels. Students' performance was assessed through comprehension questions and data about their motivation were collected through surveys, observations, and video recordings in class. It was found that offering students opportunities for self-selected reading material increased their reading motivation and made their learning experiences richer and more comprehensive.

Conditions for Successful Choice Provision

The controversy surrounding the role of choice in motivation is three-fold (Katz & Assor, 2007). First, there are inconsistent research findings. Second, studies with negative or neutral results appeared to involve the act of "picking" and not "choosing". And third, it was found that in some studies, the positive results yielded did not result from choice itself but from the conditions under which it was offered.

The theoretical framework most commonly used to describe conditions that make choice beneficial is the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Katz & Assor, 2007). According to the SDT, choice is motivating when it meets the three needs of autonomy,

competence, and relevance. Autonomy-enhancing choices encourage students' ownership of form, environment, and learning. Competence-enhancing choices are matched to the students' age, cognitive abilities, and perceived competence in the domain in which the choice is offered. That is, the number of choices offered and the difficulty of the task should neither overwhelm nor fail to impress students. As for relatedness-enhancing choices, they are aligned with the students' cultural values, interests, and goals.

Conditions that render choice beneficial can be identified by combining the SDT framework, the results of the meta-analysis done by Patall et. al (2008) and the reviews of literature done by Katz and Assor (2007) and Thompson and Beymer (2015). Based on the previous sources, the effect of choice on intrinsic motivation is stronger when:

1. Choices are relevant to students' personal interests, values, and goals
2. Choices are optimally challenging to students and matched to their abilities and Zone of Proximal Deficiency (ZPD)
3. Offering two to four successive choices that are similar in difficulty level but different in terms of their importance to the student (so that he/she finds at least one of them to be more interesting, relevant, or important)
4. Opportunities for choice minimize social comparison and maximize peer acceptance and empathy.
5. Rewards are not given after choice

Taking the above conditions into consideration, a reading choice unit was designed and taught to students with the aim of increasing their reading motivation and enjoyment. A good example that was followed is Morgan and Wagner's (2013) three-week choice

reading unit which was implemented in two high-school classes with a total of fifty four students. Being done on university students, the study would be an attempt to go against the contradiction that teachers in general decrease chances for choice and autonomy as students advance in their grade levels despite the notion that intrinsic motivation decreases as they grow older (Thompson & Beymer, 2015). That is, working with Freshmen university students, the present study will be addressing this contradiction by applying the choice reading unit to enhance their intrinsic reading motivation.

Driven by the lack of engagement displayed by students, Morgan and Wagner (2013) investigated how offering reading choices might support their reading motivation. They designed a three-week choice reading unit where fifty four high-school students had the chance to choose which books to read. The teacher, Wagner, taught the unit through 10-15 minute mini-lessons during which a certain concept about reading was explained. The following concepts were taught to students: point of view, conflict, plot, direct/indirect characterization, mood/tone, flashback/foreshadow, and irony.

In each mini-lesson, students were asked to keep journals to take notes and make connections to their chosen readings (Morgan & Wagner, 2013). Following each mini-lesson, students read through the Reading Workshop format and Wagner conferred with them in one-on-one conferences where books and readings were discussed. Students were asked to bring their books to class with them and read every night for thirty minutes as homework. They chose books from libraries or their personal collections. Four of the students struggled with reading because they chose wrong books in terms of relevance and level, so Wagner helped them choose more suitable books based on trial and adjustment. For assessment, Wagner conferred with individual students instead of giving

quizzes or tests, which allowed him to talk to them about their books and monitor their application of the mini-lessons. He took notes about each student's progress on a chart that included each student's book title, current page, and concept discussed during the conference.

It was found that choice of reading material engaged the students and helped them have more control over their reading (Morgan & Wagner, 2013). Students enjoyed the process of conferencing and were more motivated to read and write in their journals about the concepts learned in mini-lessons, as opposed to writing long book reports. Students' engagement in the conferences was evident as they were excited about the readings and successfully applying the learned concepts. In their journals, they expressed positive feelings about being able to work on books of their own choice and asked the teacher to do that more often.

Motivation from a Complex Systems Theory Perspective

Most of the research done on motivation in language learning classrooms was in the form of large scale quantitative studies which held reductionist views of motivation (Pigott, 2012; Sampson, 2015). According to Sampson (2015), such studies provide a limited understanding of classroom language learning motivation for two main reasons. First, the collection of responses using quantitative methods like questionnaires is limited by the imagination of the researchers who develop the scales and thus ignores the multi-faceted nature of second language (L2) motivation. Second, studying groups of students after removing them from the natural learning contexts disregards motivation as being shaped by the group itself. Given that recent approaches to motivation view it as

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contingent on interpersonal interaction and social contexts (Pigott, 2012), it is necessary

to do research on the naturally-occurring day-to-day experiences of learners in their

classrooms and to qualitatively explore the complex conditions operating in EFL

classrooms.

To address these limitations and highlight how motivation *emerges* and interacts

with students in context, there is a need for a bottom-up approach investigating particular

individuals in particular contexts (Pigott, 2012). More specifically, what is needed is

adopting an understanding of motivation as a dynamic, contextual construct that

integrates various factors related to learners, learning tasks, and learning environments,

into one complex system (Sampson, 2015). One way to do this is to study motivation in

light of the Complex Systems Theory (CST) (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

A complex system is large network of components which involves complex

collective behaviors, sophisticated information processing, and adaptation through

learning or evolution (Mitchell, 2009 as cited in Sampson, 2015). Such complex system

constitutes of multiple agents constantly interacting and co-adapting, whereby a change

in one system leads to a change in another (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). Most

importantly, complex systems are "open" because they receive and give energy in

interaction with their environment, therefore, we have to consider agents within the

context and not separately. From a CST perspective, language learning motivation is, to

an extent, the function of context, because there is a contextualized, shared formation of

motivation across learners in learning groups (Sampson, 2015). Qualitative research

methods well serve the understanding of language as a complex dynamic system, in the

sense that they take into consideration the wholeness and situatedness of individuals in social scenes and contexts (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

Sampson (2015) worked under the CST framework to trace the motivational emergence and development in an English language classroom in Japan. The study was driven by the commonly acknowledged demotivation of Japanese EFL learners who struggle to find motivation and negatively perceive classroom learning experiences due to dominance of passive learning, using uninteresting materials, and focus on examinations. Qualitative longitudinal research was done over a year on a class of 40 Japanese students aged 15-16 years at a college of technology in Japan. The researcher was the teacher for one of the three weekly English lessons and homeroom period in this class. Participants were chosen by purposeful sampling because they had the needed proficiency levels that would allow for examining qualitative dynamics.

The English lessons were designed as a task-based course using a story-themed textbook which focused on using English professionally and communicatively (Sampson, 2015).Students were randomly divided into groups of four in which they collaboratively worked on tasks which required them to use English to communicate about technology and the development of new products; as if they were in a work context. The whole course required students to work in groups where each member develops an original technological product. Then, each group chooses one of these products to go into production and defend their choice in a poster-presentation session. After that, they develop and conduct a survey to improve their products. Finally, during the final six weeks of the course, the groups create videos of short advertisements where they try to sell their products.

The study employed qualitative methods of data collection to investigate the lived experiences and perceptions of the participants (Sampson, 2015). Introspective journals were used to obtain insightful data from the students without hindering their curricular progress. Students wrote in their learning journals at the end of each session over a year and the researcher kept his own journal to record his perceptions of events and developments taking place in the classroom. Because it is not feasible to investigate all the interconnecting systems at all timescales, the researcher confined the analysis to data from the six-week final project.

The textual data were originally produced and analyzed in Japanese then later translated and further analyzed in English for presentation (Sampson, 2015). Iterative macro-analysis of the data was used, where the researcher looked for regularities and repetitions in the texts, identified broad emergent themes from a selection of texts, then compared them with those from another selection. The data about the final session of the year (the presentations) suggested a very novel, positive motivational outcome which is similar to the concept of emergence from CST. Thus, using Retrodictive qualitative modeling (Dörnyei, 2011), the researcher traced the emergence of the positive motivational outcome at the end, identified the main forms of interactions between systems over the six weeks, and applied CST to understand the conditions of the emergence revealed.

Results confirmed the emergence of motivation in the final lesson and several interactions were traced in the context of emergence (Sampson, 2015). Interactions between students and task requirements led to the formation of group roles based on the qualifications of each member. Also, there were supportive interactions between the

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students who addressed concerns about the challenges of the tasks. The researcher used three principles from CST to explain the emergence of the final positive outcome: co-adaptation, directed motivational current, and diversity and redundancy. The Co-adaptation principle explains how contexts imposed requirements on the agents (participants), who adapted to the challenges by supporting each other and finding suitable roles; which resulted in a sense of ability and achievement. Directed motivational currents, or heightened periods of motivation for second language learners, were evident in the class. Finally, signs of diversity, redundancy, neighbor interactions, and distributed control were evident throughout the study, even though the researcher did not explicitly create conditions to encourage emergence.

Conclusions

This review of literature accentuates the importance of observing the five different conditions to ensure positive choice outcomes, especially given the inconsistency in research results about the efficiency of choice provision (Katz & Assor, 2007; Patall, 2013). The study was done with college students in EFL contexts because the great majority of studies on choice and reading motivation were done with elementary and middle school students in L1 contexts (Flowerday, Schraw, Stevens, 2004; Hall, Hedrick, & Williams, 2014; Jones & Brown, 2011; Miller, 2015; Palmer, Codling, & Gambrell, 1994; Schraw, Flowerday, & Reisetter, 1998). Similarly, a qualitative research design was adopted with the CST as a theoretical framework to allow for the exploration of reading motivation as a dynamic, contextual construct that integrates various factors

related to learners, learning tasks, and learning environments, into one complex system

(Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Pigott, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design. Qualitative research is any research that produces findings without using statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Atkins & Wallace, 2012; Lichtman, 2006). There are several traditions, approaches, and methods under qualitative research. The most common ones are ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, and case study. However, the aims of qualitative research in education are the same regardless of the approach. These aims focus on studying phenomena in a naturalistic manner, looking at the whole of things, hearing the voices of those studied, and using the researcher as a channel for the information. In addition, data collected in qualitative research are mostly textual and thus results heavily depend on words.

This study adopted the grounded theory approach of qualitative research. Grounded theory reflects inductive reasoning in the sense that the theory emanates from the data instead of using the data to test a specific theory (Atkins & Wallace, 2012; Lichtman, 2006). In specific, the theoretical framework used is the Complex Systems Theory (CST) which enables the investigation of the phenomenon as it occurs in natural contexts and provides extensive textual data for thorough analysis to form the theory. Instead of considering motivation as a simple construct resulting from cause-effect relationships, CST allows exploration of reading motivation as a dynamic, contextual construct that integrates various factors related to learners, learning tasks, and learning environments, into one complex system (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). Adopting

this methodology helps in exploring the development of the students' reading motivation in natural EFL contexts and in trying to understand what factors contributed to this development.

Even though this study adopts the grounded theory approach of qualitative research, it also adheres to criteria that are specific to using the CST in particular. The main goal behind using the CST is adopting a flexible research approach through which change could be introduced and explored dynamically (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). As such, to make CST applicable in classroom research, data collection, and data analysis, the present study observed the following CST criteria: focus on change, focus on a specific level of complexity, attention to initial conditions, seeking attractor states, and viewing research as co-adaptation. These criteria are revisited in the Results and Discussion section to reframe the study's results within the CST perspective.

Focus on change

CST focuses on how introducing "change" affects the whole system (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). In this study, offering choice of reading material is the change and the whole system is reading motivation. CST also mandates that the objectives of the introduced change be stated clearly. In the present study, the objectives center around exploring the development of students' reading motivation as a result of introducing choice. In a classroom-based study like the present one, the researcher is also a part of this change. Thus, researcher journals are written to provide additional insights about the progress of the study and the change taking place.

Focus on a specific level of complexity

Because in CST it is impossible to know all the influences that make up the systems under study, the focus is on how introduced change impacts one particular level of the system (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). Accordingly, the present study focuses on how introducing choice (as change) affects the classroom and the students particularly. This is especially convenient in this study because the aim is not to generalize results but rather is to explore a specific phenomenon in a specific context only (Lichtman, 2006).

Attention to initial conditions

The initial state of the system before introducing change is of major significance since it influences the trajectory of future change, and as such, the change introduced is heavily dependent on initial conditions (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). To meet this criterion, a detailed description of the participants and the initial levels of their reading motivation is provided in the results and discussions section of this thesis. This description was formed based on data collected using a Reading Interest Inventory (RII), Adults Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS), and a focus group interview conducted prior to introducing the intervention.

Seeking attractor states

Attractor states are ones which the system prefers at particular moments in time and lead to change and development (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). In this study,

attractors and attractor states are simply the different factors influencing the students'

reading motivation at different points in time. Some of these attractors are reading

material, tasks required from students, teaching practices employed in class, and several

other factors. All of the attractors identified in the present study are described and

explained in detail in the results and discussion section of this thesis.

Research as co-adaptation

When working under the CST framework and taking initial states as a starting

point, the influence of introducing change should be explored and viewed as co-

adaptation between the various agents involved in the system, as they adapt dynamically

with each other over the course of the project (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). Because

the teacher-researcher is part of the system under study and will affect its members and

processes, researcher journals are used to focus on this influence. While it is important to

consider how both introduced change and interactions between agents affect a classroom

system as a whole, it is impossible to trace all the factors influencing the system and

motivation. Thus, this study does not explicitly seek to understand co-adaptation across

the whole classroom system. Instead, it seeks a dynamic holistic approach to

conceptualizing motivation by examining data about the different interactions.

Participants: Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedures

The population from which the sample was drawn is college learners of English

as a Foreign Language (EFL) in a private Lebanese university. These learners take

intensive English courses as part of their course programs. Part of the intensive English

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courses includes teaching reading and reading skills. These courses are given for six hours, four days a week, over the period of fifteen weeks.

The sample consists of four students, two males and two females, who are former students of the researcher from courses previous to this study. Given that the study is qualitative in nature, non-random purposive sampling is used to select participants and allow for an in-depth understanding of the research questions posed. Using this sampling method is not considered a limitation because the intention of this study is not to draw statistically- supported generalizations to larger groups but to explore in detail the development of reading motivation in specific cases (Atkins & Wallace, 2012, Lichtman, 2006).

Participants were selected based on several criteria and considerations. A total of three eligibility criteria were set, in accordance with the study's purposes and data collection and analysis requirements. The first and most important criterion is related to English language proficiency. Because the main tool for data collection is semi-structured interviews, participants had to be able to speak fluently and elaborately in order to provide thick and insightful data. As such, e0ligible participants had to be at the Advanced Mid sublevel of proficiency, represented by TOEFL scores between 72 and 94 or IELTS scores between 5.5 and 6.0 (ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, 2012). Speakers at the Advanced Mid sublevel are able to easily and confidently handle a large number of communicative tasks, participating actively in exchanges on a variety of formal and informal topics. Most importantly, such speakers are able to contribute to conversations with much accuracy, clarity, and precision, and they convey their intended messages

without misrepresentation or confusion. They can also elaborate and provide more details when required to.

The remaining two eligibility criteria are related to time availability and agreement to tape recording. Chosen participants were available at a set time each week from Monday through Thursday (four days a week), at the rate of four sessions of one hour each over a period of three weeks. The time was agreed upon based on the students' and the researcher's availability, without causing any inconveniences to the students. In addition, eligible students had consented on being tape recorded.

Recruitment and sampling took place in a series of steps. To begin with, a group of fifteen of my previous students was identified as eligible to participate in the study, based on my experiences with them. Recruitment emails were sent and due to the low response rate, I contacted the eligible participants in person. Based on their matching time availability and agreement to participate in the study, four participants were recruited. A set time for class meetings was agreed upon and the study proceeded.

Data Collection Tools

The main instrument of data collection in this study is document and media analysis. Several tools were used to collect different data. In total, the study employs six different tools for data collection which are: The Reading Interest Inventory (RII), Adult Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS), semi-structured and focus group interviews, a reading observation tool, and researcher journals and observation reports.

The Reading Interest Inventory (RII)

One of the conditions to ensure a positive influence of choice on motivation is that the offered choices (here reading material) are personally relevant and interesting for the students (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). This is especially important to avoid the "picking" effect, which refers to choosing reading material that is not interesting and would prevent choice from yielding positive results (Katz & Assor, 2007). Consequently, the Reading Interest Inventory (RII) is used to identify students' reading interests, specifically genre, and provide them with personally relevant and interesting choices. Another reason behind using the RII is gaining information about the original state of the system, which is one of the criteria for working under the CST framework (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). The RII used in this study (Appendix A) is adapted from Miller's (2010) Interest Inventory and Renzulli's (1997) Interest-A-Lyzer. It includes questions about students' favorite genres and some of their reading habits.

The Adult Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS)

The Adult Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS) (see appendix B) developed by Schutte and Malouff (2007) was administered as pre and post tests to provide data that would help in exploring any change in students' reading motivation. Similar to the RII, the ARMS administered at the beginning of the study was another way to gather information about the original state of the system, which is one of the criteria for working under the CST framework (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014).

Researcher journals and observation reports

In class, a reading observation tool was used to observe students especially while choosing and reading the stories. In addition, researcher journals and observation reports (with the help of the tool) were written after each session. Writing researcher journals is one of the criteria for working under the CST framework, because the researcher is part of the system studied (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014).

Interviews

Weekly interviews and pre and post focus group interviews were held and recorded with the students. The weekly interviews were the major means of collecting data about the development of the students' reading motivation as a result of offering choice of reading material.

Forming suitable interview questions that would serve the research questions and help in exploring the students' reading motivation was a challenging task. To begin with, one of the most widely used instruments to measure reading motivation has been the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997). This instrument was the starting point in choosing a measure for reading motivation in this study. After that, extensive literature on the nature of reading motivation and how it was studied over the years was reviewed. This review yielded the conclusion that interview questions should be formulated based on dimensions of reading motivation and that what can be considered as genuine reading motivation dimensions are the following seven constructs: curiosity, involvement, competition, recognition, grades, compliance, and

work avoidance (Schiefele & Schaffner, 2016; Schiefele, Schaffner, Möller, Wigfield, Nolen, & Baker, 2012). However, given that students' performance in this study was not to be graded, the dimension of Grades was removed. This dimension is part of extrinsic reading motivation, and with its removal, the remaining six dimensions are split into only two dimensions of intrinsic reading motivation and four under extrinsic. Thus, to create more balance, another dimension of intrinsic reading motivation, preference for challenge, was added. Preference for challenge is included as one of the basic dimensions of reading motivation in Wigfield and Guthrie's MRQ (1997) and another highly cited article by Wang and Guthrie (2004).

After identifying the seven dimensions of reading motivation to use in the study, the definitions of the constructs and the interview questions were formed by combining input from three different sources. These are articles with comprehensive literature reviews about identifying and measuring reading motivation dimensions (Komiyama, 2013; Wang & Guthrie, 2004; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997). The questions (see Appendix C) were framed in a way that reflected both the definitions and the MRQ items. Appendix D shows a detailed table summarizing how the definitions and the questions were formed. Table 1 includes the final dimensions and definitions used. In addition to the fixed questions, other questions were asked based on students' experiences and input during the interviews, to learn more about their experiences and understand the factors contributing to their reading motivation.

Table 1

Reading motivation dimensions and their definitions

	Reading Motivation Dimension	Definition
Intrinsic Motivation	Curiosity	The desire to learn more about personally interesting topics
	Involvement	Getting lost in a story and gaining pleasure from reading it
	Preference for Challenge	Satisfaction from mastering or assimilating complex ideas in text and tasks
Extrinsic Motivation	Competition	The desire to outperform others in reading and reach higher levels of reading achievement than other students
	Compliance	The desire to read because of an external pressure or requirement
	Recognition	Gratification from receiving a tangible form of recognition for success in reading
	Reading Work Avoidance	The tendency to avoid reading-related work

In addition, two focus group interviews were held with the students. The first one was done before the beginning of the intervention and it aimed at gathering information about students' background, reading experiences, and expectations about the study; as part of focusing on initial conditions which is one of the criteria for working under the CST framework (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). The final focus group interview was done at the end of the study. It aimed at gaining data to compare between students' expectations and the actual results obtained, in addition to eliciting suggestions from

students and comparing them with recommendations from the literature. Even though the first and final group questions were not the same, data elicited gave insight about the study's outcomes and allowed for the desired comparison. Appendix E shows the pre and post focus group questions.

Data Collection Procedures

The first step in this study was preparing the reading material to be offered to students and designing the different lesson plans about narrative elements. An extensive description of these processes is provided in the Reading Choice Unit section below.

After preparing the reading choice unit and the reading material, recruitment of the study's participants began; following the steps and the eligibility criteria described earlier. This was done after securing approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the students. Written and confirmed consent was obtained from the students, who asked that their real names be used in reporting on the data.

In the first meeting held with the students, several steps were taken to meet the purpose of focusing on the original state of the system as a criterion for working under the CST framework (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). This meeting included a re-explanation of the study's purposes, procedures, and what is expected from the students. As for the steps taken in this meeting, first, the students filled the Reading Interest Inventory (RII) whereby they identified their favorite genre. Next, they completed the Adult Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS) which assesses their reading motivation before the intervention. After that, the first focus group interview was held with the four

participants. As mentioned earlier, this focus group aimed at collecting information about the original state of the system and the students' expectations about the study.

The following day after the first meeting with the students, the intervention began. I met with the students for three weeks from Monday through Thursday (four days a week), at the rate of four sessions of one hour each. Each week proceeded generally as follows: in the first session of the week a narrative element was introduced and students chose their stories and started reading. This means that the students had the opportunity to choose for three different times, and the number of options offered each time was three. The second and third sessions of each week were assigned for continued in-class reading, finishing the tasks and activities related to analyzing the target narrative element, and presenting the work, with open opportunities for discussion about the different stories. Students were observed in class while reading, with the help of the reading observation tool, and at the end of each session observation reports and researcher journals were written to reflect on the sessions and the students' experiences. The fourth day in every week was assigned for interviewing the students separately. In some cases, the fourth day in the week was used to continue presenting or finishing the assigned tasks, and the interview were held on different days. Researcher journals were also written after the interviews.

After finishing the reading choice unit, whereby students chose three different stories over three weeks, the final steps in the study were taken. The last day of meeting with the students included filling the ARMS as a post test after the intervention and a final focus group. As mentioned earlier, in this final focus group students were asked to compare between the expectations they set about the influence of choice at the beginning

of the study and their actual experiences. This final meeting with the students represented the end of the study, after which the process of data analysis began directly.

The Reading Choice Unit

The general goal targeted by the unit is narrative elements, specifically plot, setting, characters, theme, and point of view. Instead of giving the students reading material chosen by the teacher, they were allowed to choose their own short stories. Short stories were used instead of books or novels for several reasons. First, in order for choice to have positive effects, choice cycles should not be long and there should be a short period of time between each choice provision (Patall, 2008). Brevity of short stories facilitates this process as it would not take students a long time to read each story. For that purpose, the short stories chosen ranged in word count between a maximum of 4000 words and a minimum of 1000. Second, using short stories has several advantages in EFL contexts, such as linguistic, emotional, cognitive, and socio-cultural benefits (Adam, 2013; Khatib & Nasrollahi, 2012; Prinsloo, 2018).

Since short stories cover a wide variety of genres (Pasco, 1991; Pratt, 1981), it was necessary to narrow down the options of genre in order to select short stories to use in the study. To decide on the genres based on which to select short stories, two steps were taken. First, expert literature professors from the American University of Beirut and the Lebanese University were consulted on the subject. The professors suggested that the most commonly read genres are: action/adventure, comedy/humor, fairytales and fantasy, historical fiction, horror (or gothic literature), mystery/detective, and science fiction. Second, to relate the genre selection to the specific context of the study and the students

targeted, a survey was sent to English language instructors at the private university where the study took place. The instructors were asked to rate the students' preferences of the suggested genres based on their experiences with students at the university. Survey results identified four genres as the most preferred by students which are: action/adventure, fantasy/fairytales, horror, and mystery/detective. Accordingly, these four genres were chosen to be used in the study.

After deciding on the genres, the process of gathering reading material and short stories to offer students as choices began. The literature experts consulted with had suggested several famous titles and authors to begin with. Staring from there, there was an extensive process of collecting short stories under each of the specified genres. Because this was taking place before identifying participants and the genres they would choose, it was necessary to secure a sufficient number of short stories so that story options would be available for all students regardless of what genres they choose. The study had four participants, each participant had to choose a story on three different cycles (once a week over three weeks), each time there had to be three different options (from the same genre) to choose from, different from the options offered in previous rounds. Thus, nine stories were needed under each genre, yielding a total of thirty six short stories. However, to prepare for any unexpected problems, a total of fifty six short stories from the four different genres were secured. Appendix F shows the titles of these stories, author, and word count. The longest stories were used for the lesson about characters; those of medium length were used for plot and setting, and the shortest for theme and point of view. The short stories were obtained from online sources. All of the stories were copied to Microsoft Word Documents and adapted into the same format in

terms of font, size, and spacing. The cover page of each story included the title, author's

name, and a brief description which would help the students in making their choices. A

sample story is attached in Appendix G.

The target narrative elements that were taught in the study are plot, setting,

characters, theme, and point of view. In the first round of choice, students worked on plot

and setting. In the second, they worked on characters and in the final on theme and point

of view. A sample lesson plan is attached in Appendix H. In the first session of every

week, 15-minute mini-lessons about the target narrative element were taught. Then each

student was allowed to choose his/her own story from an array of three different options.

Tasks and activities were briefly explained before students started reading; so that they

know what to focus on while reading. Students started reading their stories in class, while

I observed them and did individual conferences with them. The following sessions

(second and third in each week) were assigned for continuing reading, working on the

tasks, and presenting their work. The fourth day was set for interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

This qualitative study aims at exploring the development of students' reading

motivation as a result of offering choice of reading material. As such, grounded theory

guided the process of data analysis. When using grounded theory approach, a specific

process of three-part coding is followed, involving open coding, axial coding, and

selective/synthetic (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lichtman, 2006). Open coding is the first

step whereby data is being "cracked open" as a means of identifying relevant categories.

Axial coding is used when categories are in an advanced stage of development, and

selective/synthetic coding is used when the "core category" or the one which correlates all other categories in the theory is identified and related to other categories. The goal behind these processes is to arrive at a limited number of themes (usually five or six) that summarize the study's most important findings (Lichtman, 2006).

While this study is qualitative in nature and employed grounded theory, the former steps of coding were not all followed as explained. The main reason behind this is that the major categories were already created in the study; which are the seven dimensions of reading motivation selected to create the interview questions; as explained in a previous part. That is, because the study was testing each of these seven dimensions, and because interview questions were divided according to these facets, coding did not start from scratch but from these facets which were considered categories to begin with. These seven facets or categories are curiosity, involvement, preference for challenge, competition, compliance, recognition, and reading work avoidance.

Data analysis started with these dimensions as a starting point. After transcribing all of the focus group and weekly interviews, the documents were printed, followed by coding and analysis. Coding data was organized according to choice cycles or rounds. That is, interviews from the first cycle or week were coded, then the second, then the third cycle. The following process was applied in analyzing the data in each of the three cycles. I read each participant's interview at a time, highlighting statements relating to any of the seven reading motivation dimensions. Each dimension was assigned a particular color (see Table 2). A separate document was created to include the specific quotes under each of the dimensions. This is because even though interview questions were addressed about the dimensions separately, the students' responses included mixed

statements relating to different dimensions. For example, even when the students were asked about their curiosity, some of their answers to these questions included statements that were coded under involvement or preference for challenge or any other facet. The same process was repeated for each of the participants' interviews in all three cycles. The result of this process was four different documents, each referring to one of the participants, with their statements relating to the different dimensions in the three different choice cycles. In parallel, the observation reports and researcher journal were also read several times; and any appropriate comments were added to the documents.

Table 2

Color codes for the reading motivation facets

Reading Motivation Facet - Category	Color
Curiosity	Green
Involvement	Yellow
Preference for Challenge	Orange
Competition	Blue
Compliance	Pink
Recognition	Red
Reading Work Avoidance	Purple

After grouping each of the participants' statements under each dimension across the three choice cycles in a separate document, the next step of data analysis began. A thick description of each of the participants' experiences regarding each of the

dimensions was written. These descriptions included an objective retelling of the student's experiences under each dimension and comparing these experiences among the three different choice rounds. If there were any differences in these experiences from cycle to cycle, these differences were described as well, with quotes and statements from the data. These thick descriptions still represented raw data; there was no *evidence* elicited at that point because I was still working with statements without reaching any conclusions about results.

I began to arrive at such conclusions after comparing the raw descriptions against each other. That is, after writing detailed and lengthy descriptions for each student accompanied with quotes and statements from the interviews, observation reports, and researcher journal, I reread these descriptions, focusing each dimension on its own, with the intention of comparing them among the participants. This comparison, working on each dimension separately, allowed me to arrive at general themes and conclusions about the study and the influence of the intervention. At this point, I was no longer dealing with codes or categories as raw data; instead, I was eliciting quotes from the data as *evidence* to support the conclusions and themes reached (Lichtman, 2006). More specifically, these processes of iterative and repetitive reading and comparing allowed the identification of the different factors contributing to the development of the students' reading motivation and clarified the role of choice.

These conclusions were reached but not reported on in an organized manner yet. Thus, the next step was reporting on the data by writing the Results and Discussions section, where each dimension of reading motivation was analyzed and reported on

separately, with findings and conclusions supported by appropriate evidence selected from the data.

In addition to the general categories represented by the seven different reading motivation dimensions, the iterative and repetitive reading of the data showed that there were statements that did not belong to any of these reading dimensions. To take these statements into account, sub-themes were created. First, there were sixteen different sub-themes; but not all of them were found in all three cycles and with all four interviews. Only six of these sub-themes were common across all participants in all three choice rounds. Compared to the original sixteen, these six sub-themes were more focused on during data analysis. With further processes of iterative and repetitive reading and analysis, it was found that two of these sub-themes were actually factors contributing to the development of the students' reading motivation. As a result, also the remaining four sub-themes were not considered as crucial to the study's purposes and research questions. Table 3 traces the original sub-themes and how they were minimized throughout the process of data analysis.

Table 3

Development and selection of sub-themes

Original 16 sub-themes		6 Common Sub-themes	Most important and indicative sub-themes
Expectations about choice	Teacher-related factors	During-reading strategies	Factors about the reading material themselves

Negative feelings while reading	Process of choosing	Factors about the reading material themselves	Factors about the tasks assigned to students
About making future choices	Factors about the tasks assigned to students	Direct comments about choice and its impact	
During-reading strategies	Value of reading	Process of choosing	
The desire to become readers	Socializing about the stories	Factors about the tasks assigned to students	
Factors about the reading material themselves	Personality traits	Performance indicators	
Choice giving a sense of responsibility	Efficacy/Confidence		
Direct comments about choice and its impact	Performance indicators		

As for the other data collection tools, they were used for different purposes. The RII, ARMS, and initial focus group interview were used to describe the original state of the system (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). The reading observation tool and the researcher journals were used as additional sources of data about the students and their reading motivation. However, the interviews remained the major source of data use because they were the most informative and indicative about the factors contributing to the development of the students' reading motivation.

To sum up, data analysis in the present study started at the end, that is, with the outcomes obtained, and then traced their emergence back to see which components of the complex system of motivation interacted together and how they led to the outcomes at hand (Lichtman, 2006). The motivational outcomes were traced by in-depth, iterative reading of the data, looking for regularities and repetitions to form themes and comparing them to each other to reach the final findings.

Trustworthiness Criteria

To ensure credibility in this qualitative research, insider checking was utilized with the participants to make sure that the researcher's analyses match what they actually meant. For transferability and confirmability, a thick, detailed description of the participants and the classroom contexts and procedures is provided. This is to provide sufficient and appropriate details that would make the study replicable in other contexts. Similarly, there is a description of any changes in the setting and how they affect the way the researcher approached the study; in order to ensure dependability.

Ethical Considerations

This study followed the Ethics Code for Conduct for Social Sciences Research adopted by the Institute Research Board (IRB) and the American University of Beirut (AUB). The present study did not pose any threats to the participants and it was not conducted until full approval was secured from the IRB at the American University of Beirut (AUB-IRB) and the private university where the study was held. Written and

informed consents were also obtained from the participants who had the right to withdraw from the study without any consequences.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Sources Used

Initially, the study employed six different tools for data collection. The Reading Interest Inventory (RII) was used to identify students' reading interests before the intervention. The Adult Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS) was administered as pre and post test. Interviews were held with students on a weekly basis and were recorded. In class, a Reading Observation Tool was used to observe students especially while choosing and reading the stories. In addition, researcher journals and observation reports (with the help of the tool) were written after each session.

It is important to mention that the major source of data which was most depended on is the interviews. Observation notes and researcher journals were not as informative about the different factors influencing students' reading motivation. However, data from the interviews provided deep insights about the development of the students' reading motivation and the different factors contributing to this development. Thus, input from observation notes and researcher journals was only used as confirmation for conclusions reached by analyzing the interview responses, when applicable.

The Original State of the System

This section describes the original state of the system as one of the criteria for working under the CST framework (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). In the first meeting with the students, all four of them were genuinely excited about the project, especially the

purpose behind it which is testing the effect of choice. As the researcher and teacher in this study, it was of my interest to create a pleasant atmosphere where students felt comfortable. This was not too challenging because all of the participants had been previous students of mine so we were accustomed to each other.

On the first day of the study's field work, the students participated in three different forms of data collection. First, they filled in the Reading Interest Inventory (RII) (Appendix A) in which they identified their genre preferences and answered general questions about their reading habits (time spent reading, number of owned books, preferred time to read, etc..). Then they completed the Adult Reading Motivation Scale (ARMS) (Appendix B) (Schutte & Malouff, 2007). Finally, they answered focus group questions for the greatest part of the session.

The students' answers on the RII show that they had very little to do with reading; they didn't read for fun and did not have it as a hobby or a habit. All of them indicated that they hadn't read any books in the past month and that they had zero to nine books at home. The only kind of reading the students knew is academic; the one they do for studying. This was noticeable because while filling in the RII, all of them asked if studying in their course books counted as reading or not. Their understanding of reading as being limited only or mainly to academic purposes was also manifested in their scores on the Reading to Do Well in Other Realms scale in the ARMS. All of the students had high scores on this scale (average = 4/5), which shows that they associated "reading" with what they do as studying for their courses at university and not any kind of habitual or recreational reading. After finishing the questionnaires, all of the students pointed out

that answering the questions made them aware of how little they read and that they should work on this issue.

The RII also allowed students to identify their favorite genres; based on which the story options were offered to them throughout the study. Each of the students chose a different genre; an element which added more interest and diversity to the study and the classroom's atmosphere. Ali chose action-adventure, Richard went for mystery-detective, Mira picked horror, and Nada opted for fantasy-fairytales.

The participants

Generally speaking, the participants were a group of high-achieving, distinguished, and polite students who share the common goal of maintaining distinction and a 4/4 GPA. Nada hadn't known Ali, Richard, and Mira before, but the latter three knew each other because they had been mates at the university ever since their first terms.

The students began the study with a range of different school experiences. Some experiences were common among all, and some hopes and expectations were shared by all four of them. However, despite the general similarities, each of them had unique experiences with particular instances standing out. The following sections include detailed descriptions of each student's profile in the initial conditions of the study, as individual parts of the whole system.

Ali. Ali is a second-year Banking and Finance student with a 4/4 GPA. His goal is maintaining this GPA by acing all of his courses, and he does not fail to do anything to

serve that purpose. Also, he takes pleasure in pursuing his current goal because he knows it is a stepping stone in reaching for higher goals.

Regarding school experiences, Ali had normal, traditional reading experiences at school. Throughout the focus group interview, he referred to both positive and negative school experiences in reading. He described some practices and factors that made such experiences positive. These practices are: having classroom discussions and sharing information and different perspectives about the texts, receiving positive feedback from teachers, and role-playing. As for his negative experiences, they were affected by several factors as well. First, teachers chose books and forced students to read them, which led to hating the lesson or the story altogether. Also, most teachers considered reading as an academic requirement without encouraging students to read for fun. Sometimes changing teachers he was used to negatively affected his motivation.

More insights about Ali's initial state at the beginning of the study and his views about reading were gained by analyzing his scores and responses in the ARMS. To start with, Ali got a score of 2.75/5 on the Reading as Part of Self scale. By taking a closer look at the scores of the separate items, it was noticed that there are high scores (Agree/4) on items expressing views about reading and low scores (Strongly disagree/1 and Disagree/2) on factual descriptions of himself as a reader and where reading stands in his life. This shows that he was aware of the importance of reading and wanted it to have a place in his life but did not consider himself a "reader". In addition, Ali's score in Reading Efficacy was high, 4.3/5, which shows his confidence in his reading ability. Similarly, he had a high score (4.6/5) on the scale of Reading for Recognition, meaning

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that he considered feedback as an important motivating factor; a finding which was confirmed by later data analysis.

   Richard. Like Ali, Richard is a second-year Banking and Finance student with a 4/4 GPA. Richard is a special student for a number of reasons related to both his personality and academic achievement. Having received his education in Sweden, Richard had had the most positive experiences in reading among the participants. Throughout the focus group interview, he did not refer to any negative experiences with reading; on the contrary, he often described such experiences as "interesting", "exciting", and "beneficial". He expressed how his experiences were "totally different", mentioning for example how he was offered choice of reading material in his classes in Sweden. Therefore, unlike the other participants, Richard had experienced the freedom to choose what to read in class. Richard also recalled working on stories of his own choice, where he had to write a paper about the book, its characters, problems, solutions, and his own reflection on it. Again, none of the other students reported experiencing similar activities at their schools.

   An interesting finding was that Richard's score on the Reading as Part of Self in the ARMS was the highest among the participants. This can be seen as a consequence of the multitude of positive reading experiences he had in Sweden. These experiences have contributed to building his attitude towards reading and reading practices. On the other hand, none of the other three participants had experienced reading the way he did; which is probably why their scores on this scale were lower.

Mira. Mira is the third member in the Ali-Richard-Mira group. They had been friends since their first year in college, so they had taken most of their classes together. Mira shares with Ali and Richard the quality of being a distinguished student (also with a 4/4 GPA) and the goal of graduating as such; doing everything needed to achieve this goal. However, while Mira shared these similarities with Ali and Richard, she differed in a few ways from them. To begin with, she has a more open and outgoing character. She is energetic and has a sense of humor which makes her affable wherever she goes. Ali and Richard have calmer and more reserved characters. She has a bold character; very confident of herself and her abilities. On the day of the first focus group interview, Mira did not look as excited and involved as the others. When asked about this, she explained that she had been feeling tired because of her work schedule.

When it comes to her reading experiences at school, they resembled Ali's in the sense that they were both negative and positive; with several factors contributing to the experiences. Under positive reading experiences, Mira explained that the most memorable reading sessions were the ones which involved role playing. Role playing was interesting to her because it added an element of fun to reading; as opposed to the boredom which resulted from being forced to read just for the sake of reading. Another positive experience was being chosen frequently by the teacher to read out loud, because she was the best in her class. This motivated her because by nature she is a competitive student with high self-confidence and reading efficacy. Because she knew she was good, she was motivated to read.

Regarding the negative experiences, they were mostly related to teachers and their practices in class. For example, Mira recalled how having a new, strict teacher who did

not motivate them to read made her hate reading and the English language as a whole and get lower grades in English. This was because that teacher forced them to read and considered reading as part of the program only; without placing any value on fun or motivation. Similarly, Mira talked about how teachers used short stories for tasks like summarizing and paraphrasing only and not for interest; which is why she did not remember any of the stories she read at school.

An interesting finding from the ARMS was that Mira had the lowest score of the reading for recognition scale (3/5). This can stand ground in the fact that she is not motivated by receiving positive feedback, but by competitiveness and being able to finish her tasks in the shortest time possible; which she had enough confidence in (reading efficacy). These highlights are congruent with her relatively high score on the reading efficacy scale (3.66/5). This also shows the difference between her and the other three participants, who got an average score of 4.42/5 on the reading for recognition scale; suggesting how they care about receiving feedback from others.

In addition, Mira had the highest score on the reading to do well in other realms scale (4.25/5). This can be understood as an indication of two ideas. First, it shows how Mira considers reading as just a tool to get by in other domains; without placing much importance on its recreational value. Second, it replicates the notion of how she understands reading only as studying and reading course books; a factor common among all of the students, as explained earlier.

Nada. Like all of the participants, Nada was compliant, polite, and a high-achiever, but she did not have the same level of English language proficiency. She

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managed to get high grades not because of her advanced English skills, but because of her regular attendance, frequent studying and following up with the course material, and asking a lot of questions in class. While Nada had this disadvantage in terms of her English language proficiency, and while the eligibility criteria for participating in the study necessitated the opposite; she was selected as a last resort due to the low response rate. In addition, given my knowledge and experience with her as a student, I wanted her to participate because I knew she was highly cooperative and that she would appreciate learning new English-related concepts because she consistently works on herself particularly to improve her English language skills.

When it comes to her reading school experiences, she had the worst experiences of all the students. To start with, she received all of her education in public schools while the others were students in private schools. Nada's direct answer to the question "what do you remember about your reading experience in classes?" was a blunt, un-thought out "boring". When asked to elaborate on her answer, she listed reasons like having incompetent teachers who forced the students to read without actually teaching them how to read. She also explained that throughout her entire school journey, she was never offered the freedom to choose her own books or stories.

Nada's positive reading experiences at school were very limited compared to the others. Even though Ali and Mira's experiences were not the best, they still talked about positive practices which motivated them to read or made them love reading, at least temporarily at one point in time throughout their school journeys. However, this was not the case with Nada. She did not identify with any of the positive practices mentioned by the others, like having book discussions, sharing perspectives, role-playing, or any

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specific factor that meant something to her personally; as the case is with Mira being the boss in class, Ali receiving positive feedback, and Richard living his own different experience in Sweden. These are clues on how Nada was the one with the worst reading experiences among all.

Nada's ARMS scores are also demonstrative of her case. She had the lowest scores on overall reading motivation (2.85/5), reading as part of self (2.125/5), and reading efficacy (2.33/5). This shows just how insignificant reading is for her and how she does not consider herself as a reader. Specifically, the reading efficacy score shows that she is not confident about her reading abilities; which she admitted herself. She is aware of the fact that her language is weak and that she can't read and understand quickly; especially if the text has difficult vocabulary words.

Factors affecting students' reading experiences

From all of the above descriptions, it was possible to identify factors which positively and negatively affected the students' reading experiences at school. These factors are: teacher-related factors, reading efficacy/ability, topic interest, and types of reading material used in classes. Given that the original state of the system influences the trajectory of future change (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007), these factors were taken into consideration when analysis of further data began. Part of the results in the upcoming sections report on whether the students' experiences in the present study were also affected by these factors or not.

Presentation of Findings

The general reading motivation constructs based on which the interview questions were formed were determined in light of extensive reviewing of literature. These constructs are: curiosity, involvement, preference for challenge, competition, compliance, recognition, and reading work avoidance. Data analysis took place in iterative and repetitive processes.

To begin with, the written data was coded based on each of the seven dimensions. In addition, iterative reading of the data while coding allowed for the identification of emerging sub-themes within each of the aforementioned general categories. The frequency of statements under each category and the sub-themes was determined and compared across the three intervention cycles of choice. The data were further unitized and categorized to identify attractor states and repelling factors in the study. The repetitive and iterative analysis of the emerging categories clarified that the emerging sub-themes were in fact factors affecting the students' reading motivation throughout the study (such as factors related to the stories and the teacher). Emerging themes are presented and discussed under each of the seven reading motivation dimensions. Furthermore, relationships are drawn between these categories to elaborate on the students' emergence of reading motivation. The following sections present the study's findings regarding each of the seven dimensions

Curiosity

In this study, curiosity was initially defined as the desire to learn more about personally interesting topics. However, after analyzing the students' interview responses, curiosity was found to be related not only to knowing what will happen in the story itself (as in the events) but also to a) whether the story in general will be up to the students' expectations, and b) knowing what the following choice will be. Therefore, there were three different types of curiosity experienced by students throughout the study.

Concerning the effect of choice on curiosity, it was found that choice creates a strong sense of curiosity before reading, but does not suffice to sustain this curiosity during reading. That is, while all students in all of the choice rounds were curious about the stories before choosing and reading, not all of them experienced the same level of curiosity as they were reading. On the contrary, in some cases (like Ali in the first round and Nada in the first and third rounds), the initial sense of curiosity, which was created by choice and other factors like title and description of the story, did not persist throughout the whole reading process. This is because during reading, curiosity was found to be moderated not by choice, but by other factors related to the story itself. These story-related factors are: events, characters, difficulty level, and suspense.

Pre-reading curiosity

All of the students experienced curiosity before choosing and starting to read their chosen stories. This pre-reading curiosity was found to operate on two levels: general and specific.

General: Related to choosing. On the general level, this curiosity is directly related to choice and it refers to students being curious about the act of choosing stories at the beginning of every round. This general curiosity persisted and even increased across the three rounds of choice. That is, the students continued being excited about choosing their own stories, and having the freedom to choose did not get boring or less exciting with time. On the contrary, students still enjoyed this privilege and considered it as a chance to explore their choices more and test out if their expectations will be met or not. This is similar to one of the findings in a study done by Miller (2015), where the participants reported that the act of choosing e-books remained exciting even when repeating the process for three different times along the duration of the study.

One example of this continued general curiosity about choosing occurred with Ali. At the end of the first round of choice, he expressed his curiosity about the next story saying: "*I was very excited for the next story like I want to read it and know what I will choose*". Having been disappointed with the first story, he started the second and third stories with an existing sense of curiosity because he wanted to know what his choice will be like and if it will meet his expectations or not. Concerning the second choice, he expressed similar ideas saying: "*I was curious to see if the second story will disappoint me or not. I was really curious to choose the story and see the result*". Likewise, in the third choice he clarified how the act of choosing itself induced pre-reading curiosity and how such curiosity increased with each round of choice: "*I was also curious to know what my third choice will be, my second choice was perfect for me so I wanted to see will the third be perfect also or it will be disappointing like the first one or it will be better, like if I will know how to choose or not, if it will be up to my*

expectations or not. And I found that as usual from stage to stage my curiosity increased a lot".

Moreover, and for Ali only, an additional element of curiosity was noticed in the third choice, one which is related to the narrative elements the students learned and the tasks they were assigned. For instance, even before choosing the third story, Ali was particularly curious about what the new narrative element will be and how he was going to work on it: "*I was curious to know what else there is to work on, other than plot and setting and characters in a story*".

Richard, Nada, and Mira also experienced this general between-rounds curiosity about choosing the stories. Following are sample illustrative quotes:

-Richard: *"Before you let us choose each time, I couldn't wait to see which story I will choose. And even when I chose like each story specifically, I was curious to just start reading and know more about them".*

- Nada: *"Every time I had this curiosity to read the new story and also to know if it will be good or bad, like if I will enjoy it or not".*

- Mira: *"One thing I found to be exciting was how I waited for each story every time, like after finishing each story I started thinking okay what will be my next story? Will I like it more than this one? Things like that".*

Specific: Related to reading the chosen stories. Unlike the general level, the specific level of pre-reading curiosity was not in the form of excitement about having the chance to choose another story at the beginning of every week. On the contrary, it was

excitement about reading the chosen stories to know more about them and see if they will be up to the students' expectations. This specific pre-reading curiosity was created by factors directly related to these stories: title and description of the story (which was written on the cover page under the title). This replicates a finding by Ceylan (2016), reporting that students base their choice of stories on titles and descriptions; and that their willingness to read these stories depend directly on these two factors. The following quotes demonstrate the students' experiences with this specific kind of pre-reading curiosity.

- Ali: *"The title of the story was A Day in the Country and the description explained that the story happens in the country side, so because I love villages and towns I loved the title and it made me excited to know more about this story in specific".*

- Richard: *"I hadn't experienced anything like this before, the title made me so curious to know more about it because 'After Twenty Years', why what happened why is it this way."*

- Richard: *"In this case when I had three options I eliminated one and between these two I wanted to choose this because the title interested me so much, why after twenty years? It wasn't similar to the others I read even though it's the same genre it was different."*

- Nada: *" I was interested to know more about the story because it was very attractive , it talks about, either you choose the lady or the tiger, so I was interested in the title and I chose the story then I read it".*

- Nada: *"I was really excited to read the story because of the title, it's attractive, and I liked the character the mother, so I had curiosity to know about the mother, what happened to her and what she did for her son"*.

- Nada: *"I read the description under the title and I saw that I was curious to know what happened to the mother"*.

- Mira: *"These short descriptions written under the title are amazing. They are what made me curious to start reading. For example in this story, the title was "Lamb t the Slaughter", I was like great, slaughter means there is a murder, it excited me, then the description said 'a wife kills her husband' and here my curiosity reached its max!! I couldn't wait right away I started reading to see what will really happen"*.

Only in the case of Richard's first choice, this specific pre-reading curiosity was created by two additional factors other than title and description. These factors are genre (mystery-detective) and the long time it had been since he had last read something. The quotes below are examples:

- Richard: *"I like genres that make me want to read more and to continue so I was very interested in learning more about the genre and the story I chose"*. *"It was a genre that made it interesting for me to keep reading."*

- Richard: *"Maybe also because I haven't read in a long time so this made it more exciting for me."*

During-reading curiosity

While this pre-reading curiosity in its two levels was common among all participants across all choice rounds, it did not persist during the reading process for all of them. The only participant who had all positive experiences and whose curiosity was maintained while reading in all three stories was Richard. On the other hand, Ali, Nada, and Mira had negative experiences in at least one of the stories they read. In these negative experiences, the initial level of curiosity which they had before reading was not sustained throughout the reading process. This was due to the interplay of several factors which downplayed the influence of choice and controlled students' curiosity. As mentioned earlier, these factors are referred to as story-related factors and they include: events, difficulty level, and suspense.

For example, in Ali's first story, the curiosity he had before reading decreased after he finished the first part of the story because the events became less suspenseful. Ali clarified that the story was somewhat disappointing for him because it was theme-oriented while he had expected it to be more suspenseful; as he chose the action-adventure genre. He said: *"It was a bit disappointing, it wasn't up to my expectations. The first part of the story included some adventure, how they went to save Danilka and things like that, but after that it was somehow boring for me because nothing really happened. They only focused on the theme of nature"*.

This negative reading experience encountered by Ali can be explained by referring to situational interest and its impact on reading engagement as an indicator of reading motivation as investigated by Flowerday et. al (2004). The authors found that

situational interest, which is context-dependent, short-lived, and based on spontaneous engagement and novelty, is strongly and directly related to reading engagement and motivation. Ali's story lacked suspense and was theme-oriented and "boring" as he described it. This can be considered a problem in situational interest; which, in turn, negatively affected reading engagement and motivation, specifically in the form of reduced curiosity while reading. More interestingly, one of the study's findings was that compared to choice, situational interest has a stronger impact on reading motivation. This too is reflected in Ali's negative reading experience, whereby the influence of choice was overruled by that of situational interest. In other words, even though the choice was offered, the problem in situational interest prevented the expected positive effects of choice and led to a decreased during-reading curiosity.

Similarly, in the two stories which represented negative reading experiences for Nada, the sense of curiosity which was created before reading by choice, title, and description, faded away during the reading process. This reverse in curiosity was particularly caused by the unsuitable difficulty level of the stories; whereby the first was too difficult and the third was too easy. This disparity in difficulty level is a limitation in meeting one of the primary conditions that ensure a positive influence for choice; which is matching the reading material to the students' abilities and Zone of Proximal Deficiency (ZPD) (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). This condition maintains that in order for choice to have a positive influence on students' reading motivation, choices (or the offered reading material) must be optimally challenging for students; not too difficult and not too easy. The unsuitable difficulty level of Nada's first and third choices is a violation of this condition, thus resulting in negative

effects on her reading motivation. These negative influences will be discussed in detail and supported with evidence in different upcoming sections of the discussion.

As stated earlier, Nada's pre-reading curiosity was not sustained during reading because of the unsuitable difficulty level of the stories. For instance, in the first story which was too difficult, she explained how her excitement to read dropped while reading because she could not understand the story: *"I was very excited to read the story because the title was attractive, but when I read the first page I was shocked and sad because I didn't understand what happened in the story"*. Likewise, in the third story which was her worst, she started reading with a high level of curiosity particularly enticed by the story's title, saying*: "I read the title about the apple and The Conceited Apple Branch so I had curiosity to know more about the story"*. However, this curiosity was reversed and her high expectations were unmet. While reading, she was reportedly "shocked" because she did not expect the story to be this boring and simple. She said: *"At first I thought it would be an important story and I was really excited to read it because I read the title and got interested, but later I was shocked that it was so silly"*. She explained that the story was very simple and did not include any elements of suspense which would have encouraged her to keep reading: *"I like stories which have suspense, like I want to be curious about the ending what happens at the end things like that, but none of that happened in this story, it's only the problem is very easy"*.

In the negative experiences reported above, it was shown how the story-related factors controlled students' curiosity levels by reversing their initial pre-reading curiosity and decreasing it during reading. Likewise, these story-related factors also played the major role in deciding students' positive experiences in terms of curiosity. That is, even

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in the stories which students enjoyed and where the initial levels of curiosity did not decrease while reading, the influence was that of the story-related factors and not choice. In other words and as mentioned earlier, what moderated students' during-reading curiosity was not choice itself but the story-related factors which are: events, characters, difficulty level, and suspense. The section below lists each of these factors with respective quotes showing how they affected the students' curiosity while reading.

Characters in the story.

- Ali: "*I was very interested in knowing what will happen in the story and what will happen with the character specifically*".

- Ali: "*I was like very curious about what will happen with him, there was a part in the story that said he cast an unusual, like something that looked very unusual for him, so I wanted to know what that thing was*".

- Ali: "*I enjoyed the story as much as I was curious about what will happen in the story in the cave, what happened to him, the main character*".

- Richard: "*This murderer was very smart, he killed the man and did everything in a perfect way, but I was excited to read more and know how the police will find out, because they always find out and the murderers always make a mistake which let the police catch them*".

- Richard: "*Detective Hawke has many traits like me so also in this story I wanted to know what will he do and how he will behave*".

- Richard: *"You can't believe how curious I was, to know how they were friends and why they separated. I was reading very quickly and like flipping the pages just to reach the end and know about these two characters".*

- Nada: *"I wanted to read more about it to know what will happen to the lovers, if they will stay together or not".*

- Nada: *"I kept reading to know more about the mother and what will happen to her".*

- Mira: *"The wife in the story, the murderer actually, kept me excited all the time while I was reading. I kept reading to know what else she will do".*

Events in the story.

- Ali: *"There wasn't anything about the story that made me avoid reading it, on the contrary the events were very interesting and exciting for me to finish it, I was very excited to know".*

- Ali: *"Like I was very excited I was turning the pages to see when it will end I want to know what's happening".*

- Richard: *"I really enjoyed how the detective was knowing information and asking questions and visiting the crime scenes and things like that. It made me excited like something is actually happening and I wanted to know the end".*

- Richard: *"Everything was developing quickly in the story, like in each two or three lines something new happened and that's what me even more curious and excited".*

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- Nada: *"While reading I was only thinking about what the mother will do and how she will solve this problem and what will happen to her husband and son and all that"*.

- Mira: *"I was curious about the events that will happen in the future in the story and at the end"*.

- Mira: *"Every now and then I wanted to read the events happening next like tell me what will happen, who will die and who will go to jail"*.

Therefore, the information and evidence presented in this section confirm the idea that the story itself plays the major role in moderating students' curiosity as one facet of their reading motivation. Regardless of being allowed to choose, and regardless of the high levels of curiosity before reading which were created by title, description, and choice, curiosity was moderated by the stories themselves. Thus, it can be concluded that choice appears as an additional positive factor only when the story itself is "good enough" or motivating itself. If not, as shown specifically in Ali and Nada's negative experiences, then choice is not enough to maintain curiosity while reading. Choice can only increase curiosity before and not during reading.

Involvement

The second facet of reading motivation, involvement, is defined as getting lost in a story and gaining pleasure from reading it. It included three sub-categories which are: making pictures while reading, empathizing with the characters, and feelings of pleasure/enjoyment. While the responses under the first two elements illustrate the students' different reading experiences in each story, they do not shed the light on the factors contributing to these experiences or the reasons behind these differences. This is

not surprising as these elements of involvement (making pictures and empathizing with the characters) are strictly related to events and characters in the stories. Therefore, for a better identification of the factors which moderated the participants' involvement in each story, it was necessary to focus on the third element of involvement; feelings of pleasure and enjoyment. The statements under this element are more indicative of the reasons behind the students' involvement and thus give more insight about the contributing factors in general and the role of choice (if any) in specific. Combined from all of the participants' responses, it was found that the factors contributing to involvement while reading are: the story (events, characters, and setting), genre, tools learned in the study (narrative elements), challenge, difficulty level, and choice.

It is important to mention that each of the participants traced the feelings of pleasure and enjoyment in each story to different reasons. That is, some factors were only mentioned by one or two of the participants and not necessarily all of them. The only factor mentioned by all of the participants was the story itself and the sub-factors related to it. As for choice, it was mentioned only once by Ali and in all three rounds by Richard, for a particular reason which will be explained later. The following section will outline and explain each of the mentioned factors and how they affected the students' reading experiences. Most importantly, it will elaborate on the rather minimal role of choice in this involvement.

Genre and choice of genre

Two of the participants, Mira and Richard, talked about genre as one reason why they were involved while reading. Richard mentioned genre as such in his first and

second stories, and Mira mentioned it in her first story only. The following quotes display the relationship that each of them drew between genre and involvement:

- Mira: *"I was involved that much because it's a genre I like. Like I wanted to read horror and I did. So because of that I was enjoying the story, it's horror it's what I want"*.

- Richard: *"I like genres that make me want to read more and to continue. It was a genre that made it interesting for me and that involved me in the story"*.

- Richard: *"I was involved and as I said because the genre I chose it so it gets me more interested in it so I was very pleased and happy and I didn't even experience little bit that I got bored or something like that, nothing"*.

- Richard: *"The choice was very good for me because it made me become more interested in the story and the genre, and when you are interested in something, you don't as I said force yourself to read you only read for interest, you are enjoying reading in other words"*.

Gambrell (2011) maintains that allowing students to choose their own genre has beneficial effects on their reading motivation. Similarly, different survey studies found that genre is one of the major factors which students take into consideration when choosing books to read in classroom contexts (Ho & Guthrie, 2013; Moss & Hendershot, 2002). However, a clear point can be made here about the choice of genre which Richard and Mira identified as a main reason behind their involvement. While choosing personally interesting genres is one of the conditions applied in the study to make sure the offered choices are relevant to students' interests, the focus is not on choice of genre

but that of stories instead. That is, it can be argued that the major contributing factor here is the genre itself and not choice. Stemming from Richard and Mira's statements which focus specifically on the role of choosing the genre, it can be argued that if they were allowed to choose their own genre, but were given the stories (as opposed to choosing them), the case wouldn't have been different. Because they mentioned the choice of genre specifically and not the story, it can be concluded that the controlling factor here is the genre and not the story itself. Thus, this suggests that providing choice of stories did not have a huge influence on their involvement and reading motivation.

Tools (narrative elements)

The study included teaching the students about narrative elements and how to analyze them in stories. Students referred to these elements as "tools" because learning them helped them understand and analyze the stories more. One participant, Richard, linked between involvement and these tools (narrative elements) which he learned and used in analyzing and understanding the stories. In the second and third stories, Richard explained that these tools were major contributors to his heightened feelings of pleasure and involvement while reading. The quotes below exemplify:

- *"In the second story when I got the plot and setting and the whole I became better at analyzing and seeing the story, in reading between the lines so I have seen more perspectives I feel that I got a bigger image I can see everything I can refer to the plot and setting and how the characters affect plot and setting and vice versa. So this gave me a better image of the reading. That's why I enjoyed this story more than the first one*

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because of this that I had the plot and setting I have more knowledge and more skills for me to read".

- "Maybe it's also because I had the plot and the setting the characters in my bag when I read it so it made it maybe easier and richer and more involving for me because I had more knowledge and more analytical tools".

More specifically, because Richard had positive experiences in all three stories, he clarified that what made the last story his favorite was the narrative elements he was supposed to analyze (theme and point of view) and the narrative elements he had learned in the previous two stories (plot, setting, and characters), which he used in the final story as additional tools for deeper analysis. He clarified that because all of the stories were of his own choice and of the same genre, the factors that distinguished his favorite story from the rest are the narrative elements and the tools he used for analysis, as the following statements show:

- "The first and second were a little bit similar to each other, so it was the tools that made a difference, the tools let me decide that the first was the second and the second was last"

- "The narrative element itself was the measure I used to rank the stories because they were my own choice and they were in the same genre so I liked them and I enjoyed them, so the first, the last I would directly say it was the best I enjoyed it the best but between these two the tools were the judge".

Therefore, as he openly stated, Richard enjoyed the second and third stories more partly because he had more tools to analyze them. Just as the case with genre was, the

role of choice is downplayed here because, had he not been allowed to choose the stories himself, he would still have felt the same about the tools and how they helped him analyze more deeply and enjoy reading, regardless of the opportunity to choose the stories.

Challenge

Also away from choice, in Richard's third and favorite story, challenge was one of the major factors contributing to his during-reading involvement specifically and reading motivation generally. The following statements demonstrate how the challenges he faced while reading the third story increased his involvement and enjoyment because he prefers challenges which make him think more deeply about what he is reading:

- *"Now in this case because I didn't really understand the whole story from the first time I didn't really close the gap you know? Because it was only the last letter that made me understand the whole story so it was only pictures but not related to each other and I didn't really imagine that Jimmy was the policeman and he sent another man. It was only when I read it twice and the last letter made the images clearer for me. So there were images but they were more like a puzzle at the end I did it as a whole image, compared to the previous times it was more clear for me, the images, in this I read it twice, the last letter, so that it became clear, and I like this more because I want to challenge myself, this will get me deeper in analysis and thinking, so I liked it more"*.

- *"There was so much to analyze and I like that and there was much to read between the lines"*.

- "It wasn't direct for me to know I got to think more and as I said I like doing that".

Challenge was also shown as a contributor to Richard's involvement especially when linked with the role of the tools he learned and used in analysis; as manifested in the second and third stories. His increased motivation from beginning till end was in part directly influenced by the tasks assigned to him and the narrative elements he had to analyze. The more tools he learned (more elements), the deeper his analysis grew and consequently the more his motivation and enjoyment increased. This is in part due to the fact that he has a preference for challenge and thus is motivated when the material he is working on is challenging. The tasks he was working on and the narrative elements he learned and used as tools for analysis were attractors on their own. In other words, they increased his motivation to read and perform better. This is clearly reflected in the following statement: *"This story is the best [among all three] without a doubt. Like the first story I learned about plot and setting, then in the second I used them and learned about characters, and I analyzed more because of this. Now imagine the third story! I had them and in addition I learned theme and point of view so it was amazing for me. The third story as I told you needed more thinking and I was analyzing so deep to finish the task and everything so this challenge itself was extraordinary for me".*

The results reported in the previous two sections about tools learned and challenge in tasks can be related to literature about the relationship between reading strategies and reading motivation. Several studies have shown that reading motivation increases when students use reading strategies that relate between old and new knowledge and help in better analyzing and understanding texts (Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Guthrie, Mcrae, & Klauda, 2007; Ho & Guthrie, 2013). The tasks required from

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students in each story and the narrative elements they learned and used as tools for analysis contributed to their reading motivation; specifically Richard and Ali. Some of these tasks included drawing plot diagrams, identifying conflicts and resolutions, relating between setting, plot, and characters, writing detailed character sketches, classifying characters and character types, and identifying and discussing themes and points of view. Because the students were actively engaged in analyzing the stories, reading between the lines, and accomplishing tasks, they consequently experienced high levels of reading motivation.

Difficulty level

The reading motivation of one of the participants, Nada, was directly linked to the difficulty level of the stories she chose and read. She had two negative experiences in reading two of the stories and this was manifested in all of the reading motivation facets analyzed, including involvement. Her favorite story and the one in which she did not face any problems was the second one. Data analysis clarified that the difficulty level of the stories was the factor that controlled Nada's reading experiences, deciding which stories were problematic and which was her favorite. Briefly stated, the first story was too difficult for her, but she overcame the challenge and continued reading for several reasons which will be explicated later. The second was her favorite because it had a suitable difficulty level, and the third was the worst choice because it was too easy. Therefore, regardless of choice, what made a difference in Nada's reading experiences is the difficulty level of the stories and not the opportunity to choose.

In the first story, Nada reported that she experienced involvement only when she overcame the linguistic challenge by looking up the word meanings and understanding the story more clearly. She gave examples about the different forms of involvement she experienced after simplifying the story. However, it was noticed that even after overcoming the linguistic challenge, she did not provide a lot of examples and details about her involvement, as the following statements demonstrate:

- *"I found the meanings then I began to imagine the characters and the story and the events"*.

- *"Yes I felt the situation of the lady, what will I do if I were in her place? She felt jealous which is normal, like any woman, and she felt afraid for her lover because they were going to kill him"*.

- *"I didn't experience pleasure in the first time but in the second time after I looked for the meanings of the words in the dictionary I saw that I was having pleasure and I was enjoying it because I understood what was happening"*.

The case was similar in the third story, only this time the complexity level was too easy instead of too difficult. Still, this unsuitable difficulty level dimmed Nada's involvement and reading motivation. While the complexity of the first story was a major obstacle that hindered her comprehension and motivation, the over-simplicity of the third story left her unmotivated to work on the tasks or finish reading the story in the first place. The following quotes illustrate her feelings about the third story:

- *"I felt I knew the information I skipped them like okay yes I know I know."*

- "If the topic is interesting I will continue reading and I will have suspense to know more, I will be totally focused on the story and curious to know about the ending. But this one I already know! It's silly! It's like Cinderella and Snow White and things like that".

- "This story was less than the others in enjoyment. It was the least".

This discouragement was also evident in Nada's performance when she was presenting the story's theme and point of view. While she was very excited to start presenting the second story and insisted on presenting before Ali that time, she did not display any similar signs in the third presentation. On the contrary, she displayed more negative signs which reflected her feelings about the story. This is shown in the following comments taken from my teacher journal, where I describe Nada's performance in the third presentation: *"Nada seemed kind of embarrassed or put down because she didn't like her story. She jumped to her position and directly said "my story is so silly!!" (in a whiny voice) 'your stories are nice but mine isn't'. She started to summarize the story but stopped and said 'my story is very simple'. She started to explain again then she stopped again".* When asked about this in the interview, Nada explained that she was not motivated to present about the story this time because she knew her friends will get bored (just as she did while reading): *"I was expecting that there will be boredom because I wasn't interested when I was reading because it's very silly, so I didn't have that motivation to come and tell about the story you know?"*

However, while Nada's experiences in reading the first and third stories were negative, the case was completely different in the second story, which she referred to as her favorite. Here again, the major contributing factor which regulated her reading

experience was the difficulty level. Her comments about involvement while reading clearly point out that she enjoyed the second story the most because it was "easier" than the first one (which was too difficult).

- *"I really was interested more than the first story because maybe this time I got into the mood in this story more than the first story, so it was even easier for me to know vocabs because the first one was more difficult".*

- *"I liked this story more because it was easier and also the idea it was talking about is really beautiful".*

It is worth mentioning that Nada's involvement was also reflected in her performance when she was presenting about the story and analyzing the main character in it. This is clearly highlighted in one of the entries from my teaching journal:

"Nada retold the story with the finest details. It was very obvious that she had read it carefully and that she knew exactly what was going on. While she was presenting she got emotional in some places, she was showing her feelings about the events and the characters in the story. She was using the board to illustrate some events. Her interest was very obvious in her tone, intonation, body movement, and facial expressions. She also included so many details which again showed that she really worked hard on it. I was really proud of her work and how involved she was in the story and the task".

This comparison between the second story on one hand and the first and third stories on the other, shows that what moderated Nada's involvement specifically and reading motivation generally was the difficulty level of the chosen stories and not choice. This is especially because Nada has the lowest proficiency level among the students, so it

comes as no surprise that the difficulty level of the stories played a bigger role in her

reading motivation than with the others (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Guthrie, Wigfield,

Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, & Barbosa, 2006). It also explains how the factor of

difficulty level downplayed the effects of choice; even though she was allowed the

freedom to choose, it did not change the fact that she did not enjoy the first and third

stories because of their unfit difficulty levels. As stated earlier, these negative effects are

a result of not meeting the condition that in order for choice to positively influence

reading motivation, the reading material must have suitable difficulty levels in such a

way that does not overwhelm or discourage students (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor,

2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). Failing to meet this condition in Nada's first and

third stories had several drawbacks on her reading motivation.

Choice

Only two participants, Ali and Richard, mentioned choice as a reason behind

their involvement while reading. Each of them explained the role of choice differently so

their cases will be explained separately.

To begin with, Ali listed choice as a contributing factor to his feelings of pleasure

and involvement while reading only in the second story; and this is because he chose one

story at the beginning, started reading it, but found that it was boring and thus decided to

choose another one. It appears that this chance to change and choose a different story

meant a lot for him, as he said: *"I chose this and I was very happy that I changed*

because the story was really beautiful. If I didn't change and choose the one I really

wanted I wouldn't enjoy it like this". This quote, while it does highlight the positive

influence of changing and choosing another story, it also clearly reflects that the new story chosen was simply "good". However, even though the third story was Ali's favorite, he did not mention choice in any of the statements explaining his involvement in it. On the contrary, his statements about the third story reflect, again, the role of story-related factors and not choice, as shown in these quotes:

- *"I was very excited I was turning the pages to see how the events will end and what will happen to the characters".*

- *"This story was just amazing, the way it is written, the events, what the characters say to each other, the messages in it, everything. All of these things made me really enjoy reading it to the max".*

This comparison between the second and the third stories accentuates the idea that the major influence in regulating involvement is not that of choice but the story and its related factors. It also clarifies that choice made a difference in the second story only because Ali was allowed to change the story he did not like and simply choose another one. If, on the other hand, he had happened to choose the better one from the first time, that is without having to change, he would not have talked about the opportunity to change and choose; just as what happened in the third story which happened to be a great choice right from the beginning.

Similarly, Richard mentioned choice as a contributing factor to his high (and increasing) involvement in all three stories. Below are quotes about choice and its influence from all three stories as explained by Richard:

- "I was involved because it's our own choice, the more it's our choice the more it's easier for us to be involved, but if we maybe just get forced to read something maybe it will lead us to different reaction". (First story)

- "I chose my own choice and I enjoyed it I wasn't disappointed with it". (Second story)

- "I was satisfied when I chose it, I made the right choice because it was amazing it was one of the best stories I read, between these three". (Second story)

-"I enjoyed the story this much because I chose it, because I had the freedom, like I wanted to read this one and I did". (Second story)

- "If I was forced to read another one I wouldn't be the same, okay I would do the job and analyze but not full heartedly". (Second story)

- "I chose it, it made me so interested I liked it I enjoyed it I had better results so much output so I really enjoyed it and liked it a lot because it was my own choice, as I said before even if I were forced I would do my job but I wouldn't be so interested and so in it to analyze and so curious". (Third story)

As previously explained, evidence from the data suggest that Richard listed choice as a primary cause behind his reading motivation in all three choice rounds because it just happened that all of the stories he chose were suitable and enjoyable. However, and as concluded from other students' cases, when encountering negative experiences with unsuitable stories, choice is not mentioned. That is, had any of Richard's stories been unsuitable, his statements would have changed and his main focus wouldn't have been choice but the other story-related or external factors.

These two cases provide additional evidence that the provision of choice is not the major factor regulating students' reading motivation in general and involvement in specific, despite being mentioned by some of the students to be as such.

Other story-related factors

 In addition to the previously listed factors, data analysis allowed the identification of other story-related factors which affected students' involvement while reading. These factors are the events, characters, setting, style of writing, and moral. As opposed to the previous factors, all of the students, without an exception, mentioned at least one of these factors as a contributor to involvement; positively or negatively. This again shows that the stories and their related factors play a more definitive role than choice in regulating reading motivation and involvement. Listed below are sample quotes from each of the participants, highlighting how these story-related factors affected their involvement.

- Ali: *"In the story the events occurred in a village, so I imagined all the village and the nature and Danilka. It's just that Danilka his hand stuck in the tree and he was alone and searching for help. It affected me". (First story)*

- Ali: *"I was so, happy while I was reading it because the events were very interesting and had a lot of adventure and suspense". (Second story)*

- Richard: *"I liked it because it's different I didn't really read something like that before even though it's in the same genre but it's totally different with the experiences content characters". (Third story)*

- Richard: *"Even though the story was shorter, I thought from the beginning it's short so it wouldn't be interesting, it wouldn't let me go out with so much analysis and things like that but it was totally opposite to my expectations". (Third story)*

- Richard: *"[The story] was shorter but it was more analysis more to analyze more to think about more interesting so even though I didn't really think that the length would affect it, it was the opposite, I had much more input than in the ones before".*

- Nada: *"I liked the story I enjoyed the moments while I was reading, so I really loved reading because of this story honestly". (Second story)*

- Nada: *"I felt I knew the information I skipped them like okay yes I know I know." (Third story)*

- Mira: *"The story was well-written, it was a very good story. I was super enjoying while I was reading especially that it was as I expected, horror and crime and husband and wife and things like that. You know me how I love stories about married people". (First story)*

- Mira: *"Nothing about the story was boring. I was engaged the whole time I was reading and I was like flipping pages to see what will happen and what she will do to him". (First story)*

A separate comment should be given about Nada's third story which was her worst. She had such a negative experience reading the third story in particular because of the story itself and several characteristics about it like topic, events, type, characters, and moral. The story seemed to be a very traditional and simple one, very similar to Disney

stories and fables which are mostly theme-oriented. The content of the story was reportedly too simple to the extent that Nada was not motivated to finish reading the story and accomplish the required tasks. This is yet another clue that choice is not enough to motivate students to read and that the major judging factor is the story with all its sub-factors.

Preference for Challenge

Preference for challenge is defined as satisfaction from mastering or assimilating complex ideas in text and tasks. As a facet of reading motivation, preference for challenge did not change with participants along the duration of the study. That is, those who mentioned at the beginning of the study that they prefered difficult reading material, who are Ali, Richard, and Mira, demonstrated through their reading experiences that they do have this preference for challenge. Similarly, the one participant, Nada, who stated that she preferred to read simple materials then move to more complex ones, also proved this throughout her reading experiences in the study. However, challenge in reading materials and required tasks was identified as one of the major attractors in the study, and in some cases a repelling factor. This means that in some cases the challenges faced by students while reading increased their reading motivation and pushed them to work harder. On the contrary, and in one specific case that happened with Nada, such challenges hindered her reading motivation and acted as a repulsing factor instead of an attractor. This section will explicate each of these cases, shedding light on the role played by challenge and other contributing factors; choice being one of them.

Challenge as an attractor

Data analysis allowed the identification of challenge as an attractor in several cases throughout the study, particularly Ali's third choice, Richard's third choice, and Mira's first choice. In each of these reading experiences, students' responses to interview questions suggested that different challenges they faced while reading increased their reading motivation.

To start with, Ali and Richard had similar experiences regarding challenge, in the sense that they both stated their general preference for challenge in their first two stories, but expressed specific instances of such preference and how it affected their reading motivation in their third stories. That is, both of their third stories had certain challenges which pushed them to read more and work harder, as opposed to the first stories which did not include any or at least difficult challenges.

More specifically, in the first round of choice, Ali did not express any specific thoughts about overcoming challenges in the story and feeling satisfied as a result. He only explained his general preference for reading difficult material to learn new words as the following quote shows: "*The reason why I want to read more is to find out difficult vocabs. This is the enjoyment for me, that I want to finish the story and excel; the challenge is the enjoyment*". In the second story, he reconfirmed his goal behind liking to read hard stories and gave an example from the story he read: "*I was satisfied because I found out some new words, for example skiff I didn't know that it was a small boat, quivering means shaking, and there were other vocabs*".

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Likewise, in the first and second rounds of choice, Richard talked about his preference for challenge in a general manner and how he is a person who likes challenging himself and improving as a result of overcoming these challenges. The following statements illustrate:

- *"For me, I like challenge because when I'm challenged I think I'm being better I'm developing I know what's going on".*

- *"From my experience even if the book was a bit hard I enjoyed and it was entertaining even if I looked up some words but maybe if I got a very hard book that you don't get anything of it yes maybe the entertainment will decrease".*

However, the third stories chosen by Ali and Richard included specific challenges which were shown to increase their reading motivation. For example, the third story Ali read had a paragraph written in a dialect of English and not the standard language; thus it was difficult for him to understand it and comprehend the implications behind it. The following quotes show how this challenge motivated him to read and what successfully overcoming this challenge meant for him:

- *"At the beginning the story was normal for me but when I reached the paragraph with the weird English, the one where the words are written as the street language, I was a bit mad at myself like I should know these words and what they mean, because I knew that there was something important in that difficult part. So when I understood what it meant I felt very happy and proud".*

- *"This paragraph was a barrier for me to know the theme and the lesson, so when I understood I was like very satisfied, like okay now I can be comfortable".*

- "Also the challenge I faced about the hard paragraph which I didn't understand pushed me to read more. Some people maybe they stop reading because of this difficult paragraph but for me it's the opposite way around".

Similarly, while reading the third story, Richard encountered and overcame challenges, which increased his reading motivation as a result. These challenges are related to analyzing the story and understanding the messages behind it. It is worth pointing out that these challenges also affected his involvement while reading, as extensively explained in the previous section. The following statements illustrate:

- "There was so much to analyze and I like that and there was much to read between the lines".

- "In this story there were words that were harder, it was more difficult than the ones before but I liked it still because I was enjoying the story they didn't stop me or anything".

- "The story was challenging but it didn't, like there wasn't a barrier for me when I'm reading no I still enjoyed it and I analyzed more".

As for Mira, she directly talked about the role of challenge in the first story she read, explaining that the complexity of the murder case and trying to figure out who the killer was boosted her motivation to read. Like Ali and Richard and unlike Nada, because Mira does not have language difficulties, she does not face problems reading complicated material. Her advanced language proficiency allows her to comprehend such material and be interested in the deeper levels of meaning and not just superficial reading. She also clarified that she prefers short stories over long ones not only because she likes finishing

tasks quickly, but also because she gets the chance to dig deeper into such stories instead of getting lost in useless details. All of this is demonstrated in her answers about her preference for challenge:

- *"This mystery of trying to know who the real killer is drove me crazy. Like I was so happy when I guessed that it was the wife and I discovered that I was right."*

- *"I like reading difficult books, but not long stories, difficult short stories, because I don't want to waste time on details that are not important. No I love analyzing and thinking but about short texts"*.

- *"I enjoy thinking more deeply about what I read, like not just read it once and understand it right away no I love digging and getting extra meanings"*.

Combining the previous cases together, it can be concluded, once again, that the major factor controlling the students' motivation to read is the story and its related sub-factors. More specifically, this section drew closer attention to how the factor of challenge in some of these stories motivated students. It also highlights how the role of choice was minimal, as it was downplayed by the story-related factors, particularly challenge here.

Challenge as a repulsing factor

Nada is different from the other participants in that she does not have a preference for challenge as they do. Because she is not as advanced in English as them, she does not prefer difficult reading material. On the contrary, she expressed her desire to start with easy material and then move to more difficult ones; because this would help her

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progress and prevent her from feeling incapable and disappointed while working on higher-level material; as was the case in the first story. She explained: *"I want to start from the beginning from the simple ones to reach a level that I can read hard and challenging books. So step by step"*. Therefore, as opposed to the cases explained in the previous section, challenge for Nada was a repulsing factor whereby it decreased her reading motivation and not the opposite.

It is important to mention that the factor of challenge and its influence on Nada's reading motivation is directly linked to the difficulty level of the stories she read. That is, in the first story which was too difficult for her, the challenge of understanding the complicated language and the whole story frustrated her and was a barrier to her reading motivation and enjoyment. She clarified this by saying: *"When I read the first page I was shocked and sad because I didn't understand what happened in the story"*. In the third story, which was on the contrary too simple, the absence of any kind of challenge diminished her motivation to read. While it's true that she prefers easy stories and wants to move from simple to more complex stories step by step, the over-simplicity of this story repressed her motivation to read. She openly said: *"This story was way easier than the previous ones, I like easy readings but not at this level!! There was nothing to think about or analyze it was too too easy"*. Only in the second story, which had the most suitable difficulty level and the most interesting topic, was Nada motivated to overcome the few challenges and continue reading. She explained: *"I liked this story more because it was easier and also the idea it was talking about is really beautiful, not too complicated for us to understand no it's something from reality it happened with us"*.

As in previous cases, this suggests that it was not choice that moderated Nada's reading experiences and motivation, but the stories themselves and their difficulty level in particular. In other words, despite the fact that she was allowed the freedom to choose her own stories, this opportunity was not the major factor contributing to her reading motivation. On the contrary, this motivation was regulated by factors related to the stories themselves, specifically the difficulty level and challenges in them.

Relating the present findings about challenge to previous literature, it is worth mentioning that academic challenge in general and reading challenge in specific can have positive and negative impacts on motivation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991). Depending on their different abilities and proficiency levels, students are differently affected by challenge when presented in reading texts (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, & Barbosa, 2006). Less able students are more likely to give up on challenging tasks and experience lowered feelings of competence, expectations of success, and enjoyment of the activity. On the contrary, students with higher abilities have greater tendencies to persist in order to overcome challenges and display heightened levels of competence, success expectations, and enjoyment. This is very similar to the students' experiences regarding challenge in the current study. Specifically, Nada, who has been originally identified as having a lower proficiency level than the other three participants, reacted differently to challenge. While she reported feeling frustrated and wanting to withdraw from the project, the others, Ali, Richard, and Mira, viewed the challenges they encountered as motivating factors which pushed them to work harder and increased their interest in the texts and tasks at hand.

Furthermore, these different experiences in dealing with challenges provide more evidence on the importance of matching choices to students' abilities and proficiency levels (Katz & Assor, 2007). While it is true that having students with diversified abilities is normal and expected in every classroom, the problems faced by Nada were a direct result of a mismatch between the choices' difficulty level and her ZPD (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015).

Competition

The fourth facet of reading motivation, competition, is part of extrinsic motivation. It is defined as the desire to outperform others in reading and reach higher levels of reading achievement than other students. Competition was affected differently in each of the students' experiences. As with the previous facets, the major role in controlling competition was not played by choice. On the contrary, it was found that students' personal differences and the reading materials themselves regulated their competition throughout the study.

To start with, Mira was the only participant whose sense of competition did not change along the study. Based on my previous experiences with her, she can be referred to as a competitive student; and this project was not an exception. She was driven by her competitiveness and trying to stand out among her friends. Because she does not have language difficulties, she did not have to put forth a lot of effort to achieve that. What she worked on was extra details that would mark her work special. This was shown in her statements responding to the questions about her sense of competition: *"Of course like in anything I had the desire to be better at reading than everyone else in class. I'm always*

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just preparing to be number one". She also clarified that her goal is to further improve

her English language, even though she is already at an advanced level: *"I know English*

but I want to be even stronger and to read more. I always thought yes reading is

important and everyone should read but now I realized how true this is. Like I really

want to start reading more stories and books".

Since Mira's sense of competition was almost fixed in the study, and taking her

statements into consideration, it can be concluded that competitiveness is one of her

personal traits and that is why she did not mention any role of choice in contributing to

this competitiveness. However, the other participants had varied cases throughout the

study, which gave more insight about the minimal role of choice and the bigger role of

the stories and personal differences.

Concerning Ali and Richard, they both experienced changes in their sense of

competition between the first two rounds of choice and the third. However, these changes

were different with each of the students. While Ali's sense of competition moved from

competing with others in the first two rounds to competing with oneself in the third,

Richard's case was the opposite. That is, in the first two rounds, Richard stated that his

aim was to improve himself only, but this changed to a desire to outperform others in the

third round.

In the first and second rounds, Ali openly expressed his desire to excel and be

better than others, as the following respective quotes show: *"In everything I do I want to*

excel and be number one", "I want to always be better than others and get good

comments from the instructor. Like it increases self confidence like I, I am someone who

is able to do what's required from him in a very excellent way". However, in the last story which was his favorite, he added that the sense of competition was not only with others but also within himself. In other words, he felt a desire to work on himself and improve too instead of only competing with others, as this statement shows: *"I want to add something, I had a desire not only to be better than others as much as it's for me to be better than the performance I did previously. Like Ali before Ali after"*. This can suggest that Ali was more intrinsically than extrinsically motivated in the third story which was his favorite.

Conversely, this change was the opposite way around in Richard's case. In the first and second rounds of choice, he expressed general ideas about his sense of competition, stating that he did not particularly aim at being better than others but what mattered to him was bettering himself. Similar to the concept of preference for challenge, Richard directs competition and challenge towards himself for the goal of learning and improving, as shown in this statement: *"I like to develop myself always, it's not only in reading in everything, because I think the moment that you stop learning something new and developing yourself you're lost, so you must always challenge yourself and keep going to be better"*.

However, in the third choice, Richard reported wanting to *"be the best"*, alongside improving his own performance, as this statement illustrates: *"As I said before I don't really compare myself to others, but this because it was the last I was doing, I told myself I wanted to do the best, I want to do it more than the ones before, my previous two presentations I wanted to do better, I wanted it to be the best that I did to leave a good impression of me"*. This all goes back to his personality, whereby he always thrives to

perform at his best and improve himself with every opportunity of learning. Therefore, challenge in Richard's third story increased his involvement while reading and competition.

Comparing the two cases of Ali and Richard in terms of competition, it can be concluded that the changes they experienced were the result of personal differences. Even though the third stories they chose were their favorites and were personally chosen by them, their competition was affected differently because of their individual differences. As noticed in the statements quoted, none of the students mentioned choice as a factor behind their competition.

On a different note, the case of Nada and her sense of competition across the three rounds of choice provide further evidence on how the reading materials or the stories, not choice, are the primary factor moderating reading motivation in general and competition in specific. Like Ali and Richard, there were changes in her sense of competition throughout the study; but for different reasons.

Data analysis showed that Nada's sense of competition is directed towards herself and stemmed from comparing herself to her classmates. In the first round of choice, while the difficulty of the story's level negatively affected her involvement in reading (at least the first time she read), it increased her sense of competition and self-improvement. Because she realized the difference between her and her classmates, she was alarmed and pushed to work harder on herself by putting forth more effort to improve and be more like them. Nada explained this saying: *"I felt [a desire to be better at reading than everyone else in class] because I saw that I'm weak. Everyone in the class was good, and*

I am not as good, I wasn't at their level, so I tried to make an effort to be at the minimal

of their level, not completely at the same level but at least reach a little of their level".

This desire was sustained in the second story, where she also explained how she

considers them as examples to work by and not compete against. Clarifying her concept

of competition, she said: *"I don't like to be better than other people I have to I want to*

improve myself, but not to be better than others or anything but I have to be like them you

know? Like I have to be like them and I'll try as much as I can to be as normal", "[My

classmates] are an example they motivate me to do better, not because I want to beat

them or anything".

However, in the third story which was too simple, Nada's sense of competition

was just another motivation facet dimmed by the story's plainness. It even made her

refrain from presenting the story and the tasks (point of view and theme) because it made

her feel embarrassed compared to her friends. She expressed this in the following quotes:

- *"When I saw my friends how they are presenting I had a desire to be like them, but my*

topic is very silly again so I didn't reach their level because it wasn't interesting it was

very boring and I saw someone yawning!!"

- *"I didn't want to tell the story because it wasn't interesting so I didn't have that*

motivation to retell it to anyone".

Therefore, as with the previous reading motivation facets, choice of reading

material did not play a major contributing role. Regarding competition, it was particularly

the students' individual differences which had the most contribution, in addition to the

stories themselves.

Compliance

The fifth facet of reading motivation, compliance, is defined as the desire to read because of an external pressure or requirement. In general, all of the participants' input about compliance was common, except for the degree of compliance as they explained it. In other words, all of them agreed that little did they read out of compliance or because it was a requirement in the project, but in each story the intensity of compliance differed based on the stories themselves. This again shows that the stories are the factor which controls compliance and not choice. Generally, Ali, Richard, and Mira had more similar cases, and Nada had a special case concerning compliance. All of these cases and their implications will be reported on in this section.

Starting with Ali, he expressed a common concept about compliance across the three rounds of choice, maintaining that the reason why he completed the reading is *"a combination of two reasons [because it was important for me to read the story and because I was required to].* But he also stated that it was more because it was important for him than to meet the project's requirements: *"This was more than as a duty that I have to do it for you. It's not because I want to get it done and that's it of course not".* Ali further clarified this combination by saying: *"I agreed to be part of this project to help you finish it in a good way yes, but of course the greater percentage is for enjoyment while reading and to improve myself in reading".*

The case with Richard was similar, except that in each choice round, he assigned percentages to the degrees to which he was reading because of compliance or personal will. In all three rounds he said that it was a combination of both, but that the greatest

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percentage was for interest and wanting to read the stories himself; and not because of any external requirements or pressures. It was noticed in his statements that the percentages he assigned for interest and wanting to read increased with each choice. That is, in the first time he stated that he read the story 80% because he wanted to and 20% because it was part of the project. These percentages respectively changed to 85% - 15% in the second choice and 95% - 5% in the last one. This partly goes back to the kind of person Richard is, as he expressed in this statement: *"I never look at something like I'm forced to do it; so no I didn't read because I had to"*.

In the third story specifically, which was Richard's favorite, he reported experiencing the highest levels of interest, curiosity, and wanting to read just for the sake of reading and not because of external requirements. This is reflected in the quotes below:

- *"Before it was a combination of both, here it is also but even much more like I can say 95% because I was interested and only 5% because I had to read it. And that's why I did a better analysis than the other ones, because the percentage of my interest was the highest this time"*.

- *"In this case when I had three options I eliminated one and between these two I wanted to choose this because the title interested me so much, why after twenty years? I just wanted to read an know. It wasn't similar to the others I read even though it's from the same genre it was different"*.

It is worth mentioning that in the second round of choice, Richard particularly expressed how the provision of choice contributed to his motivation to read the stories

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willingly and out of interest as opposed to reading to fulfill the project's requirements. This is demonstrated by the following quote: *"Because it's our own choice then maybe 85-15, 85% more because I want to read it and 15 because I was supposed to. Maybe 15 is too high also but because it's our choice this genre it made it more percentage, because I like it I want to read it, on the other hand maybe if it wasn't of our choice or maybe we were forced to read it maybe the percentage will change".* However, based on evidence elicited through data analysis, it can be argued that while Richard openly talks about choice as a major contributing factor to his motivation, the reality is otherwise. By referring back to the explanation of the previous reading motivation facets and the different cases experienced by students, it was concluded that the major contributors to motivation are the stories themselves and sub-factors related to them; not choice itself. The case with compliance here and what Richard expressed about the role of choice is not an exception. It is only another statement where the participants think it is all because of choice while data analysis suggests otherwise.

Similar to Richard and Ali, Mira denied having done her work out of compliance saying: *"I did not finish the story because you want me to. Of course it is part of the project and we all agreed to participate but I took it as a chance to read something new and it was amazing. I told you how much I enjoyed the story and I read it willingly I didn't think oh I am forced to read no not at all".*

On the other hand, and as stated earlier, Nada had a somewhat different experience even in terms of compliance. Her compliance, like other motivation facets, was directly influenced by the stories she read and factors related to them.

In the interview about the first story which was too difficult, Nada talked about how she wanted to withdraw from the study because she could not understand the story and was overwhelmed by its difficulty. However, she explained that while she did continue because she did not want to disappoint me and ruin the project, she also considered it as a positive opportunity to improve herself and start reading: *"I didn't want to disappoint you but at the same time I looked at it as a positive point to improve myself and start to read"*.

In the second story which was her favorite, Nada denied reading and finishing the tasks out of compliance or because she had to. She explained that she did it willingly, especially because she was enjoying the story a lot, and that this story in particular made her realize the value of reading and want to read more. The following quotes illustrate:

- *"It's both [because it was important for me to read the story and because I was required to] but it's more about that I really wanted to read it. Because I liked the story I enjoyed the moments while I was reading, so I really loved reading because of this story honestly"*.

- *"[The percentages are] approximately 90/10. 90% because I was interested and 10% because you asked me to do it"*.

As one would expect, in the third story which was too simple, Nada's sense of compliance was stronger than in the others. Because the "fun" elements were not available in this story and because she was not intrinsically motivated to read and work, what pushed her this time was simply compliance. She explained that she still took it as a chance to read and improve her language. However, it was evident in her responses that

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she was more triggered by her commitment to the project and having to finish the tasks out of compliance than because she wanted to. The quotes below illustrate:

- *"The activities we work on are very important, they are what makes you feel that you must read it to solve these activities".*

- *"I kept reading to improve my language and be better in English and this is part of the study and to complete the activities".*

- *"This story I kept reading even though it was boring because I must finish it and like I want to practice reading to improve myself. Even if it is silly like why wouldn't I read it so I just read it, I have nothing to keep me from it".*

Comparing Nada's three different experiences, it can be concluded that she had the lowest levels of compliance when the story was suitable enough to be her favorite. On the contrary, when the difficulty levels were not matched to her abilities, the role of compliance increased. Therefore, knowing that all of the stories were of her own choice, one can deduce that choice does not play a major role in regulating compliance but the stories themselves do. That is, had the participants been given the stories to work on instead of choosing them, their experiences wouldn't have been any different, or at least not too different, because their responses point out that the stories themselves and their related factors are the stronger contributing factors and not choice.

Recognition

The fifth facet of reading motivation studied was recognition. It is defined as gratification from receiving a tangible form of recognition for success in reading. Just as

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students' competition was majorly influenced and changed by personal differences and the stories chosen, so was the case with recognition. Receiving compliments from me as a teacher and from other classmates was either a pursued goal or just an appreciated gesture. This perception depended on each student's individual characteristics and experiences throughout the study. The following section will explain students' sense of recognition in the study and how it was affected by different factors, pinpointing the minimal role of choice.

Being both facets of external reading motivation, Ali and Richard's recognition and competition were influenced in very similar ways. As explained in the section about competition, both participants witnessed a change in the third round of choice. Ali's sense of competition switched to being more self-oriented, while Richard's was flipped the opposite way around. A similar pattern was noticed in terms of recognition. That is, in the third choice round, Ali moved from seeking external recognition to personal progress while Richard moved from seeking personal progress to external recognition.

More clearly, in the first two rounds of choice, Ali explained that while he did not particularly read and finish the tasks for the sake of receiving compliments from others, he still believed in the importance of verbal praise especially because it motivates him and increases his self-confidence: *When I first started I didn't have it in my mind that I want someone to give me compliments but I think [verbal phrase] increases self-confidence. It pushes me to work harder to improve myself and perform even better, like always keep the person, for example you to expect more*. However, in the final round of choice, he explained how his priority started to shift from impressing others and receiving comments to improving himself and being rewarded by the progress itself, regardless of

others' comments. He also maintained how this is a continuous goal that he will keep working on, as the following statements demonstrate:

-*"At school I used to get really mad if I didn't get praise, like if I do a great thing and don't get comments from the teacher like good excellent I used to get angry, but later on I felt it decreased but not a lot yet".*

- *"I think with time it will keep fading, because I'm improving myself even if others don't appreciate it I will never care, now I still care but way less than before. Like now my priority is Ali before and Ali after, improving myself".*

As opposed to Ali's case, in the first two rounds of choice, Richard directly stated that although he believed in the importance of positive feedback in supporting students, and knowing that he appreciates receiving such comments, he did not accomplish his tasks with the goal of receiving praise. It is not a must for him because his goal is improving himself and not receiving praise. Following are two example quotes from the first and second choice rounds respectively:

-*"I like feedback it will support me it will help me believe in myself more, so I would like it but it's not a must for me".*

- *"I don't really do anything because I want to get the attention or the comments from others I do it for my own sake for myself to compare myself with the old one if I've been better".*

However, the case was different in the last choice, whereby Richard explained that because the third story was his favorite and because he worked on it the hardest, he

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wanted to receive positive feedback as proof that he did a great job and performed better than the previous two times. For example, he said: *"While working I wanted to get good feedback, compared to the previous times when I didn't really think of it, because I thought okay I'm doing well, but in this one because I wanted a measure for me if I did well, I needed a measure for me to know that I did better than the times before so I needed this feedback as evidence".* He also added that receiving positive feedback from me as his teacher and from his friends was rewarding and satisfying, especially because it was proof that he outperformed himself and successfully communicated his high interest in the story and the extra effort he put forth in analyzing it. The following statements illustrate:

- *"When I heard your positive feedback I became very proud and glad and happy for myself because I expected to receive it and I did so this was proof that I did a better job than before".*

- *"I was more than satisfied with the result and your feedback and my friends' reactions and everything".*

- *"When you said it was perfect I really liked it so much because this hard work paid off".*

Therefore, the personal differences between Ali and Richard led their sense of recognition to be affected differently. Ali became more intrinsically motivated for the sake of working on himself and improving, regardless of others' opinions. Conversely, Richard's heightened intrinsic motivation in the third round of choice pushed him to seek recognition and thus be extrinsically motivated, for the sake of validating his high interest

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and extra efforts that he experienced and communicated in class. For Richard, the positive comments he sought (and received) were a form of validation to his improvement and interest in the story.

In addition to personal differences, there were instances where the stories themselves directly affected students' recognition, as the case was with Nada. In the first story which was too difficult for her, the comments she received from me as the teacher were one of the factors that encouraged her to keep reading despite the challenges. When she expressed her worries about her weaknesses in language and how frustrated she was while working on the story, I explained that her feelings are normal and that she should not allow the frustration to stop her from working. I told her that people improve by working harder on themselves and that she is not less capable than anyone if she has the will and the effort to improve. I also gave her examples of previous students who had cases similar to her, but were determined to develop and succeeded by being committed and hard-working. It seems that these comments influenced her positively and contributed to her getting back to work and not giving up on herself. The following quotes provide evidence:

- *"When you gave me comments like no you can do it, I went home yesterday and I was thinking about what you told me yesterday. When you told me that your friend at university really improved himself in English, I told myself then okay I can do the same thing as well"*.

- *"These comments they're causing development. What you said motivated me to try harder and not quit"*.

Therefore, in the first story, feedback was a teacher-related attractor which motivated Nada to keep working. She was not working harder in order to receive recognition, but receiving recognition and positive remarks motivated her to work harder. Several studies on reading motivation have shown how teachers can play vital roles in stimulating students' intrinsic reading motivation, especially when encountering challenges or difficulties (Gambrell, 1996; Guthrie, 2008; Guthrie, McRae, & Klauda, 2007); just as the case was with Nada. Similarly, a teacher's investment of personal resources and expression of support and affection towards students for the purpose of building a motivating interpersonal involvement is strongly associated with students' reading motivation (De Naeghel, Valcke, De Meyer, Warlop, Van Braak, & Van Keer, 2014).

So, teacher support and positive feedback were one of the factors which motivated Nada to keep working on her first story despite the challenges. However, the situation was different in the third story, which was too simple and dull. Any desires for recognition in Nada turned into feelings of embarrassment. While in the second story she was very enthusiastic about presenting and sharing the story with her friends, this time she was not motivated to do the same. In fact, she knew her feelings about the story will be reflected in the presentation and thus she was expecting to receive negative feedback, which was another reason why she did not want to present. This is illustrated in the following statement: *"To be honest I was expecting negative comments because of the topic of the story you know? So I was expecting that there will be boredom because I wasn't interested when I was reading because it's very silly, so I didn't have that motivation to come and tell about the story you know? So it was less than that of the*

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mother, I'm still comparing to the story about the mother". This is yet another clue that the major controlling factor of Nada's reading motivation was the stories themselves, specifically the difficulty level.

More insight about the influencing factors can be gained by comparing the students' responses concerning recognition in their favorite stories. In her favorite story (the second), Nada maintained that although she appreciated receiving praise because it boosts her self confidence and motivation, she did not perform her tasks for the goal of receiving such comments. She clarified: *"Sure!! It was important for me to receive praise about my reading from my teacher. They help a lot, you feel you are self-confident, like you believe in me so I want to change because of that. But on the other hand I don't read and present because I want you to tell me "good job" and things like that no. It motivates me but you must not do it or anything"*. This is opposite to what happened with Richard and Ali in their favorite stories. Richard was motivated to get recognized and Ali's motivation for recognition was directed more towards improving himself. None of this happened with Nada, who, as the above quote suggests, was not impacted by recognition. This is most probably related to her lower level of proficiency and confidence compared to them.

As for Mira, she had an almost fixed case in terms of recognition; similar to competition and compliance. Because she has high reading efficacy and self-confidence stemming from her advanced proficiency in English, she does not seek recognition and positive feedback. However, like all the other students, she stated that praise motivates her to work and increases her confidence. She explained how the positive comments she received from me affected her: *"I was encouraged to read another time, to hear the same*

words another time and be equally interested". So it can be said that these comments are just a marginal addition with respect to Mira. She does not seek the confirmation nor does she accomplish her tasks in order to receive recognition, but when she does receive it she does not mind it.

Put together, the students' experiences concerning recognition provide evidence that they were controlled mostly by individual differences and the stories they read; with their related factors. As suggested by the absence of any statements relating between choice and recognition, the provision of choice did not influence the students' recognition as a facet of reading motivation.

Reading Work Avoidance

The seventh and last reading motivation facet is reading work avoidance. It is a reversed facet defined as the tendency to avoid reading-related work. Because it is more related to negative reading experiences, more insight about the students' reading motivation and the factors contributing to it can be gained by focusing the analysis on the negative experiences that took place in the study and then comparing them against the positive experiences. Data analysis confirmed that the stories themselves and the factors related to them are the primary influencers of reading work avoidance, and not choice.

Negative reading experiences in this study were limited to three cases: Ali's first story and Nada's first and third stories. In these negative experiences, the participants experienced reading work avoidance for reasons directly related to the stories they were reading. For Ali, it was the lack of suspense in the story. For Nada, it was the unsuitable difficulty level in both stories in addition to the dullness of the third.

To start with, Ali reported a desire to stop the reading the first story he chose because he expected it to be more suspenseful but it turned out to be more theme-oriented, especially in its second part. He explained: *"In my opinion when Danilka was saved I thought the story was over for me. I felt like I wanted to stop reading because [the story] was theme-oriented, the events got a bit boring and there was a focus on the lesson and the importance of nature only"*.

Regarding Nada's third story, and given all the negative factors contributing to her bad experience reading it, she experienced high levels of reading work avoidance. As concluded from the previous descriptions, the factors were all related to the story itself, and Nada listed some of these factors again while explaining about avoiding the reading work: *"Yes there were many things about the story that made me avoid reading, a lot, because when I started reading I was like okay? What's next? Now what? Everything was the same! There wasn't any dynamic like up and down then something happened no everything was constant. It was very very easy"*.

Special attention should be paid to Nada's first negative reading experience because while she did experience reading work avoidance, she kept on reading and working. This happened due to the interplay of several factors combined together. Data analysis allowed the identification of these factors, which, in turn, shed the light on the minimal role played by choice. Despite the story being too difficult and Nada not comprehending it, she fought the frustration and continued reading without giving up due to several factors. These factors are listed below with accompanying quotes:

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1. Her own personal traits or the kind of person she is: *"In everything I hate to leave things without finishing them. Like I will feel guilty if I fail in something so this story was the same. Although at first I was really sad, because I did not understand anything, but then I calmed down and said to myself that it's okay I should just try more and I will succeed at the end"*.

2. Her strong desire to become a reader: *"I think that it is important to read, and I want to solve this problem because I didn't read, my problem is that I don't read and I want to read, like this project was like a push, it obliged me to read, and I want someone to oblige me to read"*.

3. Choice giving her a sense of responsibility: *"I am the one who chose the story, so if I didn't finish it, it's my choice! Like it's a responsibility"*.

4. Wanting to improve herself in English and reading: *"I felt [a desire to be better at reading than everyone else in class] because I saw that I'm weak. Everyone in the class was good, and I am not as good, I wasn't at their level, so I tried to make an effort to be at the minimal of their level, not completely at the same level but at least reach a little of their level"*.

5. A combination of compliance and self-improvement: *"I didn't want to disappoint you but at the same time I looked at it as a positive point to improve myself and start to read"*.

6. Teacher support: *"When you gave me comments like no you can do it, I went home yesterday and I was thinking about what you told me yesterday. When you told me that your friend at university really improved himself in English, I told myself then okay I can do the same thing as well"*.

It can be easily detected that choice is only one of six factors which pushed Nada to fight her reading work avoidance and turn her frustration into a learning experience. Combining Ali and Nada's negative experiences and the reasons behind them confirmed the theme that choice does not play the major role in controlling students' reading motivation. Even though all of the stories were chosen by the students, what varied the experiences was the stories themselves and their related factors (such as suspense or lack of it thereof and difficulty level).

An additional confirmation to this theme can be reached by reporting on Richard's all-positive reading experiences, whereby he did not experience any kind of reading work avoidance. By studying his statements, and similar to the previous two cases, the stories and their related factors were identified as the major contributors to his heightened reading motivation instead of choice.

For example, Richard clarified how the suitable difficulty level and the length of the first story refrained him from avoiding to read: *"In this case I kept going because there wasn't so many difficult vocabs and because it was a short story, maybe if it was a long story maybe I would choose to stop and look at words"* and *"I don' think that I had something that I wanted to avoid no nothing".* Also, he pointed out how the exciting events of the second story kept him hooked to it and pushed him to overcome external challenges while reading: *"While I was reading at home the lights were out but I kept reading because I wanted to continue and the story was just very exciting. I wanted to know. Even my mom said how can you see? But I told her don't worry I'm reading and enjoying don't worry about me".* Similarly, he explained how the challenges in the third story eliminated any trace of reading work avoidance: *"Maybe because I thought that the*

story was new there was more challenge in language, I looked up more words than the one before but I said there was no barrier it didn't make me not continue or not interested in it, no the level was as high or even higher than the ones before in terms of interest".

Students' Expectations before the Study vs. the Actual Results

In one part of the first focus group interview, the students were asked if they think they would be motivated by being allowed to choose their own reading material in classes; and all of their answers were affirmative. Some of the reasons given were common among all, while others were given by separate students. Through several readings of the data from the first focus group interview, the following three reasons were identified: adhering to personal interests and individuality, improving English language, grades, and general knowledge (receptive), and working harder and more passionately (productive).

To begin with, all of the students agreed that if they were allowed to choose their own stories to read in class, they would be more motivated to read because their interests would be met.

- Richard: *"I will be more motivated because I think every student has his own interest"*

- Ali: *"Of course I will be more motivated because I will choose a book that I'm interested in, the topic, everything".*

- Mira: *"When I choose the topic and the story myself, then I'll be interested".*

- Nada: *"I think that it's interesting because it's personal and related to you, it gives you more opportunities to improve"*.

Moreover, the students pointed out how choosing their own reading material would help them improve in different domains: their English language proficiency as a whole, grades, and general knowledge.

- Richard: *"If a student reads something he's interested in, he will say okay I can improve my English skills and at the same time learn interesting things"*.

- Richard: *"I agree with Mira because it will also result in good high grades, because you are interested when you are writing from your heart not forced to write"*.

- Mira: *"When I choose the topic, then I'll be interested and I'll make a big effort in understanding it and I prefer this topic, like it will be positive, it will add something to my vocabulary to my knowledge to my everything but if you give me a topic I won't even care about it"*.

- Mira: *"Yes! Because when you read it's like you're adding something to your knowledge in the future not only for this day. When you're talking to your friends or someone who is higher in knowledge than you, you can speak…"*

- Nada: *"When you love something you become better at it"*.

- Ali: *"You start to work more efficiently and you would be more productive if it is your own choice"*.

Similarly, all of the students had the same hypothesis or expectations that choosing their own stories would motivate them to read more; because of the reasons

listed in the previous section. They also agreed that they *want* to read more and that they want someone to motivate them to do it, as the following statements show:

- Mira: *"If I choose the stories, maybe I will be an everyday reader, not 0 to 9 books. I was shocked by the questionnaire. Like if it weren't for you, I wouldn't have known I was a failure".*

- Richard: *"Personally I like reading but as Mira said, we want someone to push us, to motivate us, to give us ideas.*

- Ali: *"I want to start becoming a reader and I think the chance to choose stories on my own will be a great push".*

- Nada: *"We want to read but we want someone to motivate us. I think when I choose what I want to read it will help me a lot".*

These hypotheses were brought back in the final focus group interview which was done at the end of the study. The students were asked whether the hypotheses they proposed about the impact of choice on their reading motivation was confirmed or not. While their responses were affirmative, that is confirming that choosing their own reading material increased their reading motivation for the different reasons mentioned above, data analysis suggested that the resulting changes in motivation were not caused by choice itself but by other factors. Therefore, as the analysis of the data demonstrated and as elaborately explained in the different sections above, the major factors contributing to students' reading motivation are the story-related factors and not choice itself. Even though the students said it was choice, data analysis suggests otherwise. This is in part due to the fact that all of the participant started the study and chose each story

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with an initial level of interest, which led to confounding effects of interest and choice (Katz & Assor, 2007; Patall, 2013).

Nada's Negative Experiences: an Explanation

Given that Nada had more negative experiences than the other participants, her case will be summarized separately, focusing on the different reasons behind those experiences. To begin with, there was a mistake right at the beginning of the study; in terms of choosing the genre. This choice of genre was offered to meet one of the conditions necessary for the success of choice, which mandates that choices be relevant to students' personal interests, values, and goals (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). However, Nada chose the genre of Fantasy/Fairytales arbitrarily, without really knowing what the genre is about. In the first interview which was done after reading and working on the first story, she said: *"I personally didn't even know the types [genres], like horror and the others, I didn't understand them, so I just chose this one [Fantasy/Fairytales]"*. Even though Nada was given a chance to change the genre after the first round of choice, she decided to keep the genre of Fantasy/Fairytales, saying *"I don't want to change no, I got used to this type so I don't want to start with something new"*. Knowing that Nada's consecutive choices of the stories throughout the study were based on this arbitrary choice of genre, it can be argued that she was engaged in an act of "picking" rather than "choosing". As explained by Katz and Assor (2007), "choosing" allows for a meaningful realization of students' individual preferences and desires; but "picking" does not because the choices provided would not be personally relevant to students; as the case with Nada was. Therefore, one of the

reasons behind Nada's negative experiences was the violation of the first condition of choice provision; that choices should be relevant to students' personal interests, values, and goals (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015).

This arbitrary choice of genre and the resulting lack of interest negatively affected Nada's experiences and reading motivation in other ways. For example, because Nada did not have clear goals or interests to start with, and because the genre and the choices were not personally interesting or relevant to her, she did not know how to benefit from the freedom given to her by the opportunity to choose (Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002). The authors suggest that students with lower proficiency levels, negative school experiences, unclear interests, and unidentified goals, do not know how to cope with choice. This specifically applies to Nada because, as explained in the original state of the system, she had the worst reading experiences at school compared to the other participants.

Another reason, and perhaps the major one, behind Nada's negative experiences is the failure to meet the second choice condition; stating that choices must be optimally challenging to students and matched to their abilities and ZPD (Patall et. al, 2008; Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). As was explained in detail in previous sections, there was a mismatch between Nada's abilities and the difficulty level of the stories she chose; whereby the first story was too difficult and the third was too easy. This mismatch, considered as a violation of one of the conditions necessary to ensure positive effects of choice, led to negative results on her reading motivation instead. To be more specific, these negative effects were most salient in terms of curiosity, involvement, and challenge acting as a repulsing factor.

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Furthermore, and as explained in several previous sections, because of her lower proficiency levels and negative school experiences, Nada has problems in her confidence and self-efficacy. In their extensive literature review, Thompson and Beymer (2015) conclude that if an individual does not feel some sort of confidence toward a task, providing a choice may actually lead to decreased motivation. This was confirmed by Nada in the final focus group which was done at the end of the study, when she said: *"Sometimes I was afraid when choosing the stories because I know I have problems in English and reading".*

Viewing the Results from a Complex Systems Theory (CST) Perspective

The main goal behind using the CST is adopting a flexible research approach through which change could be introduced and explored dynamically. To make CST applicable in classroom research, data collection, and data analysis, the following criteria were met: focus on change, focus on a specific level of complexity, attention to initial conditions, seeking attractor states, and viewing research as co-adaptation. The following section will briefly summarize how these criteria were met by showing the results from a CST perspective.

Focus on change

In CST, change should be introduced to the system, and studies in classroom contexts should include clearly stated objectives behind the introduced change (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). In the present study, the change introduced to the system was offering choice of reading material. Since I as a researcher was part of the study, the

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objective of introducing the change was clearly stated at the beginning: to increase

students' reading motivation. The change and development in students' reading

motivation was explored throughout the study. The specific experiences, negative and

positive, of each of the students were described and analyzed in the previous sections

above.

Focus on a specific level of complexity

Because it is impossible to know all the influences that make up the systems

under study, researchers should focus on how introduced change affects one particular

level of the system (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). In the present study, the major

system was reading motivation and the focus was on how the introduced change of

offering choice affected the students in the classroom particularly. This was especially

convenient to this study because the aim is not to generalize results but explore specific

cases only.

Attention to initial conditions

The initial state of the system before introducing change is very important

because it influences the trajectory of future change and the change introduced is heavily

dependent on initial conditions (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). In this study, a detailed

description of the initial conditions was provided at the beginning of the results and

discussions section.

Seeking attractor states

Attractor states are ones which the system prefers at particular moments in time (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014).Such attractor states should be identified as contributors to the system. In the present study, different attractors affecting the development of students' reading motivation were identified. These attractors are: the reading material themselves, events, characters, difficulty level, suspense, genre, choice, narrative elements as tools, tasks, challenge, personal differences, and teacher-related factors. The interplay between these factors and how they influenced the development of reading motivation was described and analyzed in detail.

Research as co-adaptation

Taking the initial states of the system as a starting point, the influence of introducing change should be explored and viewed as co-adaptation between the various agents involved in the system, as they adapt dynamically with each other over the course of the project (Mitchell, 2009; Sampson, 2014). Because the teacher-researcher is part of the system under study and will affect its members and processes, researcher journals were used to focus on this influence. As mentioned earlier, while these researcher journals aided the understanding of students' experiences in the classroom throughout the study, they were not used as a major source for data analysis because the students' interviews were more informative about the different factors contributing to the development of their reading motivation. The study did not explicitly seek to understand co-adaptation across the whole classroom system because it is impossible to trace all the factors influencing the system and motivation. Instead, the study explored the interaction

between the different agents and attractors and how they influenced the development of the students' reading motivation.

Summary of Findings: Case by Case

The research questions in the present study are:

1. How does providing choice of reading material affect the EFL reading motivation of four university students?

2. How does the reading motivation of each student develop/change when working with self-chosen reading material?

This section addresses these questions by summarizing the findings related to each of the participants in terms of the seven reading motivation dimensions. As profoundly explained in previous sections, choice was found to have the least influence on reading motivation. The strongest influence was that of the reading materials themselves.

Ali

Ali experienced pre-reading curiosity in each of the choice rounds but this curiosity did not persist while reading the first story. In that story, his sense of curiosity dropped because the story was less suspenseful and more theme-oriented. Regarding involvement, he was involved in the second and third stories more than the first, due to reasons related to the stories themselves and not the opportunity to choose. It is worth mentioning that he associated his heightened feelings of involvement in the second story to choice since he was allowed to replace a story which he did not like. His general preference for challenge which he talked about in the first two rounds was demonstrated

in a specific instance in the third story, whereby he reported satisfaction from overcoming challenges while reading. Regarding competition, there was a slight change between the first two rounds of choice and the third one. In the first and second rounds, Ali openly expressed his desire to excel and be better than others. However, in the last story which was his favorite, he added that the sense of competition was not only with others but also with himself. Across the three rounds of choice, Ali maintained that the reason why he completed the reading is a combination of compliance and interest. Similar to the case of competition, his recognition between the first two rounds and the final one shifted from impressing others and receiving comments that would increase his confidence to improving himself and being rewarded by the progress itself, regardless of others' comments. Finally, he demonstrated reading work avoidance only in the first story which was disappointing for him, and not in the second and third stories.

Richard

The most significant finding about Richard is that despite describing choice as the main reason behind his reading motivation, data analysis showed that the actual factors behind the development of his reading motivation are the reading materials themselves and not choice. Richard's sense of pre-reading curiosity was sustained while reading all of the three stories, with a noticeable increase in the final story which he referred to as his favorite. He related this curiosity to the factors of genre, title, events, and choice. His involvement, which increased with every choice round, developed as a result of story-related factors as well. Similar to Ali, Richard's preference for challenge was highlighted in the third story which included several challenges, the overcoming of which resulted in

feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction. His desire to compete with oneself in the first two rounds changed to competing with others in the third, because the challenges presented in the story itself and his individual characteristics pushed him to prove himself more. The case with recognition was similar to that of competition. That is, he sought recognition in the third round more than in the first two rounds; also for the same reasons. Finally, he did not report encountering any reading work avoidance because he had positive reading experiences in all three stories.

Mira

Pre-reading curiosity for Mira was fixed in all choice rounds, but it did not persist in the second story which was disappointing for her. Her involvement was similarly affected due to the characteristics of the second story itself. She displayed her preference for challenge in all the stories, whereby she felt satisfied after overcoming several difficulties. As for her competition and recognition, they were almost fixed throughout the study because of her high self-confidence and reading efficacy. Also, her sense of compliance and reading work avoidance increased in the second story where she encountered a negative reading experience.

Nada

Nada had the most negative reading experiences in the study because of problems with the stories she chose, particularly their difficulty level. Only the second story had a suitable difficult level, while the first was too difficult and the third was too easy. In these two stories, Nada's reading motivation in all of its seven dimensions was negatively

influenced. Nada's case represented one of the study's limitations because she had a lower proficiency level than the other participants and as such, she encountered more challenges. However, despite this limitation, her case provided deep insights about the weak influence of choice compared to that of the reading material themselves.

Conclusion

The study began with the expectation that providing students with choice of reading material under the set conditions would increase their reading motivation. However, data analysis showed that what controlled the development of reading motivation was the reading material themselves and not choice. The negative experiences that took place in this study resulted from violating or not meeting one or more of the conditions specified at the beginning. On the other hand, while positive experiences did take place when all of the conditions were met, that is students did experience an increase in their reading motivation, it was not as a result of choice itself but the factors related to the reading material. Even more, the fact that choice yielded positive results when the conditions were met is yet another proof that merely offering choice does not lead to positive effects on reading motivation, it is rather a matter of the conditions under which the choice is provided (Katz & Assor, 2007). This is a replication of results from several other studies where the changes in reading motivation were determined not by choice but by the conditions under which it was provided.

This study was an attempt to meet these conditions and offer students choice of reading material with the hope that it will play a positive role in their reading motivation,

however, and after practically applying the theoretical conditions, it was shown that such a process is not particularly easy. Given all the challenges and conditions surrounding choice provision, it can be argued that offering choice to increase students' reading motivation is "easier said than done". Moreover, and because the major factor contributing to students' reading motivation was the reading material themselves and particularly material relevance and interest, it can be said that the overlapping effects of choice and interest cannot be easily isolated (Flowerday et. al, 2004, Katz & Assor, 2007). In order for choice to be motivating, it has to be based on a careful match between the different options and the students' needs, interests, preferences, goals, abilities, and experiences. In addition, considerable attention should be paid to the context, environment, and manner in which the choice is provided, without neglecting the critical role played by the teachers (Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). In short, the results from the present study, similar to several other studies, cast doubt on the generalized and assumed power of choosing reading material on students' reading motivation (D'Ailly, 2004, Flowerday et. al, 2004; Gomez, 2016; Iyengar & Lepper, 2000; Katz & Assor, 2007).

Limitations

The present study has several limitations. To begin with, given that teaching, data collection, and data analysis were all done by the researcher, there is a limitation in terms of the objectivity of the research. Also, the sample size is small and three of the participants had close relationships with each other. As mentioned earlier, the negative experiences encountered in this study resulted from not meeting one or more of the

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conditions that ensure a positive role for choice. This was done through offering reading material which have unsuitable difficulty levels and are not personally relevant to students' interests and goals.

Recommendations

Concerning the recommendations, it is worth noting that while there are specific measures that could have been taken to avoid the problems which occurred in the present study, the provision of choice requires meeting several conditions which, as explained in the conclusion above, cannot be easily applied in practice away from the theory. The recommendations are listed below:

1. In identifying students' interests, identifying their favorite genres is not enough. This is because the stories might have certain qualities which do not go hand in hand with students' interests, despite being part of their favorite genre. A good example from the study is Ali's first story which started out as interesting but ended up being more theme-oriented and less exciting to read. With this in mind, and knowing that identifying topic interests is also not a quite feasible job due to the presence of endless varieties of topics, a question remains about the suitable way to identify and implement students' reading interests.

2. Teachers should meticulously check the reading material options before offering them to students, to make sure they meet the objectives of teaching and are suitable to the students in terms of difficulty level, content, and interest. This is yet another example on the premise that offering students the choice of reading material is a complicated process.

3. Teachers should guide students in their choices. Research suggests that teachers play a defining role in students' experiences especially when making choices (Katz & Assor, 2007; Thompson & Beymer, 2015). This is because regardless of any differences, students would always seek help and guidance from their teachers. Specifically when it comes to making choices, and because it is not a very common practice in schools (Patall, 2008), students require more guidance to make sure they are making the right choices. This guidance is manifested in helping students choose material which are aligned with their interests and their proficiency levels. This recommendation was frequently mentioned by the participants in the final focus group, where they suggested that teachers guide students while making choices, despite it being an act of expressing freedom of choice.

APPENDIX A

THE READING INTEREST INVENTORY (RII)

(adapted from Donalyn Miller's (2010) Interest Inventory and Joseph Renzulli's (1997)
Interest-a-lyzer)

1) Rank the following book genres in order from your favorite to least favorite. (1 =

favorite, 9 = least favorite)

_____ Action/Adventure

_____ Fairytales/Fantasy

_____ Horror

_____ Mystery/Detective

2) I am more likely to read a book that: (tick all that applies)

_____ a teacher suggests

_____ my friend suggests

_____ has won an award

_____ is by an author whose books I have read

_____ I just happened to see (hear about) in _____

3) In the past week, I have read for at least half an hour (30 minutes):

_____ No days   _____ 1-2 days   _____ 3-4 days   _____ 5-7 days

4) In the past month, I have read _____book(s):

_____ No books   _____ 1 book   _____ 2 books   _____ 3 books   _____ More than

3 books

5) My favorite time to read is (tick all that applies):

_____ Never   _____ In the morning   _____ At college   _____ After classes
                               before classes

_____ Lunchtime   _____ In the evening   _____ Before falling   _____ Whenever I
                                                        asleep   can

6) When I read I like to:

_____ read one book   _____ read more than one book at a time

7) I like to receive books as presents.

_____ Yes   _____ No

8) The number of books I have at home:

_____ None   _____ 0-9   _____ 10-19
_____ 20-29   _____ 30-50   _____ More than 50

9) I would like to read a book about:

_____

APPENDIX B

THE ADULT READING MOTIVATION SCALE

Following are statements about reading. For each statement, please decide what is most true for you and write a number next to the statement using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Your Rating	Item
	1. If a book or article is interesting, I don't care how hard it is to read.
	2. Without reading, my life would not be the same.
	3. My friends sometimes are surprised at how much I read.
	4. My friends and I like to exchange books or articles we particularly enjoy.
	5. It is very important to me to spend time reading.
	6. In comparison to other activities, reading is important to me.
	7. If I am going to need information from material I read, I finish the reading well in advance of when I must know the material.
	8. Work performance or university grades are an indicator of the effectiveness of my reading.
	9. I set a good model for others through reading.
	10. I read rapidly.
	11. Reading helps make my life meaningful.
	12. It is important to me to get compliments for the knowledge I gather from reading.
	13. I like others to question me on what I read so that I can show my knowledge.
	14. I don't like reading technical material.
	15. It is important to me to have others remark on how much I read.
	16. I like hard, challenging books or articles.
	17. I don't like reading material with difficult vocabulary.
	18. I do all the expected reading for work or university courses.
	19. I am confident I can understand difficult books or articles.
	20. I am a good reader.
	21. I read to improve my work or university performance.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1) Curiosity: To what degree were you interested in learning more about the genres and the stories you chose and read? Why?

2) Involvement: While reading the story you chose:

- Did you make pictures in your mind about what you were reading?

- Did you empathize with the characters of the story?

- Did you experience pleasure and feelings of getting lost in the story?

3) Preference for challenge: Do you like hard, challenging books?

- Were any of the stories you chose complex or difficult to understand? If yes, did that make it more interesting to you?

- Were any of the stories you chose difficult to read but you read either way because it was interesting to you?

4) Competition: Did you feel a desire to be better at reading than everyone else in class? Why? What did you do to achieve that?

5) Compliance: Did you finish the readings you chose because you had to (required from the teacher) or because you felt that it was important for you to read them?

6) Recognition: Was it important for you to receive praise or compliments about your reading from your teacher and/or friends?
Do you think it's important to receive praise or compliments about your reading from your teacher and/or friends?

7) Reading Work Avoidance:

- Was there something about the stories you chose that made you avoid reading them?

- When you encountered difficult vocabulary words or complicated stories, did you feel like you wanted to stop reading or did you continue reading despite the difficulty?

** Added questions:

- Were there any differences between your reading experiences between the first time and this time?

- Did you think that it got boring to choose another story or was it the opposite?

	Dimension	Definition (Wang & Guthrie, 2004)	Definition (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997)	MRQ Items
Intrinsic Motivation	1) Curiosity	Desire to learn about a particular topic of interest	To learn more about personally interesting topics	☐ If the teacher discusses something interesting I might read more about it ☐ I have favorite subjects that I like to read about ☐ I read to learn new information about topics that interest me ☐ I read about my hobbies to learn more about them ☐ I like to read about new things ☐ I enjoy reading books about living things
	Curiosity: To what degree were you interested in learning more about the genres and the stories you chose and read? Why?			
	2) Involvement	Pleasure gained from reading a well-written book, article, or Web site on an interesting topic	To get lost in a story, experience imaginative actions, and empathize with the characters of a story	☐ I read stories about fantasy and make believe ☐ I like mysteries ☐ I make pictures in my mind when I read ☐ I feel like I make friends with people in good books ☐ I read a lot of adventure stories ☐ I enjoy a long, involved story or fiction book
	Involvement: While reading the story you chose: **- Did you make pictures in your mind about what you were reading?** **- Did you empathize with the characters of the story?** **- Did you experience pleasure and feelings of getting lost in the story?**			

	Dimension	Definition (Wang & Guthrie, 2004)	Definition (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997)	MRQ Items
Intrinsic Motivation	3) Preference for challenge *(not included in Schiefele et. el, 2012)*	Satisfaction from mastering or assimilating complex ideas in text and task	Preference for difficult or complex reading materials	☐ I like hard, challenging books ☐ If the project is interesting, I can read difficult material ☐ I like it when the questions in books make me think ☐ I usually learn difficult things by reading ☐ If a book is interesting I don't care how hard it is to read
	Preference for challenge: Do you like hard, challenging books? **Were any of the stories you chose complex or difficult to understand? If yes, did that make it more interesting to you?** **Were any of the stories you chose difficult to read but you read either way because it was interesting to you?**			
Extrinsic Motivaation	4) Competition	Desire to outperform others in reading	To reach higher levels of reading achievement than other students	☐ I try to get more answers right than my friends ☐ I like being the best at reading ☐ I like to finish my reading before other students ☐ I like being the only one who knows an answer in something we read ☐ It is important for me to see my name on a list of good readers ☐ I am willing to work hard to read better than my friends
	Competition: Did you feel a desire to be better at reading than everyone else in class? Why? What did you do to achieve that?			

	Dimension	Definition (Wang & Guthrie, 2004)	Definition (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997)	MRQ Items
Extrinsic Motivation	5) Compliance	Desire to read because of an external goal or requirement	Reading because of external pressure or assignments in school	☐ I do as little schoolwork as possible in reading ☐ <u>I read because I have to</u> ☐ I always do my reading work exactly as the teacher wants it ☐ <u>Finishing every reading assignment is very important to me</u> ☐ I always try to finish my reading on time
	Compliance: Did you finish the readings you chose because you had to (required from the teacher) or because you felt that it was important for you to read them?			
	6) Recognition	Gratification from receiving a tangible form of recognition for success in reading	To get praise for good reading performance by teachers, parents, or friends	☐ I like having the teacher say I read well ☐ My friends sometimes tell me I am a good reader ☐ <u>I like to get compliments for my reading</u> ☐ <u>I am happy when someone recognizes my reading</u> ☐ My parents often tell me what a good job I am doing in reading
	Recognition: Was it important for you to receive praise or compliments about your reading from your teacher and/or friends? Do you think it's important to receive praise or compliments about your reading from your teacher and/or friends?			

	Dimension	Definition (Wang & Guthrie, 2004)	Definition (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997)	MRQ Items
Extrinsic Motivation	7) Reading Work Avoidance	(not included)	Trying to avoid reading-related work	☐ I don't like vocabulary questions ☐ <u>Complicated stories are no fun to read</u> ☐ <u>I don't like reading something when the words are too difficult</u> ☐ I don't like it when there are too many people in the story

Reading Work Avoidance:
- Was there something about the stories you chose that made you avoid reading them?
- When you encountered difficult vocabulary words or complicated stories, did you feel like you wanted to stop reading or did you continue reading despite the difficulty?

APPENDIX E

PRE AND POST FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Pre Focus group questions

1) What do you recall about reading sessions when you were at school? Were they generally pleasant or boring?

2) Would you describe your reading experiences in reading sessions at school as pleasant or not? What made them so?

3) What are some practices or special activities done by your teachers which were remarkable? (positive and negative)

4) What did you enjoy the most during those sessions?

5) Were you ever allowed to choose your own reading materials for classes or did the teachers choose the texts themselves?

6) Have you ever had the chance to work on a story of your own choice in class? What was that like?

7) Do you think it is important to choose your own reading material or is it okay to work with what teachers choose?

Post Focus Group Questions

1) Compared to the beginning of the study, did you experience any changes related to reading? What are these changes?

2) What factors encouraged or discouraged you throughout the study?

3) How would you comment on the role of choice of reading material?

4) What suggestions would you give about offering choice of reading material in class?

5) What do you think should have been done differently in this study?

LIST OF SHORT STORIES

	Title	Author	Word Count
Action/Adventure	James Penny's New Identity	Lee Child	5666
	The Lost Legion	Rudyard Kipling	4714
	The Seed from the Sepulchre	Clark Ashton smith	4549
	The Sea Raiders	H. G. Wells	4006
	The Sea Devil	Arthur Gordon	3860
	A Mountain Journey	Howard O'Hagan	3268
	The Wind of Fear	Talmage Powell	2977
	The Tiger's Heart	Jim Kjelgaard	2616
	A Horseman in the Sky	Ambrose Bierce	2494
	A Day in the Country	Anton Chekov	2321
	The Interlopers	H. H. Mundo	2151
Fantasy/Fairytales	The Remarkable Rocket	Oscar Wilde	4378
	The Devoted Friend	Oscar Wilde	4330
	A Clever Thief	Nancy Bell	4274
	The Happy Prince	Oscar Wilde	3477
	The Shepherd's Story of the Bond of Friendship	Hans Christian Andersen	3284
	She was Good for Nothing	Hans Christian Andersen	3026
	Tobermory	H. H. Munro	2734
	The Lady, or the Tiger?	Frank Stockton	2699
	Gabriel-Earnest	H. H. Munro	2447
	The Nightingale and the Rose	Oscar Wilde	2330
	The Selfish Giant	Oscar Wilde	1652
	Jack the Dullard	Hans Christian Andersen	1632
	A Cheerful Temper	Hans Christian Andersen	1588
	The Conceited Apple Branch	Hans Christian Andersen	1360
Horror	The Monkey's Paw	W. W. Jacobs	3968
	The Black Cat	Edgar Allan Poe	3915
	The Tell-Tale Heart	Edgar Allan Poe	3587
	The Landlady	Roald Dahl	3550
	Wakefield.	Nathaniel Hawthorne	3479
	The Ambitious Guest	Nathaniel Hawthorne	3267
	The Wedding Knell	Nathaniel Hawthorne	3191
	The Coffin Maker	Alexander Pushkin	2869
	The Outsider	H. P. Lovecraft	2572
	The Mask of the Red Death	Edgar Allan Poe	2435
M y	The Ransom of Red Chief	O. Henry	4163

	Beau Brummel Murder	Ray Cummings	3379
	The Case of the Silent Dog	Dixon Hawke	3263
	The Hour and the Man	Robert Barr	3166
	A Retrieved Reformation	O. Henry	2815
	The Case of the Swedish Deckhand	Dixon Hawke	2783
	The Case of the Special Edition	Dixon Hawke	2653
	This'll Kill You	James Mort	2183
	Murder that Boomeranged	Zeta Rothschild	2050
	An Alpine Divorce	Robert Barr	1936
	The Detective Detector	O. Henry	1772
	August Heat	W. F. Harvey	1757
	Killer's Final Curtain	Wilber S. Peacock	1700
	In the Light of the Red Lamp	Maurice Level	1633
	Lost Keys	Jane Livingston	1540
	Oil of Dog	Ambrose Bierce	1471
	Lothario Unlamented	Joseph Franklin	1385
	After Twenty Years	O. Henry	1263
	Study in Suicide	Richard Demming	1228

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE SHORT STORY

Four Men in a Cave

by Stephen Crane

One man suggests to his three companions that they explore a dark dubious cave. What they find there is troubling.

LIKEWISE FOUR QUEENS, AND A SULLIVAN COUNTY HERMIT

The moon rested for a moment on the top of a tall pine on a hill.

The little man was standing in front of the campfire making orations to his companions.

"We can tell a great tale when we get back to the city if we investigate this thing," said he, in conclusion.

They were won.

The little man was determined to explore a cave, because its black mouth had gaped at him. The four men took a lighted pine-knot and clambered over boulders down a hill. In a thicket on the mountainside lay a little tilted hole. At its side they halted.

"Well?" said the little man.

They fought for last place and the little man was overwhelmed. He tried to struggle from under by crying that if the fat, pudgy man came after, he would be corked. But he finally administered a cursing over his shoulder and crawled into the hole. His companions gingerly followed.

A passage, the floor of damp clay and pebbles, the walls slimy, green- mossed, and dripping, sloped downward. In the cave atmosphere the torches became studies in red blaze and black smoke.

"Ho!" cried the little man, stifled and bedraggled, "let's go back." His companions were not brave. They were last. The next one to the little man pushed him on, so the little man said sulphurous words and cautiously continued his crawl.

Things that hung seemed to be on the wet, uneven ceiling, ready to drop upon the men's bare necks. Under their hands the clammy floor seemed alive and writhing. When the little man endeavored to stand erect the ceiling forced him down. Knobs and points came out and punched him. His clothes were wet and mud-covered, and his eyes, nearly blinded by smoke, tried to pierce the darkness always before his torch.

"Oh, I say, you fellows, let's go back," cried he. At that moment he caught the gleam of trembling light in the blurred shadows before him.

"Ho!" he said, "here's another way out."

The passage turned abruptly. The little man put one hand around the corner, but it touched nothing. He investigated and discovered that the little corridor took a sudden dip down a hill. At the bottom shone a yellow light.

The little man wriggled painfully about, and descended feet in advance. The others followed his plan. All picked their way with anxious care. The traitorous rocks rolled from beneath the little man's feet and roared thunderously below him, lesser stone loosened by the men above him, hit him on the back. He gained seemingly firm foothold, and, turning halfway about, swore redly at his companions for dolts and careless fools. The pudgy man sat, puffing and perspiring, high in the rear of the procession. The fumes and smoke from four pine-knots were in his blood. Cinders and sparks lay thick in his eyes and hair. The pause of the little man angered him.

"Go on, you fool!" he shouted. "Poor, painted man, you are afraid."

"Ho!" said the little man. "Come down here and go on yourself, imbecile!"

The pudgy man vibrated with passion. He leaned downward. "Idiot--"

He was interrupted by one of his feet which flew out and crashed into the man in front of and below. It is not well to quarrel upon a slippery incline, when the unknown is below. The fat man, having lost the support of one pillar-like foot, lurched forward. His body smote the next man, who hurtled into the next man. Then they all fell upon the cursing little man.

They slid in a body down over the slippery, slimy floor of the passage. The stone avenue must have wibble-wobbled with the rush of this ball of tangled men and strangled cries. The torches went out with the combined assault upon the little man. The adventurers whirled to the unknown in darkness. The little man felt that he was pitching to death, but even in his convolutions he bit and scratched at his companions, for he was satisfied that it was their fault. The swirling mass went some twenty feet, and lit upon a level, dry place in a strong, yellow light of candles. It dissolved and became eyes.

The four men lay in a heap upon the floor of a grey chamber. A small fire smoldered in the corner, the smoke disappearing in a crack. In another corner was a bed of faded hemlock boughs and two blankets. Cooking utensils and clothes lay about, with boxes and a barrel.

Of these things the four men took small cognisance. The pudgy man did not curse the little man, nor did the little man swear, in the abstract. Eight widened eyes were fixed upon the center of the room of rocks.

A great, gray stone, cut squarely, like an altar, sat in the middle of the floor. Over it burned three candles, in swaying tin cups hung from the ceiling. Before it, with what seemed to be a small

volume clasped in his yellow fingers, stood a man. He was an infinitely sallow person in the brown-checked shirt of the ploughs and cows. The rest of his apparel was boots. A long grey beard dangled from his chin. He fixed glinting, fiery eyes upon the heap of men, and remained motionless. Fascinated, their tongues cleaving, their blood cold, they arose to their feet. The gleaming glance of the recluse swept slowly over the group until it found the face of the little man. There it stayed and burned.

The little man shrivelled and crumpled as the dried leaf under the glass.

Finally, the recluse slowly, deeply spoke. It was a true voice from a cave, cold, solemn, and damp.

"It's your ante," he said.

"What?" said the little man.

The hermit tilted his beard and laughed a laugh that was either the chatter of a banshee in a storm or the rattle of pebbles in a tin box. His visitors' flesh seemed ready to drop from their bones.

They huddled together and cast fearful eyes over their shoulders. They whispered.

"A vampire!" said one.

"A ghoul!" said another.

"A Druid before the sacrifice," murmured another.

"The shade of an Aztec witch doctor," said the little man.

As they looked, the inscrutable face underwent a change. It became a livid background for his eyes, which blazed at the little man like impassioned carbuncles. His voice arose to a howl of ferocity. "It's your ante!" With a panther-like motion he drew a long, thin knife and advanced, stooping. Two cadaverous hounds came from nowhere, and, scowling and growling, made desperate feints at the little man's legs. His quaking companions pushed him forward.

Tremblingly he put his hand to his pocket.

"How much?" he said, with a shivering look at the knife that glittered.

The carbuncles faded.

"Three dollars," said the hermit, in sepulchral tones which rang against the walls and among the passages, awakening long-dead spirits with voices. The shaking little man took a roll of bills from a

pocket and placed "three ones" upon the altar-like stone. The recluse looked at the little volume with reverence in his eyes. It was a pack of playing cards.

Under the three swinging candles, upon the altar-like stone, the grey beard and the agonized little man played at poker. The three other men crouched in a corner, and stared with eyes that gleamed with terror. Before them sat the cadaverous hounds licking their red lips. The candles burned low, and began to flicker. The fire in the corner expired.

Finally, the game came to a point where the little man laid down his hand and quavered: "I can't call you this time, sir. I'm dead broke."

"What?" shrieked the recluse. "Not call me! Villain Dastard! Cur! I have four queens, miscreant." His voice grew so mighty that it could not fit his throat. He choked wrestling with his lungs for a moment. Then the power of his body was concentrated in a word: "Go!"

He pointed a quivering, yellow finger at a wide crack in the rock. The little man threw himself at it with a howl. His erstwhile frozen companions felt their blood throb again. With great bounds they plunged after the little man. A minute of scrambling, falling, and pushing brought them to open air. They climbed the distance to their camp in furious springs.

The sky in the east was a lurid yellow. In the west the footprints of departing night lay on the pine trees. In front of their replenished camp fire sat John Willerkins, the guide.

"Hello!" he shouted at their approach. "Be you fellers ready to go deer huntin'?"

Without replying, they stopped and debated among themselves in whispers.

Finally, the pudgy man came forward.

"John," he inquired, "do you know anything peculiar about this cave below here?"

"Yes," said Willerkins at once; "Tom Gardner."

"What?" said the pudgy man.

"Tom Gardner."

"How's that?"

"Well, you see," said Willerkins slowly, as he took dignified pulls at his pipe, "Tom Gardner was once a fambly man, who lived in these here parts on a nice leetle farm. He uster go away to the city orften, and one time he got a-gamblin' in one of them there dens. He went ter the dickens right

quick then. At last he kum home one time and tol' his folks he had up and sold the farm and all he had in the worl'. His leetle wife she died then. Tom he went crazy, and soon after--"

The narrative was interrupted by the little man, who became possessed of devils.

"I wouldn't give a cuss if he had left me 'nough money to get home on the doggoned, grey-haired red pirate," he shrilled, in a seething sentence. The pudgy man gazed at the little man calmly and sneeringly.

"Oh, well," he said, "we can tell a great tale when we get back to the city after having investigated this thing."

"Go to the devil," replied the little man.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Lesson Plan 2

Plot and Its Elements

- **Concept:** Plot
- **Essential Questions:**
    - What is the plot in a story?
    - What are the different elements of plot?
    - How can plot elements be demonstrated in a plot diagram?
- **Skills:** reading, speaking, listening, writing
- **Objectives:**
    Students will be able to (SWBAT):

    - Define plot.
    - Identify and analyze the elements of plot in a short story of their choice.
    - Develop plot diagrams based on short stories of their choice.

- **Instructional Materials:**

    - Copies of students' short stories
    - Copies of the short story Love by William Maxwell
    - White board and markers
    - PowerPoint document about plot
    - Laptop
    - LCD projector

- **Key Vocabulary:**

    Plot – Exposition - Rising action – Climax - Falling action - Resolution

- **Estimate of students' prior knowledge:**

    Following the first session, students would be familiar with the different narrative elements and what each one generally stands for.
- **Procedure:**

- Generally review with students what was discussed in the previous session (characteristics of short stories, the different narrative elements, what each one means..)

- State that the focus of today's session is plot and its elements.

- Display the PowerPoint about plot and its elements and explain to students accordingly.

- Distribute the copies of the short story *Love* by *William Maxwell*. Ask students to read it silently and apply the concepts learned in the PowerPoint (identify plot elements and draw a plot diagram). Receive answers and provide feedback.

- Let students choose their own short stories from the choices provided.

- Explain that they have to analyze the plot and its element and draw a plot diagram.

- Provide time for reading.

- Circulate among students and ask individual questions (for individual conferencing)

- Hold a discussion where each student discusses the plot in his/her story.

- Wrap up by quick revision.

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