

UNDERSTANDING READING IN THE ENGLISH PROGRAM: AN INQUIRY OF
HOW STUDENTS ARE GUIDED WITH ADVANCED READING MATERIALS

By

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ABSTRACT

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Reading and writing are connected activities. Research has shown that you cannot truly be successful in one without the other. In post-secondary writing intensive courses, the teaching of reading in regards to advanced academic texts is often forgotten or ignored due to pre-existing conceptions of reading practices. In this project, I have conducted a research study across three (3) FYC courses at Humboldt State University to understand how the teaching of reading is implemented within its FYC program. I specifically study how the reading pedagogy known as the Reading Apprenticeship (RA) framework is used by instructors within their classrooms and how students are using RA to gain the reading skills needed to be successful in future courses. This study occurred over the course of the Fall 2019 semester. I used a triangulated data set of early and late semester student surveys, early and late semester instructor interviews, and classroom observations to gather multiple perceptions of this teaching pedagogy and to help complete my study. The findings from this research can be used as a point of entry to begin a conversation about the importance of teaching reading within writing intensive classrooms.

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INTRODUCTION

Research suggests that reading and writing are connected activities, that we cannot be truly successful in one practice without the other. Having fluency in reading is a skill that is crucial in the academic setting. Reading is an essential practice in all academic major course work. However, the teaching of *how* to read within academic majors is not a common practice, and this may lead some students to struggle with their reading-specific coursework, especially disciplinary and/or difficult academic texts that students are assigned to read. Moments such as these are known as hitting a “literacy ceiling.” A literacy ceiling appears when students have difficulty with their reading and understanding of their reading materials, which “often limits what [students] can achieve both in the classroom and in their lives outside of school. The literacy ceiling also limits what teachers can achieve in their classrooms” (Schoenbach, et al. 5). When students have difficulty reading and understanding texts for their courses, this difficulty may lead to professor limitations and leaves them wondering what they can do if students cannot work with their readings. What can school institutions do for both its students and professors to work with the issue of building reading skills in college students? This research project investigates how English courses at Humboldt State University (HSU) are explicitly teaching reading of challenging scholarly and academic texts to help students overcome reading literacy struggles.

The subject of this research connects to me personally because of my own history as a struggling reader. I have been enrolled within “resource” programs since I was in

first grade. The first sign that appeared contributing to knowing I had learning disabilities was my mom noticing my difficulty in being able to read. Reading has always been a challenge for me, and I never really enjoyed reading in or outside of school until I was in middle school where I luckily gained the skills I needed to thrive as a reader. Becoming a successful reader helped improve my writing. From that time forward, I didn't struggle with assigned readings until I entered college. I noticed a jump in course difficulty and reading assignments, which of course is to be expected, but I was really never able to overcome the challenge of reading advanced texts. I wished there was something I could do to help me *get it*, something I do to make these readings and conversations more accessible to me and others like me.

My feelings of helplessness continued on into graduate school until I came across a webinar that I was invited to view for a class assignment titled "The Reading Apprenticeship Framework at WestEd." As I learned about the Reading Apprenticeship (RA) framework, I realized that my current struggle in grad school and my past difficulty in undergrad circled back to my issue with reading. The RA framework focuses on giving students the space they need to gain literacy in academic reading. This was a teaching pedagogy that I personally could have gained a lot from as a student. As an English major, the courses I had taken typically focused on teaching students how to write and how to write well. With the intense focus on teaching students how to write, the teaching of reading was overlooked. The development of literacy for college-level readers was not discussed or worked toward within the particular courses that I took as a college student.

So, for this research project, I specifically wanted to study how the RA framework was being used within its first-year composition courses to support academic reading and readers. I also wanted to learn more about the Framework itself: What does it do and how is it valued both in the existing conversations between scholars and in the classroom? My project investigates how English courses at HSU are using RA to teach reading of challenging scholarly and academic texts. This study specifically investigates how lecturers approach the concept of reading and how they use the RA framework in their first-year composition (FYC) courses. By completing this project, my goal was to answer the following research questions:

1. How is reading taught across three first-year composition classrooms at Humboldt State University?
2. What kinds of reading skills are students being asked to use in first-year composition classrooms at Humboldt State University?
3. What is the effect of Reading Apprenticeship instruction across one semester at Humboldt State University on students reading skills and strategies?

I set out to answer these research questions in a number of ways. I first reviewed the scholarship within the field of reading pedagogy, specifically within the FYC classroom. Next, I performed a qualitative research study of how the RA framework was being used across three FYC courses at HSU. The research study consisted of studying three FYC courses during the Fall 2019 semester. For each of these courses, I created early and late-semester anonymized student surveys. Early-semester surveys asked students how they approached working with difficult texts. Late-semester surveys again asked how they

approached reading, but also about what knowledge they gained about reading during the semester. Additionally, each instructor of these three FYC courses were interviewed twice, during the early and late weeks of the semester. Early-semester interviews asked instructors about how they approach teaching academic reading and how RA is being used within their classrooms. Late-semester interviews asked how these instructors demonstrated teaching difficult reading during the semester, if students asked for instruction on working with difficult readings, how they used RA in their course during the semester, and if they would continue to use the RA framework in future courses. The last piece of my data was conducting classroom observations where I could observe class instruction of academic reading occurring in classroom spaces. With the information and data I collected from my research, I wanted to discover how RA guided students with their academic reading. The findings from this data can offer various insights to discussions about the teaching and learning of academic reading including: how being honest with students about the difficulty of academic reading can often lead to solving reading problems collaboratively, how students developing identity as readers leads to reader confidence, and how teaching pedagogies such as the RA framework can have a positive effect on both students and instructors. Each of these findings can be used as a guide for professional development design in future writing courses, particularly in FYC. In the following chapters, I review the research in relation to my project; I provide a description of the methodology I used to conduct my research for this project; I present my results from my completed study; I then analyze and discuss my results including the limitations of my study; I then end on my concluding thoughts about what it means to do

research on reading pedagogy, and what teaching reading literacy can do to support future student success.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literacy develops and changes over time and is always developed in school-based contexts. Academic reading is not simply about understanding words on a page, it is about understanding what scholars are doing in their texts; it's about readers having awareness of rhetorical tools that guide their developing literacy. Professors recognize that students must have literacy skills within post-secondary settings, but are students learning tools for literacy before applying them in academia? Various scholars have observed that students in the university are not well-prepared coming into classrooms as readers (Bunn 2013; Heick 2019; Brown et al. 2017; Downs 2010; MacMillan et al. 2012). Such research has argued for increased literacy instruction early on in post-secondary education. This examination of the literature will report the current conversations about reading pedagogy that address why students need strong literacy skills in order to work with advanced reading materials. Additionally, this lit review will report on previous research on reading and teaching strategies that can make advanced post-secondary reading more accessible and understandable for students. All of the texts summarized in this section recognize that literacy and reading have value in the post-secondary space, but sometimes this value is overlooked in FYC courses because of its heavy emphasis on writing.

While writing may be viewed as a chore to students, they understand that having the ability to write will be beneficial to them post-education. But what about reading? Michael Bunn addresses this understanding about reading in his article “Motivation and

Connection: Teaching Reading (and Writing) in the Composition Classroom” (2013).

Bunn brings in a handful of scholars into his conversation to describe researched understandings about students’ relationship to writing as compared to their relationship with reading. According to reading scholars such as Patricia Harkin, Nancy Morrow, Alice Horning, Mariolina Salvatori, and Marguerite Helmers; students understand that having the ability to write and write well is a valued skill. Even if they dislike the course, students are still doing what is required so they can graduate and have better success after college. With this fact known about writing, one wonders about academic reading: “Students seem to recognize the value of learning to write (in composition courses), [but] it is unclear whether students experience this same level of motivation towards assigned course reading” (497-98). When it comes to understanding student motivation towards reading, past scholars have stated that students who were engaged with their course reading were also reading outside of the classroom for personal pleasure. The question then becomes: How can professors teach course readings in ways that motivate students to become engaged in the same way as they are with outside texts? These particular students who are reading for pleasure and working with course readings demonstrate that they have transferable reading skills. How do professors teach these transferable skills? Furthermore, how can professors and first-year writing programs (at minimum) encourage students’ own recognition of the importance of writing as a way to motivate them to read in classes? (498).

In the past two decades, various studies have investigated and researched the way reading factors into college composition courses. Many of these scholars express the

challenges that instructors face when teaching reading in writing-focused classrooms. Bunn's article adds to this conversation by studying the way professors "theorize and teach reading-writing connections in composition courses and how this approach may affect students' motivation and feelings to complete course readings" (498). To do this, Bunn conducted a qualitative research study at the University of Michigan to examine how instructors are theorizing and teaching reading in composition courses. To gain the information needed for his study, Bunn collected specific data to gain awareness of what professors do to teach reading in composition classrooms, along with how students are taking up this knowledge. Collected data included online surveys from composition instructors, performing classroom observations, and a student survey. 114 composition professors who were teaching or had taught first-year composition courses took an online survey to help investigate the role of reading pedagogy in their teaching curriculum. The response rate was 50% (57 of 114 professors) and from these surveys, 8 professors agreed to be interviewed. Additional data was collected from 4 of the 8 professor class sections in observations. At the end of the research experiment, students also completed a survey during Bunn's observation. Together, 66 students took the survey. Bunn uses these instructor surveys, instructor interviews, and student surveys to create a conversation of how both professors and students think about reading as it operates in the classroom.

The findings from Bunn's instructor surveys express the teaching of reading in first-year composition classrooms: 52 of the 56 instructors believed that reading and

writing are connected activities. There is a variation of positivity between these 52 instructors, but most of them expressed that reading plays a factor in writing, but not all of these instructors explain or teach these connections in the classroom. The connection between reading and writing in a FYC course would seem to be rather obvious, but obvious to whom? Bunn explains that instructors assume that students should already know the importance of reading, and due to this, these connections go unannounced (503). This was the common view and realization among most of these instructor responses to Bunn's survey: "I'm not sure that it's [reading] something I teach directly. This may be a fault on my part. Instead of telling them the connection that is important, I assume they already know or that they will see the connection as we work toward reading texts objectively" (503). If this assumption is common for instructors, how could the connection between reading and writing connection be addressed? One instructor suggested that by explaining to students that their readings are connected to what they will be writing, students would be more motivated to complete readings. Bunn mentions that with expressing the importance of a reading/writing connection, students have a better chance of recognizing how these course readings connect to their writing assignments (505). Bunn discovered that after instructors realized they were not making the connection between reading and writing clear, new ideas emerged about how to share this importance. For example, there were similar suggestions that students should identify writing techniques from scholars that they could use in their own work. If students can discover elements of the texts they engaged with as a reader, they can use these same techniques in their own writing (506). According to Bunn's research, connecting

rhetorical reading practices to writing practices helps students understand the genres that they might be asked to write, and having a text as an example can help students be successful with their reading literacy. Bunn indicates, “by requiring students to reflect on their adoption of techniques and strategies, they locate in the model text and compose a submission note in which they assess the effectiveness of this borrowing, this instructor prompts students to identify and consider direct connections between their course reading and writing” (507). Most students responded that they are not motivated to read assigned texts. Bunn argues that if programs taught the connections between reading and writing, students would become more engaged with readings and become more successful in both reading and writing at the college level.

As Bunn’s data shows, there is a connection between reading and writing and student success. This connection is usually a conscious one for composition instructors, but as Bunn discovered, this connection may not be made explicit to students. Methods for teaching students to become aware of this connection are limited in the research, since instructors tend to assume that students already have reading knowledge. In his article “Teaching First-Year Writers to use Texts: Scholarly Readings in Writing-about-Writing in First-Year Comp” (2013), Doug Downs takes this conversation further by expanding on the reading and writing connection while also discussing the concept of teaching academic reading. Downs also focuses on the pressing need for instructors to provide disciplinary reading instruction in first-year composition. Specifically, Downs asks readers to consider the role of reading within general education courses and how the

teaching of reading differs in this space as compared to spaces that are specific communities of practice, such as in specific majors. If reading instruction worked within these specific communities of practice, courses then “challenge the possibility of simple instruction in such general skills” (19). This type of move allows those who are teaching to ask questions about what kind of analysis, synthesis, or evaluation they will use within their courses. Downs argues for this approach as an effective one for general instruction of reading skills in first-year writing courses:

I suggest that one answer is using gen-ed first-year writing courses to set the stage for effective reading instruction in later disciplinary courses by helping students fundamentally reconcile the nature of reading as they encounter it in the university... The approach to this type of teaching uses transferable knowledge *about reading*, [and] this is a relatively new and increasingly popular pedagogy called writing-about-writing. (20)

Within FYC courses, students’ study disciplinary-specific issues in writing studies to build “transferable knowledge about the experience with writing” (20). *Transfer* according to Wardle and Downs is: “the ability of learners to draw on what they already know or have learned in order to do something new, or something in a new context” (184). In contexts of teaching transferable knowledge in terms of writing could be for example, teaching writing methods that may be useful for students in other courses or spaces where they will be writing. They can use this transferable knowledge from FYC and apply it later on in other courses or even after their education. This approach of

teaching for transfer helps students understand their writing as connected to what they are reading in the course and in turn, this helps build declarative knowledge about writers, writing processes, discourse, textuality, and literacy (20).

Downs brings attention to some misconceptions about reading and reading theories. His goal is to bring attention to these misconceptions and then have readers think about how these texts can create transferable knowledge for disciplinary-specific reading (22). For example, Downs discusses scholar Nancy Wood's psycholinguistic theory of reading which defines reading as a "social activity," and recognizes reading as a "purposeful activity where students apply what they read in contexts meaningful to them" (23). With this reading theory, reading can be taught as an "interactive process, and that prior knowledge [about reading or the subject matter] is the basis of comprehension" (23). While Downs does acknowledge this theory of reading, he also critiques Wood's theory. He mentions that these sorts of assumptions about reading minimize it to a "momentary interaction of reader and text without [any] sense of history... and such assumptions about the nature of reading also have a preexisting condition of only background or prior knowledge influence how readers understand a text or make sense of the meaning from the work" (24). This type of thinking about reading dismisses the importance of rhetorical knowledge [the ability to think about and understand purposes behind a text]: making meaning about why the text was written and how this type of knowledge can guide readers with understanding. Reading rhetorically allows readers to further examine a text and possibly discover motivations which brought this text into

existence (Wardle, 559). There has been some research performed on this area of reading studies conducted by scholars such as Charles Bazerman (1985), Christina Haass and Linda Flower (1988), and Cheryl Geisler (1994). Downs encourages scholars to focus on how readers and texts are both active in the same social practice, rather than these being seen as separate entities. If this connection of reading and writing is acknowledged and understood, then students can be taught how reading and writing actually work together (24-25).

The implications which come with rhetorical theory may be seen as an issue in general education courses in the case of teaching reading (Downs, 26). Constructivist psycholinguistic models of reading allow professors to teach skills that build students' comprehension of reading and these can be used in any course. On the other hand, socio-cultural theories suggest that reading and writing cannot be learned separately. Downs acknowledges this problem and merges the two together: "It is through this theoretical route, then, that we reach the realization that a general education course must teach transferable knowledge about reading and writing, but cannot do so without centering on disciplinary texts" (26). Disciplinary knowledge can be built in writing studies contexts by focusing on interdisciplinary material. This can help students see reading and writing connections, which in turn, creates transferable knowledge (27). First-year writing courses can work with reading dilemmas, particularly with the discomfort that can come along with reading advanced reading materials. Centering comprehension skills and reading strategies in first-year composition courses allows those who are teaching a way

to show students how to use texts rather than just passively reading them. Downs states that the research on reading suggests that students do not read carefully or for a long amount of time (35). In Writing about Writing (WAW) courses, those who are teaching reading show students how to use their course texts in the case of their reading and writing. The goal is to have students discuss with one another what they do understand from a text (from prior knowledge or personal experience), rather than pushing for students to understand what a text means (36).

First-year writing courses can begin fleshing students' understanding of texts with the very first reading they work with. These courses focus on helping students understand what a text *is* and *does* and how this understanding can help them with both reading comprehension and their own writing. Downs discusses how his first-year writing courses have in-class reading lessons and these can help guide students through research articles. These students are not just looking for what a text says or means, but what it *does* for both the reader and writer (41-42). Teaching these types of skills within first-year composition classrooms gives them transferable knowledge that they can use within disciplinary-specific courses.

Thus far, this literature review has covered the importance of the connection between reading and writing, how FYC courses can approach communicating and teaching the reading and writing connection, ways that this connection can be taught to students, and what reading instruction in the classroom may look like. MacMillan and MacKenzie (2012) are faculty members of Mount Royal University (MRU) in Calgary

Canada who present a different research study on reading in their article, “Strategies for integrating information literacy and academic literacy: Helping undergraduate students make the most of scholarly articles,” MacMillan and MacKenzie describe the challenges that undergrad students may face when working with advanced academic readings. The study describes a workshop that was studied to help guide third-year students with their development of reading and literacy skills. This workshop was created with the intention to better understand the student experience and impact of this additional academic focus. The workshop also was created with the intention that in the year subsequent to the study, these students who participated would have exposure to tactics to help them in another course that used academic materials in the curriculum. This workshop was a “one-credit, semester-long course incorporating reading and critical thinking with other aspects of information literacy” (527). In Canada as well as in the US, researchers and colleges are seeing that universities “in the west” are less prepared to read advanced content “while no generation in history has had easier access to as much advanced scholarly material”(526). Within Canada’s academic system, students have open access to scholarly materials. These materials are also highly specialized, which becomes a big problem if students are not guided with how to find and read them. MRU took an interest in helping resolve this issue of students’ lack of literacy by collaborating with library staff and creating a “reading class.” The public relations (PR) curriculum is designed to help students with three main goals:

1. “To create opportunities for deep, meaningful learning throughout the students’ undergraduate PR education;
 2. To enable the students to learn the value of grounding PR practice in theoretical underpinnings so they know how they can use the research in PR journals to find solutions, identify practice weakness, develop solutions and improve their practice; and
 3. To prepare students, should they so choose, for success in graduate school.”
- (528).

The specific course that was studied at MRU as part of this research design was a reading course in research methods. MacMillan and MacKenzie wanted to gather and work to investigate students’ understanding of some reading practices that may be used while they worked with these texts. The course began with a discussion of what scholarly articles are, what they do, and who they are for. As students worked through these challenge, the instructors gave students a list of tips they could use for effective reading which included skills such as annotation, reading with a pen ready to write questions, reading slowly, and noting unfamiliar words or concepts (a larger list of tips is available at http://www2.mtroyal.ca/~mmacmillan/instruction/1112/Tips_for_Reading_Scholarly_Articles_2501-1.pdf). One of the strategies that was used throughout the research cycle for integrating literacy into students’ post-secondary experiences included reading academic articles together as a group while summarizing and discussing the purpose of different

sections. This type of group work allowed students to see how to approach and work through these specific texts (528-29). The students who participated in feedback from these types of sessions said that they were helpful and allowed them to understand these articles more clearly (529).

In addition to these class exercises, MacMillan and MacKenzie created a survey for senior students who were in their fourth year and had participated in the Public Relations (PR) reading course their junior year. There were 47 students total who were given a pre and post-course survey asking them about their reading practices in relation to scholarly articles. These questions specifically covered discussion of use, changes, aspect of articles, aspects of reading, and strategies. Most of the student answers were positive and reflected a sense of how they had improved in the course. The answers also reflected many of MacMillian and MacKenzie's thoughts of how to teach reading strategies and "affirmed their focus on teaching students more about how articles are put together" (533). Students communicated that reading strategies such as highlighting, annotating, and classroom discussion encouraged their understanding of some of the advanced "jargon" that can occur in these readings (533). This specific study provided clarity and reinforcement of the ideas that students struggle and have difficulty with reading and making meaning from academic texts that students understand these articles play a role in helping shape their post-secondary careers and that student's confidence improves when they are guided with these texts. This research study shows some of the ways that institutions can help guide students with their reading and literacy skills.

As discussed by Bunn (2013), Downs (2010), and MacMillan and MacKenzie (2012) the difficulty of teaching (and learning) academic reading leads students to not have the motivation to work to understand assigned texts. In a series of blog posts, Terry Heick also argues for the importance of teaching reading to students, why some students feel that they dislike reading, and how the future of reading is changing before our eyes. In the first post “Why Students Should Read,” Heick breaks down how education teaches students ‘literacy,’ aka-- how to read. But the process of teaching reading is complicated. There are many pieces that need to be acknowledged when teaching literacy, and this can be complex. Heick states:

To teach reading requires us—teachers—to break it down into parts, usually somewhere along the fault lines of decoding and comprehension. The decoding part is a mix of letters and sounds. Digraphs, clumsy blends, irregular words, and pattern recognition. Phonemics. It’s literally learning to speak a new language... Comprehension is more metacognitive and personal, where the reader takes the internalized symbols and, leveraging their own schema and background knowledge, turns the symbols into something they can recognize [making meaning]. When a teacher, then, seeks to teach reading, they have to make a choice: Teach decoding, teach comprehension, or try to merge both. (TeachTech).

However, Heick discusses the idea that decoding pedagogy is ‘destructive’ for students because it forces them to have the ‘skill’ of recognizing words, the author's purpose, and

other pieces that they may try to make sense of. The issue with decoding pedagogy is that there is an “assumption that if one can read, and read well, then they will.” When we focus on content rather than teaching the student how to read, the student gets left behind because they do not possess the tools to uncover what is expressed within these texts. With institutions centering on student improvement and development so heavily within the curriculum where the focus is on progress (faster and more efficient,) the learner gets “broken down and their sense of self to fit in *stuff*... which makes as much sense as teaching students how to read instead of why.” We have to be able to have students be engaged with the material-- this is when new ideas are created, and when this happens, students discover who they are as readers. They start to discover *why* to read. Through decoding and comprehension, we begin to understand that we are looking for something. It’s not about words on a page. Reading a text must give readers motivation, whether it's because of a new idea or personal connection, what gets discovered by readers when the text is complete is individual reader identity. Heick argues this is why students should read

As we have seen thus far, motivation towards texts is important for readers to have when trying to read. In another blog post by Heick, he continues the conversation of student motivation towards reading. “Why Students Think They Dislike Reading,” discusses some of the reasons why students feel that they do not like to read. According to Heick, this negative association towards reading from students is connected back to the way students are taught ‘reading.’ By focusing so heavily on having students taking ‘texts

apart' and looking for the 'main claim' of authors, we are pushing the idea of a text becoming a type of 'otherness' and this is pushing students away from becoming immersed in the reading. Students see a text full of jargon that they do not (and feel that they cannot) understand, which leads to students distancing themselves from the importance of reading. To be immersed and connected with a text requires the reader to engage personal schema. Personal schemas are individual thoughts or connections from one's own personal life which allow a reader to make connections to the text. Heick describes that when students use personal schema to guide their reading, this helps students make meaning of texts. This concept can be connected back to Downs. Downs argues for the connection between reading and writing: one needs to be able to read well to write well. If FYC courses are specifically focusing on content rather than addressing how to understand the content, the reading connection becomes lost. These personal connections are what helps readers enjoy and be more involved with texts that lead to successful understanding. If students lack a personal schema in relation to an advanced text, asking them to use authors' motivations to examine texts is not only intimidating, but oftentimes impossible. The lack of understanding pushes students away from reading that then causes students to skim or simply not read. According to Heick, there has to be a balance between the reader and the text. If academics can give students the tools they need to work with difficult readings that avoid turning the text into something "beyond recognition," and into something that will encourage reading (most likely via personal schema as Heick states) we will have students enjoying developing personal literary and reading skills.

Because reading rhetorically, personal schemas, and reading development, are all important for readers to make meaning from difficult texts, we can see that the teaching of reading is complex. There are various elements of scholarly texts students need to understand before they begin to work with them, and when we focus on content rather than purpose, the students may get left behind. Additionally, when professors understand that students may be hesitant of reading these texts due to intimidation, they can think about other ways to develop students' interest through possible motivations such as personal schemas. But even with these strategies, how can institutions help students develop their own reading literacy, particularly a literacy that they can use across classes in their post-secondary career? And how does literacy development in high school transfer to reading expectations in college? In the article “Reading Effectively Across the Disciplines (READ): A Strategy to Improve Student Success,” fellow scholars Juanita But, Pamela Brown and Davida Smyth address the issue of student’s literacy skills in the college setting. These scholars have observed that students are not exposed to the tools they need from high school to be successful with academic reading in college. According to the authors, the reading skills and strategies that are required for college are different than those that are required in high school:

College courses are more challenging due to a larger amount of material covered, demanding learning goals, and diverse and complex reading requirements. Given the greater depth of content knowledge taught in college courses students need a

series of advanced thinking and learning skills, both general and discipline-specific, to succeed. (30).

In order to address this increase in expectations, these researchers developed the program called Reading Efficiently Across the Disciplines (READ). READ was developed to become “a pilot initiative to improve students’ critical reading skills, disciplinary literacy, and academic success” (30) within three GE college courses. READ uses a “multi-modal” design that uses faculty training in disciplinary literacy instruction and curricular enhancement, development of active reading assignments and the use of discipline-specific teaching and learning resources to provide interactive teaching and learning environments for students. The main goal of the READ program was to discover how and where reading should be taught in college and who should be involved in this process (31).

Brown, et al. explains the ways that the READ program operated and the methods used to study the program. This was a course that required faculty training to help students develop general and discipline-specific reading skills. The layout of this program allows instructors to have access to active reading strategies for “discipline-specific assignments that make reading necessary and relevant. Students are engaged in active reading in both individual and group settings” (43) that allowed these students to “read to learn.” Courses participating in the READ program underwent modifications to improve the accessibility of course reading materials. Some of these modifications included: creating reading objectives for instructors, modifying assignments to engage students

with course reading, creating pre-reading assignments to assess student prior course knowledge and vocabulary along with giving students reading partners (35-36).

Additionally, there was an open lab web platform where students, faculty, and staff shared/exchanged ideas. The READ program was studied between Fall 2012 and Spring of 2014. For this program, they:

hypothesized that our students' low level of college readiness in reading was due to their lack of vocabulary skills and active reading strategies needed to become effective readers and learners in the disciplines. We further hypothesized that effective instruction of active reading strategies and vocabulary skills in the content area would improve students' general and discipline-specific reading and thinking skills and enable them to become independent readers, and thereby achieve greater success in their courses. (31-32)

The participants of this program included faculty members from English, biological science, computer engineering technology, and business departments. There were 34 READ sections and 718 students served by the program during the 2013-2014 year. At the end of the 2013 Fall semester, most courses found improvement in students' course work which involved reading. When the researchers compared READ course grades to non-READ course grades, they discovered an average of ten to fifteen percent of course improvement. In other words, the READ program, which included working with and asking questions of reading material, showed increases in student reading success. This strategy was not just used in English departments, it was used in multiple disciplines and

the improvement was seen in all disciplines. In READ, students reported that they were exposed to active reading strategies for the first time (42). Having the tools and strategies to help students with their understanding of reading connects to their overall understanding of their course work. With programs like READ students are succeeding.

While the READ model resulted in increased student success in course work relating to reading, the research on READ did not include connections to writing success or reading's relationship to writing. Mike Wallace and Alison Wray discuss this relationship between reading and writing in their text "Scholarly Reading as a Model for Scholarly Writing." The first claim that these authors make is that reading is the first step to begin writing. This claim relates directly back to Bunn (2013) and Downs (2010). Bunn and Downs both addressed the importance of a reading and writing connection in their pieces. Bunn discovered that professors are aware of this connection, but sometimes do not make this connection clear to their FYC students. Downs additionally communicated this issue, but took it further by explaining that this connection needs to be taught directly in ways that students can transfer these reading skills to further courses. Wallace and Wray also address in their work "what it means to be constructively critical as a reader and how this skill can be applied to become a self-critical writer" (45). According to Wallace and Wray, reading scholarly writing would not count as scholarly if it did not discuss the existing conversation of what other scholars had said on the topic (44). Wallace and Wray also suggest that readers should be paying attention to three elements when reading scholarly writing: the topic of the piece, the quality of the claims

made about the information given, and being aware of how the claims are being presented (44). Wallace and Wray claim that readers can use the same techniques to help guide and improve their writing.

Let us circle back and remind ourselves of the major concepts so far in this lit review that attempt to capture a picture of successful reading pedagogies: reading development, reading rhetorically, personal schemas (motivation) and communities of practice. Scholarly discourse is something that also plays a large part in both post-secondary reading and writing. Wallace and Wray address this issue: “Scholarly discourse communities remain united in the purpose of exploring and evaluating others’ work and presenting new evidence and interpretation for others to evaluate” (45). This is where both argument and evidence play a role in scholarly discourse. Argument is important along with providing the evidence because these two factors are what makes a piece become accepted by an audience. When learning how to become an “expert scholarly writer” (along with an expert reader), observing other arguments with the evidence provided can guide one's own learning. Wallace and Wray are communicating the same need for increased literacy instruction as Bunn and Downs within secondary education. Students cannot learn how to write well alone. Scholarly reading connects directly to scholarly writing. If students begin to learn what to look for in readings, they can use those elements within their own writing. Students see what they have learned from constructively reading others writing. Students then decide how well an author

convinced them of their argument. Students can use all of these factors in their own course work.

With this concept in mind, it becomes apparent to Wallace and Wray that reading and writing work in cycles: “If a person uses this type of scholarly discourse to integrate both reading and writing in their work, they become a more successful scholar.” (44). One reads relevant literature to inform their writing. Then your work becomes reading material for someone else: this is a part of the scholarly discourse cycle. Wallace and Wray claim, “mastery of these complementary activities results in more effective writing, which helps ensure that your contribution to new knowledge or practice is recognized and valued” (44-45). The fact of the matter is a writer benefits from critical reading skills. Wallace and Wray share some examples of these skills including: a reader's quality of their account of others work, and critically reading one's own work to reveal possible weaknesses in arguments (45). Scholars read to gain a larger understanding of others' work and as a reader, one should be able to critically read not just others' work, but one's own. Wallace and Wray argue that this, in turn, helps with the writing process. With reading, a reader must maintain an open-mind to accept the views of the author's work they are reading (if they are found convincing). In writing, one has to be informed by the reading they do. If one is to become and remain self-critical, one can write in an effective manner. This is the reading and writing connection Wallace and Wray argue to their readers.

So how do we begin to teach successful reading practices? Wallace and Wray express the importance of being a self-critical reader, but how do students gain these skills? Is there a way to teach reading literacy? In the next section, reading pedagogy gets explained a bit further by diving into an established teaching framework that solely focuses on teaching students how to work with challenging academic texts.

Reading Apprenticeship as a Framework for Teaching Academic Literacy

In this section, I summarize the Reading Apprenticeship (RA) model in order to demonstrate a current teaching framework that is being used within FYC courses at Humboldt State University to help students develop literacy in both reading and writing. RA is a teaching framework that aims to help students with developing and building their literacy skills. RA uses metacognitive and cognitive toolkits to contextualize learning so reading becomes a personal, social and knowledge-building experience. These specific strategies are used for the purpose of developing reading knowledge in a collaborative social context (like classrooms) where learning becomes multidimensional. The classroom setting brings its own set of affordances which can lead to moments where students are shaping and forming their personal attitudes and dispositions to literacy and learning that will guide them to success or not (viii).

What does RA look like? There are four key dimensions of classroom life that support this teaching framework: the social dimension, the personal dimension, the

cognitive dimension, and the knowledge-building dimension (24). All four of these dimensions work together to support reading development. The *social dimension* of RA focuses on creating safety in the classroom; sharing reading processes, problems, and solutions; noticing and approaching others' ways of reading; and investigating the relationship between literacy and power. Additionally, this dimension allows for community building in the classroom along with allowing students to be open about their reading difficulties (24). The *personal dimension* focuses on developing reader identity and developing metacognition. Developing metacognition allows students to “think about thinking” (26) and this skill leads students to developing reader fluency and developing reader confidence (25). The *cognitive dimension* focuses on developing a reader's mental process of working with a text. Cognitive awareness allows for getting the “big picture” of a text; breaking down a text; monitoring text comprehension; setting reading purposes and adjusting reading processes; and using problem-solving strategies to restore reader comprehension (25). Lastly, the *knowledge-building* dimension allows readers to identify and expand on the preexisting knowledge they bring to a text and what knowledge they can take away from a text (24). All four of these dimensions together create the RA framework.

Since the 1990s when *Reading for Understanding* was published, The Reading Apprenticeship model has been studied through qualitative and descriptive research that have produced important information about RA, which has been used in classrooms affecting one hundred thousand students in middle, high school and college (xii). The

framework for Reading Apprenticeship comes from the concept that engaging students intellectually in reading texts is critical for them to develop the skills which will make them confident, critical, and independent readers and thinkers (1). When students are supported with reading through understanding and discovery of their own personal entry points for reading, they begin to develop engagement with texts (2). There is often a stigma that students who have difficulty with academic texts “just aren't motivated” to complete reading assignments. RA takes this challenge head-on by encouraging teachers and professors to listen to their students' thinking and understanding in the classroom. When students listen to and probe each other's thoughts about texts, classrooms become a safe space where students can work with and learn from each other about what they are reading (2). Establishing a community of readers who study reading leads to positive outcomes for students and they then see themselves as readers which leads to empowerment and confidence.

However, RA is not a “quick fix;” it is a text based problem solving way of working that leads to student comprehension and motivation (14). Reading is not a basic skill; it is not just something we just learn in elementary school and move on. RA views reading as a continuous skill and an essential part of learning. Many students view reading as “saying words on a page,” but what they are not seeing is that there is more to reading than this. RA teaches students to view reading as a complex process, as problem-solving. For students, reading proficiency varies with situation and experience. Instructors are constantly learning new ways to help guide students through these difficult

materials while using RA. Teaching and learning environments that can develop students' confidence as readers can happen within collaborative learning in classroom spaces and RA uses this as part of its four dimensions. All individuals have what is called a "reader identity." RA takes the concept of reader identity and uses it within the classroom setting. Reader identity is how a student may feel about themselves in relation to reading. Sometimes, a student may feel that they are not good readers. This can cause a multitude of emotions in the classroom or on their own when discussing work or trying to accomplish an assignment. RA works to help students develop new identities as readers that help encourage students to feel more confident with reading assignments. Metacognition is a large factor within understanding one's reader identity and this can be understood as thinking about thinking. Thinking about thinking in classrooms or in conversations helps those in this discussion become aware or more aware of their thinking and learning process. Having the ability to describe or explain what they do to understand texts is the kind of conversation that supports students in various learning situations.

This discussion of scholarship about academic reading helps to frame the research questions that I've asked in this project, which include explorations of how reading is taught across multiple FYC courses, what kinds of reading skills students are asked to use within these classrooms, and what the effect of Reading Apprenticeship across one semester is on students' reading skills and reading strategies. These questions are answered specifically by looking at students' past, present, and future relationship with

reading advanced materials, as well as understanding instructors' positionality of reading pedagogy. In the methods chapter, I break down each of my three data sets and explain how this triangulated data allows for multiple perceptions on what is occurring in the FYC classroom.

METHODOLOGY

I conducted this study using three qualitative research methods which allowed me to investigate how Reading Apprenticeship (RA) was being applied and understood within first-year composition (FYC) classrooms at Humboldt State University. The data was collected across three FYC courses over the duration of the Fall 2019 semester. The goal of this methodology was to gather information on students' past and current relationship towards academic reading by following these students over the course of the semester. Students were exposed to some of the pedagogy of the Reading Apprenticeship framework in their first-year composition course. This study aimed to see if these students experienced a change in their reading knowledge, and to the extent which their reading habits were influenced by the RA framework. The data I collected includes: 1) Two (2) student classroom surveys, one early semester-survey, and one late semester-survey; 2) Early and late-semester instructor interviews of English lecturer faculty about their implementation of RA; and 3) Four (4) classroom observations across three FYC courses during the course of the Fall 2019 semester. These different sources of data work together as a "triangulated data set," which allowed for multiple perceptions of this type of teaching pedagogy.

Data Source #1: Early/Late Semester Student Surveys

The first data source is early- and late-semester surveys. The early-semester survey asked students questions about how they approach the reading of difficult texts

and also asked questions about their relationship to reading. With the first survey, I wanted to get an overall understanding of students' pre-college exposure to advanced college-level reading materials. One of the main purposes of this early-survey (and overall project) was to get a better sense of the extent to which students are entering post-secondary education prepared to read the material that they are expected to work with. Late-semester surveys asked how students approach reading, and about but with what knowledge they have gained from the semester about reading. Student surveys (early and late) were announced by professors to their students and were voluntary. I highly encouraged the four instructors who allowed me to share my surveys with their students to encourage their students to participate. The study and first survey were announced during the second week of the semester and the survey was shared with students via Google Forms. Students participants who agreed to participate in this study were anonymized and we were informed upon solicitation about anonymity in the reported data. The early survey consisted of five (5) questions in total, some short answer questions, and some multiple choice. This survey was designed so that it could be completed in approximately fifteen minutes. In all, I collected 59 early student survey responses across four FYC courses. Questions and survey response choices from this early-semester survey are shared in Figure 1.

Early-Semester Student Survey

1. What steps do you take to approach difficult readings in your courses?
Describe what you do as a reader.

2. Have you been taught how to work with difficult texts before coming to college?
Response 1. Yes
Response 2. no

3. If you replied with "yes" in the previous question, describe what you were taught.

4. Based on your previous experience with difficult texts, how do you think this reading experience affects your understanding of the material?
Response 1. Some extent
Response 2. Not at all
Response 3. Greatly

5. So far, how much time do you spend on reading for school per week?

Response 1. 1-2 hours
Response 2. 2-3 hours
Response 3. 3-4 hours
Response 4. 4-5 hours

6. How do you most often obtain access to assigned readings?

Response 1. access articles through phone
Response 2. access through book
Response 3. access through computer
Response 4. print
Response 5. Other

Figure 1: Early-survey of students administered early in Fall 2019.

The late semester-survey was also shared through a Google Forum in the last weeks of the semester. This survey resulted in 21 responses. The late-semester survey included questions regarding participants' perceptions of college-level reading and reading development after exposure to a reading pedagogy such as RA. The late-semester survey also included questions that aimed to get comparable data from the early survey. For example, Question 1 in the early survey and Question 4 in the late survey aimed to compare previous exposure to academic reading before RA and a new technique they have picked up after RA in their FYC course. Questions and response types for the late survey are shared in figure 2.

Late-Semester Student Survey

1. What steps do you take to approach difficult readings in your courses?
Describe what you do as a reader.

-Long answer (typed individual response)

2. What are some of the reading strategies or skills you have learned this semester?

-Long answer (typed individual response)

3. How do you approach these readings compared to the beginning of the semester?

-Long answer (typed individual response)

4. Name one or more reading techniques that you learned this semester that you think you will use in the future. If you don't plan to use one or didn't learn any, please let us know that as well.

-Long answer (typed individual response)

5. Are you encouraged to continue gaining reading literacy in your academic career?

-Short answer (typed individual response)

6. So far, how much time do you spend on reading for school per week?

Response 1. 1-2 hours

Response 2. 2-3 hours

Response 3. 3-4 hours

Response 4. 4-5 hours

7. How do you most often obtain access to assigned readings?

Response 1. access articles through phone

Response 2. access through book

Response 3. access through computer

Response 4. print

Response 5. Other

Figure 2: Late-survey of students administered late in Fall 2019

My goal was to use these early and late student survey responses as conversation starters both across the early and late instructor interviews and classroom observations. This would allow me to analyze both what instructor and student expectations of academic reading are entering into the FYC classroom, along with how student and instructor viewpoints about reading evolve after finishing the course. I Hoped these surveys would reveal that using reading pedagogy in a FYC course is effective with developing students' skills as readers as well as reader confidence.

Data Source #2: Instructor Early/Late Interviews

The second research method I used in this project was early and late-semester interviews of instructors of first-year composition. Three faculty members were interviewed at both the early and late points in the fall semester. Faculty interviews were conducted in-person and over email. In-person interviews lasted about twenty minutes and were recorded through audio and note-taking. Early-semester interviews were conducted in person. As a result of the timing and end-of-the semester obligations, all late-semester interviews were conducted by email.

The objective of both the early and late-instructor interviews was to get an insight into the pedagogical choices that these instructors made when teaching through the RA framework. Early-instructor interviews occurred in the first month of the Fall 2019

semester. There was a total of seven early-semester interview questions, shared in figure

3.

- Early-Semester Interview Questions

 1. How do you approach difficult readings? What steps do you take to get through it?
 2. How do you demonstrate to your students the steps they may need to take to get through a reading?
 3. Do you ever take time in class to break down and analyze what your students have read for assignments?
 4. Do students ever ask how to approach a difficult text? If so, how do you approach explaining what to do?
 5. How are you using reading apprenticeship in your classrooms? Do you think or feel that it may help students better understand the course material?
 6. What are your opinions about “access” (how students are accessing their materials for class)?
 7. Do you think students enter the university prepared to read at the college level?

Figure 3: Early-semester instructor interview questions administered early in Fall 2019

Late-semester interviews occurred during finals week of the Fall 2019 semester. There was a total of six late-semester interview questions shared in figure 4. Late-semester interviews asked instructors questions regarding students reading practices within the classroom over the course of the semester. These questions were created to help me understand as a researcher how academic reading was discussed within the classroom

between students and instructors, and to reveal how (or if) the RA framework helped these instructors with their teaching practices.

- Late-Semester Instructor Interview Questions
1. How did you demonstrate to your students the steps they needed to take to get through difficult readings this semester?
 2. Did you take time in class this semester to break down and analyze what your students read for their assignments?
 3. Did your students ask how to approach a difficult text? If so, what did you show them?
 4. How did you use reading apprenticeship in your classes this semester? Do you think this reading pedagogy helped students understand their coursework?
 5. Do you think that students can use the skills they have gained with RA in their future courses?
 6. Will you continue to use RA in your FYC courses? If so, how? Will you change anything about this pedagogy?

Figure 4: Late-semester interview questions administered late in Fall 2019

I hoped both the early and late semester instructor interviews would reveal how academic reading practices are viewed by these FYC instructors. It is important to understand how instructors view the importance of academic reading within the FYC classroom because by understanding these views and values instructors possess, we can begin to understand why they are asking their students to work with specific types of reading skills. These questions also allowed me to analyze if these instructors felt that a reading pedagogy such

as RA is something they value in the FYC space and if it had any effect on their students reading skills. These data sources allow me to put instructor insights, student surveys, and classroom observations into conversation with one another to reveal how students and instructors not only view RA, but value reading pedagogy. The analysis of these data sources should reveal what reading skills are being explicitly taught by instructors, how these skills are being taught, and what the effect of RA is within these classrooms.

Data Source #3: Classroom Observations

The third and final source of data in this project was classroom observations of three FYC courses. Classroom observations gave me the opportunity to observe class meetings that specifically instructed academic reading using elements from the Reading Apprenticeship framework. I studied a total of four RA lessons over the course of the Fall 2019 semester. Performing observations of these professors' classrooms helped me actively look for the pedagogies that faculty discussed in the early-semester interviews. These teaching models included/Think-alouds, metacognitive reading logs and other classroom exercises that practiced the RA framework. Observations also allowed the opportunity to view how students were understanding difficult readings they were working with, as well as how these RA lessons were possibly guiding students with a more concrete understanding of approaching and working with difficult texts.

I conducted two observations of an ENGL 110 course section that had 5 attending students, one observation of an ENGL 104 course section that had approximately 20

attending students, and one observation of an ENGL 102 course section that also had approximately 20 attending students. All three of these courses are introductory English courses that HSU offers to post-secondary students. In the HSU First-year Composition program, there are two-course options for students to choose from: stretch English or accelerated English. ENGL 102 is the stretch course and ENGL 104 is the accelerated course. The Stretch course is a two-semester program that allows students to complete their writing requirement for their degree. The Accelerated course is a one-semester program that moves at a faster pace which will also satisfy the writing requirement for students. HSU also offers ENGL 110, which is a 1-unit writing lab that these students may take along with ENGL 102 or 104. ENGL 110 provides students with additional instruction, time to write, and instructor support. All of these courses help students meet the general education written communication requirement at HSU.

I approached each observation as a silent observer. I did not take part in any activities during the time of these courses. While silently observing, I took handwritten notes of class outcomes and discussion points, as well as scripting class dialogue of instructor/student interactions and student/student interactions. All hand-written observation notes were later transcribed to typed electronic files.

Methods of Coding for Analysis

The methods of analysis for my project occurred through coding of key ideas and patterns across my data. Specifically, I coded for the four dimensions of the RA

framework across student surveys, instructor interviews, and classroom observations to get a thorough understanding of the impact RA has in a FYC course. As a method of Grounded Theory according to Birks and Mills, coding is essential: “A grounded theory generally provides a comprehensive explanation of a process or scheme apparent in relation to particular phenomena. It is comprehensive because it includes variation rather than assuming there is a one-size-fits-all answer to a research question” (Birks & Mills, 12). By coding my data to the four RA dimensions, I was able to gather specific information from my data and group these facts into categories. I was able to understand how (and why) these practices were appearing where they were within my data sets. The method of coding also insured that I had multiple factors and ideas represented in my data, rather than just assuming a single fact.

Limitations of the Methodology

This project consisted of some limitations, both from my data sources and research methods. Because I had professors express to students that my survey was optional/voluntary (although they stressed the importance of participating), I had a limited number of total survey responses as compared to the total number of students across all four sections. This was particularly the case when it came to the late-semester surveys. In total, the early-semester surveys resulted in 59 responses, and the late-semester surveys resulted in only 21 responses. A few factors could have influenced this outcome: 1. Students may not have been informed about the late-semester survey and; 2.

Due to the timing of the survey distribution (two weeks from finals week), students may not have had time to participate. A second limitation to my methods was how I conducted faculty interviews. All three early interviews were conducted in person, whereas all three late-semester surveys were conducted by email. Again, due to the end of the semester obligations, each faculty member found it easier to respond to my survey via email. The instructors could have had more time to reflect on my questions on their own as compared to in-person in a timed setting. A final limitation of my data and overall project concerns duration and sample size, including: 1. The amount of time I was able to spend on data collection, and; 2. The total number of participants. I would have liked to have had more time than a single semester to collect my data. Similarly, the participants represent a small data set across five FYC classes with collected data over one semester. Therefore, it cannot be argued that this data is representative of all FYC teaching and RA pedagogy. However, even with these limitations, this project is important. The lack of reading instruction in FYC classrooms is a recurring issue, as explained in the literature review of this project. Reading and writing are connected, and this fact has been discussed within the research of my literature review. This one small project shows a piece of a much larger picture of what may be occurring in writing classrooms. This research is valuable because it starts a conversation about why teaching reading with writing is necessary.

RESULTS

In the previous chapter, I traced the literature about the teaching of reading in post-secondary writing-intensive contexts. A trend across this research is that the typical college student values the writing skills they will gain in a FYC classroom, but they do not show this same appreciation towards academic reading. However, in some cases, students are not made aware of the importance of academic reading because professors assume that this is a skill that students already have developed. The reality is that students are lacking in developed reading skills when they come to college. From the scholarship examined in the previous chapter, we can see that once students are made aware of the importance of academic reading and that reading and writing are connected, students and professors can connect the value of teaching reading skills in a course such as FYC. There are many teaching pedagogies that center reading in the writing classroom; and this project focuses on the Reading Apprenticeship Model (RA). Though this project uses RA as a way to understand how reading pedagogies are used in the writing classroom, it is not the only successful pedagogy towards teaching academic reading.

In this section, I discuss the findings from my data that resulted from three sources: student surveys, instructor interviews, and classroom observations that I conducted over the course of the Fall 2019 semester. These three data methods were used as a way to help answer my three research questions:

1. How is reading taught across three (3) composition classrooms at Humboldt State University (HSU)?

2. What kind of reading skills are students being asked to use in first-year composition classrooms at Humboldt State University (HSU)?
3. What is the effect of Reading Apprenticeship instruction across one semester at Humboldt State University (HSU) on students' reading skills and strategies?

In order to help me understand the data I collected, I used coding as a way to define and identify key moments where students (and instructors) are picking up new knowledge and expressing the importance of reading in a writing intensive classroom. Coding allowed for me to observe similarities or differences between students and their understanding of academic reading and its value. Most importantly, I coded specifically for the four (4) dimensions of Reading Apprenticeship to see if these dimensions were present in both the early/late semester student surveys, early/late semester instructor interviews and classroom observations. As a reminder, the four dimensions of RA include: Social, Personal, Cognitive, and Knowledge-Building. These are defined more thoroughly in the literature review, but basic differences across the definitions and how I used them for coding are as follows:

1. Social Dimension: Focused on community building in the classroom,
2. Personal Dimension: Focused on developing reader identity and developing metacognition.
3. Cognitive Dimension: Focused on developing the mental process of working with a text.

4. Knowledge-Building Dimension: Focused on identifying and expanding preexisting knowledge brought to a text and what knowledge is taken away.

As a researcher I used these RA dimensions as a way to code how reading was taught and to provide a comprehensive framework for reading development. The skills students gain from each dimension include things like reader identity, using problem-solving strategies, building knowledge of texts, and sharing text talk. Before I coded for these four dimensions, I compared the early-semester student surveys to instructor interviews to see if I could uncover how these two groups felt about students' reading skills as they entered into the four-year college setting. As a final note, these instructors were teaching reading practices using the RA framework as a guide, but were not specifically following a RA curriculum and did not specifically align their teaching of reading via RA to represent each of the four dimensions. This was something that I specifically looked for as a researcher.

Pre-Reading Apprenticeship Model: The Early Feelings Towards Academic Reading

Students pre-exposure and reading at the “college-level”

In this early semester data, student surveys indicated that most students had not been taught to work with difficult texts before coming to college. Without working with difficult texts it follows that students did not have appropriate reading skills to approach them with. This information came out of both the early-semester surveys and early-instructor interviews. 59 students participated in the early-semester surveys. Questions to

the early-semester survey can be found in the Appendices section under appendix A. In response to question 2 “Have you been taught how to work with difficult texts before coming to college?” 56.4% of students reported that they have not been taught how to work with difficult texts before coming to college. They have not had previous exposure to the tools they need to work with these academic texts instructors are asking them to read. In response question 4 of the early survey “Based on your answer to the one above [question 3], how do you think it affects you to understand the material?” 94% of students revealed they *are aware* that their previous exposure to academic reading *greatly affects* their understanding or affects their understanding *to some extent* of the material they are asked to read for classes. These answers can be seen in the figures below:

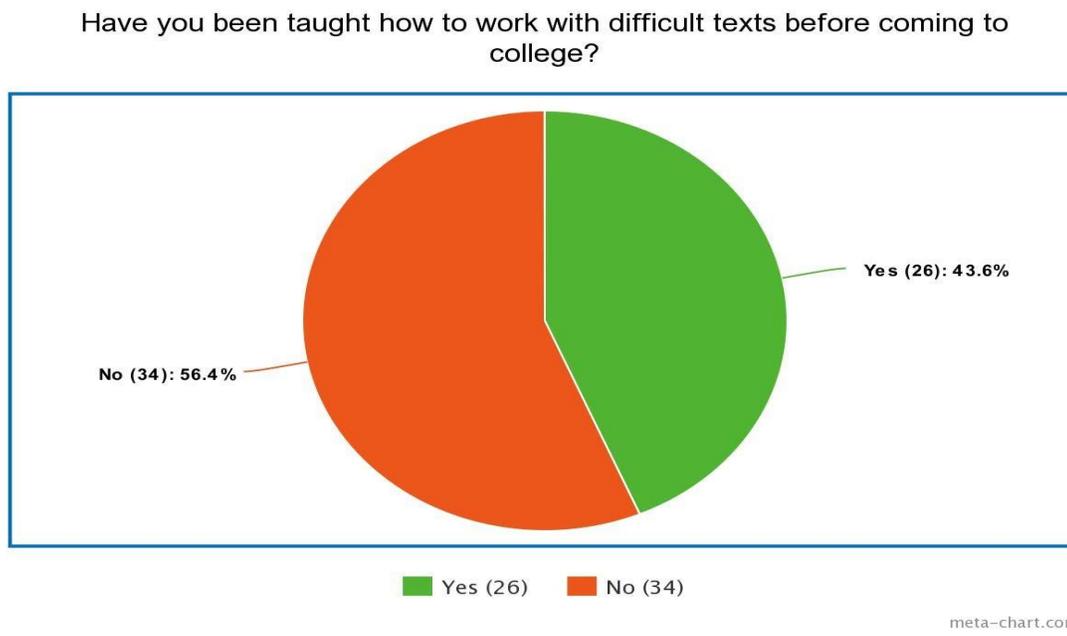


Figure 5: Early-semester student survey question 1

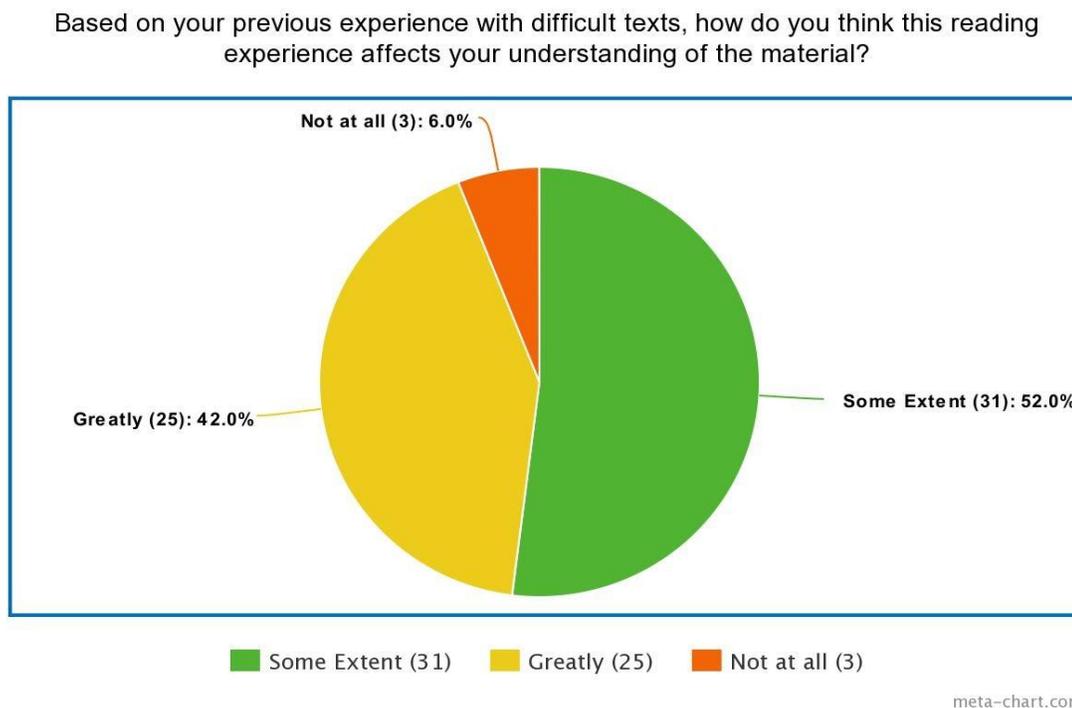


Figure 6: Early-semester student survey question 3.

As the figures show, these students are aware that their lack of pre-exposure to academic texts affects their ability to understand their course material. Responses within the early instructor interviews corresponded with student responses by indicating students' reading skills are often underdeveloped entering the university, and instructors also expressed concern about how the universities' expectations are extensive for the typical FYC student. Below are three excerpts from each of the three instructors I interviewed in response to the question "Do you think students enter the university prepared to read at the college level?":

I don't think students enter the university prepared to read at the college level. When I say that I absolutely do not mean that they are not diligent and hardworking readers--the majority of them absolutely are. However,

what I find is that students aren't often prepared to read the dense, theory-heavy reading that's often assigned in college. So many of them are used to reading novels, poems, short stories, etc. (which is awesome!) and textbooks and more popular sources such as internet articles, newspaper articles, etc. They do a good job of processing most of the content, but, as a lot of the reading they do in college is for the "insiders" to the discourse, it's challenging for them to grasp not only a lot of the content but also the rhetorical situation. Also, it's hard for them (and incredibly frustrating for them, and I understand how they feel!) to learn to "sit with ambiguity" (as the reading apprenticeship book puts it, or something like that) and learn to be comfortable with the fact that some of the reading might still go over their heads.

I don't really know what we mean by "prepared to read at the college level" anymore. I think that too many people want our students to have college level skills before they get to college. Why would a student, especially a first-year student, know how to read at a college level before they ever get to college? I also look back at my own undergrad experience and I didn't read scholarly work regularly until graduate school, so we are expecting a lot of students these days.

I don't think 'at the college level' is a thing. A lot of my own past stuff has been about how students are positioned as in deficit coming into the university.

Students reading here *are* reading at the college level. Some spaces may see students as in need of remediation, or culture-- really it's the need for skill. And this is still a persisted narrative, typically when it comes to academic reading.

From these professors' responses, we see that *there is* an absence of students coming to the FYC classroom with developed reading skills, but that these skills are required for students to understand the content they are working with. However, it is important to recognize that *there are some* students entering the university who have had previous training towards academic reading. In the early-semester student survey, question 2 again asked "*Have you been taught how to work with difficult texts before coming to college?*," and 44% of the students reported that they *were taught* how to work with challenging

texts before college and this prior training influences how they understand the material. My intention here with this question was that “difficult” texts are defined as challenging, researched based academic texts. It is important to clarify that students could have perceived “difficult” in ways that do not necessarily align with this definition. In the next section, I further investigate these students' prior experiences with academic reading, and uncover what skills they have within their toolkits.

Students dispositions as readers coming into the FYC classroom

Some students in this study had some level of prior knowledge about difficult readings and how to grapple with them, even if they did not have the tools or vocabulary to express this knowledge. 44% of students in this study had preexisting dispositions towards difficult course readings coming into the university, and this positionality goes hand in hand with their prior knowledge of working with advanced reading materials, whether that comes from difficult readings in high school or a community college. The purpose of the first question of my early-semester student survey was to get students to become both aware of their positionalities with difficult readings and what knowledge they use as a reader to work through these texts. This was an opportunity for them to express how they felt about advanced reading materials and for me to get an idea of where students' minds were at the beginning of the semester about difficult texts.

Question 2 of the early-semester student survey asked: “*Have you been taught how to work with difficult texts before coming to college?*” Question 3 of the survey asked:

“If you replied with “yes” in the previous question, describe what you were taught.” In total, I received 28 individual student responses out of 59. Most of these replies were short answers, but other students went into further detail about their reading strategies. It is important to note that out of the 28 students that responded “yes” to question 2, 11 of them stated that they were previously taught to “annotate the text” and to “break it down.” Annotation falls into one of the four dimensions of RA-- the cognitive dimension. These students have been practicing academic reading pedagogy before they entered the FYC classroom and this is important for students to understand. When I was coding these students' responses to question 3, I discovered a pattern across coded examples that revealed a lot of these students who *do* have the ability to express their reading knowledge, possess similar reading skills and are aware of them. Here is a sampling of these types of responses:

I re-read the section that I feel that I didn't understand or found difficult. I usually search up words I don't understand so I can make a clearer understanding of what the reading is trying to say.

I re-read difficult readings until I can comprehend what the author is trying to get across.

When I approach a difficult text, I like to highlight key words that confuse me. I also like to annotate on the text on the side based on what I read and create my own connections, comments and questions.

Read slowly, look up any words I did not understand, and if possible, talk to a fellow student about them.

I try to look up as much of the verbiage that I am having difficulty with and just break down enough to where I can hopefully comprehend the information and if that doesn't work I discuss the text in class with the professor.

From these few responses alone, we see that these particular students have the awareness of their reading practices, and if they still have difficulty, they use the classroom space as the place to obtain clarification. Of course because not all responses expressed specific reading practices, this does not mean that these students do not participate in similar activities or use similar reading strategies. There were other responses that hinted at methods that are used in RA pedagogy. For example, though they had not been exposed to RA, some responses revealed practices in the Knowledge-building and Social dimensions from the Reading Apprenticeship framework. For example, these responses fell under the Social Dimension because they all discuss working with peers and using the classroom space to help progress their learning: *“I like to ask someone to explain something to me I am not grasping;” “If I can, I like to talk to my fellow peers about our assignments;” “I tend to discuss the text in class with the professor and/or classmates.”* These next examples fell under the Knowledge-Building dimension because they acknowledge using patterns to decode a text or identifying the author's purposes of creating a text: *“I first read the abstract and subsections of the text to better understand what the subject will be;” “I like to do a background check on the author to see where they are coming from. This helps me have a larger understanding of the text's purpose or background.”* These findings inspired me to use coding as a way to learn more about what dimensions students were aware of in these early weeks of the semester. In the appendices section, appendix C, I list some of the student responses that fit each code for the four RA Dimensions. As it turns out, I coded all 28 responses to one or more RA dimensions. Students are reporting that they have been exposed to some reading

instruction and they do have the tools they need to be successful academic readers, but some of these students were not aware of their existing knowledge. For example, a few students responded that they did not do anything to approach a difficult text, but they also named a skill that they used. For these students, what may be happening here is that cognitively they are aware of skills available to them, but lack metacognition-- awareness of their thought processes. One student who responded that they had had no prior exposure to reading instruction explained that they do not do anything to prepare for readings, they tend to avoid difficult readings until they can only skim or are forced to skip them. This is an example of a student who is struggling with their reading knowledge, and shows how the absence of reading skills begins to affect student work. I also wondered about the 20 of 59 students who did not submit an answer to this question on the survey. Were these the students who did not have prior reading knowledge coming into the university? This analysis revealed that some students were using some of the skills RA focuses on, but what about the ones who do not? How can FYC courses support these students? The next section will begin to cover what a university like HSU is doing for these specific students along with how instructors are helping students sharpen their preexisting reading skills.

Working Towards Becoming “College level” Readers: How do We Get There?

I investigated what three instructors in the FYC program at HSU are doing to help students build their reading skills. I interviewed these three (3) faculty members at the beginning and the end of the Fall semester. In the following section I analyze both the

early-instructor interviews and classroom observations in order to understand what is occurring in the classroom when it comes to working with students to build their reading skills over a course of a semester. Early-semester instructor interviews asked instructors about their teaching practices centered around teaching reading, how students respond to difficult texts, and how reading is being used within their courses. During the interview, I asked instructors how they personally approach difficult readings and if the skills and tools they use transfers into their teaching practices. Instructors answered these questions generously, revealing a lot about what just these few instructors in a FYC course are achieving.

2.1 Setting the stage with honesty

Working with students to honestly and clearly prepare them for texts that may be difficult and challenging was a concept that each instructor touched on in their interviews. It is important to address the possible difficulty and frustration that students might feel with the reading work that they will be doing. Each instructor stated this importance when I asked them: *“How do you demonstrate to your students the steps they may need to take to get through a reading?”* Instructors’ perspectives included the following interview excerpts:

The way to demonstrate this to students is to acknowledge readings are hard and assure them that they will get through it. Working with difficult/advanced readings are a part of the college experience and we are here to support each other as a class.

When students express frustration with difficult texts, it often opens up a discussion of reading strategies and the steps they can use to get through a text. I also always try to address that frustration and anxiety as a sign of

learning-- that we are often frustrated when we are challenged and that this is not something to fear or avoid, but something to work on together in class.

With difficult readings, I first focus on assuring students that it IS a difficult reading. Readings in college are often challenging, and academic readings are often written for other academics/professionals and not students. I want to make clear to students that learning how to read like this takes time and practice and confusion does NOT mean they are stupid/not getting it/bad readers. We talk about metacognition and practice and how awareness of process allows people to “train their brains” to get through challenging texts. I also ask them to draw upon prior knowledge-- what do they know is going on in terms of content or structure?

From these responses, we can begin to understand why it is crucial to inform students about possible challenges they will be working with. Building reader confidence is a rather important concept within the RA framework. Having confidence within one's reading ability attributes to taking risks when approaching new types of texts. Academic reading is a complex process, and commonly this process can be intimidating for many students across major disciplines. If students begin to develop reading confidence, beginning to work with different types of difficult academic texts may become slightly easier and more enjoyable for these students. From the excerpts above, we see this sort of process occurring within HSU's FYC courses. Each excerpt can be connected to one or more of the RA dimensions: the social dimension, building a community within the classroom where students can safely share their reading difficulties, which can be seen in the phrase “open[ing] up a discussion of reading strategies and the steps they can use to get through a text.” The cognitive dimension, acknowledging and developing a readers mental process towards academic readings which can be seen in the phrase “talk[ing] about metacognition and practice and how awareness of process allows people to “train

their brains” to get through challenging texts. And finally, the personal dimension is also referenced: acknowledging how students identify as readers, and further developing confidence and range of reading which can be seen in the phrase “draw[ing] upon prior knowledge.” Within these excerpts I do want to point out there was a lack of mention in regards of the knowledge-building dimension. These dimensions of classroom life which were addressed, allowing students to recognize and appropriate other ways of reading into their own practices, understanding they do identities as readers and their skills are always improving, and beginning to develop awareness of one's own mental process when working with academic texts.

2.2 Establishing the next strategies

Instructors expressed in their interviews that after students begin to understand what it means to read and work with academic texts, they shift to teaching the different strategies students can take in order to understand these readings. In each interview, I asked the instructors: *How do you demonstrate to your students the steps they may need to take to get through a reading?* Each instructor expressed the importance of metacognition-- the awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes-- and how this thought process plays an important role in academic reading:

I try to have lots of metacognitive/reflective writing and discussions about the experience of difficult texts. For example I'll ask questions like “What was the experience like for you reading this text? How did you navigate it? What was clear/confusing? What strategies did you use to read/note-take?” I am trying to get my students to think more meta-cognitively about their own reading and to see that they are entering a new community that has new and different reading

expectations and so their struggles in reading are about access and exposure, not ability.

We talk about metacognition and practice and how awareness of process allows people to “train their brains” to get through challenging texts.

Something I have been trying to work on is getting students to discuss and become knowledgeable about how they are reading. I want students to see that being aware of their thought process is meaningful and that there is a purpose to thinking metacognitively.

In the first excerpt, the instructor discusses "metacognitive/reflective" writing and discussions about reading difficult texts. This excerpt is one example of other references in instructor interviews about metacognition. In all there were 7 references to metacognition across instructor interviews, indicating that these instructors view it as an important aspect of reading as an evolving process. While these excerpts demonstrate strategies that reference the cognitive dimension of RA, we can also make connections to how individual perceptions and awareness is valued in the teaching of reading.

Along with establishing the importance of students being aware of metacognition, instructor participants described other practices they use to help students with readings. Some instructors mentioned that reading guides can be useful for students to help them understand what to look for within their texts. Reading guides work as part of the cognitive dimension. These guides are encouraged to be used when students are reading individually, and when students come together in class, group discussion is highly valued. Small group discussion allows time for students to practice specific reading exercises that then can be used when working solo. Becoming aware of other individuals reading practices is something the RA framework encourages through the social

dimension. The following steps/activities are a summary of strategies that instructors I interviewed expressed to be found helpful and encouraging for students in relation to their reading. After each bullet, I have put in parenthesis the RA dimension that it connects to:

- Analyzing the rhetorical situation of the text (Who the audience is, what the purpose is, who the writer is, when it was written, where it was published, etc.). (**Knowledge-Building Dimension**)
- Genre analysis to analyze the genre of whatever academic article being read to help notice features such as abstracts, citations, IMRAD structure, etc. to get a sense of the rhetorical situation. (**Knowledge-Building Dimension**)
- Skimming and scanning to notice how the article is arranged--does it seem to be in sections? Are there subheadings? Are there bold words? Tables and charts, etc.? (**Cognitive Dimension**)
- Drawing upon prior knowledge--what do they know going in, either about the content or the structure? If they have some knowledge about the topic, how can they use that to ground themselves? If the topic seems completely new to them, how can they use what they do know about structure of articles (is there an introduction, where does the writer seem to be giving a "thesis statement" or main argument, where is the writer asking the audience to look at examples and data, etc. (**Personal Dimension/Knowledge-Building Dimension**)
- Engaging with the text, talk out loud, ask themselves questions, look up words, etc. when they get deeper into the article to figure out the content. (**Social Dimension/Cognitive Dimension**)
- Showing examples of instructors reading notes to help students see how they can interact with their texts. (**Social Dimension**)
- Giving frameworks for reading and note taking. (**Social Dimension**)

Within this list, we can see that all four dimensions are present, but the social dimension is most prevalent and the personal dimension least prevalent. The social dimension being the most prevalent makes the most sense here because these are practices happening within the classroom, which is a social setting. These practices were designed to occur in this specific space and the professors at HSU are implementing these strategies in the classroom, which is a positive finding. On the other hand, the personal dimension is the

least mentioned dimension in this list. The absence of this specific dimension causes an implication for students: with professors not focusing on explaining to students they possess tools from their past learning experiences to work with new challenging texts, may then cause students difficulty when they sit down to work with their reading assignments. All four dimensions of the Reading Apprenticeship framework are important and need to be implemented into the classroom space equally.

2.3 How instructors desire to use RA in the FYC classroom

The next section will break down how instructors used RA curriculum in their courses and what I observed students taking away from each lesson. Before moving on to that section, I noticed something important in a response from an instructor in my early semester interview. I asked each instructor in their individual interviews specifically about teaching RA in their courses: *How are you using reading apprenticeship in your classrooms? Do you think or feel that it may help students better understand the course material?* Each response corresponded with how these instructors are demonstrating to their students how to work with challenging academic texts. One instructor expressed some early observations across their three different course sections that begun during week 6:

This is my first semester doing reading apprenticeship, so I will probably have a more firm answer later in the semester, but, in the meantime, it seems that students are better understanding the course material. I'm doing it more fully in English 110 this semester, our lab course, and I'm using it to show students how to break down complicated readings, how to train themselves to become more metacognitive readers, and how to use our course concepts (rhetorical situations, genre, discourse, etc.) to help them get a sense of the content/purpose of texts--

both texts specifically for their English classes, and also texts outside of English classes. At first I was a bit reluctant to spend so much time on reading in my 102 and 104 classes, but, after seeing how helpful it's been in English 110, I want to incorporate it more fully into all my classes next time. I am used to doing a lot of work with the CARS model and analyzing rhetorical situations in my classes, but I want to move toward taking more time to do hands-on practice with previewing texts, thinking out loud, etc. after seeing how beneficial most of that has been in English 110.

There are some interesting points from this excerpt that I noticed. Firstly, this instructor is noticing a positive change in students' understanding of the course material in week 6 with guidance from the RA framework. This instructor was hesitant about spending more time on reading instruction in the slower pace (2 semester) FYC courses, but after seeing improvement from students in the 1 semester course with RA has encouraged this instructor to wanting to use it more in future courses. It is also interesting to see how elements of the four RA dimensions arise in this single excerpt. We see the mentioning of the social dimension (using think alouds exercises), knowledge-building dimension (learning how to use core concepts for understanding content and prose of texts), and the cognitive dimension (training students how to become more metacognitive readers). It is significant that instructors are noticing a change from students' understanding of their course readings so early on in the semester. The RA framework may have definitely played a role in this factor, but there are also other pedagogies that instructors could have been using to come to this improvement. Nevertheless, improvement like this is significant and shows the importance of how teaching reading methods can help students be more successful in their coursework.

As a reminder from my methods chapter, I completed 5 classroom observations of three FYC sections during the Fall 2019 semester. I approached each observation as a silent observer. I did not take part in any activities during the time of these courses. I was able to witness some of these lessons that instructors were practicing with their students with each observation. In the following section, I share and analyze three lessons about reading practices in order to show other ways that the RA framework can be seen in the classroom space.

3.1 Reading Apprenticeship dimensions in practice

Lesson #1.

The first observation that I completed was on 9/30/19 of the English 110 course. English 110 at HSU is a 1-unit writing lab that students may take along with ENGL 102, 103, or 104. This lab provides students with additional instruction, time to write, and instructor support. During this lesson, students discussed the concepts and key terms such as genre, critical reading, and the practices and strategies they could use to work through a reading. They also applied these same concepts to a specific text written by Lisa Bickmore: *Genre in the Wild: Understanding Genre Within Rhetorical (Eco) Systems*. The goal of this in-class activity was for students and the instructor to be aware of the strategies they used to work the text. Students were not required to finish the entire reading, but just enough to gather a basic understanding. After students read the article individually, they worked together in small groups to discuss the article together. The

instructor provided groups with a worksheet to help them mark down their ideas. The worksheet can be found in the Appendix, section E. This worksheet allowed students to put into practice the reading strategies that they had learned so far during the semester. Elements of RA are present within the worksheet in all four bullet points. Bullets 1 and 2 put into practice the knowledge-building dimension: evaluation of prior knowledge of a topic/concept as well as allowing discovery of how this knowledge may be further developed by a text. Bullets 3 and 4 allows students to practice the cognitive dimension: focusing on one's mental processes to work with a text and using strategies to assist with comprehension of the text. Before students read Bickmore's piece, the class collectively participated in a warm up strategy to help them enter the conversation the piece was hosting. The instructor asked the following questions to the students:

1. How do you define genre?
2. How do you define discourse?
3. How does knowledge of each concept assist in reading and writing? (Perhaps think of how these terms are related)

Students responded and agreed that depending on the genre of the article, it changes how a reader approaches the piece. After the student groups worked together, the instructor brought the students together by asking them: How do we begin to have an entry point for this text? These are the following student responses and instructor responses.

S: I imagined/ put myself in the situation (that text covered). If I don't do this then I feel like I'm reading academic work and I then struggle with motivation to read it.

Instructor: This approach works for the discourse community, it's a great way to enter the conversation.

S: I started by googling who the author was and I found out she is in the creative writing discourse. After that, I skimmed for subheadings. This helps me get a larger picture of the text.

Instructor: What does learning about the author do for readers and for a text?

S: It helps set up the discourse.

Instructor: What do the images within this piece do for the text?

S: It's a rhetorical tool. It also makes the genre change and it simplifies a text.

Instructor: How are you discovering the main points and ideas of the text?

S: The subheadings and the silence(s) in the text.

Instructor: Take some more time to discover/work out how you are defining or noticing silence in this piece.

S: Genre is in four moments of the text and the key ideas of all of these makes the genre definition. The structure of the article is for the audience and it can help a reader break a piece down.

Instructor: Discourse connects the audience!

S: I noticed that a rhetorical move that the author made was starting out simple in the text and becoming more complex towards the end.

Instructor: This kind of work may be visible in other courses, so that is one reason why we focused so much on this type of activity.

S: The whole point of the text is at the bottom of the article.

At this point of the conversation, the instructor took some time to explain the audience of this piece to the students. As they moved through the piece, the instructor focused on the scholars that the author used in the text.

Instructor: Who does the author quote?

S: Charles Bazerman.

Instructor: Have you heard this name in any of your other English courses yet?

Students shake their heads and they Google him.

Instructor: Why do you think the author quoted Bazerman twice in this piece?

S: He writes in this field, I found some of his work.

S: He has over 17,000 citations!

Instructor: So what can a reader gather from that discovery?

S: He must be really important in this discourse community.

From this point forward until the end of class, this instructor explained how other ‘types’ of genres within the text can help the audience understand the piece and these are purposeful rhetorical moves authors are making. During this lesson, there are many moments of teaching and practicing elements of RA. Other than the social dimension, within this observed lesson, the knowledge-building dimension is present from both the instructor's teaching and student efforts working through the worksheet/text. For example, the first student response directly connects with what the knowledge-building dimension aims to do: identify the author's purposes in creating specific texts and this student accomplished this by immersing themselves in the text and working through the content. Out of the 12 student responses I have transcribed from this lesson, 7 responses can be categorized under the knowledge-building dimension. This finding in this observation shows that as well as the social dimension, the knowledge building dimension is being practiced in FYC courses at HSU.

Lesson #2.

The second lesson where I observed reading instruction was in an ENGL 104 course. Again as a short reminder, ENGL 104 a one-semester program for FYC that moves at a faster pace that satisfies the writing requirement for a degree. My observation took place on 10/2/19 and the focus their conversation was on Author James Paul Gee. The main discussion points of the lesson was on the following:

1. Reading difficult texts
2. How to make the text capable of understanding/ how to define the problems at hand within the text
3. How students worked with their text. Students were to share their process with one another. This allowed the class as a whole to collect data about the ways they worked with the text and how they may want to work with others in future assignments.

To achieve the goals of this lesson, students practiced an RA class activity called “think alouds.” Think alouds are an activity designed to help students become aware of their thinking process when they are working with academic texts. Students could use this activity to discuss their understanding with their classmates. Students were split up into three different groups based on how prepared they were for class. It seemed as if some students were more prepared than others, and it turned out that some students did little to no reading in preparation for that class meeting. With this being uncovered, the instructor created three groups: Those who completed their reading log and read the Gee

assignment; Those who read Gee; and those who did not read Gee or did their reading log.

The instructor had students complete what is known as a “metacognitive reading log” with their reading assignments. Metacognitive readings logs are a RA handout which allow students to become aware of their own thinking processes as readers and give them a place to prepare their thoughts/concerns for sharing within the classroom. An example of the reading log students were working with can be found in appendix F. Each student was additionally given a worksheet to help them discuss their completed (or to be completed) reading log. Students were to work with a partner inside of their groups to complete this task. The reading log pair work handout is an opportunity for students to discuss with one another their individual thought process towards reading while additionally granting the opportunity to ask the other questions about their processes. An example of this worksheet can also be found in appendix F.

I spent a little time in all three groups observing. I started my observations with group 1 which was the group that completed both the assigned reading and their metacognitive logs. The focus of their discussion revolved around making sense of the text. A highlight of their conversation was understanding “discourse” and where discourses exist.

Group 1 Conversation:

S1: I understood some things, but not everything. I was a little confused about discourse.

Student finds section on discourse and reads aloud to their group members

S1: You can have discourse with facial expressions? What does that mean?

S2: I think what that means is that how you behave physically puts you into a discourse.

S1: Oh, I guess that makes sense.

S3: But That's like 'everyday' discourse. It just sits there and it interacts with your involvement.

S2: So then, that is your discourse when you are neutral?

Students think silently

S1: What is your discourse without an opinion?

S3: I'm not sure. I feel like discourse is interactive with you like I said before. So you would still have discourse without an opinion.

This conversation was the center of this group discussion. They talked about different situations where discourse 'would' be involved vs. where it would not be to have an overall understanding of this concept. It seemed like the read-aloud activity helped these students express what they were understanding from the text. These students were practicing both the social and personal dimensions of RA by working together with their classmates and thinking independently.

I began to observe group 2 just as the instructor sat down with the students to help them work through their conversation. Group 2 had completed their reading by Gee and have not had the chance to complete their reading log. They took this time to work through the reading log together with their classmates.

Group 2 Conversation:

Students began to work with the first question of the reading log (Key points of text/what was interesting). This group similar to group 1, focused on the meaning of “discourse.”

S1: We got a better understanding of discourse now I think!

S2: The examples in the text helped me understand too, especially where he talked about language.

Student did not show specific examples, just mentions this idea

Now this is when the instructor starts working with students in the group, asking questions to motivate their understanding.

Instructor: What about the text helped you with your understanding? What was he saying? What helped you get through the reading?

S2: What helped me was picking out new words or ideas and focusing on them.

S1: I did the same thing! I used the dictionary or google to help me get a definition.

S3: Skipping ideas that were difficult to grasp and coming back to it later.

S3 at this point shifts the conversation: I still have no idea by what he means by “Physio or Socio”.

S1. I think it means Physiee Vs Social

S2: Yeah, I think he is regarding self or the “self.” Whatever that means, I’m still confused on that subject.

Now Groups 1 and 2 merge together and begin answering questions with the instructor

Instructor: Let’s talk about Question #2, “What do you think (about literacy) based on what you read?” Who is the typical audience for this piece?

S1 (G1): Not us, that’s for sure.

S1 (G2): *Yeah, this is definitely an insider piece. There is way too much syntax and words/concepts that we don't understand.*

Instructor: Yes, I agree with you. He is writing to others in his field. So how do you understand what he is saying?

S3 (G1): *Look for definitions or clues in the text.*

At this point, I shift my observation to group 3 since class time is getting close to ending. For most of the class period this group has been working though the Gee piece reading silently and individually working in their reading logs. This group was very quiet. I did notice that when they were confused about something, they would check in with one another. When I started to observe their group, they had just begun to talk about discourse.

Group 3 Conversation:

S1: *I don't understand the concept of discourse. Can it be related to someone's experience?*

S2: *I'm pretty sure it can be. Right now, I think we are a part of a discourse in school. Each major is its own discourse.*

S1: *Yeah, that makes more sense, but how do you identify discourse?*

S2: *I think in a similar way with how people identify with one another: With the things you do and the things you know. It is what makes you yourself.*

S1: *Why did he write this text? What was his reasoning?*

S2: *I think because of showing his exigence to the discourse.*

A major element that I observed in all three groups was that as soon as students have a question they are asking each other for support. If they have questions that they cannot help each other answer, they write them down to ask the professor later on. They are using the classroom space as the place to solve their reading concerns. This is something that the RA pedagogy encourages and it occurs in this lesson. For example, in group 3, students are confiding in one another to work through their confusion. The social dimension encourages this practice. Some of the responses in this group also reflect elements of the knowledge-building dimension. Group 3's S1's final response puts the knowledge-building dimension into practice by helping the others identify reasons why Gee wrote this text. In group 2, the instructor encourages students to think about their metacognitive practices. These students were able to identify practices such as:

Identifying new language and revisiting concepts that were hard for them to grasp within this text by Gee. Students were additionally able to notice and understand that students (like themselves) were not the intended audience for this piece. Therefore, they needed to be aware of the reading practices that would help them understand the text. Cognitive and knowledge-building dimensions are present in these specific moments. As I stated earlier, each group practiced the social dimension, using the classroom space to work through their difficulties with others who may be experiencing the same kind of struggles. It is important that students are aware of these practices that they are taking a part in, it will help them conceptualize the different ways they are learning.

Final Thoughts on Reading Apprenticeship Pedagogy

4.1 Students dispositions as readers after completing a RA course

At the end of the Fall 2019 semester, I asked instructors to announce to their students that I was conducting a “post-semester” survey about their reading practices. Similar to the early-semester surveys, late-semester surveys were anonymous. All three instructors encouraged students to complete the survey. While I surveyed the same student groups in both the early and late semester survey, because the surveys did not collect identifying information, I was unable to do direct comparison of individual responses across early and late surveys. However, since the student groups invited to respond were the same, indirect comparison between early and late across whole group response trends is possible. In total the late-semester survey resulted in 21 responses, less than half the amount of early-semester surveys. This part of the analysis also takes into account that there were only 21 responses to the late survey, so patterns across early and late-surveys must be seen in light of the different number of responses across these surveys.

Similar to the early survey, question 1 of the late-semester survey asked: *What steps do you take to approach difficult readings in your courses? Describe what you do as a reader.* I followed my previous process of coding each answer for the four RA dimensions to see how these answers differed to the first survey. While I was coding, I noticed that students' answers were similar to the early survey, expressing the same steps and strategies. All four of the RA dimensions were present in their responses: “*I have*

been asking someone in the class to explain something I am not understanding” (Social Dimension), *“I have been going back to previous texts that I have made notes on to see if I can make connections”* (Personal Dimension), *“I re-read the text until I understand the message/thesis”* (Cognitive Dimension), *“I like to see how a text is laid out and what kind of structure it has. Then I will read each topic carefully”* (Knowledge-Building Dimension). Additional Examples of these findings can be found in the appendices, appendix B. From my findings, it seems students' answers between the two surveys remained fairly similar. When I looked at question 3 of the late-semester survey *“How do you approach these readings compared to the beginning of the semester?”*, 18 of 21 students reported they had some sort of positive change to their reading practices. Most of these students reported they were less stressed about assigned readings because they have the tools to work with them: *“I used to really stress over readings I did not understand in the beginning. Now I try to pay attention to structure and language to help guide me through them,”* *“I now feel I am more attentive to what I am reading and processing.”* Student’s also expressed a change in their overall attitudes towards reading as a whole: *“I hardly ever read at the beginning of the semester. However, after this course, I can't not read. It’s made into a habit at this point and reading has become an immediate reaction for me,”* *“Now, I am well aware of my surroundings with reading versus the past. I feel like I am more attentive to what I am reading and processing and it is more enjoyable,”* *“In the start, I was just reading because I had to. Now I read to learn something new. It’s a big change.”* These students are expressing how FYC had changed both their attitudes and disposition about reading. I must mention that there were 3

students who reported no change in their reading practices, and that is a finding in itself. These students may have already possessed the skills that this course focused on throughout the semester.

In the next section, I draw conclusions from these findings to make arguments about why the teaching of reading in these writing intensive courses is necessary. First, I discuss the importance of instructors setting the FYC stage with honesty about the challenges that come with reading advanced academic texts in these courses, and explain how this honesty often leads to reader confidence. Next, I discuss the importance of students developing identities as readers and how reader identity opens up student's ability to become stronger metacognitive readers. Lastly, I discuss the efficacy of the RA framework and its overall effect on both students and instructors at HSU.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Scholarship on reading pedagogy has expressed the importance of its presence within the writing classroom. Reading and writing are connected activities; proper reading instruction allows students to gain the essential rhetorical tools that will help guide their developing literacy within the college setting (Bunn 2013, Heick 2019, Brown et al. 2017; Downs 2010; MacMillan et al. 2012, Schoenbach et al. 2012). As the scholarship on reading pedagogy that I reviewed earlier has also illustrated, there is a need for increased reading literacy instruction early on in post-secondary education, and courses such as FYC are an appropriate setting to do so.

Humboldt State University is one institution within the CSU system that is beginning to implement reading pedagogies such as the Reading Apprenticeship Framework into its FYC program. With this project, I wanted to understand how academic reading was being taught in various FYC course sections, what kinds of reading skills students were asked to use within these courses, and what the effect of RA had on students across one semester in an FYC course. I am a believer in expressing the importance of reading instruction due to my own personal experience in post-secondary and graduate education. My goals with this project were to learn how students are being taught reading, and discover if there are ways to improve this practice. After completing my study, I have observed key moments where reading instruction thrived and moments where reading instruction could be improved. Using the four dimensions of the RA framework as a base for this project has helped me understand how academic reading might be being taught in FYC courses. It also helped me uncover what HSU can do to improve this aspect of the program.

Key Finding 1: Setting the Stage with Honesty: The Importance of Acknowledging the Challenges of Academic Reading and Solving Reading Problems Collaboratively

Being honest with students that academic reading is a difficult task is one important strategy for teaching reading in a writing-intensive classroom. Each of the three instructors that participated in my study were honest with their students about the difficulty that comes with reading advanced academic texts. This honesty both impressed

and reassured me that academic reading is being taken seriously in this program. What I have learned from personal experience and while studying reading scholarship is that when students are aware of possible challenges with reading, they will be more likely to express their concerns and ask for help. For a long time in my own education, I was embarrassed that I was not picking up the same kinds of understandings and concepts that my classmates were from required readings, and due to this, I remained silent. By remaining silent, I continued to silently struggle with my coursework. I felt as if I should be able to comprehend the material in the same way as others were around me, but I did not. It wasn't until I came across the RA framework that I had the realization that I lacked the proper rhetorical tools I needed to be more successful in my academic reading because reading and working with highly academic texts *is* difficult. I understood that reading these types of texts meant more than reading words on the page, but I did not have strategies that would help me to comprehend the core concepts from these pieces. Instructors who are honest about the challenges of reading advanced texts and who express that feeling challenged by difficult texts is normal will allow those who are silently struggling to speak up. When students feel comfortable and supported in the classroom, they will have better chances for success.

The RA framework is one way to help students overcome their possible reluctance to use classroom space as a place for learning opportunities and for confronting the challenges of academic reading; this is essential because students need to learn that both instructors and peers can help them solve their troubles with reading. This is the core focus of the social dimension in the RA framework. This dimension

encourages students to share their reading processes as well as possible reading problems and reading solutions. An example from my data of this dimension which reveals the social dimension occurred in the observation of lesson 2 (where students were split into 3 groups). Students asked multiple questions to both the professor and their classmates and used each other to bounce ideas off of. All instructors I interviewed, expressed the importance of supporting students in moments such as these. When students understand that texts they are working with are often intended for other “scholars,” they can begin to use the classroom space to develop the tools they need to help them develop and solidify their ideas. Reading problems can often be solved within the classroom. Expressing concerns with one's reading practices opens up the conversation of other methods or tactics for those who are struggling with reading to try out. Working collaboratively with one another in moments like this is essential to begin to solve the reading problem.

Key Finding 2: The Importance of Establishing and Developing Reader Identity

A crucial factor that I took away from completing this project was learning about the importance of students possessing what is known as “reader identity.” The concept of reader identity connects to the personal dimension in the RA framework. Reader identity includes the idea that a student should develop a strong sense of who they are as a reader; more specifically, it is about understanding one’s own reading practices and having a sense of who one is as a reader and learner (Schoenbach et al., 31). Reading Apprenticeship particularly focuses on the importance of establishing reader identity, as

researchers have found that reader identity often leads students towards developing motivation and confidence in their reading practices (31). Without developing confidence in one's reading skills, students will no doubt struggle to complete challenging texts that are assigned to them in their courses. Courses such as FYC are an important place to begin guiding students to reflect on and develop reader identity if they have not begun to do so previously. As the research of this project suggests, because FYC is so writing intensive, the importance of focusing on reading practices can be sometimes assumed or forgotten by instructors. The RA framework brings this importance to center stage, reminding us that reading and writing are connected activities and both practices need to be addressed equally.

At the conclusion of this research project, I personally feel that developing a reader identity is one of the most important tools that a student can have. Being aware of one's reading practices and being able to identify how one learns as a reader and through reading is a critical part of education. In the RA Framework, reader identity is connected to the personal dimension. However, across the data sources of this research, I was surprised to discover that the personal dimension was the least evident throughout the study. This is interesting because students need to become aware of their reading practices and learn how to not only identify their connections to their identities as readers, but be able to express this identity to themselves and others. It is also important for instructors to be aware of their reading practices and identities so they can demonstrate examples to students about how they might work to understand difficult texts. If instructors struggle to communicate their own reading practices, it may then

cause a dilemma with knowing how to approach teaching reading pedagogy. What these practices lead to is an essential practice known as metacognition. The RA framework defines metacognition simply as “thinking about thinking,” but in more advanced terms as “referr[ing] to one's knowledge concerning one's cognitive process and products or anything related to them” (Schoenbach et al., 26). In terms of reading practices, students practicing metacognition will become aware of their reading process and have the ability to express not only how they read a text, but explain how these strategies helped them make sense of that text. The classroom space can (and should) be used to help students further develop their metacognitive practices. As discussed in key finding 1, professors setting the FYC stage at the beginning of a course with honesty about working with advanced academic materials will encourage students to ask for help when needed (because they are assured that these texts are difficult and it is not expected for them to understand them immediately), and help them see that they do have identities as readers. Metacognition allows students to be more confident in their reading practices because they will be able to both see and express how they have become more developed readers. These new skills developed in FYC will be able to be applied in future courses students take in their education.

As mentioned earlier in this section, the personal dimension of RA was the dimension I noticed being expressed the least within my study. This is an issue because without reader identity and reader confidence, readers in these courses will struggle. The personal dimension helps students to develop their identities and self-awareness as readers, and instructors in the FYC program at HSU can help make sure this is occurring

within their courses. This dimension can be implemented further into the course curriculum by developing metacognitive activities to help students reflect on their identities and experiences as academic readers. Professors can also help students create personal goals to help them establish individual reader identity and encourage them how to use this new identity in future spaces.

Key Finding 3: The Efficacy of RA and its Effect on Both Students and Instructors

At the end of studying both my student surveys and instructor interviews, I can say that the RA framework has had a positive effect on both groups of participants in the course of a semester. The post semester student surveys revealed some important information that has led me to this conclusion, particularly the responses to questions 3 and 4 (*How do you approach these readings compared to the beginning of the semester? And Name one or more reading techniques that you learned this semester that you think you will use in the future. If you did not learn any let us know that too*). Out of the 21 responses to question 3 that I received, 18 students reported a type of positive change in their reading practices. The other 4 responses reported that they approached reading the same way or that they were not sure how to respond to the question. As I stated in my findings chapter, most students expressed how they gained new ways of approaching their reading practices. Some of the responses I found to be most valuable were those who noted changes in their attitudes towards reading and those who realized that the classroom (and their peers) were factors of their overall improvement in their reading.

This finding was also present in students' responses to question 4. 8 of 21 responses mentioned how working with peers will be something they continue to practice in future courses. 6 of 21 responses discussed how they learned the importance of annotation in their reading practices, and how they will continue to use this in future assignments.

These observations from the surveys assured me that at least some of the elements of the RA framework (and other pedagogies) that these instructors had used in the classroom factored into this outcome. There were 4 students who responded that they did not learn any reading practices that they will be using in the future or that they will continue with the same practices they used before the Fall 2019 semester. Students who said they will not be using these practices did not address why they wouldn't use them. This makes me wonder if these particular students felt that these techniques couldn't be applied to other courses or if they just have a method that works for them. Regardless, I think it is important for professors to reinforce to their students at the end of a semester how they can use the practices from FYC into future courses.

Late-semester instructor interviews revealed a lot of encouraging information about the effectiveness of the RA framework in the courses over one semester. These interviews additionally revealed how instructors will use the RA Framework in future semesters. All three instructors reported that they will continue to use RA across their multiple sections of FYC. Each instructor that participated in my research was just beginning to work with RA in their courses. This specific finding to me as a researcher shows that the RA pedagogy is being taken up in a way by students in a positive and

encouraging manner for instructors to want to continue using this practice. Instructors shared with me how they think they will be modifying RA in future courses:

I will continue to use RA in future courses, but I will do more of it as individual activities vs. paired activities. I also want to modify some of the RA material to use more for our course concepts/terms-- add words such as discourse, genre, rhetorical situation, etc. so that students aren't just reminded verbally to look for these things-- rather, if that the framing for the RA stuff in class, I think that will be better able to make connections.

I will be using RA more robustly as I move forward into new semesters. I think each course I teach, across disciplines, needs to explicitly ask and explore: what does it mean to communicate in this academic and disciplinary context? What does reading and writing look like here? And why? I am most interested in creating expanded frameworks to help conceptualize reading as a social practice that requires apprenticing new community members. Reading is shaped by our prior experiences, connected to identity, and is not perfectible. I needed RA to see the value and utility of it for my own teaching and reading practices.

I want to use RA more in my courses. I need to play around with some of the curriculum more and I continue to use it. I think it is important to incorporate some of its concepts into my own and my students' daily practice. Reading is a social practice that we have to continue to learn to do in new communities. RA I think gives valuable tools to help this practice.

From these responses, this teaching framework is helping instructors see new value in reading practices and it is inspiring them to teach reading in new ways. In my academic career, I have learned to understand reading as not only problem solving (making sense of a text), but also as a way to begin forming our own individual stances as scholars in training. In order to begin understanding reading in these ways, students have to break through their personal literacy ceilings. Possessing the ability to independently access the knowledge and information within texts begins with reader confidence. As a way to approach the issue of developing reader fluency and the issue of reader confidence,

RA offers multiple ways for instructors to communicate to students for approaching these common struggles:

- Instructors should communicate to students that all readers (including the instructor) are developing readers and that developing reader fluency is a lifelong process.
- Communicating the role that effort plays in the growth of reader confidence and comprehension over time (even in a semester). Informing students that effort pays off in becoming a stronger reader is a key step for the building blocks of reader confidence.
- Celebrate progress as a developing reader and increase patience with oneself as a reader.
- Persist reading a text when one is confused or bored.
- Build stamina for reading longer texts and for longer periods of time.
(Schoenbach et al, 32)

From what I have observed across this research project's data, each of these suggestions from the RA framework are being expressed to students in the FYC classroom. Reading is being taught in multiple ways to help students grasp the importance of reading practice. Students are learning how to truly examine difficult texts through the methods of annotation, and by also learning how their peers are working with these same texts. The classroom is a space for collaboration, and there are multiple ways of working with something challenging. Students are understanding that they do have identities as readers, but I think this factor can be further expressed in the future of HSU's FYC courses. Most importantly, students are feeling more comfortable and confident in their reading practices. At the end of one semester of FYC, they know that they can apply these new skills in future courses. Having the proper rhetorical tools for academic reading is critical because reading is the basis for almost all academic coursework.

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Appendix A: Early-Semester Student Survey Questions

Question 1: What steps do you take to approach difficult readings in your courses? Describe what you do as a reader.

Question 2: Have you been taught how to work with difficult texts before coming to college?

Question 3: If you replied with "yes" in the previous question, describe what you were taught.

Question 4: Based on your previous experience with difficult texts, how do you think this reading experience affects your understanding of the material?

Question 5: So far, how much time do you spend on reading for school per week?

Question 6: How do you most often obtain access to assigned readings?

Appendix B: Late-Semester Student Survey Questions

Question 1: What steps do you take to approach difficult readings in your courses?

Describe what you do as a reader.

Question 2: What are some of the reading strategies or skills you have learned this semester?

Question 3: How do you approach these readings compared to the beginning of the semester?

Question 4: Name one or more reading techniques that you learned this semester that you think you will use in the future. If you don't plan to use one or didn't learn any, please let us know that as well.

Question 5: Are you encouraged to continue gaining reading literacy in your academic career?

Question 6: So far, how much time do you spend on reading for school per week?

Question 7: How do you most often obtain access to assigned readings?

Appendix C: Coding Table (Early Student Survey)

Table 1: Responses to Question 3

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of coded responses out of 59
Social Dimension	Discuss reading with peers	Seeing other students as supporters of learning	<p>I usually ask my peers what they thought of the reading before class</p> <p>I would ask someone else on their views of the readings</p> <p>I ask someone to explain something I do not understand when reading the same text</p>	12
Personal Dimension	Awareness of reading habits	Students show awareness of their relationship to reading	<p>I try to read actively, keeping myself aware of what I am reading. If I find myself wondering, I go back and reread.</p> <p>I skim then read for meaning. I don't like annotating because it stops my train of thought and does not enhance it.</p> <p>I approach each reading with an open, clear mind to accept the information. If the</p>	8

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of coded responses out of 59
			reading is too difficult, I will skim.	
Cognitive Dimension	Skim Annotate Break it down Note taking Re reading	Focuses on increasing students cognitive strategies for making sense of a text	I reread the difficult readings until I can comprehend what the author is trying to get across. I like to highlight key words that confuse me. I also like to annotate on the side of the text based on what I read and create my own personal connections, comments, and questions.	31
Knowledge-Building Dimension	Structure of texts Authors purpose	Using text organization to assist in comprehension of texts Identifying author's purposes in creating specific texts to support reader comprehension.	Usually when I read difficult texts, I like to read the intro and read in between the lines and pick out what the author is saying When I start to read a difficult reading it depends on what genre it is. If it is more boring I will read slowly and re read anything that I don't understand. I do a background check first. This includes me finding out more about the author and where they are coming from. After I attempt the text and reread until I	8

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of coded responses out of 59
			understand the message.	

Appendix D: Coding Table (Late-Semester Student Survey)

Table 2: Responses to Question 1

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of student response out of 21
Social Dimension	Discuss reading with peers	Seeing other students as supporters of learning	<p>I like to ask someone else their views on the reading and compare our thoughts.</p> <p>I like to ask someone to explain something I do not understand from the text.</p>	4
Personal Dimension	Awareness of reading habits	Students show awareness of their relationship to reading	<p>I break reading down into sections and take one section a day.</p> <p>I approach each reading with an open, clear mind to accept the information.</p> <p>I read actively, keeping myself aware of what I am reading. If I find myself wandering I go back and re-read.</p>	8
Cognitive Dimension	Skim Annotate Break it down	Focuses on increasing students cognitive strategies	I annotate on the side of the text I am reading and create my own connections,	14

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of student response out of 21
	Note taking Re reading	for making sense of a text	<p>comments, and questions.</p> <p>I re-read anything I do not understand and annotate thoroughly.</p> <p>I re-read sections I am finding myself not understanding.</p>	
Knowledge-Building Dimension	Structure of texts Authors purpose	<p>Using text organization to assist in comprehension of texts</p> <p>Identifying author's purposes in creating specific texts to support reader comprehension.</p>	<p>I like to do a background check on either the author or the text before I read.</p> <p>I like to read the introduction first and then read between the lines to pick out that the author is saying.</p>	3

Table 3: Responses to Question 2

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of student response out of 21
Social Dimension	Discuss reading with peers	Seeing other students as supporters of learning	<p>I have learned that I have resources to ask questions or get support in my learning.</p> <p>I have learned to read with others more and that classmates helps with my learning process.</p>	2
Personal Dimension	Awareness of reading habits	Students show awareness of their relationship to reading	<p>I have learned how to read more actively by learning ways on how to stay focused.</p> <p>I have learned this semester to be more patient with myself when I don't understand a text and to take my time with it.</p> <p>I have learned how to become a more patient reader.</p>	6
Cognitive Dimension	Skim Annotate Break it down Note taking Re reading	Focuses on increasing students cognitive strategies for making sense of a text	<p>To always re-read multiple times and to ask more questions.</p> <p>I have learned how to effectively highlight texts and annotate.</p> <p>I have learned that annotating and taking</p>	5

Code	Sub-codes	Defining Features	Example	Number of student response out of 21
			notes is really helpful with difficult readings.	
Knowledge-Building Dimension	Structure of texts Author's purpose	Using text organization to assist in comprehension of texts Identifying author's purposes in creating specific texts to support reader comprehension.	I have learned how to identify specific languages an author is using. I have learned how to identify different groups of genres an author may be writing in. I have learned that there are specific discourse communities authors are a part of and that their work belongs to.	5

Appendix E: Student Worksheet from Classroom Observation Lesson 1

Article title:

Author:

With a partner, practice (out loud with each other) the various critical reading strategies we've discussed.

- What do you know about the discourse community this text is written in/for?
- What do you know about the genre of this text? How might this genre have changed over time as the discourse community's needs changed?
- What strategies did you use to figure this out?
 - Skimming
 - Looking at subheadings
 - Looking at potential audiences
 - Looking for keyword/definitions
 - Looking at structure to find a main idea or "thesis statement"
 - Any other strategies you might use?
- Use the following chart to guide your discussion/practice:

Author/context	Genre of the article	Discourse/discourse community	Main ideas and key points

Appendix F: Student Worksheets from Classroom Observation Lesson 2

Discussing Your Metacognitive Reading Log: Pair Work

Overview: You'll work with a partner to discuss each other's reading logs. You'll also work together to identify problems with Gee's difficult Source text, "Literacy, discourse, and linguistics." We will use the data you create and gather to shape our conversation about Gee's work on Friday.

Directions: Read your log alongside your partner. Make sure that each of you has a chance to read uninterrupted first (3-5 minutes). Both people have had a chance to read, answer the following questions allowed (10 minutes).

1. How did you decide what to put on the left side of the log ("important ideas and information")? What makes you think it is important?
2. Were there things in the reading that you didn't understand? How did you figure out what they meant? Or what strategies did you use to navigate the challenges posed by the text?
3. What problems do you still have with engaging with the text or the meaning of the text?
4. Identify sections or concepts you feel we should spend time on in class discussing. Explain your reasoning.