

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHERS AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING: A  
QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership

by

Rachelle Marie Minutella

May 2012

The Dissertation of Rachelle Marie Minutella is approved:

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Tanya M. Akopoff, Ph.D.

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Date

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Peggy Johnson, Ed.D.

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Date

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Diane Gehart, Ph.D., Chair

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Date

California State University, Northridge

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my Mom, Rose Ann Minutella, who taught me that now is the appropriate time.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend my deepest appreciation and love to my Mom for believing in me no matter what. It has been her example that created the strong foundation within me to persevere through challenges.

I extend to Neil sincere thanks for his understanding throughout my educational journey, and for the consistently delicious coffee made to help keep me going.

To Bart, my brother in heaven, who has had a constant watch over me in traffic and every chaotic, crazy, and happy moment of my days, thank you for being my best friend.

I extend special gratitude to the distinguished members of my dissertation committee for their input and support:

Dr. Diane Gehart: for her time and energy to guide me through this academic process.

Dr. Peggy Johnson: for listening to the words unspoken.

Dr. Tanya Akopoff: for understanding how someone learns.

I wish to recognize Dr. Rusche for the opportunity to be a part of the first doctoral cohort at CSU, Northridge, and Dr. Gregory for his many contributions to my learning experience.

Finally, to all who have expressed patience, kindness, and understanding:

THANK YOU.

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## Abstract

### SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHERS AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

by

Rachelle Marie Minutella  
Doctor of Education Degree  
in Educational Leadership

Secondary English teachers in California typically develop their curriculum by following the California State Standards for the grade level they are currently teaching. Sometimes an English Language Arts curriculum is predetermined by the school district and the English teachers are responsible for covering the content of that mandated curriculum. Previously in some local districts of the Los Angeles Unified School District, a curriculum for English was developed and implemented (LAUSD, 2007). This curriculum, which is presently not mandated, contains instructional strategies that can teach students to become self-regulated learners. Self-regulated learning is an element within the category of metacognitive strategies that teaches students to think about thinking (Zimmerman, 2002). According to Wolters (2003) and Joseph (2009), self-regulated learning can improve student achievement and academic development. There are specific characteristics of self-regulated learning. These characteristics include the attitudes a learner has about their learning, the beliefs a learner has about motivation, and

how a learner uses cognitive strategies (Wolters, 2003). The term “self-regulated learning” has been used by theorists to describe the independent, academically effective forms of learning that involve metacognition, intrinsic motivation, and strategic action (Perry, 2002). This qualitative study examined what secondary English teachers know about self-regulated learning and how they teach these skills in the classroom. The study includes an exploration of secondary English teachers’ attitudes about self-regulated learning and discusses what these teachers are teaching to enable their students to become self-regulated learners. The barriers and benefits that these teachers experience when teaching self-regulated learning are also reported. The major themes that emerged from the analysis included: Motivating factors for teaching self-regulated learning, strategies to teach self-regulated learning, barriers encountered when teaching self-regulated learning, and teacher reported benefits when teaching self-regulated learning. Sub-themes which emerged from the analysis included: self-reflection, metacognition, cooperative learning, intrinsic motivation, and student responsibility for learning.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **Introduction**

Secondary English teachers in California typically develop their curriculum by following the California State Standards for the grade level they are currently teaching. Sometimes an English Language Arts curriculum is predetermined by the school district and the English teachers are responsible for covering the content of that mandated curriculum. Previously in some local districts of the Los Angeles Unified School District, a curriculum for English was developed and implemented (LAUSD, 2007). This curriculum, which is presently not mandated, contains instructional strategies that can teach students to become self-regulated learners.

Self-regulated learning is an element within the category of metacognitive strategies that teaches students to think about thinking (Zimmerman, 2002). According to Wolters (2003) and Joseph (2009), self-regulated learning can improve student achievement and academic development. There are specific characteristics of self-regulated learning. These characteristics include the attitudes a learner has about their learning, the beliefs a learner has about motivation, and how a learner uses cognitive strategies (Wolters, 2003). The term “self-regulated learning” has been used by theorists to describe the independent, academically effective forms of learning that involve metacognition, intrinsic motivation, and strategic action (Perry, 2002).

The motivational, behavioral, and metacognitive strategies that high achieving students typically use are also evident in students who are self-regulated learners (Wolters, 2003; Zimmerman, 2002). Self-regulated learners are able to adopt, modify,

and adjust their own learning and behavior so their academic results become more effective and successful (Montalvo, 2004).

In contrast, students who are not self-regulated learners usually have not become effective in mapping a course to get through their academic challenges, such as incorporating the use of self-monitoring, self-assessing, and self-reflecting (Montalvo, 2004). According to Joseph (2009), this inability to navigate within their own academic course is due to poor metacognition, leaving the students drifting without the necessary skills to figure out their own academic challenges. When students have the opportunity and are encouraged to develop their self-regulated learning skills, they learn to set increasingly higher goals for their own learning and manage their academic achievement (Ramdass & Zimmerman, 2011; Winne & Nesbit, 2010).

This qualitative study examined what secondary English teachers know about self-regulated learning and how they teach these skills in the classroom. The study includes an exploration of secondary English teachers' attitudes about self-regulated learning and discusses what these teachers are teaching to enable their students to become self-regulated learners.

### **Background of the Problem**

In 1997, the California State Standards for English Language Arts were developed as part of the Language Arts reform in California (CDE, 1997). These standards reflect the grade level appropriate content students need to acquire and consists of strategies focusing on analysis, comprehension, listening and speaking, response, and writing. These strategies can be applied to a variety of text genres, ranging from narrative to expository. Although these standards describe the content that students must master, they

do not address how this material is to be taught, nor which texts are to be used to teach them (CDE, 1997). According to the California Department of Education (1997), flexibility in choosing texts in which to teach the standards is out of respect for the local control of schools.

For each grade level, the standards show a progressive increase in the skills necessary for students to be successful in mastering the standard. As an example, the standard thread for Reading Comprehension and Analysis of Grade Level Appropriate Text for grades Kindergarten through twelfth grade is presented in Table 1. The structure of English Language Arts standards remains constant across the grade levels. School systems have worked to identify, develop, and promote content area requirements so that students know what is necessary to be proficient in each core subject. However, according to Marzano (2008), it is rare that specific objectives are written that involve the metacognitive aspect of learning which would teach students to develop the standard driven strategies to analyze, comprehend, listen and speak, respond, write, and think about their thinking.

Table 1

*California English Language Arts Reading Standard*

GRADE LEVEL	CALIFORNIA ELA STANDARD READING 2.2 Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text
Kindergarten	Use pictures and context to make predictions about story content.
Grade One	Respond to <i>who, what, when, where, and how</i> questions.
Grade Two	State the purpose in reading (i.e., tell what information is sought).
Grade Three	Ask questions and support answers by connecting prior knowledge with literal information found in, and inferred from, the text.
Grade Four	Use appropriate strategies when reading for different purposes (e.g., full comprehension, location of information, personal enjoyment).

Grade Five Grade Six	Analyze text that is organized in sequential or chronological order. Analyze text that uses the compare-and-contrast organizational pattern.
Grade Seven	Locate information by using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.
Grade Eight	Analyze text that uses proposition and support patterns.
Grades Nine and Ten	Prepare a bibliography of reference materials for a report using a variety of consumer, workplace, and public documents.
Grades Eleven and Twelve	Analyze the way in which clarity of meaning is affected by the patterns of organization, hierarchical structures, repetition of the main ideas, syntax, and word choice in the text.

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Based on the theory presented in the Los Angeles Unified School District Disciplinary Literacy Framework, developed by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh (LAUSD, 2007), teachers are shown how to integrate literacy development and thinking practices into their routine content instruction. The critical factor of the Disciplinary Literacy Framework is the combination of a) learning about content and b) learning about how to develop a thinking process for that content learning at the same time, so that they interconnect. For students to develop literacy in a particular discipline, they must grow on these two dimensions simultaneously: content and process. These two dimensions must be present for student literacy development to occur most efficiently.

The Habits of Mind strategies (McConachie, 2010) help develop both content and process that promote skills such as being thoughtful about what they are doing, listening with empathy, applying past knowledge to new situations, communicating with clarity, and taking responsible risks. For students, using Habits of Mind promotes development

of their understanding of the content of each discipline as well as develop behaviors and strategies to increase their literacy and manage their thinking processes (Costa, 2000). These thinking strategies can transfer to other content areas to increase learning for other subject areas (Himbeault, 2011). Once students have gained an understanding of the Habits of Mind concepts, thinking about how they are learning becomes part of their self-regulated learning development. This model of instruction presents a capable research-based (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991; Collins, Brown & Newman, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991) example for teaching and learning on the diagonal.

The responsibility of the teacher is to present their instruction on the diagonal so that students become apprentices of their own learning. Teachers must learn how and be able to teach this way, using their content expertise and habits of thinking. Incorporating these two instructional areas creates the scaffolding of learning that teaches students to learn on the diagonal, and specifically supports metacognition and self-regulated learning strategies (McConachie, et al, 2010).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Self-regulated learning skills that encourage students to think about their thinking, are embedded into the English Language Arts Concept Lessons but are typically not included in other English Language Arts instruction because many educators focus only on state mandated content (Bolin, 2005). Research suggests that students who do not already have these skills will not develop them on their own without instructional intervention, and thus are less likely to be academically successful (Garrett, 2007). Systematically teaching students to be self-regulated learners would likely improve their academic success and their ability to master the disciplinary content mandated by the

state (Dembo, 2000; Zimmerman, 2001). This study described the existing attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers related to self-regulated learning.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore what secondary English teachers believe about metacognition and to examine their attitudes and practices related to self-regulated learning. Specifically, this study addressed the issue of teaching students how to promote their own learning by developing self-regulated learning strategies. The results of this investigation contribute to the professional knowledge and practice of educators identifying what facilitates self-regulated learning. Ultimately, the results can be used to inform new pedagogical practices that enable secondary English teachers to address both state content requirements while also teaching students self-regulated learning skills, which increase students' ability to effectively learn across the curriculum.

### **Significance of the Study**

Although researchers and theorists have generated a significant body of literature on self-regulated learning and metacognition (Bandura, 1978; Flavell, 1976; Gourgey, 1998; Perry, 2002; Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 1990) few researchers have systematically explored its practical applications in contemporary school contexts. Specifically, no qualitative study has systematically explored the attitudes and practices of practicing teachers related to self-regulated learning or how these teachers put into practice self-regulated learning strategies. To better understand the possibilities and barriers to teaching self-regulated learning in practice, this investigation included an examination of secondary English teachers' attitudes and actual practices relating to self-regulated learning in order to develop recommendations for future application and implementation.

## **Research Questions**

This study addressed the following questions: (a) What motivates teachers to teach self-regulated learning skills in secondary English courses when it is not mandated?; (b) What are secondary English teachers currently doing to teach their students to become self-regulated learners?; (c) What barriers do secondary English teachers experience related to teaching self-regulated learning skills in their classrooms?; and, (d) What specific benefits have they seen from teaching self-regulated learning and/or believe students may receive from such education?

## **Overview of Methodology**

This investigation was a qualitative explorative study using a phenomenological approach to examine the attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers who teach in large urban schools in a California school district. The phenomenological approach was used to investigate the meaning of the lived experiences of people to identify the core essence of the human experience as described by the research participants (Bloomberg, 2008). Phenomenological research makes use of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of an essence description (Moustakas, 1994). The focus was on attitude and the response to the central phenomenon under study, teaching self-regulated learning (Bloomberg, 2008).

The teacher participants selected for this study explicitly stated that they seek to teach metacognitive strategies to students to promote self-regulated learning. The research study included an investigation of the lived experiences of eleven English teachers with varying years of teaching experience at secondary schools sharing similar demographics. The individual interviews were followed up with member validations

where the researcher's interpretations were presented to the participants for discussion of their validity (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Interview questions began with structured questions, and then more specific, semi-structured questions that were suggested by the answers to the initial questions were asked (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

The data collection process began with a request for local district instructional leaders to invite school site instructional leaders to identify secondary English teachers with an understanding of metacognition and self-regulated learning, a self-declared belief that their instruction was explicitly designed to lead to students' self-regulated learning, and an interest to participate in interviews to further the study. After the English teachers were identified, face-to-face interviews were conducted. Data collection included the transcriptions of the individual interviews, and any information added or commented on by the participants from the member checks. If enough data was not gathered after the individual interviews and member checks, then additional interviews were scheduled, conducted, and transcribed, in search of common themes until saturation was reached.

Data analysis involved coding, identifying, and interpreting emerging themes found in the individual interviews. The interview data was transcribed and coded by the researcher to identify common themes using a phenomenological research approach. After the information from the raw data was distilled into smaller sets of notes that characterized the total data, the common themes were analyzed and reduced to combined categories to identify connections in English teacher attitudes and practices in order to explore what specifically these teachers did to enable their students to become self-regulated learners (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

## **Definition of Terms**

The following list of words and their definitions were used throughout the course of this research study.

*Attitudes*: the way a person chooses to think (Roberts, 2004).

*Habits of Mind*: a collection of 16 thinking dispositions used to adopt thinking tools and strategies, such as the development of reading, writing, thinking, talking, and problem solving in a discipline; instructional habits used to develop students' learning on the diagonal skills (McConachie, 2010; LAUSD, 2007; Costa, 2000).

*Metacognition*: the process of thinking about thinking; one's knowledge concerning one's own cognitive processes or anything related to the learning properties of information or data (Flavell, 1976).

*Secondary*: grade spans of middle and high school levels, consisting of early-adolescent students in grades six through eight, and older adolescent students in grades nine through twelve (CDE, 2010).

*Self-regulated learning*: the utilization and initiation of volitional control to direct cognitive and behavioral strategies during the learning process (Zimmerman, 1995).

## **Limitations and Delimitations**

Defining limitations and delimitations of a study helps to establish the "boundaries, exceptions, reservations, and qualifications inherent in every study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 110). This study had several limitations and delimitations. First, the scope of the study included only secondary English teachers at large urban secondary schools in California; thus the experiences of teachers in other disciplines, elementary instructors, and teachers in suburban or rural areas were not addressed. Given the limited

population, generalizing the findings to other learners or learning contexts was done carefully. More specifically, previous research (Schunk, 2005) indicated that a self-regulated learner might not be motivated to self-regulate in all domains or content areas of study. For example, students might exhibit high levels of self-regulating evidence in their Math class because Math happens to be their favorite or most successful class. Those same students may not exhibit the same high levels of self-regulated strategies in Science if Science is not their favorite subject or they do not enjoy the aspects of Science.

A further limitation of the study was the researcher's potential bias. To ensure that data collection was systematic, the purpose of the study and the researcher's perspectives towards the topic were articulated and explicitly stated in Chapter 3 (Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

A delimitation as a phenomenological study, the interview data was not designed to address the effectiveness of teaching practices. The focus of the study was English teachers' attitudes and practices of self-regulated learning. The degree of teaching practice effectiveness and how it might affect the study was not discussed.

### **Organization of the Dissertation**

This study follows the organization set forth by the CSUN Doctoral Program Dissertation Chapter Guidelines for Ed.D. Candidates. The remainder of the study was organized into five chapters, references, and appendices in the following manner: Chapter Two presents a review of the related literature dealing with evolving trends and practices used to teach self-regulated learning. Chapter Three delineates the research design and methodology of the study, the instrument used to gather the data, the procedures followed, and determination of the sample selected for study described. An analysis of

the data and a discussion of the findings are presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The study concludes with references and appendices.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter 2 contains a literature review pertaining to metacognition and self-regulated learning, the characteristics of self-regulated learners, instructional methods and strategies for self-regulated learning, and assessing self-regulated learning.

#### **Defining Self-Regulated Learning and Metacognition**

The term self-regulated learning refers to the learning that is guided by metacognition (Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 1990). A description of the developmental aspects of how learners monitor their own cognition is found in Flavell's and Bandura's seminal writings of the 1970s (Flavell, 1976, 1979; Bandura, 1978).

A student who self-regulates, figures out the requirements of the assignment, defines the most effective strategies to accomplish the assignment, and then uses metacognition to control their learning processes in order to be academically successful (Greene, 2011). Having an awareness of one's own learning is the basis of metacognition, and directly connects to self-regulated learning. The motivational investment that stems from this personal belief about learning is what makes metacognition critical to the development of self-regulated learning (Paris, 2001).

A combination of metacognition, intrinsic motivation, and strategic action, are part of the self-regulated learning skills process (Perry, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002). Self-regulated learners participate in their own learning process through metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral actions to promote their learning (Zimmerman, 1995).

Metacognitive actions usually include the ability to understand which skills are needed to perform a task, necessary resources and strategies to perform a task, and self-regulating practices such as checking, revising, and remediating (Clark, 2003). The metacognitive learner typically has the ability to analyze their own learning processes, identifying what is and what is not understood.

Metacognitive learners know how to have control of their learning experiences, and are capable of knowing how to use information to reach goals (Gourgey, 1998). These learners are able to determine cognitive demands of the task presented to them, apply specific strategies to achieve the goal, and then assess their progress of their performance (Gourgey, 1998). This metacognitive process is essential to achieving effective cognition by enabling the learner to make progress towards evaluating, understanding, and applying knowledge to new situations (Gourgey, 1998).

Students who have learned how to learn, or think metacognitively, display intellectual curiosity, are persistent in their quest for knowledge, and are strategic problem solvers, and apply these self-regulated learning skills (Paris, 2001). Metacognitive abilities develop in children between the ages of five and seven, with most students reaching a transitional period when they no longer apply metacognitive strategies unless they are reminded to do so (Woolfolk, 1987).

Overall, metacognition directs student decisions at vital stages in learning, influences students' belief in their abilities, and allows students to become self-regulated learners. These skills, referred to now as metacognition, -the ability to learn how to learn- are closely related to self-regulated learning (Dinsmore, 2008; Marzano, 2008).

### **Characteristics of Self-Regulated Learners**

Self-regulated students exhibit specific characteristics. Wolters (2003) claims that these characteristics relate to the students' motivational attitudes, their use of cognitive strategies, and their metacognitive abilities. According to Zimmerman (2002), self-regulation is not necessarily associated with a student's mental or intellectual ability. Instead, Zimmerman (2002) believes that self-regulated learners are able to adapt their mental abilities into academic skills, all by themselves. For example, self-regulation allows a student, no matter their mental abilities, to apply necessary academic skills because they understand how to manage their own learning. The ability to convert mental abilities into academic skills is a significant component of education that explicitly ties to the development of life-long learning skills, making self-regulated learning strategies an important feature of a student's learning (Zimmerman, 2002). The more awareness a student has about their own knowledge and how they acquire and use that knowledge, the better the student can utilize the skills to acquire new knowledge (Schober, 2007).

### *Intrinsically Motivated*

A basis for researchers to begin studying self-regulation in relation to academics was because previous research indicating that achievement could not be completely explained by the skills and abilities of the student suggested that motivation and self-regulation were also significant factors (Schunk, 2005).

Self-regulated learners are characteristically self-motivated and possess the will to use their metacognitive strategies (Jackson, 2004; McCombs & Marzano, 1990). These students will typically be more motivated academically and demonstrate superior learning (Pintrich, 2002). In contrast, Wolters (2003) argues that motivation is distinct from other

features of the self-regulated learning process, claiming that it may or may not be related to the process. Jackson (2004) believes that self-regulated learning is more of a continuous metacognitive process in which the student exercises forethought, performance, and self-reflection. Self-regulated learners view learning as an activity that they do for themselves proactively, rather than as a reaction to teaching (Zimmerman, 2001). Being aware of their own strengths and limitations enables the student to set goals and task strategies for themselves as guides for their own learning (Zimmerman, 2002). During the learning process, self-regulated learners make conscious choices to direct their own cognitive and behavioral strategies (Houssand, 2008). Research (Houssand, 2008; Boekaerts, 1997; Corno, 2001; Flavell, 1979; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007; Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 1989), states that self-regulated learners more actively engage in knowledge acquisition and in activities that enable them to strategically adapt their behavior, personal learning processes and environment to support meaning making and goal attainment.

### *Self-Monitoring*

Learners who are self-regulated, apply specific self-monitoring strategies when they are engaged in academic tasks (Wolters, 2003). They monitor their own learning and produce internal feedback about their cognitive processing. If academic or environmental situations alter, automatically the learners modify their learning behaviors, and are able to continue to regulate and monitor their use of those strategies throughout the academic tasks (Wolters, 2003).

### *Self-Reflecting*

Self-regulated learners possess internal factors of the metacognitive process that makes it possible for them to reflect upon their learning progress and accomplishments, and then evaluate their understanding (Paris, 2001). This reflective process is used to move the student beyond assignment requirements and into life-learning situations where they accept academic challenges and risks in order to master knowledge and skills (Paris, 2001).

### **Instructional Principles**

Teachers ultimately are responsible for the content knowledge and skills strategies students receive. In education, there are many different instructional principles that teachers can use to guide the teaching of their curriculum. Usually, teachers are introduced to instructional principles while in their teacher credentialing program. These instructional principles are generally structured around Bloom's Taxonomy, only recently expanding into an increased awareness of metacognitive principles.

#### *Bloom's Principles*

For many years in education, the impact of Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) influenced how instruction and evaluation methods were conducted. Bloom (1956) established a framework of statements for teachers to use when writing instructional objectives. Developed with the intent to provide a common language for teachers in all content areas, Bloom's Taxonomy was used as the resource for creating learning objectives (Krathwohl, 2002). Bloom's Taxonomy presented six categories of the cognitive domain: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, to be used in this order so mastery of each category would lead into learning the next category of a more difficult level (Krathwohl, 2002). Bloom's Taxonomy was

the teacher's framework of instructional statements used to determine what students should learn from instruction, and many educators interpreted these domains as generalized areas of learning because of their limited focus on metacognition and how it connects to learning (Krathwohl, 2002; Furst, 1981).

Bloom's Taxonomy's (1956) of thinking and learning was revised by one of his former students in 2001 in order to address the implementation of standards-based curriculum. Bloom's student, Anderson (2001), revised the cognitive domain of the learning taxonomy to help teachers understand and better put into practice the standards-based curriculums. Changing the original domain categories from nouns to verbs, Anderson refocused the original domains to reflect a more active form of thinking. For example, application was changed to apply; analysis was changed to analyze; and evaluation was changed to evaluate. Several of the categories of Bloom's Taxonomy were restructured to use more current educational terminology, and added features of cognitive psychology that have since emerged (Krathwohl, 2002). Metacognitive Knowledge has also been added as a category because of the growing impact of the importance of teaching students to learn to be aware of their metacognitive activity and adapting how they think and learn (Krathwohl, 2002).

### *Marzano's Principles*

Marzano (2000, 2007) combines three systems and the domain of knowledge to create a New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Developed to provide teachers with research-based guidelines for instructional planning that would improve their students' thinking, Marzano's New Taxonomy includes three systems and the knowledge domain (Marzano, 2007). The three systems are: the self-system, the metacognitive system, and

the cognitive system. Marzano (2007) believes that these are the three systems that are necessary factors for thinking and learning.

The self-system thinking is what Marzano (2001) refers to as beliefs, attitudes, and feelings that influence a learner's motivation to finish an activity. When a student completes an extremely challenging assignment unexpectedly, according to Marzano, this occurs because at the root of all learning is the self-system (2007). For example, evidence of the self-system in action is when a student who had been deeply engaged in her iPod decides to stop this activity and engage in the classroom lesson (Marzano, 2007). The feelings, beliefs, and attitudes about efficacy and knowledge of the student influence her to make a conscious decision to stop the iPod activity and engage in the learning activity.

The metacognitive system keeps all of the other systems in order by monitoring knowledge, clarity, and accuracy (Marzano, 2007). For example, as a student creates a project, he makes decisions as to the content selection, the details of the content, and the strategies needed to determine what he needs to complete the assignment. Throughout this process, the student monitors how successfully his choices are working and if modifications are necessary for completion.

The processes of the cognitive system are ignited by the knowledge domain. It is in the cognitive system where memory processes and information is accessed and manipulated (Marzano, 2007). Knowledge retrieval, comprehension, analysis, and knowledge utilization are all components of the cognitive system (Marzano, 2007).

The knowledge domain contains information, mental procedures, and physical procedures that provide the content that is to be learned (Marzano, 2007). Combining the

systems with the knowledge domain allows teachers to present more effective instruction. For example, once a teacher is aware of a student's hesitation in the area of science, the teacher can offer instruction that will support the student's learning through the different systems, such as, modeling the necessary strategies, providing additional instruction on specific skills, and providing opportunities for reflection at various points of the activity.

Presenting information to students does not guarantee that they will learn.

Marzano (2007) expresses that if all of the systems plus the knowledge domain are addressed within instruction, the student has a better chance of developing higher-order thinking skills and the ability to apply what has been learned.

#### *Paris and Winograd's Principles*

Further instructional principles have been developed by Paris and Winograd (2001). Metacognition and self-regulated learning, according to Paris and Winograd (2001), are the most important processes to teach to students. Students need to be made aware of self-regulated strategies so that appropriate strategies can be selected, monitored, and celebrated for success by the student (Paris & Winograd, 2001).

Paris and Winograd (2001) developed twelve principles for teachers to use to create activities for their students which will promote self-regulated learning. There are four main categories of Paris and Winograd's (2001) principles: a) self-appraisal leads to deeper understanding of learning; b) self-management of thinking, effort, and affect promotes flexible approaches to problem solving that are adaptive, persistent, self-controlled, strategic, and goal-oriented; c) self-regulation can be taught in diverse ways; and d) self-regulation is woven into the narrative experiences and the identity strivings of each individual. Each of these main principles lists three sub-principles that present more

details of the main principle. Various self-regulated learning strategies may be embedded into instruction in order to promote the four main categories of Paris and Winograd's (2001) principles. For example, self-appraisal leading to a deeper understanding of learning is promoted through the use of reflection in which a student identifies and then analyzes their learning strengths and areas needing improvement, celebrates their successes, and plans strategies for further achievement (Andrade, 1999).

Paris and Winograd (2001) emphasize that teachers should explicitly explain and discuss the self-regulated learning strategies that are used in their classroom so that students will receive the most benefit. Open-ended instruction, such as activities in which students work collaboratively in groups to plan and organize their own approach to a project, will encourage deeper learning in contrast to workbook and routine instructional tasks (Paris & Winograd, 2001). The twelve principles work well within portfolios, projects, and performance assessments, which provide better opportunities for students to become self-regulated learners (Paris & Winograd, 2001). For example, cooperative learning groups promotes a learning environment in which students work together on a specific task through discussion, reflection, and peer effort while developing their own self-regulated learning strategies (Kirk, 2001).

### *Ley's Principles*

In support of Paris and Winograd's principles (2001), which apply directly to creating a supportive self-regulated learning classroom environment, Ley (2001) believes that embedding self-regulated strategies into regular instruction supports students' learning. Ley's principles (2001) guide students who are learning to become self-regulated by providing instructional routines of preparation, organization, monitoring and

evaluation processes. There are four main principles which are from six self-regulated learning domains: a) goal-setting, b) preparing a place to study, c) organizing materials, d) monitoring learning, e) evaluating progress and effectiveness, and f) reviewing tests (Ley, 2001). The four main principles are: a) guide learners to prepare and structure an effective learning environment, b) organize instruction and activities to facilitate cognitive and metacognitive processes, c) use instructional goals and feedback to present student monitoring opportunities, and d) provide learners with continuous evaluation information and occasions to self-evaluate (Ley, 2001).

Embedding Ley's principles into instruction can facilitate self-regulation in less expert learners and improve student achievement (Ley, 2001). These instructional principles can support self-regulated learning by preparing students with strategies so they know how to educate themselves throughout their lives, beyond the content area (Ley, 2001).

### **Teaching Strategies for Self-Regulated Learning**

Current research suggests that in order for self-regulated learning strategies to be the most effective, they should be embedded into instruction (Schunk, 2005). Typically, it is the responsibility of the teacher in a traditional school setting to provide the information that is to be learned, motivate the students to learn it, and offer a process for that learning (Boekaerts & Niemivirta, 2000). Understanding how students think and learn prepares teachers to motivate and encourage student development of effective self-regulated skills (Paris, 2001; Boekaerts & Niemivirta, 2000). Self-regulation is usually not emphasized by teachers because focusing on skills necessary for high performance on standardized assessments is considered to be more important (Schunk, 2005).

It is believed by advocates of self-regulated learning that students need training to understand how and why self-regulation works (Paris, 2001). Students who can experience self-regulated learning strategies in their classes can see the positive results of their actions, and then can create a connection, become academically motivated and show better learning (Pintrich, 2002; Schober, 2007). When teachers shift their instructional focus more towards how students learn with self-regulated strategies, life-long learning is promoted (Schober, 2007).

There are many teaching strategies that can be used in the English Language Arts classroom to teach self-regulated learning. Cooperative Learning and Reciprocal Teaching are examples of how self-regulated learning strategies can be embedded into instruction.

### *Cooperative Learning*

Cooperative learning is a metacognitive strategy that reaches a wide range of learners typically found in any given classroom (Kirk, 2001). Learning strategies are valuable cognitive tools for teachers to promote in their students within instructional situations (Paris, 2001). According to Slavin (2004), 80 percent of teachers report some sustained use of cooperative learning methods with evidence of increased student achievement.

Cooperative learning encourages students to take responsibility for themselves (Kirk, 2001). As a metacognitive strategy, cooperative learning involves students in decision making, reflective discourse, and task problem solving (Paris, 2001). The structure of cooperative learning addresses different elements that are not found in other instructional group strategies (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). Students learn to work

together as a group and understand that their joined efforts will either create success or failure. Through this process, students learn to help each other learn, and hopefully celebrate their successes. Cooperative learning group members realize that their collective and individual work contributes to the group accountability as they develop the many skills of group participation, such as reflecting upon the cooperation of the team, and how to function better (Marzano, 2002).

The cooperative learning groups may be formal or informal (Kirk, 2001). Teachers might select students for each group or allow students to self select. Activities and tasks will vary depending on the instructional content and assignments. Frequently, job duties, or roles, are assigned to the group members. Roles may be assigned for an extended period of time depending upon teacher discretion. Usually, the roles involve different student responsibilities that are necessary to be completed for the groups' success. Cooperation, organization, and clear communication are valuable skills that the students develop as they progress through their group activities and projects. Empowering students in decision making processes and in taking responsibility for themselves are critical factors of cooperative learning groups (Kirk, 2001). Teachers who prepare their students with prior knowledge and then invite them to work interactively as a group, support students in this learning experience (Rozendaal, et. al., 2005).

### *Reciprocal Teaching*

Reciprocal teaching is a metacognitive strategy in which students conduct various self-regulatory tasks to analyze a text as a group (Palinscar, 1984). Each group member learns to clarify the purpose for reading, understand meanings, draw inferences, look for relationships rather than memorizing isolated facts, and actively interact with text by

paraphrasing. For example, in a four member reciprocal teaching group, students are responsible for role assignments and take turns being the summarizer, the questioner, the clarifier, and the predictor (Marzano, 2001). Members of the reciprocal teaching group read the assigned text, either silently or out loud together. Through this process, the text is read and re-read multiple times, allowing for a deeper analysis from different task perspectives. The more students interact with the text, the better they learn (Gourgey, 1998).

Typically beginning with the summarizer, the group members share their task and analyze the text using the role assignments to guide them through the reciprocal teaching process. According to Palinscar and Brown (1984), the developers of reciprocal teaching, the act of summarizing ignites student engagement and encourages other thinking processes. In addition, student engagement tends to be positive when participating in a reciprocal teaching group. The strategies are effective for the students as they are developing their metacognitive awareness. Reciprocal teaching promotes metacognitive thinking, leading students to reach higher levels of self-understanding about their learning style (Stricklin, 2011). Students usually have fun working collaboratively with their group members, discussing and analyzing text from different skill perspectives. The structure of reciprocal teaching assists students in understanding how to complete tasks and removes ego as the reason for getting work done (Borkowski, 2001).

Teachers who explicitly incorporated reciprocal teaching into their classrooms have evidenced improvement in their students' vocabulary skills, reading levels, and reading comprehension (Stricklin, 2011; Gourgey, 1998). Additionally, Gourgey (1998)

claims that when reading instruction includes strategies that are present in reciprocal teaching, such as summarizing, clarification, and prediction, self-regulated learning skills are promoted. Reciprocal teaching can also provide supportive feedback to strengthen students' self-assurance, and through guided practice, their metacognition (Borkowski, 2001; Clark, 2003; Gourgey, 1998).

### **Assessing Self-Regulated Learning**

Much of the literature on assessing metacognition and self-regulated learning go back to grades for content success rather than actual student learning because these affective domains are not conveniently assessed (Sadler, 2007). According to Wilson (1997), if metacognition and self-regulated learning were easily assessed by teachers, it is likely that the affective domains would be more readily accepted into curriculum and instruction. Assessing the learning processes of students is a much more abstract action than that of assessing test scores, which have been established as the acceptable value system to determine achievement (Bolin, 2005).

Although portfolios and reflection are used for instructional purposes, both have been used by teachers as forms of self-regulated learning assessment.

#### *Portfolios*

Metacognitive assessment typically is conducted through the use of student portfolios (Ward, 1999). According to Paris (2001), portfolios are collections of student work which has been gathered to provide evidence of learning, improvement, and understanding, to promote self-management of thinking and effort which can lead to higher levels of self-regulation.

For portfolios to be the most effective, the collection of student work is selected by the student with input by the teacher (Ward, 1999). Portfolio assessment necessitates that educators adopt a new perspective on authentic assessment, in direct contrast to standardized test scores which do not show the real-life student challenges available in a portfolio (Andrade, 1999). Criticism of portfolios as a method of assessment will surface unless clear standards-based teaching objectives and pre-determined rubrics back up the portfolio evidence for student achievement (Ward, 1999.)

The work in a portfolio is used to evaluate student effort and academic success. Portfolios have been viewed as tools for students to learn how to self-assess and to take accountability for their work. Self-assessment promotes self-regulated learning as a student reviews and analyzes their own tangible evidence of how their learning took place and how strategies were used (Paris, 2001; Paulson, 1990). When students maintain their own progress monitoring record keeping, and when teacher/student conferences are conducted, portfolios provide additional occasions for self-assessment (Paris, 2001).

According to Kathpalia (2008), portfolios engage students in their own learning and allow teachers to recognize student effort and achievement. In a purposeful portfolio collection, both student strengths and challenges are presented to acknowledge the students' academic and educational growth (Ward, 1999). Reflections in which students think about their learning empower portfolios and prevent them from being viewed as just a folder containing student papers, and create evidence of metacognition, combining what was learned and how it was learned (Kathpalia, 2008).

*Reflections*

Students must be able to step away from their work and look at it differently in order to reflect upon it. The purpose of reflection is to self-evaluate what work has been done so that improvement and revision might take place (Andrade, 1999).

According to Kathpalia (2008), when students use the reflection process, they better understand their own thinking and learning. Details of how students conduct their own learning become clearer and therefore, their thinking and learning becomes informed and intentional. To increase the potential of a successful learning experience, reflection must be deliberately developed (Kathpalia, 2008). Once students learn to assess and evaluate their own work through reflection, strategies to improve their learning will also be identified (Paris, 2001). Metacognitive processes are needed to conduct self-evaluation and then to identify the new learning strategies effectively that will improve student work (Paris, 2001). Embedding reflective questions into instruction, supports the development of the reflection process. Students do not automatically reflect, making it necessary for teachers to develop and promote the skill in order to offer the most successful learning experiences for the students (Paris, 2001; Kathpalia, 2008). Teachers who are reflective are more likely to teach and support reflection in their students (Buckheit, 2010).

### **Research Studies on Self-Regulated Learning**

Several studies of self-regulated learning in educational settings exist (Paris, 2001; Zimmerman, 1989, 1990, 2002; Wilson, 1997; Schunk, 1995), providing support for the idea that self-regulated learning affects learning outcomes when students are taught self-regulated learning strategies.

*Self-Regulated Learning and Learning Outcomes*

A recent two-year study conducted by Corsi (2010) describes using the non-traditional instructional approach of self-regulated learning in secondary science. Corsi's (2010) quantitative study presents a constant project-based environment in which students circulate through five different learning centers, one each day, for a week. The principles of self-regulated learning were the process basis for the learning centers, demanding that students work pro-actively. Each learning centers' task contained open-ended and problem-solving assignments which addressed science content. Students worked together in small groups to accomplish the tasks.

Corsi (2010) reports data analysis revealing overall significant positive results, indicating that teaching self-regulated learning strategies not only improves student achievement, but also student behavior. Students became involved, interested, focused, and accountable for their learning, and disciplinary student referrals ceased (Corsi, 2010). Students surveyed for the study indicated self-regulated learning positively affected their learning and their desire to learn, and taught them improved analytical strategies (Corsi, 2010). Additional results of the study reflect higher test scores, reduced workload for teachers, and evidence that self-regulated learning can be successfully implemented in high school settings (Corsi, 2010).

Garrett's (2007) quantitative study emphasizes the importance of students' developing metacognitive skills. Using a diagnostic test developed to identify skills related to metacognition, a small sample of first-year pharmacy students who had failed their Pharmacy College Admission Test, were studied to determine the common factors for their failures. Garrett (2007) believed that students do not develop self-regulated skills on their own without instruction.

It was found by Garrett (2007) through the diagnostic test results that the students who fail had not monitored their learning; they did not identify before a test what they knew and do not know; they spend too much time studying what they already know, not what they did not know; and they had no idea if these strategies worked until they received their test score. The diagnostic tests can be used to identify students with poor metacognitive skills and offer opportunities to develop their metacognitive skills by attending workshops and individual sessions (Garrett, 2007).

### *Teaching Self-Regulated Learning*

In a mixed-methods study, Kramarski (2009) suggested that teachers who found value in self-regulated learning and who implemented the strategies within themselves were more likely to teach the strategies to their students. Kramarski's (2009) study suggests professional development opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop self-regulated learning for the teachers themselves. These results correlate well with the theoretical work of Buckheit (2010) who proposes that teachers who are reflective and critical about their own thought processes do a better job of training students to do the same (Buckheit, 2010).

Self-regulated learning strategies, according to Kistner (2010) can be taught directly or indirectly by the teacher. When the teacher has specific knowledge of self-regulated learning strategies and purposely implements them into instruction, the learning environment allows students to develop their self-regulation (Kistner, 2010). Kistner (2010) investigated the relationship between direct and indirect teaching of self-regulated learning and the affect on students' performance. Math teachers in Germany were observed while teaching lessons to a combined total of 538 students, focusing on the

direct and indirect self-regulated learning strategies used by the teachers. Specific features that promote self-regulated learning such as planning and organization were observed.

The results revealed that metacognitive strategies were observed less frequently (Kistner, 2010). Teachers instructed less explicitly, inferring that teachers assume that self-regulated learning will be acquired by the student (Kistner, 2010). Kistner's (2010) conclusions suggest that self-regulated learning strategies need to be explicitly taught, giving students clear information about the strategy, how to use it, and why it is an important tool for their learning. Students have a clearer understanding of the self-regulated learning processes when the processes are explicitly taught, and typically learn better as a result of this explicit teaching (Kistner, 2010).

Teachers are the critical factors determining if self-regulated learning strategies are taught and implemented into instruction (Vermunt & Verschaffel, 2000). If teachers teach self-regulated learning, then students learn how to monitor and evaluate their own learning (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001).

### **Summary**

Metacognition and self-regulated learning are strategies that can be embedded into instruction, specifically, English Language Arts. Education that targets only content ignores the components identified as essential for deeper learning that enable students to connect school instruction with real world behaviors and to retain and transfer knowledge (Gourgey, 1989).

According to Buckheit (2010), educators are partially to blame for today's students' ability to tolerate difficult and challenging information less than students did

forty years ago. Teachers in one content area typically believe that teachers in another content area will provide students with thinking process skills (Buckheit, 2010).

Research-based instructional strategies are available to engage students in activities which will develop their thinking process. For example, dialogue and reflection work effectively as strategies to develop students' awareness of thinking, and therefore, promoting self-regulated learning habits (Buckheit, 2010).

Students learn best when they take on an active role by developing their own strategies and questioning their thinking. Instruction that encourages students to do this, promotes training for self-regulation and cognitive processes (Winne & Nesbit, 2010). Even though self-regulatory skills encourage learning and lead to improved academic achievement, few teachers consciously prepare students to learn on their own, therefore many students' metacognitive skills are not fully developed (Winne & Nesbit, 2010; Zimmerman, 2002; Sperling, 2004).

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used for this qualitative study. The research questions and the study's purpose were presented to create an understanding of the research design, setting, sample, instruments, data collection, data analysis, and the role of the researcher. The chapter closes with a brief summary.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this explorative qualitative study was to examine the attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers in order to better understand what secondary English teachers believe about self-regulated learning and how they teach these skills in the classroom. The study includes an exploration of secondary English teachers' attitudes about self-regulated learning and discusses what these teachers are teaching to enable their students to become self-regulated learners.

#### **Research Design**

A qualitative phenomenological research design was used for this study with the intent to allow the researcher to enter the world of the participants and to develop a holistic understanding (Bogdan & Bilkin, 1998; Locke, et al., 2000; Mason, 1996; Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Patton, 1990; Schram, 2003; Schwandt, 2000). The phenomenological tradition is a research methodology that "seeks to understand the deep meaning of a person's experience and how these experiences are articulated" (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 97). According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) phenomenological methodology is inquiry centered on intentionality and

caring that seeks descriptions, interpretations, and critical self-reflection about the topic and the inquiry process. This tradition assumes that meaning is constructed and conveyed through language. Therefore the essence of a particular phenomenon is derived through the dialogue of purposeful, iterative interviews and self-reflection (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The interviews in this study engaged secondary English teachers in dialogue about an experience of interest, namely teaching self-regulated learning strategies. The use of phenomenological inquiry allowed for the unique experiences of the participants to be fully explored.

Furthermore, a qualitative design was used because this study included a focus on a phenomenon that occurred in natural settings and this design allowed for the development of multiple meanings that are helpful in establishing theory or patterns within a small sample size (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative research is interpretive and qualitative researchers seek to learn about reality as the participant understands it, focusing on the description and analysis of what has been learned (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Criterion sampling works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the same phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

### **Research Questions**

Specifically, this study attempted to describe and understand what motivates secondary English teachers to teach self-regulated learning skills in secondary English courses when it is not mandated. The research questions for this study were generated from a review of the literature that revealed that self-regulated learning has developed into a combined construct where the learner establishes their own learning goals and takes responsibility for the quality of their own learning (Paris & Winograd, 2003).

Seeking to understand this phenomenon from the perspective of the secondary English teacher, this study addressed the following questions: (a) What motivates teachers to teach self-regulated learning skills in secondary English courses when it is not mandated?; (b) What are secondary English teachers currently doing to teach their students to become self-regulated learners?; (c) What barriers do secondary English teachers experience related to teaching self-regulated learning skills in their classrooms?; and (d) What specific benefits have they seen from teaching self-regulated learning and/or believe students may receive from such education?

### **Research Setting**

The setting for this qualitative study was various secondary schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). LAUSD employs over 33,000 certificated teachers with over 11,000 of these teachers having 11 or more years of teaching experience with the district. LAUSD has the largest student enrollment in California, totaling close to 671,000 (CDE, 2010). The student population of LAUSD is approximately 74% Hispanic and come primarily from low socioeconomic urban areas (CDE, 2010). The participants for this study worked in local districts of LAUSD in which the student population is approximately 79% Hispanic and approximately 11% African American. The secondary schools in LAUSD for this study were typically large urban schools in primarily low socio-economic Hispanic communities. Thirty-two percent of LAUSD students are English Learners. Students are identified as English Learners until they achieve district-specified scores on state achievement tests and meet other academic criteria. Class size averages 24 students to one teacher. There was a 73%

pass rate for tenth grade students taking the California High School Exit Exam in 2010 (<http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/>).

Qualitative research takes place in natural settings. Each research setting is unique in its own mix of people and contextual factors. The qualitative researcher went to eight different sites of the participants to conduct the research. This enabled the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individual or place and to be highly involved in actual experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2003).

### **Research Sample**

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2008), qualitative research samples are often purposeful in selecting information-rich cases, with the objective of yielding insight and understanding into the phenomenon under investigation. This method is in contrast to the random sampling procedures that characterize quantitative research, which is based on statistical probability theory. In this study, the researcher's intent was to describe a particular phenomenon in depth and not to generalize to another context.

Representativeness in phenomenological research is secondary to the participants' ability to provide information about themselves and their setting (Bloomberg, 2008). Criterion sampling works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the same phenomenon (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

In this study, the phenomenon involved secondary English teachers whose instruction leads students to self-regulated learning (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Participants met the predetermined criterion established by the researcher of a) the secondary English teacher had previously or was currently implementing instruction such

as Reciprocal Teaching, Cooperative Learning, Portfolios, and Reflections, and b) the instructional strategy had been implemented for one year, or approximately two semesters of a traditional school year. Of the eleven participants for this study, nine were females ranging in age from 39 – 62, with seven or more years of teaching experience. Eight of the female participants were Caucasian, and one was Hispanic. Two of the participants were males, both Caucasian, with a minimum of ten years of teaching experience.

The participants for this study were 11 secondary English teachers who wished to participate in interviews to further the study. The sample participants had explicitly declared a desire and willingness to help teach students the habits associated with self-regulated learning. The researcher invited participants to share the experiences, practices, and attitudes that they had about self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms. Participant selection was determined by criteria consisting of a set of questions (See Appendix C) to gauge the candidates' use of, and belief in, self-regulated learning as a strategy for student success. These participants were screened through an email conversation in which the questions were asked to determine if the teacher would be a viable participant for this study. Based on the teachers' response, the researcher determined the viability of the potential participant. From this purposeful sampling, a snowball sampling strategy, which is also referred to as network or chain sampling, was used (Bloomberg, 2008).

### **Instruments and Procedures**

Phenomenological interviews were the primary method for data collection. These qualitative interviews were conversations in which a researcher gently guided a

conversational partner in an extended discussion (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The researcher elicited depth and detail about the research topic by following up on answers given by the interviewee during the discussion (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The qualitative interview was a congenial and cooperative experience as both interviewer and interviewee worked together to achieve a shared understanding as conversational partners emphasizing the uniqueness of each person, his or her distinct knowledge, and the different ways in which he/she interacts with the interviewer (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

In qualitative interviews each conversation is unique as researchers match their questions to what each interviewee knows and is willing to share (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). In this study, the researcher began interviews with structured questions. (See Appendix D). Towards the end of each interview, the interviewer asked further focused questions that were suggested by the participants' answers to the initial questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

During the qualitative interviews, the researcher listened for what had not been said as well as what had been said (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Qualitative interviewers listen to hear the meaning of what interviewees are telling them. Follow up questions were asked to gain clarity and precision when meanings were unclear (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

The interviewee was a conversational partner in that they had an active role in shaping the discussion and in guiding what paths the research should take (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Questions were adapted for each interviewee, accommodating both to what the person knew and to the topics, creating a responsive interviewing style, based on the structured questions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The term "responsive interviewing"

questioning styles reflects the personality of the researcher, adapt to the varying relationships between researcher and conversational partner, and change as the purpose of the interview evolves (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The responsive interviewing model builds on an interpretive constructionist approach and emphasizes that the interviewer and the interviewee are human beings forming a relationship during the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The design of the responsive interview remained flexible throughout while the interviewer continually self-reflects during the interview process to examine her own understandings and reactions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The responsive interview style encouraged transparency which contributed to the credibility of the interview process (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Responsive interviewers begin a project with a topic in mind but recognize that they will modify their questions to match the knowledge and interests of the interviewees (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Interviews were systematically examined and analyzed immediately after conducted to suggest further questions and topics to pursue (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Interview transcripts were reviewed by the interviewer and then the interviewee to check for validity.

### **Data Collection**

The intent of this qualitative phenomenological study was to investigate the attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers in California who teach self-regulated strategies within their English instruction. A qualitative data collection procedure was appropriate for exploring the attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers focusing on individual interviews as the primary method for data collection. The interview method was of the most use because it had the potential to elicit rich, thick

descriptions. Interviews also gave the researcher an opportunity to clarify statements and probe for additional information (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). Creswell (2003) states that a major benefit of collecting data through individual, in-depth interviews is that they offer the potential to capture a person's perspective of an event or experience.

Data collection began in September, 2011, and was completed by the end of November, 2011. In July of 2011, a request was sent to the person in charge of instruction of a local district of the LAUSD asking for participant recommendations. The instructional leader contacted all of the Secondary Literacy Coaches and the Access to Core personnel who work out of the classroom supporting English teachers. The Secondary Literacy Coaches and Access to Core personnel who chose to suggest teachers, contacted the researcher with participant suggestions. The Coaches and Access to Core personnel were asked by the researcher to get permission for the researcher to contact the potential participants. When permission was granted, the researcher contacted them to explain the process of being interviewed. Participation letters were then sent via email to the secondary English teachers. Informed consent was obtained from all research participants. The data collection methods used were individual teacher interviews.

In order to evaluate the research questions, data was collected that reflected the experiences of secondary English teachers who implemented strategies that promoted self-regulated learning. Data was collected through in-depth interviews where rich, thick descriptions were transcribed by the researcher and interpreted to make known the teachers' attitudes and practices.

This data collection was used because exploring the experiences of teachers who implement self-regulated learning strategies supported the phenomenological tradition used throughout this study. This process supported the research purpose and the research questions by taking the researcher into the participants' worlds so that a body of descriptive data could be gathered for interpretation. Documenting descriptions of the teachers' experiences as they were lived provided views from the inside rather than pretending to understand it from an outside point-of-view, and provided a practical understanding of their meanings and actions (Miles, 1994). Participants were invited to participate and selected based on their willingness and agreement to participate in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

Phenomenological research uses the analysis of significant statements, the generation of meaning units, and the development of an "essence" description (Moustakas, 1994). Data analysis for this study began with organizing and preparing the data. This process involved the researcher transcribing the interviews, and sorting and arranging the data into different themes (Creswell, 2003). All of the data was read through to gain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning, looking for the essential ideas that the participants were expressing (Creswell, 2003).

Further detailed analysis began with a coding process. Coding is the process of organizing material into "chunks" before bringing meaning to those "chunks" (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 171). Coding involved taking text data and then segmenting it into categories, and then labeling those categories with a term. Terms were based in the actual language of the participant and are called *in vivo* terms (Creswell, 2003).

The coding process was used to generate a description of the participants' responses as well as categories or themes for analysis (Creswell, 2003). Codes were generated by the researcher for the descriptions. This analysis was used to design detailed descriptions, then using the coding, a small number of themes or categories were generated (Creswell, 2003). Themes were shaped into a general description and are represented in the qualitative narrative.

Finally, the meaning of the data was interpreted. The question, "what were the lessons learned?" was the focus for the data analysis interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The lessons evolved from the researcher's personal interpretation and experiences that were brought to the study. Participants were emailed the transcription of their interview and had the opportunity to review and add comments. One participant sent one comment to be added. Meanings derived from a comparison of the findings, member checks conducted after first drafts of the results were emailed to the participants, plus information from the literature also influenced the interpretation (Creswell, 2003).

### **Role of the Researcher**

Qualitative research defines the researcher as a learner, constructing understanding through interactions with participants within social contexts (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Qualitative research is interpretive and seeks to learn about reality as the participant understands it, focusing on the description and analysis of what has been learned.

The role of the researcher for this qualitative study was principal investigator. I was responsible for planning and executing the study, under the guidance of my dissertation advisor. As an English teacher who also uses self-regulated learning

strategies in the classroom, bias are inevitable but can be managed and properly stated. As the principal investigator, face-to-face interactions with the participants were fostered (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The researcher collected data that was collected from the natural setting of the participants which facilitated insights into complex social and cultural nuances by allowing the researcher to develop relationships with the participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008). The researcher as principal investigator ran the risk of becoming emotionally involved with the experiences of the participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

### *Researcher Bias*

The skills of a researcher include the ability to ask good questions, be a good listener, to interpret the responses, and be unbiased by predetermined ideas (Yin, 1994). Rubin and Rubin (2005) state that it is better for the qualitative researcher to acknowledge their own biases and feelings to prevent slanting of the research.

I am an English teacher, and therefore, must be mindful of “who I am” within the context of the study and from the perspective of the participants. I am an advocate of self-regulated learning and believe that students have the potential to develop their own self-regulated learning strategies when explicitly taught these strategies, and that this information would encourage educators to teach self-regulated learning strategies to improve student achievement. I base my views on substantive research to suggest that all students do not have the ability to adopt the metacognitive strategies necessary to become self-regulated learners on their own, that self-regulation can be taught, and that students who use self-regulating skills can obtain better grades (Boekaerts, 1997).

Fundamental to qualitative research is the willingness and courage to reflect on the self as learner and knower (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). My professional positions had been both that of teacher and instructional support person. The ontological issue of identifying the nature of “how things really are” in this particular setting directly applied to my intellectual orientation because I must document without bias what was actually transcribed from a neutral researcher’s point of view, and not a teacher or instructional support perspective, although I could write what “should” be happening; I could put words into the mouths of those interviewed (Schram, 2003), such thinking would limit or bias how I conducted my research, so to insure that my beliefs were not inappropriately coloring the results, I read rather than interpreted the interview transcripts, and followed up with member checks in order to prevent my own views from altering or reshaping the results. I knew that I must be aware of my own biases when I was reading and analyzing the voices as I attempted to construct a reality from the point of view of the study’s participants (Schram, 2003).

### **Summary**

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to examine in-depth, the attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers who teach self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms. Interviews were conducted with purposefully selected teachers. Qualitative data was examined and organized by themes. The researcher worked as a responsive interviewer and self- reflected throughout the process. Member checks were conducted to contribute to the rich, thick descriptions of the qualitative transcriptions.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter Three provided a detailed account of the methodological approach used to conduct this qualitative study. This study draws upon a phenomenological tradition to learn more about the attitudes and practices of eleven Secondary English teachers in eight secondary schools in a large urban school district (Schram, 2006). This study additionally seeks to understand what motivates these eleven secondary English teachers to teach self-regulated learning strategies when it is not mandated to do so, the strategies the teachers use to teach self-regulated learning, the barriers these teachers face when teaching self-regulated learning, and the benefits they experience by teaching self-regulated learning.

In order to interpret the attitudes and practices voiced by those participating in this study, an explorative approach to the data analysis was utilized (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). By doing so, this research seeks to better understand the attitudes and practices of English teachers at middle school and high school levels. As reviewed in Chapter 2, the theoretical foundations used for this research study include research on (a) the characteristics a self-regulated learner, (b) instructional principles, (c) strategies for teaching self-regulated learning, and (d) assessing self-regulated learning.

#### **Participant Demographics**

The participants for this study ranged in age from approximately 35 to 60. Their years of teaching experience ranged from approximately seven to 30 years. Two of the participants were males and nine were females. Five of the participants taught middle school. One of the middle school teachers taught only seventh grade. One of the middle

school teachers taught only sixth grade. Three of the middle school teachers taught grades sixth through eighth. Six of the participants taught high school. Three of the high school teachers taught combinations of all grades nine through twelve. One high school teacher taught all twelfth graders; and one high school teacher taught eleventh and twelfth grade.

Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the individual participants.

Interview transcripts and electronic data were stored by the researcher in a locked, secure location.

The major findings that emerged are presented and organized in conjunction with the research questions established for this study. The findings are organized by four major domains, and themes that emerged from the domains:

1. Motivating Factors
  - a. Teacher Self-Reflection that Leads to Change in Practice
  - b. Students Taking Responsibility for Their Learning
  - c. Thinking Beyond Textbooks with Self-Regulated Learning
  - d. Self-Regulated Learning in a Continuation School
  - e. Teaching Self-Regulated Learning in Different Curricula
  - f. Increasing Intrinsic Motivation Through Self-Regulated Learning
2. Strategies
  - a. Explicitly Introducing Concept of Metacognition
  - b. Habits of Mind Technique
  - c. QuickWrites
  - d. StepBacks and Reflections
  - e. Interactive and Reader's/Writer's Notebooks
  - f. Cooperative Learning
  - g. Role Model
3. Barriers
  - a. Lack of Time
  - b. Lack of Access to Reader's/Writer's and Interactive Notebooks
  - c. Lack of Student Motivation and Self-Confidence
4. Benefits
  - a. Student Benefits
    - i. Students Take Control of and Responsibility for Their Own Learning
  - b. Teacher Benefits

- i. Impacting Future Instruction Through Student Reflection
- ii. Promoting Life Long Learning in Students
- c. Curriculum and Instructional Benefits

### **Motivating Factors**

Participants were asked what motivated them to teach self-regulated learning skills to their secondary English students when it is not mandated by their curriculum to do so. Various reasons were shared by all of the participants of this study for voluntarily choosing to teach self-regulated learning strategies.

#### *Teacher Self-Reflection that Leads to Change in Practice*

Three of the participants expressed that their motivating factor for deciding to incorporate self-regulated learning strategies into their English Language Arts curriculum occurred because of their own reflections regarding their own teaching and learning experiences.

Reflecting upon his own educational experiences, Mr. Periwinkle, realized that his successful learning experiences during his middle school years as a student were partially due to the fact that he regularly participated in academic discussions with his peers. Mr. Periwinkle's own self-regulated learning skills were encouraged because of the opportunity to discuss, question, and self-assess in his Math class. He learned to become comfortable with self-regulated learning strategies that promoted self-monitoring and self-reflection. When his Math class changed, and the new teacher did not allow or offer the opportunity for the students to participate in academic discussion, Mr. Periwinkle's success declined.

While I had to just sit there in a chair and absorb things without working with it, then it didn't work for me. That's why it is really important for me to have my students working in cooperative learning groups so that they could discuss and learn and have authentic learning experiences. (Mr. Periwinkle, high school)

Similar to Mr. Periwinkle, Mr. Sapphire's experience connects to his previous teaching assignment in a different state. After reflecting upon the instructional process he had used with his Advanced Placement and Honors level students, Mr. Sapphire was motivated to teach differently and to include self-regulated learning strategies as part of his instruction:

Teaching middle school is what taught me to teach. I taught high school for seven years and I just probably kind of coasted because I could. I wasn't doing nearly as much as I am doing now. The big difference being that I had Honors and AP courses. They were highly motivated and I did not have to do much to help them. I know that some of those kids needed more help and I didn't do it because I took it for granted that they all knew what I knew or that they would figure it out. I learned so much about teaching when I started teaching middle school. I just knew I couldn't keep going the way I was going. I had to change what I was doing. I want to teach them how to think. I want students to be able to do that on their own. I want to help students to think about their learning and to think about their thinking. (Mr. Sapphire, high school)

Mr. Cornflower, after self-reflecting and reviewing his own teaching, came to the conclusion that the "old ways" of teaching were no longer working for his students. The "old ways" Mr. Cornflower referred to was the teacher in front of the classroom lecture style of instruction that many teachers of high school use as their primary style of teaching.

They are not always going to have a teacher around all the time so they better learn how to judge, determine, analyze, and demonstrate on their own. The old ways just didn't seem to work. The students were not getting to Bloom's Taxonomy. They weren't thinking critically. It is a small step from nurturing to enabling. (Mr. Cornflower, high school)

### *Students Taking Responsibility for Their Learning*

Two of the participants of this study were motivated to include self-regulated learning strategies within their instruction because they believed that their students needed to learn to take responsibility for their own learning.

Mr. Azure, a middle school teacher, begins the school year with instructional routines that focus on metacognition and self-regulated learning strategies so that his students learn that learning is their responsibility:

At the beginning of the year all of my kids get the fixed mind set article so we talk about that. We all go over the article and how we are going to have a growth mind set year and we go back to that. So, if they are being metacognitive, they are going to have a growth mind set. If not, they are going to have a fixed mind set. So there are times in the year when I say you have a fixed mindset. If that is where you want to be, ok. I am just letting you know it is a fixed mind set. It becomes like a common terminology here. They don't always get the article, but they get the chart so they get the concept of it. We have conversations where I will say, what grade do you have in this class? And they will say, I don't know. And I will say, if you cared you would go ask. I am trying to get them to take responsibility instead of the teacher delivering the grade to them. They have to ask. (Mr. Azure, middle school)

Mrs. Navy includes self-regulated learning strategies in her instruction because she believes that her students need to be better engaged in their own learning and these strategies encourage that process:

I think that the kids need to be engaged. If you just lecture and give them notes and say copy this down and go home and memorize, they are not going to get it or do it. The honors kids will try, but it is not going to stick. They are not going to be able to retain it, so I think the self-regulation really enables them to buy into it and have a little bit of ownership with what they are doing in addition to just, here's the standard, and why are we doing it, and all of that kind of stuff. It also enables them to take a bit more ownership into what they are doing (Mrs. Navy, middle school).

### *Thinking Beyond the Textbook through Self-Regulated Learning Strategies*

Four of the participants of this study were motivated to teach self-regulated learning strategies in their English classes because they believed that the strategies would enable their students to go beyond the textbook.

Mr. Teal was motivated to teach self-regulated learning strategies because he believed that his students were not thinking beyond the textbooks:

Over the time that I have been teaching, I have seen a lot of the times students don't think beyond the textbook. I started thinking about how basically what I was getting back from them was what they saw in the book or information that I had provided, and so that really wasn't showing to me that they understood (Mr. Teal, middle school)

Mr. Sapphire is motivated to teach self-regulated learning strategies to his students so that they get more out of their learning than what is in the textbook:

I guess I teach self-regulated learning strategies because I want to teach my students how to think. I think that's the most important thing we get out of learning: how to think about things, how to be curious about something, whether it's our learning or about how we get to a certain place, not only how we get there, but can we get there? What are the tools that I am going to use to get where I want to go? I want my students to be able to do that on their own. Especially with my seventh graders, I want to give them a little more autonomy. This is how you are going to do it. This is how you get there, how to do it, and then I guess reflect on it, how this works. I want them to be able to do that in the future (Mr. Sapphire, middle school).

Mrs. Cerulean teaches self-regulated learning strategies to her high school students because beyond the textbook is the spirit of the student, which she wants to be able to reach:

It was their learning process that I was more interested in. I want to peel the spiritual onion to just let them get closer and closer to that thing that makes them tick so that they can find something they love to do. I think the difficult thing about doing serious teaching is that it is not a factory. Facilitating their human growth is a creative process that doesn't happen like a factory. In relation to self-regulated learning it is sometimes like teaching sculpture, you know, Michelangelo, David, it starts out with a block of marble and you want to see David but what you don't focus on is all the mess around it, all the blocks of marble that were chipped away, that were polished away, all of the dust; it is more than the textbook. (Mrs. Cerulean, high school)

High school teacher, Mr. Bondi, was motivated to teach self-regulated learning to his students because it encouraged reflection and thinking outside of what was in the textbook:

I teach self-regulated learning in my classes because it gives students an opportunity to reflect on all of the learning that they're doing day to day. It also

helps teachers to get to know their students and what they know and what they don't know. (Mr. Bondi, high school)

### *Self-Regulated Learning in a Continuation School*

One participant of this study taught in a continuation high school, which is a non-traditional educational setting where the students' main objective is to make up course credits. Students usually work at their own pace on their own course work plan that has been assigned to them:

In my continuation school there are multiple classes within one class, therefore students must be on task and self-regulate to effectively work independently. It is important for my students to learn self-regulated habits so that they can meet their goals. (Mrs. Royal, high school)

### *Teaching Self-Regulated Learning Strategies through Curriculums*

Three participants of this study were motivated to teach self-regulated learning strategies because of the English Language Arts Concept Lessons and/or High Point, the English Language Learner curriculum, which have the strategies embedded into the instructional plans.

Mrs. Cobalt, who teaches middle school, began embedding self-regulated learning strategies into her instruction because of her successful use of the English Language Arts Concept Lessons:

Primarily, I started teaching self-regulated learning strategies because of the Concept Lessons. We had done it in little parts like when students had to submit essays we gave them a rubric and at the bottom of the rubric I had always put a line about, what score do you feel you really deserve on the rubric and why? It was just a really quick reflection. I did the same kind of thing for their notebooks. The students were asked about their grade, what their strengths were for the assignments, what they were proud of about the notebook, and what did they need to improve for next time? So there was always a little bit of reflection and then it became more formalized in the Concept Lessons because you ask kids to always reflect, like, how did you learn that? How do you know that's the answer? What are the steps you go through? (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

Mr. Teal was also motivated to teach self-regulated learning strategies because of the English Language Arts Concept Lessons.

When the Concept Lessons came out there were some of those self-regulated learning strategies embedded in the lesson and it made things a lot easier because then I saw that the kids were thinking more beyond the text and not just identifying what was in it. I also use the self-regulated learning strategies in my ESL classes because they will be transitioning into core English classes and they are used to answering questions and getting information from the book. We talk about how you have to show me what's here in your brain, not what's in the book because I know what's in the book. I want to know what you have in your brain and how that information was interpreted by your brain. (Mr. Teal, middle school)

Mr. Cornflower was motivated to teach self-regulated learning strategies in his English Language Learner classes because the strategies are embedded into instruction for the High Point curriculum. Students must respond to “Before You Move On” questions, in addition to many “why” questions to reflect after a unit is completed. Mr. Cornflower went beyond the standards-based curriculum for the ELL students and has created and developed his own self-talk strategy which is to be copyrighted. The strategy allows for the students to participate in a self-reflective process that leads to successful writing practices.

The new writing process I came up with is all self-assessment because it is self-talk. They are talking to themselves so they are constantly reflecting and constantly talking out what it is they want to say. (Mr. Cornflower, high school)

### *Increasing Intrinsic Motivation through Self-Regulated Learning*

One of the study's participants, who had also been a secondary literacy coach, specifically stated that she used self-regulated learning strategies because they increase student intrinsic motivation to learn:

Since my training as a literacy coach, I have often used self-regulated learning strategies in my English classes. My training and research reading indicated to me repeatedly that in order for students to take charge and ownership of their learning, students need to do metacognitive thinking about their learning. I

choose to use these self-regulated learning strategies because of the evidence that they are effective in increasing students' intrinsic motivation to learn (Mrs. Steel, middle school).

### **Strategies**

The teacher participants selected for this study explicitly stated that they seek to teach metacognitive strategies to students to promote self-regulated learning. Following is a discussion of the findings organized in terms of the specific self-regulated learning strategies used by the participants of this study. All participants shared evidence of regularly embedding one or more self-regulated learning strategy into their English Language Arts curriculum and instruction, especially once becoming familiar and comfortable with the self-regulated learning strategies after repeated use and practice. Participants have said that they have taken the time to refine specific processes for the self-regulated learning strategies so that they could best fit into their classrooms with their own student population.

#### *Explicitly Introducing Concept of Metacognition*

The secondary English teachers who participated in this study were asked what they were currently doing to teach their students to become self-regulated learners. Three of the participants claimed that they begin their semester by teaching the term, “metacognition,” and consistently use it and build upon it throughout the year.

I tell both my English Language Learners and my 8<sup>th</sup> grade English students I want to know what is in their brain. I emphasize the importance of metacognition and how it is something that if the students start learning early on, things run a lot smoother in their lives. Metacognition becomes more than a strategy; it connects to our lives not just here in the classroom, but also outside in the real world. (Mr. Teal, middle school)

Mr. Azure uses visual aides to explicitly introduce metacognition to his students:

We talk about metacognition. We use the term. I have a poster of metacognition and what it means. I drew a picture of a kid and he says: How am I doing? What can I improve on? So, we talk about it. When they try to put the responsibility on me, I say, well, you are not being metacognitive. (Mr. Azure, middle school)

Similar to Azure and Teal, Mrs. Steel introduces metacognition at the beginning of the semester:

I begin the year with a mini-unit on mindset and the importance of effort in learning, so students can more easily see the connection between effort and learning. (Mrs. Steel, middle school)

### *Habits of Mind Technique*

The Habits of Mind strategies teach students to think, write, read, talk, and problem solve from another perspective, such as how a scientist or reporter might think, etc. The habits are meant to be absorbed by the students so that they carry the strategies internally until they become a natural part of their thinking and learning (LAUSD, 2007).

Two of the participants of this study used Habits of Mind strategies in their classrooms:

After teaching the Habits of Mind strategies from the ELA Concept Lessons, my students must regularly annotate their copies of the text to show their application and understanding of how to analyze. I put this theory to the test when my students took the ELA Periodic Assessment and had the opportunity to write on their test booklets. I paid attention to the students who used the Habits of Mind strategies without being told to do so. Only two of the students taking the test did not use the strategies of highlighting and annotation. I was curious about how my students would apply these strategies so charted their use of the strategies I had taught them from an English assessment. This evidence showed that all but a few of my students used the strategies without being told to do so during the testing. The students who used the Habits of Mind strategies showed an increase of 6-7 points in their test scores. The point is to teach them those Habits of Mind to train them so that they do that when they are on their own. They'll do that so it's natural to them. (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

Similar to Cobalt, Mr. Bondi also uses the Habits of Mind strategies in his classes:

When we as teachers take the time to step back and think about what we are doing or why we are doing it, the students get better into the process. They will go with

whatever the teacher models and if the teacher makes it a part of the thinking process, you know, makes it a Habit of Mind, and then the students will respond to it. I think they appreciate the time to reconsider ideas. (Mr. Bondi, high school)

### *QuickWrites*

Six of the participants of this study use QuickWrites as a strategy to teach self-regulated learning. QuickWrites are typically a 5 to 10 minute activity requiring students to write non-stop, focusing on one topic and producing as many ideas as possible (LAUSD, 2007).

Mr. Sapphire stated that to help students think about their learning and to think about their thinking, he heavily relied on QuickWrites:

I use the QuickWrites almost everyday as a reflection to promote students to think about what was learned the previous day and to connect it to the current day's learning, or to have the students make a connection and identify their prior knowledge. This is a useful tool. I know that the sixth grade teachers also use the QuickWrites here because when I get the students they usually get right into it. (Mr. Sapphire, middle school)

Mr. Teal also uses QuickWrites in his classroom:

We do QuickWrites. When we are using the QuickWrites we have to explain what it is and how it is just what comes to their mind right as they are looking over their question and explaining what it is basically, and how they don't necessarily have to write a whole page, whatever just comes into their mind. As long as they produce a couple of sentences, that's ok. (Mr. Teal, middle school)

Mrs. Cobalt stated that in her classroom the QuickWrite strategy was used as a reflection with the Concept Lessons and was modeled so that the students understood the purpose of the process:

I think they just didn't understand what they were being asked to do for a QuickWrite. In September we would train them consciously to work on the process. We would do bullet points together as a class, discussing what we learned and it was kind of a process learning activity. (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

Mr. Bondi has his students interact before they begin QuickWrites:

I have the students turn to a partner and exchange a brief summary about today's learnings or discuss future questions they may have about what they learned that day before they start their own writing (Mr. Bondi, high school)

Mrs. Navy indicated that she used QuickWrites in her classes:

Usually before we launch into any kind of lesson we start off with what we call a QuickWrite, which is just their prior knowledge and whatever else they can bring to the table. Before we launch into the lesson, so that is always a good way to get them thinking rather than me telling them, here is all of the knowledge; write it down and memorize it, so it gives them that opportunity. (Mrs. Navy, middle school)

Mr. Azure also indicated using QuickWrites:

As the students are writing, I walk around the room and I just skim through their writing and maybe I ask further questions to have them go back and think deeper because sometimes it is just like a surface thought. I ask the student to go back and look at the question and figure out what it is asking you. (Mr. Azure, middle school)

### *StepBacks and Reflections*

Nine of the participants of this study indicated they use StepBacks or reflection in their classes. StepBacks are a form of reflection in which students take a step back from their work and review, remember, and connect. StepBacks are specific to the Concept Lessons. Students become engaged in self-assessment with the StepBack retrospective process. By promoting deeper metacognitive understanding of how their learning has occurred, StepBacks guide students to move and direct their learning to new situations more effectively. Evidence of reflection surfaced in many different forms in the nine participants' classes, as reported by the teachers.

Mr. Bondi reported that his students appreciated the reflection process to expand their thinking and discussion skills:

Students usually learn to appreciate the time to reconsider ideas and that their initial answer does not have to be the answer. It is ok to change their minds.

Through the reflection strategy, there have been cognitive shifts in the students' thinking, by facilitating the process that leads to self-assessment. Over time, the students are able to evaluate and assess what they did. What I see with these students is when given the opportunity to talk and reflect with me or with their peers, they get the opportunity to bat around their ideas and so often they change their minds or see a different perspective. Students eventually engage in their own self-reflection, but it takes longer to get there. They are in the habit of waiting for feedback from the teacher, which is important, but getting a student to the point where they themselves are able to evaluate and to assess what they did is a harder thing, but it does happen. It happens over time. (Mr. Bondi, high school)

Mr. Cornflower reported that his students expanded their literary and self-analysis because of their reflection skills:

The students are directed to become more self-regulated, to self-analyze their behavior and thoughts and definitely their motivations and to understand when they read the motivations of others and ask, why did he do it? Why would he do it? (Mr. Cornflower, high school)

Mrs. Cobalt indicated that her experiences in the classroom using reflection were positive, and gave her insight into her future instructional planning:

I really, really like their reflections. The best, most helpful thing for me is their end of year reflection that they write. It is too large of a chunk to remember. I can't just say, what did you learn in this unit and in the Concept Lessons? The end of unit reflections become more specific. For example, in the Expository Unit, the students are asked, what did you learn about being a reporter for this unit? The larger reflections are too abstract and so I have broken it down to several bullet points that they can respond to such as, what did you learn about writing like a reporter? How did you learn that? What do you still have questions about? As we break it down for the end of unit reflection, I find it to be the most valuable and it really helps me for the next year's planning. (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

Mr. Azure uses reflections usually at the end of classes so students have an opportunity to think about their learning and to provide a focus for the following day of instruction:

The students write paragraphs usually at the end of class and they usually take it home, check it, make sure it's what they want to write and not just what popped out of their head and the next day we go over it. We use it as a way of starting the next day. I am going to ask them about the Periodic Assessment, for example. I am going to ask them to think about their score. What do you think you are proud

of? How do you think you did? Why? How many think you did better on this Periodic assessment vs. the last time? Why? What would you do differently? Some kids say that they wouldn't have been absent. Some kids say I would have tried a little harder; I ran out of time. (Mr. Azure, middle school)

### *Interactive and Reader's/ Writer's Notebooks*

Four of the participants of this study report using the Reader's/Writer's Notebooks or Interactive Notebooks in their classroom as a self-regulated learning strategy. The Reader's/Writer's Notebook or Interactive Notebook as it is sometimes called, is a thinking tool which allows students to keep track of their own learning, and then return to it as a resource for information to prepare for tests or studying. Reader's Writer's Notebooks are organized with a table of contents, showing date, topic, and page numbers (LAUSD, 2007).

Mr. Sapphire reports using an Interactive Notebook in his classroom almost every day:

My students have interactive notebooks that contain different sections for their learning. We have a journal section set up and we journal in there almost every day. We do daily sentences just to help out our writing. I integrate grammar into what we are doing. We have a Cornell Note section. If I have something connected to the journal section after the students have written they can paste it in next to the journal so it's really interactive. At the end of the year the kids have this year book kind of thing that we did throughout the year. It is kind of like our learning log. The students can go back and look at their work from earlier in the year and do a self-assessment and compare how much they wrote to what their writing looks like at the end of the year. Students consistently use their notebooks and it becomes like a scrapbook, containing the evidence of student learning. At the end of the year, my students flip through their notebooks and reflect on things that they did in my class. They also use their notebooks as a self-assessment tool to see how they are doing on their assignments. Every two weeks I anonymously post student grades on the board in the classroom so that the self-assessments are regular and on-going. This gives my students frequent opportunities to self-regulate their own progress. I use the self-regulated strategies in my classroom because it is important to teach students how to think and to be aware of the learning tools they can use to get to where they want to go. My students are responsible for carrying and maintaining their own notebooks so that they can be used at home and at school. (Mr. Sapphire, middle school)

Mr. Azure uses a Reader's/Writer's Notebook in his English classes so that students develop organizational skills and have an ongoing resource of information to refer to:

The Reader's/Writer's Notebook we use has a table of contents and it is broken up into sections so that the students have the Narrative Table of Contents, and then an Expository Table of Contents because I want them to see that there are different units. The district has them doing it so it is one table of contents, but as the year goes on those front pages tend to fall out, so it doesn't do any good, so we break it up into sections and put a piece of construction paper for in between so that they can see it so then they get the idea that they are moving into a new unit and they get a notebook grade. Did it have page numbers? Did it have everything that it was supposed to? Was it clearly organized? Did I take responsibility for my notebook? Was I here all of the time? I take the time to go through everyone's notebook during what we call a conference. Part of their grade is the conference grade. I will call them up and say let's take a look. What do you think you earned? (Mr. Azure, middle school)

Mrs. Cobalt reports using Reader's/Writer's Notebooks in her classes as an organizational tool and to provide the students with a specific location to keep track of their learning:

We use Reader's/Writer's Notebooks as part of the Concept Lessons. We keep a running table of contents posted on the wall in the classroom so that students can keep track of the assignments and activities, even if they miss a day. I keep a master copy of a Reader's Writer's notebook on a table in the room so that there is an ongoing model of what the notebook and the assignments should look like. I use stamps to mark the pages, along with comments for feedback for credit so that the students can see that there has been teacher interaction. When we turn in the notebooks there is always a quick reflection. The students are asked, what was your grade, what are your strengths, what are you proud of about this notebook, what do you need to improve for next time? (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

### *Cooperative Learning*

Five of the teacher participants for this study reported using the strategy of Cooperative Learning to teach their students to become self-regulated learners. Variations of the traditional format of Cooperative Learning were evidenced. Depending on the

grade level of the students and on the classroom environment, teachers adjusted the strategy to make it work the best way possible for their instructional needs.

Mr. Periwinkle uses Cooperative Learning groups in his high school English classes so that his students can have academic discussion opportunities:

At first when I was teaching at a middle school, I refrained as much as possible from working with Cooperative Learning groups because I was a brand new teacher and I didn't know how to keep students in line or on topic. Plus, they were middle school kids so it is more challenging; but of course, I do it now [at the high school level]. Even more so I do it with my high school students because they're dealing with so many things at once: they're growing, they're becoming bigger, their hormones, ... they are feeling like they are adults and all the while they are being still super goofy. They really need that peer interaction in order to hang on to the material. (Mr. Periwinkle, high school)

Mrs. Navy uses Cooperative Learning as a self-regulated learning strategy in her English classes as part of the Concept Lessons:

A lot of cooperative type learning situations are found in the Concept Lessons, similar to the traditional: I do it, we do it, you do it, but now there is a second you do it, meaning you as a group. I am always looking for more opportunities to introduce more group work so the students can share with each other before we try anything. (Mrs. Navy, middle school)

Mr. Sapphire calls cooperative group work in his class, "Table Talk" where the students communicate with each other, help each other and they start sharing ideas, in the form of accountable peer talk.

Definitely, every day I have the students Table Talk. They are communicating with each other, they are helping each other, and they're sharing peer ideas. It is that peer talk, that accountable peer talk, that I am looking for. I try to change the groups around because we need to learn to work with everybody, and get new perspectives to see how to work with somebody else. (Mr. Sapphire, middle school)

### *Role Model*

Uniquely, Mr. Bondi reported that time might be a barrier, but the actuality of being an effective educator puts the teacher more so in the position of being a role model,

which then functions as a strategy to teach students to become self-regulated learners in his English classes:

I don't know if I have any obstacles with it, to be honest, because I think as a teacher if you believe in it and you follow it and practice it yourself it just becomes a part of the work you are doing with your students and frankly the students are not going to fight you on anything, really, I mean, unless you just have a bad student, I guess. The students are going to internalize whatever the practice is that the teacher is asking them to participate in. I suppose in some circumstances, time is a factor because you can say you don't have time for the reflection piece, but I don't believe that. I think there is always time for that. I mean, how long does it take to say, "ok, everybody step back and take a look at what you just said, turn to a partner and get some feedback." It should be in everything that you are doing. It is critical thinking anyway. (Mr. Bondi, high school)

### **Barriers**

The secondary English teachers participating in this study discussed the barriers they have experienced related to teaching self-regulated learning skills in their classrooms. Following are the themes that emerged from the data: a) lack of time, b) lack of access to Reader's/Writer's and Interactive Notebooks, and c) lack of student motivation and self-confidence:

#### *Lack of Time*

Two of the participants of this study reported that their biggest barrier to teaching self-regulated learning strategies in their classroom was the lack of time. The pressures to teach the California State Standards for each course, takes priority over other strategies for many teachers because of the emphasis on raising student test scores.

Mrs. Cobalt indicated that taking the instructional minutes to accomplish the self-regulated learning strategies, especially reflection, was a barrier for her:

Time is one of the biggest pressures because we know we have with all of the high stakes testing and everything and what else is going on and we have to get through a certain amount of material and you know setting aside class time to talk

about what you learned, how you learned, what you still have questions about, it's very, very time demanding and demanding just because it consumes time. (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

#### *Lack of Access to Interactive and Reader's/Writer's Notebooks*

Three of the participants of this study indicated that a barrier to teaching self-regulated learning strategies in their classes was the lack of physical space needed to access the many student Reader's/Writer's and Interactive Notebooks, or the lack of student responsibility to bring theirs to class:

My students keep their Reader's Writer's Notebooks with them, and are responsible for bringing it to class to continue their work in it. With the less motivated learners, they tend to arrive without their supplies. This year, more of the kids are not doing their super easy homework. I think there may be a cultural shift with this group of kids; maybe next year they'll be showing up with their pencils and things like that. (Mr. Periwinkle, high school)

Mr. Sapphire reported that when his students do not have their notebooks, it is a barrier for him to be able to teach the self-regulated learning strategies:

Sometimes my students forget their notebooks. To me, their interactive notebook is everything. We put so much in there. I used to keep them in our classroom. I used to keep them and then I thought that I need to let the kids take them so that they can use them at home. What if I send them home to do something in their notebook and they don't have them? I would hoard the notebooks in my room because I was afraid they would lose them. The last couple of years I just had to relax and let them take the notebooks so they could study, or add reflections. Sometimes they forgot them at home. That is one obstacle because then my students do not have their learning tool. (Mr. Sapphire, middle school)

Mrs. Steel indicated that a lack of physical space in her classroom was also a barrier:

An obstacle is having enough space for portfolios and the time to file student papers. We need better availability of the Reader's/Writer's Notebooks. (Mrs. Steel, middle school)

#### *Lack of Student Motivation and Self-Confidence*

Three of the participants for this study reported that a barrier for them to teach self-regulated learning in their English classes was the lack of student motivation and/or self-confidence. Mr. Teal indicated that if the student is only encouraged to develop their self-regulated learning skills in their English class, then there might be a lack of motivation:

Motivation and self-confidence are barriers because a lot of times in the beginning, students feel that what they have to offer is not good enough so they might not want to put something down and not try. If self-regulated learning is only supported in ELA then in their other classes they might not feel comfortable to share out. (Mr. Teal, middle school)

Mrs. Navy reported that a barrier she experienced when teaching self-regulated learning was that her students had a lack of academic confidence:

English Language Learners (ELL) and your lower level readers, below basic and far below basic students, are asked to do QuickWrites. I tell them that it doesn't matter; just think. Take that fear out of your head. A lot of them really struggle with the Concept Lessons. (Mrs. Navy, middle school)

Mrs. Azure reported that a barrier in her classroom which interfered with teaching self-regulated learning was a lack of effort on the part of the student:

I think a lot of the kids have learned helplessness or they sit and do nothing and expect the teacher to come over and wait on them. Sometimes they want you to do the work for them. (Mr. Azure, middle school)

### **Benefits**

The secondary English teachers participating in this study discussed the benefits they have experienced related to teaching self-regulated learning skills in their classrooms. All of the participants reported a benefit to teaching self-regulated learning in their classes. Following are the themes that emerged from the data: a) student benefits, b) teacher benefits, and c) curriculum benefits.

#### *Student Benefits*

Six of the teacher participants for this study shared their perspectives on how they believed teaching self-regulated learning strategies benefited their students by empowering them to take control of and responsibility for their own learning.

***Students Take Control of and Responsibility for Their Own Learning.*** Mr.

Bondi indicated that a benefit to teaching self-regulated learning strategies in his English classes was seeing his students take control of their own learning, realizing what they are academically capable of, and understanding themselves as learners:

The major benefit is that you have students who are informed. They are in control of their learning. They know what they are good at, they know what their challenges are; they begin to have a sense of how to deal with those challenges. It makes the teacher's job easier because the student is really in control of their learning. They know that the teacher is there to facilitate and to make sure that the student is understanding, comprehension and so forth, but the student becomes savvy. They start to know themselves. They know that these are the things I need to work on, and these are the things I am really good at, and it goes a long way in their learning. That is important, too. They become totally self-reliant and they have a sense of self-efficacy. So, they feel that it's doable, they can do it. They have done it; they have done other things before successfully. They can do this too, and they can really build on all of the successes that they've had. That's important, too. (Mr. Bondi, high school)

Mr. Teal reported that a benefit in teaching self-regulated learning was seeing an increase in his students' belief in their own competence as they began to take control of their own learning:

One of the benefits for me was to see that, not that I ever doubted my students, but I knew they could do it and now they can. Especially that kid who feels like, ok, you know they don't want to share and at some point they start sharing. There is evidence that the students are capable of success. In reflecting over the years, it is that letting go, giving students more accountability; that was something. I was interested in having the students feel they have earned their grade. A lot of times they say, you gave me this grade, but no, you earned it. I think that providing these strategies helps them out a little bit to understand that it is the effort that is put in, it is their thinking. The letter grade does not represent the teacher, it represents the student and what they have put into the class, especially with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Concept Lessons. We start off with the Mind Set and we talk about how many of us believe that we are dumb or we felt dumb because we didn't

understand something, and so we go into this whole thing and I think the strategies for me have had me let go a little bit and show them what they've learned because if I am just teaching, standing up there providing them with a lesson I am showing them what I know, not what they know. It takes time to feel comfortable to be able to let your students show you what they can do. (Mr. Teal, middle school)

Mrs. Steel reported a benefit to teaching self-regulated learning strategies was seeing her students begin to take control of their learning once they realized that their efforts were connected to the grades they earned:

The benefit I've seen in making a difference for my students is that they more fully understand the connection between their efforts and their grades. Even the students admitting to being lazy tap into their metacognitive thinking. When students self-regulate their grades, self-assess, and are given clear information to assess, they are more successful because they are aware of their grades and what to do to improve them. I've seen many instances of students mentioning to me some part of their metacognitive thinking. By providing students with the means to self-regulate their grades, I saw success. (Mrs. Steel, middle school)

Mr. Sapphire also reported a benefit to teaching self-regulated learning to his students was their increased responsibility for their own learning which was evidenced through the use of the strategies taught in class:

I think the benefits are seen through the strategies that I use in my classes to teach self-regulated learning. Seeing those aha moments for kids and seeing students kind of step up and take more of an active role in their own learning instead of just sitting back in class and doing nothing, is a benefit. They are expected to be writing something, to be doing something in their notebook. I am asking them to use my sentence starters; we are using higher level thinking questions. When we are talking and discussing I am asking them to think on a different level not just recall answers. I am asking them, what do you think? What is your opinion? There is definitely a step up and to take responsibility for yourself in the class. I love it when kids do that because it sets the stage for them later on down the road. Is every kid going to do that and take responsibility for themselves? No, but you do have a few kids who you kind of help them turn the corner. Maybe they are on the brink or really doing well or doing better, or not. You just can't sit back and be a tourist in class. Some people just sit back and watch and I just can't let that go on. (Mr. Sapphire, middle school)

Mr. Cornflower indicated that the benefit of teaching self-regulated learning had a positive effect on his students:

The more you teach self-regulated learning, the stronger the students will be and the more independent they become at a younger age. (Mr. Cornflower, high school)

Mr. Azure reported the benefit of teaching self-regulated learning was that his students learned to take responsibility and control of their learning:

I have seen students take responsibility. First they say that they will not be attending tutoring and then an hour later they will show back up and stay for help. I like it when they come in to tutoring and they ask if I can help their friend who is not in our class. They step up and ask for help. It becomes not so much about the curriculum but about cooperative learning and helping each other and talking to each other. (Mr. Azure, middle school)

### *Teacher Benefits*

The participants of this study reported that teaching self-regulated learning was a benefit to them by, a) Impacting Future Instruction through Student Reflection, and b) Promoting Life Long Learning in Students.

***Impacting Future Instruction through Student Reflection.*** Two of the participants of this study indicated that one of the benefits they found in teaching self-regulated learning in their classes was what they learned from student reflections.

Thinking about and reflecting upon what students have written or shared, promotes a shift in instructional practice:

Student reflection leads to teacher professional reflection, which affects future teaching. My professional reflection through when I am scoring their Reader's Writer's Notebooks and looking at their work, reading about it, it definitely affects what I do for the next year. (Mrs. Cobalt, middle school)

As a teacher, I learn through my students. (Mrs. Cerulean, high school)

***Promoting Life Long Learning in Students.*** One participant of this study

reported that there was a benefit in knowing that what had been taught has a positive result in a students' life:

It is rewarding to know that I might have helped a student become more successful by teaching them to have self-regulated learning strategies not only to be successful on tests and school assignments, but to also have a set of tools to use in life outside of school. (Mrs. Royal, high school)

### *Curriculum and Instructional Benefits*

The benefits impacting curriculum and instruction were reported by three of the participants of this study. The positive results of teaching self-regulated learning were indicated through the experiences of what was taught and its effects on the students:

Teaching self-regulated learning makes the curriculum richer and expands insight into student issues. The student owns it. I found that it is a lot more fun. It is a whole lot more work and preparation ahead of time, but it is definitely a lot more rewarding and the kids seems to enjoy it, too. I guess as evidence, their scores went up. Embedding self-regulated learning strategies into instruction increases student interaction and understanding. It makes teaching more rewarding and creates higher test scores, which make the administration happier. (Mrs. Navy, middle school)

Teaching self-regulated learning strategies in my English classes has only made the curriculum richer because my kids are getting a deeper understanding of what I want them to understand by working together and learning from each other. (Mr. Periwinkle, high school)

Of course teaching self-regulated learning with Cooperative Learning groups takes the talking burden off of me quite a bit, whereas in the past I was doing all of the work, all of the talking, all of the showing, all of the explaining, which is exhausting. I was exhausted by the end of the day. Putting their education in their own hands, you know, put it where it should be. It has gotten them way more involved in the process. I feel like I get better work from them as a result because they are truly understanding the material before they have to go home and write up a response. I am more guaranteed that the kids are getting it. If there is somebody in the quad or team who is not understanding it, and the other kids are not able to explain it, they will have me come over and explain it to make sure that kid gets it. So, in that way, I am able to identify which kids are slower and I can get the information to them individually. (Mr. Periwinkle, high school)

## **Summary**

This chapter presented the themes and specific findings related to the study's research questions. Findings were organized by presenting the major themes and then addressing the details found related to the research questions. Data from face-to-face, one-on-one interviews provided insight into the study participants' attitudes and practices they had related to self-regulated learning. Samples of quotations from study participants are included by the researcher to build confidence in the reader as to the accuracy representing the perspectives and lived experiences of the teachers studied.

The first factor of this study presents the motivating reasons for secondary English teachers to teach self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms when it is not mandated to do so. The findings are organized specifically by the themes that emerged, related to a) teacher self-reflection that leads to change in practice,) b increasing intrinsic motivation through self-regulated learning, c) students taking responsibility for their learning, d) thinking beyond textbooks with self-regulated learning strategies, e) self-regulated learning in a continuation school, and f) teaching self-regulated learning strategies through curriculums.

The next factor of this study presents the strategies that are used by the participants to teach self-regulated learning in their classrooms. Several different strategies emerged. Each strategy used by the participants of this study contained metacognitive and self-regulated learning skills to promote and develop the students to become more self-regulated on their own. Many of the strategies presented by the participants can be found in the English Language Arts Concept Lessons that originally were offered by the local district of the Los Angeles Unified School District as a curriculum option for various grade level courses of study in English Language Arts.

Participants described how they successfully have embedded the strategies that they choose to use in their instruction and curriculum, including the adjustments that they have learned to make in order to meet the needs of their individual students and the needs of students while working in group situations. Many of the strategies discussed are used daily as instructional routines. Other strategies are used at certain times throughout the curriculum, such as in the event of a unit ending, an assessment, or an end of year activity. The strategies discussed were, a) explicitly introducing concept of metacognition, b) habits of mind technique, c) quickwrites, d) stepbacks and reflections, e) interactive and reader's/writer's notebooks, and f) cooperative learning.

The barriers associated with teaching self-regulated learning strategies were identified by the participants of this study. Barriers varied for each participant depending on their own specific student population and setting. In discussing these barriers, all participants continue to teach self-regulated learning in their classrooms and have worked through or around the barriers that they have encountered. The major barriers reported were, a) lack of time, b) lack of access to interactive and reader's writer's notebooks, and c) lack of student motivation and self-confidence.

Finally, the findings describing the benefits of teaching self-regulated learning as part of the English Language Arts instruction were organized by areas of student, teacher, and curriculum. Each participant shared their perspective on how teaching self-regulated learning has benefited their students, the teachers, or the curriculum or instructional program.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This final dissertation chapter interprets and discusses the research findings generated from the interviews of eleven secondary English teachers from eight different school sites within the context of a large urban school district in California. This chapter begins by presenting a summary describing the study. The provided summary includes an overview of the problem statement, a discussion regarding the purpose of this dissertation study, the research questions posed, the methodological approach taken in this research, and major findings resulting from the data analysis conducted. The chapter, and the dissertation, concludes with a discussion of the implications of this research study for educational policy and practice, and puts forward recommendations for future research related to this educational topic.

#### **Summary**

##### *Overview of the Problem*

Self-regulated learning skills that encourage students to think about their thinking, are embedded into the English Language Arts Concept Lessons but are typically not included in other English Language Arts instruction because many educators focus only on state mandated content (Bolin, 2005). Research suggests that students who do not already have these skills will not develop them on their own without instructional intervention, and thus are less likely to be academically successful (Garrett, 2007).

Systematically teaching students to be self-regulated learners would likely improve their academic success and their ability to master the disciplinary content

mandated by the state (Dembo, 2000; Zimmerman, 2001). This study described the existing attitudes and practices of secondary school English teachers related to self-regulated learning.

### *Purpose*

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to examine in-depth, the attitudes and practices of secondary English teachers who teach self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms.

### *Research Questions*

This study addressed the following questions: (a) What motivates teachers to teach self-regulated learning skills in secondary English courses when it is not mandated?; (b) What are secondary English teachers currently doing to teach their students to become self-regulated learners?; (c) What barriers do secondary English teachers experience related to teaching self-regulated learning skills in their classrooms?; and, (d) What specific benefits have they seen from teaching self-regulated learning and/or believe students may receive from such education?

## **Methodology**

A qualitative phenomenological research design was used for this study with the intent to allow the researcher to enter the world of the participants and to develop a holistic understanding (Bogdan & Bilkin, 1998; Locke, et al., 2000; Mason, 1996; Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Patton, 1990; Schram, 2003; Schwandt, 2000). The phenomenological tradition is a research methodology that “seeks to understand the deep meaning of a person’s experience and how these experiences are articulated” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 97). According to Rossman and

Rallis (2003) phenomenological methodology is inquiry centered on intentionality and caring that seeks descriptions, interpretations, and critical self-reflection about the topic and the inquiry process. This tradition assumes that meaning is constructed and conveyed through language. Therefore the essence of a particular phenomenon is derived through the dialogue of purposeful, iterative interviews and self-reflection (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). The interviews in this study engaged secondary English teachers in dialogue about an experience of interest, namely teaching self-regulated learning strategies. The use of phenomenological inquiry allowed for the unique experiences of the participants to be fully explored.

## **Discussion**

This section is organized to address each of the four research questions, therefore providing a complete overview of the themes and findings as they relate to the research questions used for this study. The four primary research questions are presented, and then followed by a summary of findings that includes a synthesis of responses for each of the supporting questions, as presented in Appendix D.

### *Motivation to Teach Self-Regulated Learning*

***Believing in the Process.*** An overall motivating factor of why teachers taught self-regulated learning in their ELA classes when it was not mandated was because they believed in the process of teaching students to become self-regulated learners, and to think about thinking and how learning takes place. Kramarski (2009) states that teachers who personally found value in self-regulated learning and who implemented the strategies within themselves were more likely to teach the strategies to their students.

The metacognitive process must first be engaged in order for self-regulated learning to follow (Flavell, 1976). Students first need to be introduced to the concept of thinking about their thinking, and using that concept to promote their own learning strategies. The participants of this study described evidence from their own teaching experiences in their classrooms with their students, that metacognition that leads to self-regulated learning can make an impact on how a student learns, how an assignment is accomplished, and what the classroom environment can become.

***Positive Results.*** The secondary teachers participating in this study reported that they had evidenced positive results in student learning, student behavior, and student accountability in their classes when self-regulated learning strategies were part of their instruction. Researchers (Houssand, 2998; Boekaerts, 1997; Corno, 2001; Flavell, 1979; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007; Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 1989), have found that self-regulated learners more actively engage in knowledge acquisition and in activities that enable them to strategically adapt their behavior, personal learning processes, and environment to support meaning making and goal attainment, supporting the participants evidence. Additionally, this supports Corsi (2010), who states that self-regulated students become involved, interested, focused, and accountable for their learning, and therefore disciplinary student referrals decrease.

All of the participants had previously experienced teaching without the inclusion of self-regulated learning strategies, and could therefore compare their instructional routines. The participants, when planning curriculum and instructional lessons, took the time to develop their own methods, do advanced planning and preparation, and think through potential classroom scenarios as in a constant state of reflection, to offer the best

opportunities for their students to learn how to think about their thinking. Participants were open to learning to make the strategies work comfortably for them and their students in their classrooms (Kramarski, 2009).

***Teacher Self-Reflection of Practice.*** A key finding of why teachers teach self-regulated learning strategies is due to the reflection process. Participants of this study reported that their self-reflection and analysis of their teaching and instructional practices typically led to a change in their teaching practice, and as a result, in student engagement of their learning. Buckeit (2010) states that teachers who reflect themselves are more likely to teach and support reflection in their students.

Teachers expressing that they had reflected about their instructional practices and educational experiences used the reflective process in their classes to move their students beyond the assignment requirements and into life-long learning situations, where they could accept academic challenges and take risks in order to master knowledge and skills (Paris, 2001). The teachers' reflective process encouraged them to provide the opportunity to discuss, question, and self-assess for the students in their classes.

In addition to the teachers' reflection process contributing to changes in their instructional practice, reflection also influenced a change in the teaching styles of some of the participants. Mr. Cornflower, after self-reflecting and reviewing his own teaching, came to the conclusion that the "old ways" of teaching were no longer working for his students. The "old ways" Mr. Cornflower referred to was lecturing. In this situation, the teacher decided to break the old habit of being a lecturer after reflecting and questioning his own teaching style. Reflection encouraged the teacher to gain a different perspective of his teaching style, causing him to become more conscious of what he was teaching,

and why he was teaching the content. In general, teachers who reported that they use the reflection process in regard to their instructional practices and how their students are learning, typically geared their classrooms to become more self-regulated learning environments.

***Improving Student Attitude about Learning.*** Teachers who feature self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms have reported that they are motivated to include these strategies because once their students begin to embed the metacognitive ways of thinking and therefore learning, their intrinsic motivation improves and they are more likely to engage in academic tasks. Metacognition directs students in their learning progress and influences their belief in their abilities (Paris, 2001). The students who have an opportunity to become self-regulated learners usually become more confident in themselves as learners and find that they are better equipped to accomplish their assignments. The motivational investment that evolves from the students' personal belief is what makes metacognition critical to the development of self-regulated learning (Paris, 2001). When the students feel better about themselves as learners, they tend to take more responsibility and ownership of their academic assignments, and they participate in their own learning process (Zimmerman, 1995). Metacognitive, motivational, and behavioral actions are promoted through self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 1995).

***The English Language Arts Concept Lessons.*** Another key finding about what motivates teachers to teach self-regulated learning in their classrooms is the implementation of the concept lessons as is, or in a personalized structure, adjusted to meet the needs of the specific teacher and their students. The ELA concept lessons contain specific objectives that involve aspects of metacognitive learning which would

teach students to develop their learning processes to better accomplish the standard driven content (Marzano, 2008). The Habits of Mind and the concept lessons offer opportunities for students to develop as thinkers and learners, presenting more than just content to the students.

Teachers reported that they are motivated to teach self-regulated learning because of their experiences teaching the ELA concept lessons. The concept lessons contain research-based practices that promote and develop self-regulated learning strategies in students. The structure of the concept lessons helps the students to delve deeper into the content, and teaches them to go beyond the textbook for their answers. The lessons include regular reflection activities that become a consistent part of the student thinking and learning process.

The ELA concept lessons have introduced teachers to a new way of teaching and to the concept of metacognition and how it applies to educational settings. Teachers reported that prior to their introduction and application of the concept lessons, they did not teach self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms. As a result of the positive effects the concept lessons have had on student achievement, even in the evidence of higher test score in some cases, teachers chose to teach the concept lessons when they are not mandated. When teachers shift their instructional focus more towards how students learn with self-regulated strategies, life-long learning is better promoted (Schober, 2007).

#### *Practical Strategies for Teaching Self-Regulated Learning*

A variety of self-regulated learning strategies were taught by the participants of this study. In many cases, the explicit teaching of metacognition and self-regulation was evident in the findings of this study. Current research suggests that in order for self-

regulated learning strategies to be the most effective, they should be embedded into instruction (Schunk, 2005). Those teachers teaching the ELA concept lessons or the ELL curriculum, High Point, have the benefit of the self-regulated learning strategies as an embedded part of their instruction and their students have the opportunity to receive training to understand how and why self-regulation works (Paris, 2001). Research suggests that students who do not already have self-regulated learning skills will not develop them on their own without instructional intervention, and are thus less likely to be academically successful (Garrett, 2007). Students learn best when they take on an active role by developing their own strategies and question their own thinking. Instruction that encourages students to do this promotes training for self-regulation and cognitive processes (Winne & Nesbit, 2010).

Additionally, Ley's (2001) principles which guide students who are learning to become self-regulated learners through instructional routines of preparation, organization, monitoring, and evaluation processes, are supported by the participants' use of Interactive and Reader's Writer's notebooks. Organizational skills which are addressed through the regular use of these notebooks, supports student learning and self-regulated strategies (Ley, 2001). Students are able to evaluate their progress and effectiveness by reflecting through the learning documented in their notebooks, and can then set goals and are more aware of monitoring their own learning (Ley, 2001).

***Cooperative Learning.*** Self-regulated learning strategies such as the ones found in the ELA concept lessons are typically used in the classes of the participants of this study. Participants frequently reported the implementation of modified forms of cooperative learning groups to teach self-regulated learning strategies. Teachers

implementing cooperative learning into their instruction expressed that students were encouraged to take responsibility for themselves, made decisions, participated in reflective discourse, and problem solving (Kirk, 2001; Paris, 2001). Students of the teachers of this study reportedly learned to work together as a group, share job duties, and reflect upon the group process, while gaining valuable learning tools to apply to other situations (Kirk, 2001; Marzano, 2002).

Cooperative learning groups provided a non-threatening arena for student academic discussion. The structure of cooperative learning groups also addresses different elements that are not found in other instructional group strategies (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). The group accountability aspect of cooperative learning places emphasis on the individual and collective outcomes, and promotes new perspectives on learning for the students (Marzano, 2002). Teachers' specific inclusion of cooperative learning groups in the classroom allowed students to take an active role in their learning, which directly contributes to the promotion of self-regulated learning skills (Kistner, 2010; Gourgey, 1989).

***Student Self-Reflection.*** Teachers of this study reported the use of reflection as a strategy to teach self-regulated learning. The reflection pieces that are used to teach self-regulated learning by the teachers of this study include StepBacks, and general reflections for various assignment purposes. Reflections are built into the ELA concept lessons and are typically used by the teachers of this study. The time barrier was mentioned in regard to including reflection as part of instruction because it appeared to be the easiest portion of the curriculum to cut with the pressures of standardized tests. Teachers who reflected on the process of reflection, indicated that the benefits that it provided to both

them and their students made it a critical factor to include in their instruction. According to Buckheit (2010), teachers who reflect themselves are more likely to teach and support reflection in their students.

Reflection which can also be used as an assessment tool, provided meaningful insights into student understanding. When combined with a portfolio task, the student learns to self-assess what work has been completed and to what degree of success so that improvement and revision might take place (Andrade, 1999). Within the Reader's/Writer's notebooks and interactive notebooks, reflections and StepBacks were frequently used to encourage student self-assessment, and to contribute to the notebook tool as a reflection process as a whole. Teachers of this study who taught the use of a Reader's/Writer's or interactive notebook, expressed that the notebooks were used as a resource for the students to go back to when studying, preparing for a project, or to identify areas where improvement had taken place. The notebook tool was both an ongoing and a cumulative reflection tool for teacher and student, and provided an additional assessment of how the student was progressing within the context of the unit or assignment.

Teachers of this study described positive outcomes when the reflection process was explicitly taught to their students. The use of reflection in the classroom encouraged students to expand their thinking, improved their discussion skills, developed self-analysis skills, and opened up opportunities for teachers to refine and improve upon their instruction. The reflective process was used to move the student beyond assignment requirements and into-life-learning situations, where they accept academic challenges and risks in order to master knowledge and skills (Paris, 2001). By teaching students to

reflect, teachers are promoting the internal factors of the metacognitive process that makes it possible for the students to reflect upon their learning progress and accomplishments and then to evaluate their understanding (Paris, 2001).

***Teaching Explicitly.*** Self-regulated learning strategies can be taught explicitly or implicitly by the teacher, but when the teacher has specific knowledge or self-regulated learning strategies and purposely implements them into instruction, the learning environment allows students to develop their self-regulation (Kistner, 2010). Teachers in this study frequently described the explicit teaching of metacognition and self-regulated learning, applying specific and consistent use of connected academic vocabulary in the classroom which supported the development of their students' self-regulated learning strategies. Kistner's (2010) study indicated that teachers conduct their classroom instruction of self-regulated learning more implicitly rather than explicitly. The conscious and purposeful efforts to explicitly teach self-regulated learning strategies provide students with a clearer understanding of the self-regulated learning processes, and they may learn better as a result of this explicit teaching (Kistner, 2010).

Participants expressed using cooperative learning groups, reflections, and portions of reciprocal teaching to be the most common self-regulated learning strategies in their classrooms. Portfolios were used most often in the English Language Learner classes as part of the High Point curriculum. Reflections in various formats were used by the participants as informal assessments of their students' content understanding and also as an indicator of their self-regulated learning.

*Barriers to Teaching Self-Regulated Learning*

Teachers who choose to teach self-regulated learning in their classes reported that the barriers they faced connected either to a lack of classroom space, not enough time, or a lack of student motivation. In spite of these reported barriers, the teachers who participated in this study continued to teach self-regulated learning strategies. None of the teachers reported that these barriers posed significant reason to alter their instructional focus of including self-regulated learning. Each barrier was addressed by the reporting teacher as being controlled or resolved. Barriers had been dealt with and teachers successfully found ways around them or alternatives which allowed the continuous instructional process to remain intact. Schunk (2005) indicated that teachers tend to not center on self-regulated learning because of the need to focus on standardized testing skills, but research results state that self-regulated learning can prove beneficial to improving students' skills.

***Lack of Space.*** Teachers faced with the lack of space barrier typically made classroom adjustments or held their students accountable and responsible for carrying their own reader's/writer's notebook or interactive notebook. The barrier became an aspect of the self-regulated learning strategy process for the student. Teaching students to organize their learning materials is one of the instructional principles used to empower students with their own self-regulated learning strategies (Ley, 2001).

***Lack of Time.*** The lack of time barrier reported presented an initial issue due to the priorities and emphasis placed on teachers to teach the content standards in preparation for state tests. As in the case of Mr. Bondi, who mentioned that a lack of time could be a barrier for teaching self-regulated learning, but a teacher makes time for

what is important. If the teacher is teaching it, then the students will follow, and therefore he did not believe that time was a barrier to teaching self-regulated learning.

*Lack of Student Motivation.* Students who lack motivation were reported to be a barrier to the teaching of self-regulated learning. Pintrich (2002) indicates that students who are equipped with self-regulated learning strategies will usually be better learners who are motivated. In at least one of the cases, English Language Learners were described as fearful and unmotivated. This attitude may be attributed to the students being in the process of still developing fluent vocabulary. The reporting teacher stated that she encouraged her students to participate in the lessons and to not worry about how content was presented. She was aware of the struggling students and worked to make them feel more comfortable while learning the language and becoming self-regulated at the same time.

Another aspect of the lack of motivation barrier was expressed by one teacher as the students being in a state of “learned helplessness.” The teacher reported that this situation was not due to any academic challenges that the students faced; it was due to more of a sense of entitlement that they should be waited on and their work should be done for them. Students were said to be capable yet lazy when it came to effort.

#### *Benefits of Teaching Self-Regulated Learning*

All of the participants of this study reported benefits from teaching self-regulated learning in their classes for themselves as instructors, and also for their students. According to Wolters (2003) and Joseph (2009), self-regulated learning can improve student achievement and academic development.

*Positive Impact on Students.* One of the primary benefits of teaching self-regulated learning as indicated by the participants of this study was how the strategies made an impact on how their students learned, and how they became empowered through having their own learning strategies. Students were reported to show gradual changes in how they conducted themselves as individuals and in group situations in the learning environment where self-regulated learning strategies were taught. The students were said to gain control and responsibility for their own learning once the self-regulated learning strategies were introduced and the classroom atmosphere reflected a serious and focused learning environment. Similar to Pintrich's (2002) description of students who are self-regulated learners, the students in the participants' classrooms became more motivated academically and began to demonstrate superior learning.

Benefits frequently described by the participants of this study included the unity in learning and support that students and teacher shared in the classroom. Especially in the situations in which metacognition and self-regulated learning vocabulary was explicitly taught and consistently reinforced, such as in some of the middle school classrooms, the teachers expressed the benefits to expand into other opportunities for learning. For example, students who had learned the meaning and value of metacognition and self-regulated learning reportedly brought in their friends from other classes for guidance and instruction from their teacher. The students became aware of the need for their friends to develop learning strategies as they had, assumingly reflected upon their friends' academic needs, and recommended the learning experiences they had in their class from their teacher, as reported by the participants. The self-monitoring

strategies the students had developed were applied to other student learners to assist in promoting modification of their learning behaviors (Wolters, 2003).

The students exposed to self-regulated learning strategies were generally characterized as changing as learners, into well-developed learners and thinkers. Teachers reported that there was evidence of more critical thinking, analysis and reflection, beyond textbook answers from their students. As the students became more aware of their own strengths, they were better able to set goals and task strategies for themselves as guides for their own learning (Zimmerman, 2002).

***Shifting Responsibility of Learning on to the Student.*** Self-regulated learning was said to take the talking and/or lecture responsibility off of the teacher, and transform teaching into more of a discovery process for the students. It was reported by at least one of the participants that they had experienced hesitancy in regard to teaching all of the components of the concept lessons, including the group activities and the reflection pieces. This connects to the belief for some educators that teacher-directed instruction involving worksheets and lectures is typically believed to insure more control in their classrooms (Corsi, 2010). The participants of this study shared that when the responsibility of learning was placed on the student, the classroom functioned efficiently and deeper learning and much more critical thinking took place as a result of the self-regulated learning strategies. Teachers expressed that their role as facilitator rather than lecturer promoted richer learning in their classrooms.

***Improved Student Achievement.*** Another one of the benefits reported by the participants was that student achievement improved. It was evidenced by participants of this study that ELA periodic assessments indicated improved test scores. Additionally, a

teacher reported evidence of their students applying the self-regulated learning strategies they had been taught when taking the assessment. Students implemented their strategies on their own, showing evidence of taking responsibility for their learning, and successful application of life-long learning skills. The teachers shared evidence of that education that targets only content ignores the essential components for deeper learning that enable students to connect school instruction and transfer knowledge (Gourgey, 1989).

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study include the scope being that only of secondary English teachers at large urban schools in California, thus the experiences of teachers in other disciplines, elementary instructors, and teachers in suburban or rural areas were not addressed. All data was self-reported by the participants, focusing generally only on teachers' perspectives. Given the limited number population, generalizing the findings to other learners or learning contexts was done carefully. A delimitation as a phenomenological study, the interview data was not designed to address the effectiveness of teaching practices. The focus of the study was English teachers' attitudes and practices of self-regulated learning. The degree of teaching practice effectiveness and how it might affect the study was not discussed.

### **Implications for Policy and Practice**

Based on the data collected for this study, an implication for policy and practice for school districts, credentialing programs, and beginning and seasoned teacher professional development programs would be to include training and education related to metacognition and self-regulated learning. Advocates of self-regulated learning believe

that students need training to understand how and why self-regulation works, so similarly, teachers as learners, would too (Paris, 2001).

Research suggests that students who do not already have self-regulated learning skills will not develop them on their own without instructional intervention (Garrett, 2007). Teachers, such as the participants of this study who have personal experiences with self-regulated learning, ultimately possess the motivation to teach self-regulated learning in the classroom. This is unlikely the case for all teachers, therefore training needs to be experiential, providing opportunities for teachers to develop their own self-regulated learning strategies. Utilizing the research based strategies, such as cooperative learning groups, as opposed to the standard lecture style of instruction, teacher training with metacognitive mentoring, would eventually lead to a cultural shift in teacher attitudes and practices related to self-regulated learning in the classroom.

When developing teacher training programs, purposefully embedding self-regulated learning strategies into the curriculum, specifically reflection processes, will introduce these practices into teacher training, and would offer opportunities to educators to experience first-hand the strategies of thinking about their thinking. Kramarski's (2009) study suggests professional development opportunities for pre-service teachers to develop self-regulated learning for the teachers themselves. Teaching teachers and developers of standardized tests the value of metacognition and self-regulated learning, and promoting the potential positive outcomes would benefit educational practices.

Being explicit in what teachers are to expect to see and experience as they and their students learn to become self-regulated learners, requires direct explanations about cognitive strategies, metacognitive discussions, and peer tutoring and can all help

increase students' use of effective learning strategies (Kistner, 2010). Self-regulated learning is also more likely when teachers create classroom environments in which students have opportunities to seek challenges, to reflect on their progress, and to take responsibility and pride in their accomplishments (Paris & Winograd, 2001). Increasing teacher buy in by revisiting the English Language Arts Concept Lessons is recommended. The concept lessons provide alternatives to lecture and old teaching practices, and present standards and research based curriculum that addresses not only content, but learning processes that teach students to become self-regulated learners who are responsible for their own learning.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

It is recommended by the researcher based on the evidence of this study to consider the application of self-regulated learning in other content areas such as Science and Math, and the English Language Learner and Special Education populations, to explore the possibility of different outcomes. The self-regulated learning strategies explored in this study can be chunked into workable sections with adjusted vocabulary to teach students at all levels of fluency and proficiency. The introduction of metacognition and self-regulated learning has been established within the findings of this study to have benefits to both student and teacher, and therefore could be considered as a valuable aspect of education to explore as a further study within other content areas, English Language Learner courses, and Special Education classes.

Another area to consider for future research is the ongoing discussion of the “quality” of the teacher. When metacognition, self-regulated learning, and teaching on the diagonal is embedded into a teacher's instructional plan or curriculum, is the quality

of the teacher elevated or improved? Does the implementation of self-regulated learning strategies, which have been effective in improving student achievement, improve overall effectiveness of the teacher? Since these self-regulated learning strategies have been reportedly evidenced by the participants to increase student achievement shown in test scores, and if the quality of the teacher is to be determined by student test scores as suggested in recent value added model discussions (Darling-Hammond, et.al., 2012), then further research on this hypothesis is worthy of exploration.

Exploring how self-regulated learning influences online learning should be considered for further study. Online learning structures typically require students to maintain their own educational goals and progress without face to face instructional support and motivation. Self-regulated learning strategies could possibly benefit the online learner to be better equipped to meet the challenges of this current educational system.

Finally, a larger study sample of various school districts, elementary school teacher participants, a study from the students' perspective, and quantitative analysis is recommended for future research so that a wider range of educational attitudes and practices can be explored.

### **Concluding Statement**

This study sought to add to the larger body of knowledge on secondary English teachers, particularly their attitudes and practices relating to self-regulated learning. Data was collected and analyzed to answer the four main research questions posed in the design of this study. The study found research studies supporting the benefits of students experiencing self-regulated learning strategies, as well as research literature on the impact

of different strategies that help students achieve through the use of self-regulated learning strategies. The study also revealed that secondary English teachers had much insight to offer in regard to the teaching practices associated with self-regulated learning. The benefits of implementing self-regulated learning strategies into practice, and what kind of impact that instruction had on students' academic and attitudinal development as perceived by the participants, were explored. While there are limitations to this study, the majority of the findings are able to be generalized and applicable to a wide audience of educational leaders and practitioners interested in establishing or implementing similar practices of their own.

Implications for policy and practice were presented, calling educators, teacher preparation and professional development programs, and test developers to consider making self-regulated learning a priority for students as we prepare students for future challenges. Recommendations for additional research were provided to include larger sample sizes of elementary school teachers, other content areas, and quantitative studies to measure academic and attitudinal development of students experiencing self-regulated learning.

Thus, effective instructional practices that help students become self-regulated learners will develop the next generations of students to be equipped with the strategies needed to successfully engage in learning processes. The challenges that are faced by many students because they are unaware of how to think and how to learn, will be addressed. Self-regulated learning will effectively provide opportunities for students to better engage in life-long learning, and therefore intelligent and thoughtful contributions to our society will be abundant.

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## Appendix A: Research Announcement

Date

Dear Participant,

I am Rachelle Minutella and I am contacting you as a result of a recommendation from \_\_\_\_\_ who suggested you might be interested in participating in my research study. I am currently a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Policy Studies Program of California State University, Northridge. I am conducting a qualitative study to better understand the attitudes and practices high school English teachers have about self-regulated learning.

The study is about what you do as a secondary English teacher in your classroom to promote self-regulated learning skills in your students. Through the use of a personal interview with each teacher participating in the study, my goal is to hear about your attitudes and practices in your own words. A second interview will follow to allow you to confirm, correct, or add to the researcher's conclusions from the first interview. At any time within the process, you have the right to stop the interview or even withdraw from the study confident that there will not be any negative consequences by doing so. The total amount of time needed for the first interview is estimated to be 60 minutes, and the follow up interview is estimated not to exceed 45 minutes.

To ensure privacy and confidentiality, no one's name will be used in the study's findings. When direct quotes are used, they will be identified by use of a pseudonym, a fictitious name to protect each person's identity. To ensure accuracy of detail and assist in research analysis, the interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed by the researcher. However, these materials will be secured during the study and will subsequently be destroyed after a reasonable period for analysis and follow-up response to any published research that has occurred.

If you agree to participate with me in this study, I will need you to sign an Informed Consent form indicating that you consent or give permission to proceed. The consent form also provides a description of the study and reaffirms your participant rights. After the form is signed, we can schedule a time for our meeting.

I would be grateful for your assistance and privileged to have this meaningful conversation with you about your teaching self-regulated learning experiences. I look forward to your response and will follow up with you shortly.

Sincerely,

Rachelle Minutella  
Doctoral Candidate  
Educational Leadership Policy and Studies, California State University, Northridge

## Appendix B: Informed Consent

Dear Secondary English Teacher,

My name is Rachelle Minutella. I am a doctoral student at California State University, Northridge, in the Department of Educational Leadership, Policies, and Studies. I am currently working on a qualitative study that focuses on how Secondary English teachers teach self-regulated learning in their classrooms.

You have been recommended by \_\_\_\_\_ to be invited to participate in the study. If you agree to participate in the study, I would like to interview you for approximately one hour about the experiences you have had with the strategies you use to teach self-regulated learning. After the interview, you will be invited for a follow-up interview for clarifications and additions that will take approximately ten to fifteen minutes. The interviews will be anonymous and your responses will remain confidential and will only be used for this study. There are several potential benefits to you in participating. First, it is likely you will find the interview a valuable opportunity to reflect upon your work, which is commonly reported by participants in this type of study.

Additionally, if you are interested, you will have access to a summary of findings that will include insights and information from like-minded colleagues that will better enable you to teach self-regulated learning. Other than a loss of an hour or so of your time, there are few risks if any to participating. This study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact me at [rminutel@lausd.net](mailto:rminutel@lausd.net).

Your initials here \_\_\_\_\_ signify your consent to allow \_\_\_\_\_ to share your email address and contact information with me to arrange an interview time.

Printed Name (Last, First, MI): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for helping me conduct this study. Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

This study has been reviewed by Dr. Diane Gehart, Educational Psychology Department Instructor at California State University, Northridge. You may contact her at: [diane.gehart@csun.edu](mailto:diane.gehart@csun.edu).

Sincerely,

Rachelle Minutella

Ed. D., Candidate

Department of Educational Leadership, Policies, and Studies  
California State University, Northridge

### **Appendix C: Participant Screening Questions**

1. What is your understanding of self-regulated learning?
2. Have you previously or are you currently implementing strategies such as, reciprocal teaching, cooperative learning, portfolios, or reflections?
3. Has the strategy been implemented for one year or approximately two semesters of a traditional school year?

## Appendix D: Interview Protocol for Teachers

1. Do you use or have you used self-regulated learning strategies in your English classes?
  - a. Why? Why not?
  - b. If yes, which self-regulated learning strategies do you teach in your English classes?
2. Why do you choose to use these strategies as part of your instruction?
  - a. What initially encouraged you to teach self-regulated learning in your classes?
3. Do you have any evidence that these strategies are promoting self-regulated learning or otherwise making a difference for your students?
  - a. What are the typical outcomes you see in students when you teach self-regulated learning and how do the outcomes vary across types or groups of students?
4. How do students typically respond to self-regulated learning lessons?
  - a. Do some respond differently than others?
  - b. Is it more beneficial for some than others?
5. How has it affected and/or interacted with other curriculum?
  - a. Has it affected your ability to teach other required content in the class?
6. Could you describe an event you experienced in your own classroom that illustrates the effectiveness of or outcomes related to self-regulated learning?
7. What did you do specifically to teach self-regulated learning skills in your students while they are engaged in the strategies?
  - a. Do you use instruction outside of the strategies?
  - b. Do you use individual or whole class interaction, feedback, input, etc.?
  - c. Which teaching strategies have been the most effective for you?
8. What are the barriers or obstacles that you have experienced relating to teaching self-regulated learning?
  - a. In regard to the classroom environment?
  - b. In regard to the student population?
  - c. In regard to the teaching process?
  - d. In regard to district, school site, or standards?
9. Describe any benefits you experience as an instructor.
10. Do you have any suggestions or advice for an instructor who would like to start teaching self-regulated learning?

## Appendix E: Participant Information Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years teaching English: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of English classes currently teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade level(s) of English classes currently teaching: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of years teaching experience: \_\_\_\_\_