SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES AND SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS
OF CHILDREN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of
The Ohio State University

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ABSTRACT

This is a qualitative case study to investigate elementary school children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of self-regulated learning (SRL) strategies in the process of learning English as a second language. Drawing upon the social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives of self-regulation, recent studies of students’ self-efficacy beliefs, and language learners’ willingness to communicate, this study provides a “thick description” of four Chinese children’s behaviors associated with self-efficacy beliefs and their strategy use across home-based and school-based contexts.

Data were gathered through: (a) participant observations of children at play and in the classroom; (b) on-going follow-up interviews with observations; (c) reading and writing tasks; (d) interviews with parents; (e) analyses of student documents such as students’ work in reading and writing, students’ report cards, and their standardized achievement test reports; and (f) pre-interview at the beginning of the project and guided interview at the end of the project.

Data were analyzed in the process of collection. Emerging themes were noted and further explored with follow-up interviews. The follow-up interviews helped the researcher understand the observed behaviors and the context of the participants’ language-learning activities. The findings were triangulated in
several ways: Students’ self-efficacy related to reading and writing was elicited and their actual use of strategies was noted while they were performing English reading and writing tasks. Interviews with parents provided some biographical information and students’ behaviors related to language learning at home. Analyses of student documents were also used to check my interpretation of the students’ English proficiencies. The final guided interview helped me elicit participants’ self-efficacy beliefs for language-learning tasks and their use of SRL strategies to perform these tasks.

Participants reported self-efficacy beliefs across a variety of language-learning tasks in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This study suggests that self-efficacy is a task-specific construct. Each child’s self-efficacy varies across specific tasks and across home-based and school-based language-learning contexts. All participants in this study reported higher self-efficacy to complete listening and speaking language activities than reading and writing activities. Their self-efficacy to write a summary or a journal entry was the lowest among all language-learning activities, and this low self-efficacy was associated with their lack of interest and practice in writing.

Sources of the children’s self-efficacy were also explored. All participants claimed limited English vocabulary and reported low self-efficacy for English reading tasks that demanded advanced vocabulary. In addition, the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs were associated with their expertise in the content area, self-perceptions of English proficiency level, task difficulty level, social persuasion,
physiological or emotional state, interest, attitude toward the English language and the English speaking community, and the social and cultural context.

These children’s observed behavior was found to be associated with their self-efficacy. They showed persistence when they felt efficacious to accomplish the task and were likely to withdraw or give up when they felt less efficacious to do so. The children participated actively in the classroom interaction when they felt efficacious to answer the teacher’s questions and were mostly silent when they were anxious because of low perceived competence to address the topic.

While some boys reported more SRL strategies than others, nearly all 14 classes of the SRL strategies developed by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) were reported. Students reported more strategies in reading than writing. The most commonly used SRL strategies employed by all the participants were seeking social assistance, seeking information, reviewing records, and environmental structuring.

These findings have extended scholarly work on children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of language-learning strategies in the context of second language acquisition. The implications of this study also extend to language classroom teaching since teachers may better understand their students’ self-efficacy and the impact of self-efficacy based on this study. They may incorporate teaching SRL strategies specific to second language learning in the class and enhance students’ self-efficacy beliefs by providing accurate and continuous feedback to the students.
Dedicated to my wife

Juan Zhang

who supported my study and research with her whole heart

and my son

Paul Wang

who brought me great joy
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would never have this study done without my five-year study in the School of Teaching and Learning at the College of Education. A lot of people nurtured me through this hard but fruitful journey.

I feel mostly obliged to my advisor, Dr. Stephen J. Pape, who supported my study at the Ohio State University both financially and academically. He taught me how to be a true scholar and researcher. The idea for this dissertation came to my mind when I was working for him in the field of mathematics education. While he applied these educational psychology concepts in the field of mathematics education, I am using them in second language acquisition. Dr. Pape walked me through the whole process: from the proposal to the polishing of my final draft. He spent a huge amount of time reading my work and provided me numerous insightful thoughts. He also trained me into a highly self-regulated person. Without the careful goal-setting and planning, I could not finish the writing on time.

Another professor that changed my life was Dr. Patricia Enciso, who helped me get into the program of Integrated Teaching and Learning and co-advised me for almost five years. Without her encouragement, I would never think of pursuing a Ph.D. degree after eight years of teaching in China. Dr.
Enciso also provided me much valuable advice for my proposal and the experimental design.

This study is enriched with Dr. Alan Hirvela’s contribution. He introduced me to the concept of Willingness To Communicate, a recent trend in the field of second language acquisition. Dr. Hirvela also spent a lot of time during my writing process, and his advice helped me re-analyze my data from a different angle. Looking at my data from various theoretical frameworks enriched my analyses to a great extent.

Dr. Anita Woolfolk-Hoy helped me get a better understanding of the concept of self-efficacy. She provided me invaluable advice on the data analysis and interpretation regarding self-efficacy and implications in teacher education. She has been very supportive for my whole writing process.

JuYoung Song, a doctoral candidate in the Foreign and Second Language Education program at the College of Education, volunteered to be a peer reviewer. I am also extremely grateful to her critical thinking and persistence in reviewing this draft.

My thanks also goes to Dr. Heather Davis, Elif Yetkin, Nan Kurz, Yesim Capa, Gonul Sakiz, and all other members of the Learning and Cognition Research Team at the Ohio State University who have given freely of their time proofreading parts of my dissertation. I benefited a lot from their psychological and intellectual support.

Finally, I am very grateful to my parents, my sisters and my brother who supported my study in the United States for these five years. Without my siblings
taking care of my parents in China and my parents’ love, I could not have a peaceful mind. My wife not only devoted her time taking care of my own nuclear family but also helped me transcribe some data and proofread parts of the data analysis.
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PUBLICATIONS


FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education

Minor Fields: Educational Research
  Teaching English as a Second or Other Languages (TESOL)
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There are currently 2.1 million speakers of English as a Second Language (ESL) in American public schools. Approximately 76% of public schools with ESL student enrollments provide ESL programs, but only about 30% of public school teachers instructing ESL students have received training for teaching ESL students and fewer than 3% of teachers with ESL students have earned a degree in ESL or bilingual education (Hoffman, 2002). These figures indicate a strong need for teachers and educators to understand ESL children in public schools in general and to help them acquire the English language proficiency in particular.

These children came to the States with their parents who were seeking opportunities of higher education or better life. Unlike most parents who already learned English in their home countries and were prepared for the difficulties looming ahead, the children, however, were not prepared and had no choice but to struggle with both the culture shock and the learning of English as a new language. In other words, these children are in double jeopardy: cultural and linguistic minority. Even more worrisome, these children are usually considered disadvantaged in the education system and are marginalized (Kanno, 1999).
Background of the Study

My experience with my son and many of his friends, who are ESL learners, helped me notice individual learning differences among these children: some children seem to learn English very quickly while others are relatively slow. Although both cultural and environmental factors influence this trajectory of learning (Harklau, 2000; Sharkey, 2000; Toohey, 2001), many studies explored individual differences and indicated that self-efficacy and self-regulated learning (SRL) behaviors are indicators of academic achievements (Pajares & Miller, 1994; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pape & Wang, 2003; Schunk, 1994). Incorporating SRL strategies in instruction and enhancing students’ self-efficacy beliefs should help ESL children learn the English language more efficiently. They can benefit from this by having access to varieties of SRL strategies to tackle problems they might encounter in the language-learning process. They might also be more likely to persist in solving the language problems once their self-efficacy is enhanced. In the ESL field, many researchers have conducted studies to investigate adult learners’ self-efficacy beliefs and their use of strategies (Ellis, 1989; Chamot, 1987; Huang, Lloyd, & Mikulecky, 1999; Oxford, 1989). Few studies, however, focused on the self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies of elementary school ESL students (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Huang et al., 1999).

I taught English as a foreign/second language to students of different levels, from elementary to graduate school, in China, Brazil, and the United States for more than 10 years. Therefore, I have a good understanding of the
English language-learning process, especially common linguistic difficulties Chinese students encounter. In the United States, there are millions of speakers of English as a second language in public schools. Previous research indicates a significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs, SRL strategies, and academic achievement (Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pape & Wang, 2003; Schunk, 1994). Therefore, an investigation of elementary school ESL students' SRL strategies and their self-efficacy beliefs would be helpful in our understanding of children's efforts to learn the English language.

Using my background knowledge in teaching English to Chinese students, I approached this investigation with four Chinese elementary school students in an American public school from both social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives of self-regulation and self-efficacy with qualitative methods. The theory of Willingness To Communicate (WTC) was also employed to help explain children's behaviors in using the target language. The qualitative inquiry approach was employed in this study because “qualitative studies are best at contributing to a greater understanding of perceptions, attitudes, and processes” (Glesne, 1999, p. 24). The study of ESL children's self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies is exploratory at this moment (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999), and the context in which a language is used is of vital importance (Platt, 1994). Thus, more exploratory studies with qualitative research methodologies are needed before confirmative comparison studies.
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purposes of this study were two fold: (1) to investigate individual differences of elementary school ESL children's self-efficacy beliefs in learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts, and (2) to understand ESL children's use of SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts. Specifically, the research questions for each purpose of this study that I examined are as follows.

Research Purpose One:

a. What ESL children’s behaviors may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?
b. What are their self-efficacy beliefs across these contexts?
c. What factors impact the development of children’s self-efficacy?
d. How do ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English vary across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?

Research Purpose Two:

a. What SRL strategies do ESL children employ in learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?
b. How do ESL children use SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts while learning English?

Overview of Study

To answer these questions, observations, interviews, and document analyses were employed in this case study. Four Chinese-speaking elementary school students participated in the study, which lasted for nearly a year. A pre-interview with the participants and their parents helped me understand participants’ biographical background. Then, observations of the children at play and classroom observations were taken followed by probing interviews. The observations helped me understand the context of these children’s use of English and each individual child’s willingness to communicate across home-based and school-based contexts.

I interviewed the participants after the observations in order to understand the observed behaviors and to elicit their self-efficacy beliefs to accomplish certain specific language tasks. These questions allowed for flexibility during the interviews. I also asked the participants to complete reading and writing tasks during the study. These tasks provided information about the children’s actual use of SRL strategies, and the participants were asked about their self-efficacy beliefs to accomplish these tasks before working on the assigned tasks. Documents of the students’ English reading and writing assignments in class were also collected as a complimentary to the classroom observations to help me understand the English reading and writing activities that the participants were
doing in their daily classroom activities. After all observations and the reading and writing tasks, I interviewed each participant using the modified versions of the two questionnaires developed by Wang and Pape (in press) to elicit these children’s self-efficacy beliefs and SRL behaviors in a more general context. Students’ report cards were also collected as an indicator of the participants’ English proficiency and their teachers’ comments were used as triangulation with my observations.

Significance

Studies in fields other than ESL elementary education indicate that self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies are important components of the learning process (Pajares & Miller, 1994; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pape & Wang, 2003; Schunk, 1994; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986, 1988, 1990). Compared with other students, higher achieving students are found to have higher self-efficacy beliefs and employ more different categories of SRL strategies in learning. Nevertheless, according to Huang et al. (1999), the topic of perceived self-efficacy in the field of ESL has been rarely investigated although its study is particularly important for language learning. Chamot and El-Dinary’s (1999) longitudinal study indicated that, for children learning foreign languages, high-achieving children used a greater proportion of metacognitive strategies and low-achieving children used a greater proportion of cognitive strategies. Therefore, this study with ESL children provided information about the self-efficacy beliefs and the strategy use of children in ESL settings.
Although considerable research has been devoted to the study of self-efficacy in educational settings, most of the students in these studies were from Western cultures (Klassen, 2004). As a result, Pajares (2000) calls for a “culturally attentive” educational psychology to investigate students in a range of social and cultural settings. This study filled this gap by illuminating the self-efficacy beliefs of Chinese young learners of English.

In addition, few measures of children’s self-efficacy are available (Heyne, King, Tonge, Rollings, Pritchard, Young, & Myerson, 1998). Wang and Pape (in press) developed a questionnaire to measure ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs and a questionnaire to measure ESL children’s use of SRL strategies based on a case study with four Chinese-speaking children. These two questionnaires were adjusted according to the information provided by the observations during this study and used to elicit the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies. These questionnaires might be helpful for further research on ESL elementary school students’ self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies.

This study also has pedagogical implications in teaching since teaching students about different cognitive and self-regulatory strategies may be more important for improving actual performance on classroom academic tasks, and improving students’ self-efficacy beliefs may lead to more use of these cognitive strategies (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990). Student performance has been shown to be significantly improved after the training of SRL strategies (Butler, 1998; Neilans & Israel, 1981; O’Malley, 1987), and students trained to use strategies have become more self-regulated (Travers & Sheckley, 2000).
Although teaching is not the focus of this study, teaching and learning are an integral part of education. Thus, an investigation of children’s self-efficacy and SRL strategies may make significant contributions to both the teaching and learning processes.

Limitations

Since few studies have investigated the self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies of elementary school children (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Huang et al., 1999), this study is limited by available resources for reference. O’Malley’s (1987) study indicated cultural differences in strategy use between Asian and Hispanic students, and Purdie and Hattie’s (1996) study revealed the differences between Japanese and Australian students in their choice of learning strategies. Cultural difference with respect to self-efficacy beliefs and strategy use, however, is not the focus of this study. Only Chinese-speaking boys served as participants. As a result, the present study is descriptive in nature and the findings of the study are limited to these four participants who are all Chinese and male.

Another limitation of this study is that classroom teachers did not participate. Teacher’s participation would have brought the teachers’ perspectives into the study and would have helped in understanding the students’ behaviors in class.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Self-Regulation

SRL from a Social Cognitive Perspective

From a social cognitive perspective, self-regulation involves the interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental triadic processes (Bandura, 1986). Zimmerman (2000) defined self-regulation as “self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals” (p. 14). “Academic self-regulation processes include planning and managing time; attending to and concentrating on instruction; organizing, rehearsing, and coding information strategically; establishing a productive work environment; and using social resources effectively” (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997, p.195). According to Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997), the psychological dimensions of self-regulation involve motivation, strategies, self-awareness of performance outcomes, and sensitivity to environmental and social settings. Students are self-motivated to choose self-set goals and then make plans and choose strategies available in order to achieve the self-set goals. Based on their self-awareness of their performance to achieve the self-set goals, students
themselves monitor their goals and strategies and control their social and physical settings including seeking help (Appendix A).

In order to be self-regulated, individuals need to use three important processes: self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction (Bandura, 1986). Self-observation refers to the deliberate attention to observe one’s own behavior. Self-judgment refers to the comparison between one’s own performances with that of a standard or goal. Self-reaction is the evaluative response to self-judgment. Thus, following personal observations, individuals make a judgment of their progress toward their self-set goals. Based on these judgments, they alter their behaviors accordingly so as to attain these goals (Bandura, 1986).

Zimmerman (2000) suggested three cyclical phases for the processes of self-regulation: forethought, performance or volitional control, and self-reflection. The forethought phase refers to processes and beliefs that precede efforts to learn. Examples of these processes include students’ motivation, self-efficacy, goal-setting, and planning. The performance or volitional control phase refers to processes that students focus on the task to optimize their performance. Examples of these processes include attentional control, keeping records, and monitoring. The self-reflection phase refers to processes associated with self-observation. Examples of these processes include self-evaluation. During this phrase, students compare information about their performance with a standard or goal and ascribe causal meaning to the results. They make a judgment about whether an unsatisfactory result is due to their limited capability or to insufficient effort.
According to Schunk and Zimmerman (1997), the development of self-regulation is dependent upon social, environmental, and behavioral triadic influences. There are four levels of development of self-regulated learning: observation, imitation, self-control, and self-regulation. Novice learners acquire self-regulated learning skills mainly through observing models and receiving proper feedback. When the learner’s performance approximates the model, an imitative level is attained. At this level, the learner is not simply copying the model’s behavior but rather self-motivated to follow the model’s pattern after mastering the spirit of the model. The third stage is reached when the learner becomes capable of using the strategies when performing tasks independently. The learner’s use of self-regulated learning strategies has become internalized at this stage but still not fully independent of the model’s performance. The fourth stage is not attained until the learner is capable of systematically adapting the learning strategies to changing personal and contextual situation.

**SRL from a Sociocultural Perspective**

From a sociocultural perspective, self-regulation is defined as the child’s ability to plan, guide, and monitor his or her behavior from within and flexibly according to changing circumstances (Diaz, Neal, & Amaya-Williams, 1990). A child is said to be self-regulated when a self-formulated plan of action guides the child’s activity and the child has not only internalized the caregiver’s commands and directives but also taken over effectively the caregiver’s regulating role. Thus, the regulation of a child’s behavior is a shared act and an interpersonal
phenomenon. Self-regulatory capacities develop within the context of adult-child interactions.

Vygotsky (1978) describes four major stages of cognitive development that represent the changing relation between the child and his or her concrete stimulus environment. In the first stage, the child’s behavior is controlled by the caregiver only through concrete and immediate stimuli. During the second stage, the child becomes capable of some beginning mediation by using external signs as an aid to their responses. Although the child has not fully mastered the mediational properties of signs, his or her behavior can be affected by the external, concrete, and actual connections between signs and stimuli. When the child becomes more aware of the role and functions of signs in cognitive activity and begins to create and actively manipulate signs to achieve a desired response, the child has reached the third stage. This stage is limited, however, by the fact that the child’s regulation of behavior is still dependent upon external stimuli. The fourth stage is characterized by the internalization of the external relations among stimuli, signs, and behavior. At this stage, the child can achieve the same desired response without the aid of external stimuli or signs. The important aspect of Vygotsky’s perspective in the development of self-regulation is that the use of external signs helps the child to achieve a new level of activity but is finally discarded when the external signs become internalized.

In Vygotsky’s perspective, the child achieves self-regulation by actively manipulating the environment with the use of signs. Language is one of the signs that serve as external stimuli. Verbal intersubjectivity between adults and children
is perceived as the primary source of children’s internalization of self-directed speech. “Children begin to use language not only to communicate but to guide, plan, and monitor their activity” (Diaz et al., 1990, p. 135). Participants in the current study are learning to use English to communicate with their peers and the teacher. They develop SRL strategies by actively adjusting their behaviors according to the social and cultural environment. Their choice of strategies is influenced by their estimation of the expectations from significant others. The teacher or the parent guides their behaviors at the preliminary stage. Using English in the classroom and Chinese at home, the participants gradually internalize the directions from the teacher or the parent and become self-regulated when they are able to use the strategies without the scaffolding from the adults.

The use of language has three major contributions. First, with the use of speech children’s cognitive operations gain greater flexibility, freedom, and independence from the stimulus in the environment. Participants in this study have access to two languages but their proficiency level in either one of them is limited. This limitation might influence their cognitive development of self-regulation. “The child begins to perceive the world not only through his eyes but also through his speech” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 32). Second, children’s behaviors and actions become less dependent on the objective properties of the stimuli but more guided by a plan. Children need a language to make a plan. Therefore, the proficiency level of the language also has an impact on children’s self-regulation in planning. Finally, speech allows the child to master his/her own behavior and
gain control of the environment (Vygotsky, 1978). Private speech is the term used to describe children’s utterances spoken to themselves as they begin to control their early attempts to master a skill. By audibly controlling their behaviors, children gradually take over the adult’s role of external control. When this speech is internalized, they carry out the voluntary functions that were once shared with the teacher or the parent. Self-regulatory capabilities are finally established with the internalization of private speech in either English or Chinese in this study.

Based on the discussion of self-regulation from different perspectives, I define self-regulation in the context of second language acquisition as a person’s continuous adjustment of the use of language-learning strategies to achieve the self-set goals through interactions with their peers and adults across social and cultural contexts. The process of self-regulation includes the spiral cycle of goal-setting, self-motivation, self-planning, strategy learning and application, and self-adjustment of the goals, plans, and strategies based on the feedback in a social context. In the following paragraphs, I present categories of SRL strategies followed by a discussion of students’ use of SRL strategies in relation to their academic achievement.

Categories of SRL Strategies

In a study of middle school students’ learning strategies, Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) used structured interviews to assess student use of SRL strategies in six learning scenarios and developed 14 classes of these strategies: self-evaluation, organizing and transforming, goal setting and planning, seeking
information, keeping records and monitoring, environmental structuring, self-consequences, rehearsing and memorizing, seeking peer assistance, seeking teacher assistance, seeking adult assistance, reviewing tests, reviewing notes, and reviewing texts. Pape and Wang (2003) grouped the subcategories of seeking social assistance (i.e., from peers, teachers, and adults) and the subcategories of reviewing records (i.e., from tests, notes, and texts). Environmental structuring was split into physical environmental structuring and attentional control. These changes resulted in a more parsimonious 11 category scheme. The definitions of each category with examples from ESL children are presented in Table 2.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category definitions according to Pape and Wang (2003)</th>
<th>Examples within ESL sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Self-evaluation: Self-initiated evaluations of the quality or progress of students’ work.</td>
<td>Check the writing before turning it in to the teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organizing and transforming: Self-initiated overt or covert rearrangement of instructional materials to improve learning.</td>
<td>Translate English into their native language to help memorize the word.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Goal setting and planning: Setting educational goals or subgoals and planning for sequencing, timing, and completing activities related to the self-set goals.</td>
<td>Adjust what to write in a journal entry by checking how much time is left.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Seeking information: Self-initiated efforts to secure further task information from nonsocial sources.</td>
<td>Look for the meaning of a word in a dictionary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Keeping records and monitoring: Self-initiated efforts to record events or results.</td>
<td>Take down an unknown word to ask for help later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Environmental structuring: Self-initiated efforts to select or arrange the physical setting to make learning easier</td>
<td>Study in one’s own room.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Self-consequences: Student arrangement or imagination of rewards or punishment for success or failure.</td>
<td>Jump up and down when one gets good results of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Rehearsing and memorizing: Self-initiated efforts to memorize learning materials by overt or covert practice.</td>
<td>Write the word many times on paper in order to memorize it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Seeking social assistance: Self-initiated efforts to solicit help from adults, teachers, or peers.</td>
<td>Ask the teacher for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Reviewing records: Self-initiated efforts to reread notes, tests, or textbooks.</td>
<td>Reread the textbook before a test.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1: Categories of SRL strategies
Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) interviewed 40 high achieving and 40 low achieving high school students, and three different variables were developed: strategy use, strategy frequency, and strategy consistency. High achieving students displayed significantly greater use of all SRL strategies and significantly less use of “other” responses than the low achievement group except for self-evaluation. In addition, students’ self-report of SRL strategies had a significant positive correlation with their standardized test performance. The use of SRL strategy was the only significant predictor of participants’ English and Mathematics MAT scores.

This finding was supported by another study by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1988). Each of the 80 tenth-grade students completed a structured interview developed by the authors in 1986, and three teachers of the students were asked to complete a teacher scale to measure student SRL strategies they observed in the classroom. High achieving students were found to use more learning strategies and were more likely to seek help from instructors compared with low achieving students. Students who need help the most were least likely to seek help. Another important finding of this study was that successful students tended to be aware of how well they had done on a test even before getting it back from the instructor indicating the importance of monitoring performance.

In order to extend Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons’ (1986, 1988, 1990) study from high school students to middle school students and reexamine the 14 categories of SRL strategies, Pape and Wang (2003) analyzed the verbal
protocol data and strategy questionnaire data of 40 sixth- and 40 seventh-grade students. The strategy questionnaire was adapted from the interview guide developed by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) with five scenarios middle school students might encounter with their school work. More than 80% of the participants reported important academic behaviors such as seeking information, seeking social assistance, goal setting and planning, and organizing and transforming. While no significant differences were found with regard to the total number of strategies reported, high mathematics achievement group students reported significantly more different strategies than low mathematics achievement group. Both high achievement groups (mathematics and reading) and successful problem solvers reported significantly more different categories of strategic behavior.

An important finding from Pape and Wang’s (2003) study is that it is the number of different strategies or different categories of strategies reported rather than the total number of strategies reported that was significantly related to students’ mathematics and reading achievements. This implies that with limited number of different strategies and limited number of categories of strategies available, less successful students simply cling to the same strategies available to them. Similar findings were found in other studies (Chamot & El–Dinary, 1999; Wang & Pape, in press).

Significant differences in individual strategy use were also found between beginning and intermediate level ESL students in a study of 70 students (Chamot, 1987). Metacognitive strategies favored by intermediate level students
were primarily self-management, advance preparation, and self-monitoring whereas those favored by the beginning level students were selective attention and delayed production. As for the cognitive and social-affective strategies, students of both levels showed many similarities. For instance, they both favored such strategies as repetition, note-taking, questioning for clarification, and cooperation. Contextualization, however, was used more often among intermediate level students while translation and imagery tended to be favored by beginning level students. Moreover, more intermediate level students used strategies for oral presentations than beginning level students.

As for elementary school students, high-achieving students were found to use a greater proportion of metacognitive strategies, and low-achievement students were found to use a greater proportion of cognitive strategies (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999). For example, low achievement students relied extensively on decoding of words but high achievement students used background knowledge.

Differences in strategy use between successful and unsuccessful language learners were also noticed by Abraham and Vann (1987). Case studies of two learners of English, one very successful and one less successful, indicated that the very successful learner used many more and a greater variety of both learning and communicative strategies than the less successful learner. The very successful learner was much more concerned with the correctness of forms, was more willing to guess the meaning, showed higher perseverance, used more production tricks such as paraphrasing to make himself understood, and employed much more clarification/verification learning strategies.
In conclusion, effective learners are more flexible with their repertoire of strategies and more effective at monitoring and adapting their strategies. Less effective learners are more likely to overuse ineffective strategies. Moreover, less effective learners become focused on details whereas more effective learners focus more on the task as a whole. For instance, more effective learners are more comfortable guessing or skipping some individual words when they are decoding words. They use background knowledge and inferences while using the dictionary only is the dominant strategy employed by less effective learners (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Wang & Pape, in press). In the present study, qualitative differences between ESL children’s use of SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across school-based and home-based contexts were examined with interviews, reading and writing tasks, and observations.

**SRL Strategies in Different Contexts**

While successful students are more likely to use more SRL strategies than less successful students, SRL strategies are also found to vary according to different learning tasks. In a six-year longitudinal project, Chamot and El-Dinary (1999) investigated elementary school children’s strategy use while learning a foreign language. Think-aloud protocols were used for the 16 sampled participants including a minimum of three highly effective and three less effective students in each classroom. These students were in the third and fourth grades and their target languages were Japanese, French, and Spanish.

A significant difference in the use of strategies was found for the context of learning tasks. Both high and low achievement students used twice as many
as the number of strategies for reading than for writing. Strategies favored in the context of reading were making inferences, predictions, elaborations, language knowledge, translating, and summarizing. The only strategy favored in the context of writing was planning.

These findings were supported by Bialystok’s (1981) study in which inferencing, deriving explicit linguistic hypothesis from the available information, was found to be engaged more often for written material than for oral language. The English reading and writing tasks in the present study and the field notes of on-site observations were used to provide information about how these children use varied SRL strategies in different contexts.

Factors Influencing the Choice of Strategies

Two factors affect the success of language learners: situational variables and learner variables (Bialystok, 1981; Nyikos & Oxford, 1993). Situational variables, on the one hand, refer to the teaching method, the quality of the materials available, and the opportunity to practice. Learner variables, on the other hand, are learners’ age, sex, ethnicity, length of exposure to the target language, motivation, and the learning style. The use of strategies is related primarily to learner variables such as learner’s self-efficacy beliefs, beliefs of the usefulness of the task, and motivation (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Wenden, 1987; Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

Motivation may be the single most powerful influence on the choice of language-learning strategies (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989). Students who were studying foreign languages at different levels completed the Strategy Inventory
for Language Learning (SILL) and a questionnaire covering gender, years of foreign language study, elective versus required course, self-perceptions of proficiency, and motivation. Five kinds of strategies were employed by these students, and these strategies were further examined by Oxford (1990) (See Appendix B). Learners who were highly motivated to learn a language were found more likely to use a variety of strategies. In addition, gender, years of study, course status, and language proficiencies all had significant effects on the choice of strategies. The higher the students’ perceived proficiency in each of the language skills, the more frequently they chose to use learning strategies. Students who elected to learn the language used more strategies than students who took the course as a graduation requirement. Moreover, the longer they learned the language, the more strategies they used.

To conclude, these studies indicate that situational factors such as the classroom context, home environment, and social setting as well as individual factors such as learner's self-efficacy beliefs and interests have an influence on their choice of SRL strategies. Thus, in the present study, guided interviews with the four participants and their parents as well as the classroom observations and observations of these children at play were used to explore factors that might influence their choice of SRL strategies.

**Self-Efficacy**

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p. 3). Self-efficacy refers to the judgments of what one can do with whatever
skills one possesses rather than the judgments of the skills themselves. Research studies indicate that self-efficacy is malleable (Klassen, 2004). Thus, it is helpful to examine the sources of self-efficacy in the following paragraphs.

According to Bandura (1997), there are four major sources of self-efficacy information: Mastery or enactive experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and physiological or emotional state. The following is a discussion of each of these sources.

Mastery or Enactive Experience

Mastery or enactive experience refers to the past experience of success and/or failure. “Successes raise efficacy appraisals; repeated failures lower them, especially if the failures occur early in the course of events and do not reflect lack of effort or adverse external circumstances” (Bandura, 1986, p. 399). A strong sense of efficacy is likely to be developed through repeated successes. Thereafter, occasional failures are not likely to influence the person’s judgment of his/her capabilities. The person tends to ascribe the failure to some external factor like insufficient effort or inappropriate strategies. In addition, effort in performing a task is another factor that has an effect on self-efficacy. When a person puts forth a great effort in carrying out a difficult task perceived by that person, success will not strongly influence the person’s self-efficacy whereas failure will undermine his/her self-efficacy (Nicholls & Miller, 1984). On the contrary, poor performance with feeble expenditure of effort has little impact on a person’s self-efficacy beliefs but success with little effort does lead to a high level of self-efficacy.
Voss (2003) worked with a classroom teacher to improve a fifth grader’s writing. The boy, Jed strongly resisted writing in September because he did not think that he could write well. With his classroom teacher’s writing assignment and encouragement, Jed gradually saw himself writing more details and writing more complete stories. As summer approached, Jed changed his self-efficacy beliefs after completing a couple of short stories successfully. He reported that he turned out to be a good writer.

Vicarious Experience

People sometimes make judgments of their own capabilities by watching similar other people perform certain tasks. Other’s success indicates that they themselves could perform the same task while other people’s failure suggests that they may not accomplish the task. This is especially true with young children who, since they lack direct knowledge of their own capabilities, may more likely rely on modeled indications (Keyser & Barling, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; Takata & Takata, 1976). People make comparisons with others in terms of age, sex, race, educational and socioeconomic level, and ethnic designation and then predict their own capabilities of performing the task.

In a study of the influence of vicarious experience on self-efficacy, Schunk and Hanson (1985) investigated how children’s self-efficacy and achievement were influenced by their observation of peer models. Students who had experienced difficulties in learning subtraction were grouped randomly, and each group either observed a peer’s demonstration of the acquisition of subtraction skills, observed a teacher model demonstrating subtraction operations, or did not
observe a model at all. The results of this experiment showed that both the peer model and the teacher model yielded higher self-efficacy and higher achievement than the control group that did not observe a model at all. The peer model led to higher self-efficacy and higher achievement than the teacher model.

This conclusion was also reached by Keyser and Barling (1981). Compared with older children, younger children relied more on modeling as a source of information regarding their self-efficacy beliefs. The authors posit that children's own performance accomplishments may attain more influence as a source of self-efficacy as the children become older. This argument was supported by Wang and RiCharde (1987) who reported that performance had significant influence on the self-efficacy beliefs of fourth graders but not on the self-efficacy beliefs of second graders.

Social Persuasion

Self-appraisals of competence are partly based on the opinions of significant others who presumably possess evaluative power (Bandura, 1997). People who are persuaded verbally that they possess the abilities to accomplish a given task are more likely to persist longer when confronted with difficulties and develop a sense of self-efficacy. Raising unrealistic beliefs of a person's self-efficacy coupled with failure when performing the task, however, will only discredit the persuader and further undermine the person's perceived self-efficacy.

In order to examine the influence of accurate appraisal on students' self-efficacy beliefs, Schunk (1981) conducted a study with children of nine to eleven
year olds. Correct feedback was found to enhance a sense of efficacy in children who had experienced profound failure in mathematics. Moreover, Keyser and Barling (1981) noted that continuous rather than delayed or intermittent feedback regarding the adequacy of performance was influential to students’ self-efficacy beliefs.

Shih and Alexander (2000) investigated different impacts of self-referenced feedback and social-referenced feedback on Taiwanese fourth-grade children. Self-referenced feedback refers to feedback in relation to the child’s own progress while social-referenced feedback refers to feedback of the child’s progress in comparison to his/her peers. Children who received self-referenced feedback demonstrated significantly higher self-efficacy to solve fraction problems than children who received social-referenced feedback.

*Physiological or Emotional State*

Students rely partly on somatic information conveyed by physiological or emotional states in judging their self-efficacy beliefs through cognitive processing (Bandura, 1997). The impact of physiological arousal on self-efficacy depends on the situational factors since environmental factors exert strong influence on how an internal state is interpreted. Nevertheless, it is not the arousal per se but the person’s view of the arousal that affects one’s self-efficacy. High achievers usually read arousal as challenge, and their self-efficacy is boosted. Thus, judgments of personal efficacy are affected by perceived rather than actual activation of arousal in situations involving risks.
In addition to physiological activation, mood also affects perceived self-efficacy because it activates an individual’s associated memories (Bandura, 1997). Past successes and failures are stored as memories. A positive mood activates thoughts of past accomplishments whereas a negative mood activates memories of past failings. Again, it is not the arousal state per se but the meaning given to it that affects one’s perceived self-efficacy. Successes under positive mood generate a high level of self-efficacy. Failures under negative mood, however, initiate low self-efficacy beliefs. “People who fail under a happy mood overestimate their capabilities. Those who succeed under a sad mood underestimate their capabilities” (Bandura, 1997, p.113).

The above discussion summarizes four major sources of people’s self-efficacy beliefs from social cognitive perspectives. Researchers provided additional factors that influence students’ self-efficacy beliefs. Huang and Chang (1998) worked with four Chinese adult learners of English and reported that factors that influence those students’ self-efficacy beliefs were students’ interests, the teacher’s role, the complexity of required tasks, learners’ performance, the comparison to other learners, and the effort put into the task. Interviews with four Chinese-speaking children and their parents, classroom observations and observations of these children at play were conducted in the current study to investigate contextual factors that influence ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs. In the following sections, I will present a discussion of students’ self-efficacy beliefs associated with academic achievements.
Self-Efficacy as an Indicator of Success

Self-efficacy has been found to be associated with academic achievements at school (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pajares, Miller, & Johnson, 1999). “Students who hold low self-efficacy for learning may avoid tasks; those who judge themselves efficacious are more likely to participate” (Schunk, 1990, p.74). Students involved in learning activities observe their own performance, which affects their sense of self-efficacy. When students observe successes and attribute the successes to their own ability, their self-efficacy increases. When they believe that they lack ability, however, and they cannot achieve on their own they may be unmotivated to work harder (Schunk, 1990). In order to test the hypothesis that self-efficacy is a predictor of students’ academic achievements, Pajares and Miller (1994) used a path analysis to examine the predictive and mediational role of self-efficacy in the area of mathematics. Three hundred and fifty undergraduates from a large public university were asked to complete a survey about their self-efficacy, perceived usefulness, self-concept, and anxiety in relation to mathematics. Their performance was measured by solving the problems provided to them together with the survey. The path analysis revealed that students’ judgment about their capabilities to solve particular problems were much more predictive of their success in solving the problems than were other variables. Self-efficacy was also found to mediate the effect of gender and prior experience on mathematics self-concept, perceived usefulness of mathematics, and mathematics problem-solving performance. The poorer performance and lower self-concept of the
female students were largely due to their lower self-efficacy. The study indicated that it was the self-efficacy rather than the self-concept that was predictive of and mediating the student academic achievements. Similar findings were reached by Schunk (1981) in the same field: high self-efficacious children subsequently persisted longer and achieved more successes on arithmetic tasks than their less efficacious counterparts.

Since self-efficacy is domain-specific (Bandura, 1997), it is necessary to investigate self-efficacy in different domains and with different research methods. Pajares and Valiante (1997) tested the predictive and mediational role of English writing self-efficacy among fifth-graders. Participants of this study were 218 fifth-grade students in three public schools. Self-efficacy turned out to make an independent contribution to the prediction of writing performance. Writing apprehension and perceived usefulness of writing had no direct effects on performance. A more recent study (Pajares et al., 1999) reached similar conclusions.

Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992) examined self-efficacy by subcategorizing it into self-efficacy for self-regulation and self-efficacy for academic achievement. Based on their data analysis, the authors argued that “students' perceived self-regulatory efficacy would influence their perceived self-efficacy for academic achievement, and their efficacy should, in turn, influence their personal goals and grade achievement” (p. 665). Students' perceived self-efficacy for self-regulated learning turned out to be a strong predictor of their self-
efficacy for academic achievement, and their perceived self-efficacy for academic achievement was found to predict both their final grades and their self-set goals.

In the field of learning ESL, Huang and Chang (1998) conducted a qualitative study with four adult language learners in order to investigate the relationship between their self-efficacy beliefs and language achievement. Interviews with the students about their English learning experiences and their self-efficacy beliefs together with classroom observations, documents analysis, and teacher interviews indicated that high achievement students had high self-efficacy.

In one of the few studies to investigate self-efficacy of young children, Wang and RiCharde (1987) investigated the developmental basis by which children’s ability to monitor their cognitive performances interacts with their perceived self-efficacy. Both second-graders and fourth-graders were assigned to a training group and a control group. The only difference between the control group and the treatment group is that metacognitive awareness was encouraged in the treatment group. All of the students were taught two different strategies to memorize words: rote-repetition method and sentence elaboration method. These children’s memorization of the words was measured afterwards. Regardless of grade or group, all participants exhibited gains in self-efficacy from pretest to posttest. The successful learning performance by fourth graders led to enhanced self-efficacy, which also generated to other similar tasks such as remembering numbers.
As is discussed above, self-efficacy is a strong predictor of students’ academic success in general and the achievement of language skills in particular (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares et al., 1999; Zimmerman et al., 1992). In the present study, a thick-description of ESL children's behaviors associated with their self-efficacy beliefs across different learning tasks and across school-based and home-based contexts was reported. Their self-efficacy beliefs were elicited through interviews following the observations. Close examinations of each individual case and cross-case analyses in Chapter 4 provide evidence for the relationship between the participant's self-efficacy beliefs and their self-awareness of English proficiency.

Having discussed self-efficacy and self-regulation respectively, I now shift the focus to the relationship between self-efficacy and self-regulation.

Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulation

The relationship between self-efficacy and student use of SRL behaviors was not paid much attention by researchers until 1990 (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). In a study on this relationship, Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) hypothesized that self-efficacy and self-regulated learning behaviors were strongly correlated and gifted students would display greater academic self-efficacy than regular students. Thirty eighth graders, 30 eleventh graders, and 30 fifth graders were randomly selected from a highly selective school for intellectually gifted children in New York City, and samples of the same size from correspondent grades were selected from a regular school. In both gifted and regular samples, students generally came from middle-class homes and varied in
The 14 classes of self-regulated learning strategies developed by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) were used in the interview to assess these students’ use of SRL strategies.

Students’ perceptions of both mathematical and verbal efficacy were correlated with their use of SRL strategies (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). Students’ mathematical and verbal self-efficacy were both negatively correlated with their seeking adult assistance. This finding supports Ellis’s (1989) argument that good language learners would rather take charge of their own learning than rely exclusively on the teacher. Thus, students’ efforts to strategically regulate their learning were associated with high self-efficacy in mathematics and reading. In summary, the relationship between self-efficacy and self-regulation indicates that low self-efficacious children are not likely to use as many SRL strategies as high self-efficacious children.

The discussions about self-efficacy suggest that efficacious individuals are more likely to participate while less efficacious ones are more likely to withdraw (Schunk, 1990). This phenomenon was studied specifically in the field of language acquisition. In the following sections, I will first present a theory to account for people’s willingness to participate in social interactions, such as a conversation, developed in the field of first/native language (L1) learning. Applications of this theory in the field of second language (L2) acquisition with research findings follow.
Willingness to Communicate

WTC in First Language Acquisition

The use of a target language is an important condition of successful language acquisition although it may not be the only factor affecting the target language (Hashimoto, 2002). For native/first language speakers, the use of the language varies according to the speakers’ personalities, also known as “trait-like.” Some people talk very little and some people talk more; many people talk more in some contexts than in others; and most people talk more to some interlocutors than they do to others. To account for this difference, McCroskey and Baer (1985) studied the observed mean percentage of time people would be willing to communicate across various receivers and contexts. Their study suggested that the larger the number of receivers and the more distant the relationship the less willing an individual was to communicate. Based on this study, McCroskey and Baer (1985) developed the Willing To Communicate (WTC) model and interpreted verbal communication as a volitional act. Whether a person chooses to talk or not to talk in a particular situation is cognitively processed and the personality of the individual may be the determining factor in this volitional choice (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990a). Therefore, WTC reflects a person’s stable predisposition to talk in different situations and is often seen as a personality trait.

Underlying the WTC construct, the personality-based trait-like predisposition is relatively consistent across a variety of communication contexts and types of receivers although situationally dependent. Variables that lead to
differences in WTC are referred to as “antecedents.” McCroskey and Richmond (1990a) considered these “antecedents” such as introversion, self-esteem, communication competence, communication apprehension, and cultural diversity, but they also claimed that there might be other causal elements for both the “antecedents” and WTC to be explored.

Introversion refers to an interlocutor being quiet, timid, and shy. An introverted person prefers to withdraw from communication. Since the choice of whether to communicate or not is a cognitive one, an individual’s perceptions of communicative competence might be more influential than his/her actual language competence. Communicative apprehension is a cognitive construct that refers to an individual’s level of fear or anxiety with either real or anticipated communication. Research indicates that people who experience high levels of fear or anxiety about communication tend to avoid or withdraw from communication (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990a).

WTC theory also maintains that one’s communication norms and competencies are culture-bound. McCroskey and Richmond (1990b) examined studies of WTC in USA, Sweden, Australia, Micronesia, and Puerto Rico, which suggested that USA subjects reported the highest willingness to communicate while the Micronesians reported the lowest. People were least willing to talk in public while they were most willing to talk at a one-on-one conversation across nations. Students from all countries reviewed reported a generally low willingness to communicate to strangers but a high willingness to talk to friends. A significant relationship between WTC, perceived competence of language skills, and anxiety
across these countries was found but the authors cautioned that “generating pancultural theoretical propositions at this time appears unwarranted” (p. 76).

Culturally divergent people are likely to adapt to the larger group’s communication norms, and they tend to be less willing to communicate when they are not certain how to communicate effectively in order to avoid failure and possible negative consequences (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990a).

Speakers of English as a second language are not only culturally but also linguistically divergent people. Unlike L1 speakers who have achieved a great deal of competence with their native language, L2 speakers have varying degrees of competence in the second language. Moreover, MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels (1998) claimed that “L2 use carries a number of intergroup issues, with social and political implications, that are usually irrelevant to L1 use” (p. 546). Therefore, there is a great demand to apply WTC in the field of second language acquisition.

**WTC in Second Language Acquisition**

Similar to L1 acquisition study, L2 acquisition research also found that trait-like variables, such as extraversion/introversion, were significantly related to willingness to talk (MacIntyre, Babin, & Clement, 1999). An extraverted person was likely to feel competent about his/her communication abilities and therefore was more willing to talk. MacIntyre et al. (1998) went beyond the trait-like variable and expanded WTC by treating it as a situational variable with both enduring and transient influences. The enduring influences represent stable properties, such as intergroup relations and learner personality, that would apply
to almost any situation. Transient influences are situational influences, such as desire to speak to a specific receiver and knowledge of the topic, that depend on the specific context at a given time. A heuristic model of variables influencing WTC (Figure 1) was developed with six layers. The first three layers represent situation-specific influences, and the latter three represent enduring influences.
Figure 1: Heuristic Model of Variables Influencing WTC

On the top of the pyramid is communication behavior, which refers to L2 use and includes speaking in class, watching television, and using the language in daily conversation with L2. The next layer is called behavioral intention, which is defined as “a readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons” (MacIntyre et al., 1998; p. 547). If a teacher asks the students a question in the classroom, many students raise their hands to answer this question. The students who raise their hands are assumed to feel confident enough to answer the question and have a desire to speak. In this case, the hand-raising is considered a nonverbal communicative event and indicates a student’s self-confidence to answer the particular question. People’s judgment of their capabilities to execute a particular action required to achieve the expected outcome is what is defined as self-efficacy discussed in the previous section (Bandura, 1997). Students who raise their hands must be efficacious to understand the question and formulate a response.

The third layer consists of situated antecedents of communication or an individual's desire to communicate with a specific person and the person’s self-confidence to communicate. One’s desire to communicate with a specific person is influenced by the relationship between the interlocutors while the person’s self-confidence to communicate is determined by the person’s prior experience in these specific situations. Novel situations should be detrimental to WTC because the speaker is not certain of his/her ability to communicate well in that particular situation. In terms of self-efficacy, it is argued that positive prior experience (success) enhances one’s self-efficacy whereas negative experience (failure)
undermines self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Nicholls & Miller, 1984). Novel situations, however, was rarely discussed in the literature of self-efficacy.

The decision to initiate speech is a volitional action that may be governed by not only situational influences but also enduring influences. The next three layers of the model deal with affective variables influencing an individual’s willingness to communicate and the social and individual context. The following paragraphs focus on affective variables such as motivation, anxiety, self-confidence, attitudes, and the social and individual context.

Motivation to speak in L2. Motivational propensities refer to interpersonal motivation, intergroup motivation, and self-confidence (MacIntyre et al., 1998). A functional perspective was adopted to interpret interpersonal motivation. Control and affiliation were identified as the major two purposes of communication. In a hierarchical situation, the communication is often initiated by the more powerful interlocutor and is linked to personal aspects of either of the interlocutors. That is, the more powerful interlocutor controls the flow of the communication and the flow is encouraged or discouraged by either party. Another aspect of interpersonal motivation is to establish a relationship with the interlocutor. This affiliation is prompted by personal characteristics such as attractiveness, similarity, and physical proximity. Personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to new experiences also contribute to interlocutors’ development of motivation for learning L2 or WTC in L2 (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996).
Noels, Pelletier, Clement, and Vallerand (2000) discussed intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation in detail. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation to engage in an activity because the activity itself is enjoyable and satisfying. In contrast to intrinsically motivated learners, extrinsically motivated learners take actions in order to earn a reward or avoid a punishment. Findings on self-determination theory about motivation, however, are inconsistent mainly due to the discrepancies about how motivation is measured and the context in which the language learning takes place (Hashimoto, 2002; Noels et al., 2000). Peirce (1995) argued that motivation must be understood with reference to social context and in relation to the multiple changing and contradictory identities of language learners across time and space.

Hashimoto’s (2002) study with Japanese university students in Hawaii indicated that students with greater motivation and more willingness to communicate reported more frequent use of English as a second language. The study suggests that willingness to communicate has motivational properties and perceived competence will lead to increased motivation which in turn affects frequency of L2 use in the classroom. Here, students’ perceived competence is the central element of self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003).

*Anxiety.* Language anxiety was defined as “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; p. 284). Anxious students usually have to divide their attention between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient (Eysenck,
1979). As a result, it takes anxious language learners longer to learn the language compared with relaxed students (Price, 1991). Anxiety also influences one’s of self-efficacy beliefs.

There are three stages during which anxiety may have an effect on the language acquisition: input, processing, and output (Tobias, 1986). The input stage represents the learner’s first exposure to a language at a given time. Anxious students may have to reread/listen to the sentences several times in order to understand the input. The processing stage refers to the organization, storage, and assimilation of the material. Since anxiety was associated with distracting, self-generated cognition such as excessive self-evaluation, worry over potential failure, and concern over the opinions of others, anxious students have lower efficiency than relaxed students (Price, 1991). The output stage is the production and demonstration of their learned materials and their capabilities to use the L2. Anxious students usually do not perform as well as they should at this stage. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) investigated Canadian university students learning French. Compared with relaxed students, anxious students experienced more difficulty to hold discrete verbal items in short-term memory, performed worse in translating the passage, guessed less, and spent more time to complete the test. In the current study, participants’ hesitation to respond to the teacher’s question and their inefficiency in completing English reading and writing tasks might imply the participants’ anxiety and lack of self-efficacy to perform these tasks.
In studies of language-learning anxiety, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) found that language anxiety correlates more highly with the self-ratings of proficiency than with actual performance, and MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997) found that anxious students tended to underestimate their ability and less anxious students tended to overestimate their ability. That is, less anxious students are more likely to hold higher self-efficacy. This is in line with Hashimoto’s (2002) claim that langue anxiety reduces perceived communicative competence.

According to Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallert (1999), language anxiety is composed of second language classroom anxiety and second language writing anxiety, and these two constructs are “related yet relatively distinguishable” (p. 436). Second language classroom anxiety was a more general type of anxiety with a strong speaking anxiety element while writing anxiety was a language-skill-specific anxiety. Some language learners may feel anxious about speaking the L2 but some others may be anxious about writing in L2. Some anxious students in second language classes may be worrying primarily about low self-confidence in speaking English whereas others may be largely influenced by their concern about possibilities of failure and negative evaluation.

**L2 Self-confidence.** Self-confidence in L2 refers to an individual’s overall belief of his/her capabilities to communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner. There are two components of L2 confidence: self-evaluation of L2 skills and language anxiety. The first component is cognitive and the second one is affective (MacIntyre et al., 1998).
Self-evaluation of L2 skills is a judgment about the person’s mastery of L2, also known as perceived competence. Changing one’s perceived competence may require considerably more time and effort compared with strengthening one’s self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Therefore, self-confidence is comparatively more stable but self-efficacy is amenable to change across different tasks. Past research has shown that two strongest predictors of WTC are perceived communication competence and communication anxiety (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre, Clement, Baker, & Conrod, 2001). Among these two individual differences, perceived competence was the single largest factor for adult students learning French in a bilingual (French-English) social context (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). This study suggests that perceiving one has the ability to communicate, regardless of one’s actual proficiency, can affect the rate of participation in L2 conversation. We also learn from MacIntyre and Charos’ (1996) path model that the intention or willingness to engage in L2 communication is determined by a combination of the student’s perception of his/her L2 proficiency, the opportunity to use the language, and a lack of apprehension about speaking.

Communicative competence refers to linguistic competence, discourse competence, actional competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Communicative competence includes knowledge of the basic elements of communication such as syntactic and morphological rules, lexical resources, and the phonological and orthographic systems needed for oral or written communication. Discourse competence refers
to competence to select, plan, and arrange words, structures, sentences, and utterances to achieve a unified spoken or written text. They include cohesion, coherence, generic structure, and the conversational structure inherent to the turn-taking system in L2 communication. While actional competence refers to matching communicative intent with linguistic form, sociocultural competence includes an individual’s knowledge about how to express his/her ideas appropriately within a particular social and cultural context. Finally, strategic competence involves knowledge of communication strategies that allow a L2 speaker to compensate for deficiencies in any of the communicative competencies discussed above. It is very important to distinguish actual competence and perceived competence here because WTC functions with how the individual perceives his/her competence rather than the person’s actual competence.

Perceived confidence is also a central element of academic self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). “Confidence is a nondescript term that refers to strength of belief but does not necessarily specify what the certainty is about” (Bandura, 1997, p. 382). According to Bandura (1997), students who believe they are capable of managing specific impending dangers or threats have little reason to fear or avoid them; those who doubt their ability will easily give up, feeling vulnerable and anxious. In the context of second language learning, students with low self-confidence might tend to underestimate their ability to learn a second language and therefore feel anxious in the face of the language-learning tasks (MacIntyre et al., 1997).
**Attitudes.** A positive attitude toward an ethnic group leads to positive interactions with that group and negative intergroup issues such as prejudice and discrimination hinders the interactions (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Thus, the intergroup relationship might also impact the motivation to learn the language of the other group.

While interpersonal motivation is related to individual characteristics of the interlocutors, intergroup motivation originates from the desire to belong to a particular group. Learning a second language for friendship or pragmatic reasons is believed to increase an individual’s willingness to communicate. For L2 speakers, the desire to affiliate with people who use the language, usually the more powerful and the majority of the group, and to participate in the culture of the dominant group, has a powerful influence on language learning and communication behavior in general and on WTC in particular.

The desire to be a part of the L2 community is indicative of increased involvement with that community, and the concern for the potential loss of membership in the native ethnolinguistic community is related to poorer quality and lower frequency of contact with the L2 community (Noels et al., 2000). Research also indicates that attitudes towards the L2 itself also influences one’s motivation to learn (Yashima, 2002). Enjoyment and satisfaction encourages communication. Japanese university students’ attitude toward intercultural communication, international activity and foreign affairs influenced their motivation to learn English as a foreign language (Yashima, 2002). The more internationally oriented, the more willing an individual was to communicate in
English. Such individuals were more motivated to study English. This motivation, in turn, contributes to proficiency and confidence in L2 communication.

Gardner, Masgoret, and Tremblay (1999) studied Canadian university students learning French as a second language and claimed that positive attitudes toward the learning situation led to high language motivation and low levels of anxiety. Low levels of anxiety and high levels of motivation resulted in high self-perceptions of French proficiency. The study also suggests that language attitudes are sensitive to the contextual conditions of the learner’s environment. For example, the percentage of French population in the home environment affected the learner’s levels of French use anxiety.

Thus far, we have considered the most researched topics of affective variables that influence an individual’s willingness to communicate: motivation, anxiety, self-confidence, and attitude toward the L2 and the L2 group. It is clear, however, that the context of the language interactions cannot be overemphasized. The discussion of WTC will now turn to the societal and individual context in L2 acquisition.

*Societal and individual context.* The social situation refers to the participants’ age, gender, social class, the relationship between the interlocutors, the setting, and the purpose of the communication. Topical expertise and the familiarity with a certain task boosts one’s linguistic self-confidence since the superior content knowledge may override the person’s anxiety about his/her limited L2 proficiency.
Clement, Baker, and MacIntyre (2003) studied Canadian university students learning English or French as a second language in order to build a path model with both contextual and individual variables in L2 use. Their path model suggests that among minority group members, the role of anxiety-related processes might be more contextually determined than is the case for majority groups. For both the minority and majority groups, the perception of normative pressure to speak in the L2 makes identification with the L2 group more likely and, as a consequence, entails seeking more active contact in the L2.

The discussion in previous paragraphs indicates that an individual’s willingness to communicate is influenced by affective variables and the social and individual contexts. These factors were often found to be integrated in influencing people’s WTC in second language acquisition. In a study with secondary-school students, Clement, Dornyei, and Noel (1994) found that students’ English achievement was related significantly to self-confidence, evaluation of the learning environment, and motivational indices. Students’ attitude and their efforts were also related to self-confidence, the learning environment, and students’ motivation. These authors claimed that self-confidence influenced L2 proficiency both directly and indirectly through the students’ attitude toward English and the effort they put learning the language. They also argued that language acquisition was a complex social process. Group cohesion was associated with a positive evaluation of the learning environment and formed a broader classroom environment. Positive classroom atmosphere promotes students’ involvement and activity while moderating anxiety and
promoting self-confidence. On the other hand, the student brings into the classroom a level of self-confidence and anxiety related to extra-curricula experiences with the language, the quality and quantity of which would then influence classroom behavior, achievement, and anxiety.

Yashima’s (2002) study also suggests that motivated students tend to have confidence in communication but having confidence does not seem to be sufficient for an individual to be willing to speak. The individual still needs to have confidence in his/her communication competence in L2. Furthermore, increased perceptions of freedom of choice and perceived competence were found to be linked to more self-determined forms of motivation (Noels et al., 2000).

In summary, MacIntyre et al. (1998) extended WTC by identifying several additional influences particularly in L2 communication and broadened the concept to include both oral and written communication. They also redefined the WTC construct to refer to an individual’s WTC at a specific time and included additional transient and situational variables that have an impact on a person’s WTC. The extended model explains why some L2 learners speak in spite of limited communicative competence whereas others are reluctant to talk with high competence.

Although MacIntyre et al. (1998) conceptualized WTC as a situational-based variable representing an intention to communicate at a specific time to a specific person, there may be additional variables that need to be added to the model. Therefore, this study investigates children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their
use of SRL strategies to see if these variables could help explain these children’s learning process.

Research also indicates that individuals exhibit regular WTC tendencies across situations, but whether they are willing or not willing to communicate is, to a great degree, situationally dependent. As a result, we need to study an individual’s predispositions that are context-based and/or receiver-based. The current study employed participant observation to describe children’s self-efficacy and self-regulation within the authentic context in which young learners use English in their daily life and study.

Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed three main topics pertinent to the present study: self-regulation, self-efficacy, and willingness to communicate. Both social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives of self-regulation were used to help explain children’s development of self-regulation. The social cognitive perspective of self-regulation emphasizes the evaluative capabilities of the mind (Bronson, 2000). Children learn cognitive processing strategies by observing and evaluating the behaviors of both the self and others. They develop goals and performance standards and use these to guide and evaluate their own activities through observations. The sociocultural perspective of self-regulation emphasizes children’s active role in the construction and control of cognitive processes. Culture and language play an important role in shaping children’s mind. Self-regulation is a shared act and an interpersonal phenomenon. Children actively construct higher level thinking processes while interacting with more
experienced members of the society (e.g., teachers and parents) and actively strive for control and independence.

After an introduction to the 14 categories of SRL strategies developed by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986), the relationship between students' use of SRL strategies and academic achievement as well as factors influencing students' choice of these strategies were discussed. Previous research indicates a positive relationship between students’ use of SRL strategies and their academic achievement (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Pape & Wang, 2003; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988). Students’ use of SRL strategies is also found to vary across contexts: they reported more strategies for reading than for writing activities (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999). Factors that influence students’ choice of strategies are motivation, self-efficacy, beliefs of the usefulness of the task, etc.

Following the discussion of self-regulation and SRL strategies, Bandura’s (1997) definition of self-efficacy was introduced. Four major sources of self-efficacy information were discussed with research findings: Mastery or enactive experience, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and physiological or emotional state. Students' self-efficacy is positively related to their academic achievements in general and the achievement of language skills in particular (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pajares, Miller, & Johnson, 1999). In addition, the positive relationship between self-efficacy and self-regulation was also discussed.
Finally, WTC model was used to explain the volitional act of students’ willingness to engage in language-learning activities. Factors that influence an individual student’s willingness to talk in the second language include self-confidence, familiarity with the task, motivation, anxiety, attitudes, the relationship between the interlocutors, and the societal and individual contexts (Clement et al., 1994; MacIntyre et al, 1998; Yashima, 2002).

Research Questions

I learned from the literature review that few studies focused on ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs or SRL strategies (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Huang et al., 1999). Therefore, the present study attempts to investigate elementary school ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies in order to fill this gap in the literature. The research questions that investigate ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts are as follows.

Research Purpose One:

a. What ESL children’s behaviors may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?

b. What are their self-efficacy beliefs across these contexts?

c. What factors impact the development of children’s self-efficacy?

d. How do ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English vary across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?
The research questions that examine ESL children’s use of SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts are as follows.

Research Purpose Two:

a. What SRL strategies do ESL children employ in learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?

b. How do ESL children use SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts while learning English?
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study explored the self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies of four Chinese children learning ESL at an urban public school. The aim of the study was to investigate the participants’ existing beliefs about their capabilities and their use of language-learning strategies to accomplish specific English language tasks. The study also examined contextual factors that might have an impact on the children’s self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies.

Previous studies suggest that modeling, students’ interests, the teacher’s role, the complexity of required tasks, learners’ performance, efforts put on the task, feedback, students’ physiological or emotional state all affect students’ self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997; Huang & Chang, 1998; Schunk & Hanson, 1985). The learner’s self-efficacy beliefs, beliefs of the usefulness of the task, and motivation have an impact on the learner’s choice of SRL strategies (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). Factors that influence students’ self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies are complicated and interrelated. In addition, it is difficult to measure young children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies. Therefore, qualitative
analysis resulting in thick descriptions of students’ behaviors and beliefs was employed in an effort to begin to understand this complexity. The openness of interpretivism allowed me to approach the inherent complexity of social interaction and to honor this complexity.

As an interpretivist, I regard my research task as coming to understand and interpret how my participants in a social setting construct the world around them. I must gain access to the multiple perspectives of the participants with regard to self-efficacy and self-regulation. My qualitative study design, therefore, focused on in-depth, long-term interaction with relevant people in several sites. I became the main research instrument as I observed, asked questions, and interacted with my participants.

Participant observation and on-going interviews were used in this case study. Participant observation considers the perspectives and experiences of the participants and enables the researcher to investigate the complex and rich social phenomena in greater depth and detail (Patton, 1987). It ranges across a continuum from mostly observation to mostly participation depending on the context of the study (Glesne, 1999). My role in the present study moved from observer as participant to participant as observer when I was easily and readily incorporated into the lives of the children.

A case study design was used because it “offers insights and illuminates meanings that expand the readers’ experiences. These insights can be constructed as tentative hypotheses that help structure future research” (Merriam, 1988, p.32). The case studies, which consist of observations, verbal
protocols, student reading and writing assignment analysis, and interviews, provided information for a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) of the participants through the “intellectual effort” (Geertz, 2001) of the researcher. To provide a “thick description”, the detailed description of the participant’s behavior with the researcher’s thinking and reflecting, the researcher approaches the topic with a more pluralistic, interpretive, and open-ended perspective. The “thick description” makes possible “thick interpretations” in which the researcher “has no privileged voice in the interpretations that are written” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.15). In order to avoid a “thin description”, I conducted “emic analysis” (from insider’s perspectives) and to stratify a hierarchy of meaningful structures in terms of how the activities were “produced, perceived, and interpreted” (Geertz, 2001, p. 58). Moreover, cross-checking by asking the same question in different contexts as well as the use of member checks and peer debriefing ensured a “thick description.”

As a member of the participants’ community and the father of a boy about the same age of the participants, I have been playing with this group of children for one to four years. This special connection made it possible for me to provide “emic analysis” by interpreting these children’s actions through their own perspectives. In addition, a similar study, which served as a pilot of this study, was conducted in 2001. Through this previous study, I gained a great deal of experience interviewing children of this age group and their parents. I learned how to be very attentive to children’s point of views while maintaining the parental role in the meantime.
Settings and Participants

The selection of the participants and the school for this study was based upon homogenous sampling and convenience sampling. Similar cases, all Chinese boys in the same community and from the same school, were selected in order to describe this subgroup in depth.

I have a son who is an ESL learner. Through him, I have become acquainted with many other ESL children and their parents. Among them, most are Chinese. The groundwork for rapport had already been established before the present study started. At least one of the parents of each of my participants is a doctoral student or post doctorate fellow. They were comfortable with this research study and were cooperative during the whole process. Participants’ selected background information is presented in Table 3.1. Detailed information about each participant is presented in Chapter 4 with individual case studies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Kelvin</th>
<th>Jeff</th>
<th>Richard</th>
<th>David</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years learning English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Participants' Background Information

The school is the recipient of the *No Child Left Behind* (U. S. Department of Education, 2002) Blue Ribbon Award, a national award given to schools with
high academic achievement. Reading, writing and mathematics standardized test scores are above the national average.

In addition to the school, this study was conducted in the playgrounds within our community and the participants’ houses. Naturalistic settings where there was no intervention were used because it is important to collect data in the setting where the participants feel comfortable and spend most of their time (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Gaining Entry

As a member of the PTO (parent-teacher organization), I have met the principal and other teachers and staff in my son’s school many times. Thus, the school personnel were very supportive of my study. An ESL classroom teacher at the school offered me great help while I was doing a pilot study in 2001, and she helped me gain access to other classrooms.

After the approval from the Behavioral and Social Sciences Institutional Review Board of the Ohio State University (See Appendix C), letters of introduction and consent forms for participation (See Appendix D) were delivered to parents and teachers of five potential participants. All of them signed the consent forms but one family moved out the community in the middle of the study. The child of that family was therefore dropped from this study. Since my participants often play with children who are not participants of the present study, and I want to videotape my participants at play as they are playing without changing their social context, I also obtained the consent forms from five other parents whose children are not under study.
Access to the school was approved by the school district and consent forms were obtained from the principal and all the teachers of my participants. Since I live within the same community with the participants and I know their parents, access to the playgrounds and their houses was simplified.

Data Collection Methods

To gain a deep understanding of children’s behavior and their self-efficacy beliefs, I collected data through six different resources. A description of each data collection method is presented as follows:

*Parent Interviews and Children Pre-Interviews*

These interviews were conducted at the beginning of the study. Although the guided interview questions were the same for each parent and child, the length of the parent interviews varied from 10 to 80 minutes. Some parents provided more information than I elicited because they thought the information would be helpful for me to understand their children while some other parents just answered my questions directly. All the children answered my questions directly without elaboration. Parent interviews helped me gain information about parent involvement with the students’ learning of English with respect to the children's self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies. They also helped me explore how home environment affected the students’ self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies. Children’s pre-interviews helped to elicit students’ demographic information, motivation to study English, and perceived usefulness of English. Please refer to Appendix E for guidelines for these interviews.
Observations at Play

Twenty-one observations (about 17 hours) of participants at play provided data to examine participants’ behavior within informal English language-learning settings. The participants were observed interacting while playing on monkey bars, video games, computer games, soccer, chess, card games, as well as trading Pokemon and/or Digimon cards. I took time for reflective and analytic noting. I wrote down my feelings and jotted down ideas and impressions. While taking notes, I also clarified earlier interpretations, speculated about the meaning of children’s behaviors, and made flexible short- and long-term plans for the days to come. The observations helped to understand the participants’ behavior related to their self-efficacy beliefs when learning English and the contributions of social factors to students’ self-efficacy beliefs and their choice of SRL strategies. An example of the field notes of these observations is presented in Appendix F.

Classroom Observations

Twenty-one classroom observations (approximately 21 hours) provided sources to examine participants’ behavior in class (formal English language-learning setting) with a focus on English reading and writing tasks. Notes were taken with the understanding and permission of the teacher. During the classroom observations, I made notes and jotted down thoughts related not only to my research questions but also to the classroom teaching and learning activities in order to better understand the classroom context. These field notes helped to explore the impact of classroom context on students’ self-efficacy
beliefs and SRL strategy choices. Appendix F also provides an example of the field notes of these observations.

Follow-up Interviews

These interviews were on-going and followed each observation. Questions that I had during the observation were included in the interview to help me further understand the children’s behavior. Students’ self-efficacy beliefs to perform tasks related to English language-learning activities recorded during the observation were elicited. Future tense was used to elicit self-efficacy beliefs because “self-efficacy represents relatively malleable and future-oriented conceptions of the self and its potential” (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003, p. 9).

To elicit the children’s self-efficacy beliefs, a chart with five stars was presented. The children were asked to choose a star to indicate how well they could accomplish a specific language-learning task. The largest star (the fifth one) indicates “can do it very well,” and the smallest star (the first one) indicates “not able to do it.” Students’ responses were probed for further understanding. Students’ use of SRL strategies during the observation was also checked with follow-up interviews. These interviews also helped me investigate factors contributing to their self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies. Since questions for these interviews depended upon the observed children’s behaviors, no guideline for these interviews was used.

English Reading and Writing Tasks

Third- and fourth-grade students (See Table 3.1) were presented The Book of Questions and Answers (2003) and were asked to choose a chapter to
read. They were informed that they could use all resources they could think of to read and understand the chapter and were asked to speak out loud whatever they were thinking when they were reading. The first grader, Kelvin, was asked to read *Harry the Dirty Dog* (Zion, 1984). A sample of the reading task is attached in Appendix G.

For the writing task, participants were given an option to either write a book summary or a journal entry. Kelvin and Edward chose to write a short paragraph and the other two children wrote a story of an event during the day. They were told to use whatever resources they could think of in order to complete the task. They were also asked to speak out loud whatever they were thinking when they were working out the writing task. Please refer to Appendix G for a sample of the writing task.

Before students actually proceeded to do the reading and writing tasks, I elicited the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs and observed their use of SRL strategies to triangulate their self-reported use of SRL strategies during previous interviews.

*Post-Interview*

At the end of the study, each participant was interviewed about their self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies related to the language-learning tasks across home-based and school-based contexts. Questions for this interview were adapted from the self-efficacy and self-regulation questionnaires in Wang and Pape’s (in press) study. This interview triangulated students’ previously reported self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies and helped me understand
some issues in the preliminary data analysis. Guided questions for this interview are also provided in Appendix E.

School-Related Documents

Participants’ report cards and English reading and writing assignments were collected. These documents provided information about the participants’ English proficiency and helped me understand the English reading and writing activities in which the children were engaged at school. Teachers’ comments about my participants’ progress on the report card and their writing documents also served as triangulation to my interpretations from the observations and interviews.

Data Collection Procedure

This study started in the summer of 2003 and ended in the spring of 2004. Table 3.2 is the log of activities during the data collection and analysis processes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Data Collection Activities</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July, 2003</td>
<td>(a) Parent interviews and children pre-interviews</td>
<td>(a) Preliminary analysis of the interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Observation of children at play</td>
<td>(b) Preliminary analysis of the fields notes of observations and follow-up interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) On-going follow-up interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August, 2003</td>
<td>(a) Observation of children at play</td>
<td>(a) Preliminary analysis of the fields notes of observations and follow-up interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) On-going follow-up interviews</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) English reading and writing tasks</td>
<td>(b) Analysis of students’ behaviors in the reading and writing tasks and the probing interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Probing interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September, 2003</td>
<td>(a) Observation of children at play</td>
<td>Preliminary analysis of the fields notes of observations and follow-up interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Classroom observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) On-going follow-up interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October - December, 2003</td>
<td>(a) Classroom observations</td>
<td>(a) Preliminary analysis of the fields notes of observations and follow-up interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) On-going follow-up interviews</td>
<td>(b) Analysis of students’ behaviors in the reading and writing tasks and the probing interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) English reading and writing tasks</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(d) Probing interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>December, 2003</td>
<td>Children post-interviews</td>
<td>Preliminary analysis of the interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January – May, 2004</td>
<td>Student document collection</td>
<td>(a) Re-examination of preliminary analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Analysis of students’ report cards and reading and writing documents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(c) Member checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Peer debriefing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Log of Activities during the Data Collection and Analysis Processes
Data collection started with an audiotaped parent interview and an audio- and video-taped children pre-interview to gain family environment related to the children’s learning of English and biographical information. Next, participants were observed at play and in their classrooms. Observations of the participants at play were videotaped and audiotaped, but classroom observations were only recorded on field notes because all parents in the class did not provide consent for videotaping. In addition, several classroom teachers were concerned with the videotaping or audiotaping. Participant interviews followed the observations and provided additional information about behaviors recorded during the observation. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. The English reading and writing tasks were videotaped and transcribed.

Information about the setting, purpose, activity, researcher’s comments, and theoretical and methodological reflections were recorded on the observation field notes. Questions related to participants’ behavior related to self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulation were noted for the follow-up interviews. These interviews were conducted shortly after the observations. The range of context at play included games that need cooperation and communication, and the classroom context included activities to improve the students’ basic language skills in reading and writing. All participants’ report cards and their English reading and writing assignments were photocopied near the end of this study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began during data collection and was ongoing throughout the study (Merriam, 1988). I analyzed the data holistically and analytically rather
than reductively while taking the participant perspectives into account. I reviewed all the data to understand the content of my observations as well as to search for emergent patterns, issues, or themes related to the research questions of this study.

Ryan and Bernard (2000) discussed how themes are identified in qualitative data analysis:

Themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that investigators identify before, during, and after data collection. Literature reviews are rich sources for themes, as are investigators’ own experiences with subject matter. More often than not, however, researchers induce themes from the text itself. (p. 790)

In the present study, cognitive map analysis was used to identify emerging themes related to self-efficacy. Cognitive map analysis combines the intuition of human coders with the quantitative methods of network analysis (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). The purpose of using cognitive map analysis is to reduce text to the fundamental meanings of specific words. These reductions help researchers identify general patterns and make comparisons across texts. Field notes from observations were used as texts in this study. I compared the participants’ behaviors noted on the field notes by analyzing repeated words and used maps to show the relations between students’ behaviors.

Previous research in the fields of self-efficacy impacted the themes in my mind during the data coding process, but emerging themes were identified from the observation field notes according to the number of occurrences of the same
pattern. A pattern is considered a theme if it repeatedly occurred in the data analysis process. The minimum number of occurrences used as a cut-off point in deciding whether a pattern was an emerging theme was the total number of observations for each participant. This means that a pattern was considered an emerging theme if on average it occurred at least once in each observation. Since the length of each observation varies, from 15 to 70 minutes, a pattern did not have to occur in each observation in order to be identified as an emerging theme. For example, through Kelvin’s 16 observations at play, in the classroom, and working on reading and writing tasks, I observed 65 behaviors that may provide evidence of his self-efficacy beliefs or SRL strategies. Among them, 24 are related to persistence. Research in the field of self-efficacy indicates that students who believe they possess the abilities to accomplish a given task are more likely to persist longer when confronted with difficulties (Bandura, 1997; Schunk, 1990). Therefore, persistence was identified as an emerging theme.

It is important to note that more than one emerging theme may be identified within a sequence of behaviors. For example, Jeff was very aware of his own English proficiencies. He repeatedly referred to his limited English vocabulary whenever I asked him to justify his self-efficacy beliefs related to performing language tasks. His self-awareness of English proficiencies often influenced his willingness to engage in language activities. When he realized that his English proficiency for writing was low, Kelvin reported low self-efficacy to write a journal entry and tried to avoid engaging in writing activities.
As stated above, although theories of self-efficacy were used as a reference to confirm the emerging themes, they were not used to identity themes. For example, research indicates that peer modeling had a great influence on children’s self-efficacy beliefs (Keyser & Barling, 1981; Schunk & Hanson, 1985). Although Kelvin occasionally repeated older children’s words, the number of occurrences for this pattern is very small: only three times of all the 16 observations. In addition, I could not elicit from the interviews the reason for this behavior. Therefore, peer modeling was not identified as an emerging theme. On the contrary, although Schunk (1990) posits that efficacious children are more likely to participate while less efficacious children are more likely to withdraw, theorists who examined self-efficacy have not examined issues of willingness to engage in language activities. Nevertheless, a majority of the participants’ behaviors indicated this pattern. As a result, this pattern was identified as an emerging theme, and the WTC model was used for a close analysis of participants’ willingness to talk related to self-efficacy and self-regulation.

SRL strategies were coded using the 11 categories of SRL strategies regrouped by Pape and Wang (2003) from the 14 classes developed by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986). All data were coded preliminarily in a table format while they were collected.

*Data Organization of Observation Field Notes*

There were five columns for each of the observation field notes. The first column was the time when a new task started, and the second column was selected transcriptions, detailed descriptions of the activity, and the participants’
behaviors. In the third column, I wrote comments. Some of the comments served to explain classroom occurrences or what happened before the observed activity in order to better understand the context of the observed behavior. The fourth column included theoretical reflections representing connections between observed behaviors and the extant research literature. The last column was methodological reflections. In this column, I noted my questions and my reflections related to the data and the approaches used to collect the data. These questions were approached in the following interviews. I also included self-critiques with respect to my research methodology in this column.

Data Organization for Interviews and Reading and Writing Tasks

There are three columns for each interview and the reading and writing task data analysis. The first column is the transcription of the interactions between the participant and me. All oral interactions were transcribed for the interviews and the reading and writing tasks. The second column is the theoretical reflections and notes where I coded the data according to emerging categories as well as the literature. The last column is methodological reflections, same as that in the observation field notes.

Trustworthiness

From sociocultural research perspectives and the view of a participant researcher, I believe that the case study design is an effective way to demonstrate the interplay between the researcher and the participants through “thick description.” Detailed descriptions based on careful observations constitute an important part of the experimental findings. Such observations, if carried out
objectively and with scientific rigor, have the status of validated fact (Vygotsky, 1978). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), for each quantitative methodological procedure for establishing reliability and validity, qualitative inquiries have aligning and parallel procedures. These procedures involve examining the credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the obtained data.

The credibility of qualitative inquiry is especially dependent on the credibility of the researcher because the researcher is the instrument of data collection and the center of the analytical process. Since I was doing a “backyard research” (Glesne, 1999) in my own community, my attachment to this field may lead me to data that support my own hypothesis. I may hear what I want to hear and see what I want to see. I may easily find ways of discrediting those that disagree.

The techniques employed to explore my subjectivity and to increase the likelihood of producing credible findings for this study were prolonged engagement and persistent observation (long-term acquaintance, six months of observations, and on-going interviews), member checks, peer debriefing, and triangulation of data. Spending time to build strong relationships with the participants allowed proper trust to be developed, leading to more honesty, frankness, and completeness in the participants’ responses (Glesne, 1999). Repeat interviews throughout the study helped in developing rapport and increased the validity of the interviews. The on-going interviews also allowed the
participant time to think more deeply about their own feelings, reactions, and perceptions.

After data coding, the analyses were reported to the participants’ parents. I discussed my initial report of the children with the participants and their parents for member checks. Member checks give participants an opportunity to scan the data and my analyses to ensure that they were represented correctly. Member checks attempt to bring the voice of the “researched” into the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), but the researcher has the complete responsibility for the analyses and interpretation of the data.

I debriefed with another doctoral student who was conducting a related study and a research team who all have expertise in self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulation to increase the likelihood of producing credible findings. Unlike member checks, peer debriefing provides the perspectives of a peer who is not involved in the research project (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This peer debriefing enabled me to question my methods, assumptions, and data representations throughout the study.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the concept of transferability is a suitable substitute for generalizability. Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity between two contexts and defined this similarity as the degree of congruence between the “sending” and “receiving” contexts. Therefore, my thick description with “emic analyses” facilitated transferability judgments on the part of the “receiver” who may wish to apply the study results to his/her own situations.
The confirmability of a qualitative research parallels the objectivity of quantitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). To achieve confirmability, the qualitative inquirer must ensure that the data secured from the participants, along with the interpretations and findings from the inquiry process, are “grounded in events rather than the inquirer’s personal constructions” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 324). In other words, the researchers’ responsibility is to document the findings without judgment. I triangulated the data through multiple sources/angles and used member checks and peer debriefing to check my own attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and data representations as means to establish confirmability of my data. In addition, an audit trail was maintained with careful documentation of the data (all field notes, students’ reading and writing documents, audio- and videotapes, transcriptions, and data analyses).
CHAPTER 4

DATA DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to investigate children’s self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies related to studying English as a second language and to understand factors that influence these children’s self-efficacy and their choice of SRL strategies.

I collected data from (a) parent interviews and children pre-interviews; (b) participant observations of children at play and in the classroom; (c) on-going follow-up interviews related to observations; (d) English reading and writing tasks; (e) post interviews with children; and (f) analyses of student documents such as students’ work in reading and writing, students’ report cards, and their standardized achievement test reports.

I spent time with my participants as they played in their home community during the summer of 2003, learning what and how they lived by actually doing what they did. The settings for these observations were all natural allowing me to examine and understand my participants’ behaviors that may be related to their self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies in learning English in their daily life context. I also visited both the ESL and regular education classes of my
participants for four months during the fall and winter of 2003 in order to examine and understand my participants within the classroom context.

While studying each individual case, I took detailed field notes of the observations and students’ behaviors during the reading and writing tasks. Afterwards, I watched the video tapes several times and transcribed a majority of the observations and the whole process of reading and writing tasks. While examining and reexamining each participant’s behaviors, I noted questions when I saw my participant’s behavior, either hesitation or promptness, in his/her interactions with his/her peers or teachers. I also noted the children’s use of strategies in communicating with their peers and the teacher. These children’s behaviors were better understood through follow-up interviews.

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy refers to people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute specific tasks. It is a person’s judgments of what he/she can do with whatever skills possessed rather than the judgments of the skills themselves. Therefore, participants’ hesitation or promptness to interact might indicate their judgment of their capabilities to interact given their English proficiency level. From the observations, I noted that my participants sometimes participated actively in the conversation with their peers but sometimes were quite reluctant to talk. These behaviors might be associated with the children’s self-efficacy beliefs. From the perspective of the Willingness to Communicate (WTC), an individual’s willingness to talk depends largely on his/her self-confidence to communicate with the receiver (Clement et al., 2003). There are two components of L2 self-confidence: self-evaluation of L2
skills and language anxiety (MacIntyre et al., 1998). The first one is cognitive and is a central component of self-efficacy in social cognitive theory. The second is affective and is influenced by the discomfort when using the second language, which corresponds to the mastery or enactive experience source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Thus, whether the participant choose to actively engage in the activity or to avoid speaking English in a context might also be associated with their self-efficacy to speak English in that particular context.

My interpretations of the participant’s behavior were triangulated with follow-up interviews. The child’s use of strategies to communicate were also noted and triangulated with the interviews. The observed strategies were coded as SRL strategies if they were self-generated and were planned in order to achieve the participants’ personal goals (Zimmerman, 2000).

Interviews that followed each observation or the reading and writing tasks served to provide additional information about the children’s self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies. Questions were asked to elicit participants’ self-efficacy beliefs related to language-learning activities during the observations. For example, Kelvin learned how to describe an animal in two or three sentences in class. Students in his class were asked to think of an animal before describing it and asking others to guess what that animal was. In the follow-up interview, I asked Kelvin how well he could describe a crocodile in two or three sentences in order to elicit his self-efficacy for this activity. Students’ responses were probed for further understanding.
A post-interview was again conducted with each participant near the end of the study. These interview questions were adapted from a survey developed through a pilot study (Wang & Pape, in press). This interview served as triangulation of students’ previously reported self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies. Through this interview, I also obtained a better understanding of the participants’ behaviors and self-efficacy beliefs. In this chapter, I begin by presenting and interpreting students’ behavior in an effort to understand their self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies among individual case studies.

The total number of behaviors that might provide evidence of participants’ self-efficacy beliefs or their use of SRL strategies was recorded for each participant. Three major themes related to self-efficacy emerged through the data coding process: persistence across contexts, self-awareness of English proficiencies, and willingness to engage in language activities. These emerging themes and SRL strategy use information are presented in Table 4.1 and will be described and interpreted with excerpts from data sources within the case studies. Since each behavior may be coded within two or more emerging themes, the number of total behaviors recorded is smaller than the sum of the behaviors in each category. Table 4.1 presents the number of participants’ observed behaviors related to each emerging theme of self-efficacy and the number of strategies reported. Since participants repeated the same strategy across different language-learning contexts, the number of different SRL strategies is much smaller than the number of strategies reported.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Kelvin</th>
<th>Jeff</th>
<th>Richard</th>
<th>David</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Observations</td>
<td>16 (760 mins)</td>
<td>15 (790 mins)</td>
<td>13 (500 mins)</td>
<td>14 (525 mins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total behaviors recorded</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>24 (37%)</td>
<td>31 (42%)</td>
<td>25 (40%)</td>
<td>18 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness of English proficiency</td>
<td>41 (63%)</td>
<td>42 (58%)</td>
<td>37 (60%)</td>
<td>45 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to engage in activities</td>
<td>52 (80%)</td>
<td>61 (84%)</td>
<td>53 (85%)</td>
<td>60 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of strategies</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of different strategies</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common strategies reported</td>
<td>Seeking social assistance, Seeking information, and Environmental structuring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual strategies reported</td>
<td>Organizing and transforming</td>
<td>self-evaluation</td>
<td>Reviewing records</td>
<td>Reviewing records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goal-setting and planning</td>
<td>Reviewing records</td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping records and monitoring</td>
<td>Rehearsing and memorizing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rehearsing and memorizing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Number of Behaviors (Percentage) Coded within Each Emerging Theme Related to Self-Efficacy and Strategies Reported
It is interesting to note that the number of observed behaviors related to willingness to engage in language activities is the most among the emerging themes for each participant. Actually, the majority of the observed behaviors that may provide evidence to self-efficacy or self-regulation were related to this emerging theme. According to the theory of self-efficacy, efficacious students are more likely to participate while less efficacious ones are more likely to withdraw (Schunk, 1990). The WTC model indicates that the most significant predictor of one’s WTC is one’s self-confidence (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996), and self-confidence is a central component of self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Therefore, it is not surprising that self-efficacy and regulation are closely related to WTC, since self-efficacy is also closely related to self-regulation (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990).

The second largest theme according to the number of observed behaviors is self-awareness of English proficiency. This is not surprising either because self-awareness of English proficiency is related to one’s perceived competence of English language skills. Perceived competence is also a central component of one’s self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). I will refer to the numbers in Table 4.1 within the individual case studies and apply self-efficacy and SRL theories to these emerging themes and strategies reported in cross-case analyses and provide discussions at the end of this chapter.

Throughout the case studies, the following conventions were followed. Within the excerpts, “I” stands for “interviewer,” “K” stands for “Kelvin,” “J” stands for “Jason,” “R” stands for “Richards,” and “D” stands for “David.” Designation of
data sources were used in abbreviated forms together with the date the data were collected to help the reader distinguish when and in what occasions the data were collected. The designations of data sources are as follows:

IN-P: Interviews with parents
OB-P: Observation field notes at play
OB-C: Observation field notes in the classroom
IN-C: Interviews with the participants
READ: English reading task
WRITE: English writing task
DOC-RD: Student reading document
DOC-W: Student writing document
DOC-R: Student report cards

For example, OB-C/Sept 18, 03 indicates that the quotation is from classroom observation field notes that I recorded on September 18, 2003. All identification of the participants was removed and pseudonyms were used for the sake of confidentiality.

The Elementary School

All my participants attended the same elementary school. It is a city public school located in a beautiful one-story building close to the student family residential area of a mid-western university. The school has its own playground, parking lot, and a front yard where the flag pole of the American national flag stands. Many international students send their children to this school. Therefore, there are many speakers of English as a second language in this school. One
third of the students in the school are from 35 different countries. The school sponsors an international night once a year to recognize every country represented.

According to the department of education in the state, there are 294 students from Kindergarten to the fifth grade in this school at the school year of 2002 - 2003. The majority of the students are whites (40.1%) and the second largest group is Asians (33.6%). African Americans account of 20.8% and Hispanics are 5.1%. Of all the students, 67.2% were economically disadvantaged, 54.6% were limited English proficient, and 14.1% were identified with disabilities.

The school is the recipient of the No Child Left Behind (U.S. Department of Education, 2002) Blue Ribbon Award. This is the national award given to schools with high academic achievement. The 2002-2003 school year report card indicates that the average achievement scores of the fourth grade students in this school on state-wide standardized tests were among the top ten public schools in the district. According to the report card, the percentages of the students at or above the proficient level for citizenship, mathematics, reading, writing, and science were 65.9%, 71.4%, 69.0%, 80.5%, and 42.9%, respectively.

Of the 18 teachers in this school, there is only one African American and all the other 17 are whites. All the teachers have state authorized certification or licensure to teach, and the average years of teaching experience of the teachers in this school is 18 years.
Kelvin – A First Grader

Kelvin’s Background

Kelvin is the youngest of all my participants and the only child in his family (IN-P/August 24, 03). His mother is a doctoral student at a Midwestern university and his father is a student at another university in the same city. His parents, both from Mainland China, always check his homework and sometimes give Kelvin extra work in mathematics and Chinese. Kelvin’s parents mentioned in the interview that they checked his homework not only to make sure that Kelvin did not make many mistakes but also to have some information about what Kelvin was learning at school. They also wanted to learn what subjects Kelvin mastered well and what subjects he had not mastered so that they could offer some help at home. Kelvin’s parents go to the teacher’s meeting every time and get some directions from the teacher on how to help him succeed in school. They often review with Kelvin what he has learned at school on weekends. His mother sometimes borrows books from the library or buys them but they do not have a specific plan of how many books to read every day.

Kelvin was six years old and was in the first grade at the time of the study. He came to the United States on July 2, 2002 and started his schooling in Kindergarten, September 2002. Although both his mother and I thought that his English was good enough to catch up with average learners in his class after staying in the ESL program for a year, he was still placed in the ESL program for the first grade. He stayed in the ESL program for a total of 18 months (the average length of stay in the ESL program was 12 months for a child in this
school) but he exited successfully from the program by the time the data collection for this study finished.

In the following paragraphs, I present and interpret Kelvin’s behavior in categories of emerging themes related to self-efficacy and his strategic efforts from the data sources. His behaviors that indicate his persistence in the language-learning process will be presented followed by a discussion of his self-awareness of his English language proficiencies and his self-efficacy beliefs.

*Persistence across Contexts*

Through my eight classroom observations, four observations of Kelvin at play, and four observations of Kelvin when completing reading and writing tasks, I observed a total of 65 behaviors that may provide evidence of his self-efficacy or self-regulation. Among them, 24 were related to persistence (See Table 4.1). In the following paragraphs, I provide evidence that Kelvin had high level of persistence when he thought he could do the task well. His lack of persistence in certain situations was found to be associated with his low self-efficacy to accomplish the same language-learning tasks.

Kelvin liked to play with Jason, a boy of the same age with him. Jason came to the United States from China shortly after Kelvin did. These two boys had a lot in common and played together frequently because their parents took turns caring for the boys. One of the first observations of Kelvin occurred at Jason’s apartment (OB-P/August 7, 03). Kelvin and Jason were learning how to play a computer game by watching the demonstration. “That is how to battle,” Kelvin told Jason. The followings are excerpts from their interactions:
Kelvin: You know what? They are going to *Zhan Hao* [moat], you know why?
Jason: I don’t know.
Kelvin: There is *you yi ge zhan hao* [There is a moat].
Jason: I don’t know.
Kelvin: Let’s skip this first.

Kelvin shifted his language from English to Chinese, his native language, when he met a difficulty in speaking English to his friend. He also gave up his goal to figure out how to say *Zhan Hao* [moat] in English and how to use it in the game when Jason could not help him either. It is quite common for bilingual children, and bilingual adults, to switch from one language to another. Although there are many reasons for this phenomenon of code switching (Jorgensen, 2003), Kelvin’s lack of persistence in figuring out the English term for *Zhan Hao* [moat] indicated to me that he might have low self-efficacy to do so. In the follow-up interview [IN-C/August 7, 03], Kelvin revealed a sense of low self-efficacy to translate this Chinese term into English and to figure out how to use it to read the instructions. During the post interview [IN-C/Nov 28, 03], Kelvin reported low self-efficacy to translate words from Chinese to English.

The following observation in the ESL classroom indicated Kelvin’s persistence in completing the task to tell a story. When the students were asked to tell a story about themselves, Kelvin told about his experience at Wendy’s but was stuck with the choice between *noon* and *afternoon*. Although encouraged by the teacher to skip this part and continue the story, Kelvin did not give up easily. He used *noon* and *afternoon* interchangeably throughout his story to the end. While telling the story, Kelvin showed a lot of hesitation and struggle with the choice of the word for *noon* or *afternoon* but he persisted in trying to finish telling
the story and to find the appropriate word in that situation (OB-C/Sept 25, 03).

During the follow-up interview (IN-C/Sept 25, 03), I asked him what time was noon and what time was afternoon. He was confused with the time and struggled for a long time. This was because in the Chinese culture, noon is often considered a period between 12:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M., but this same time span is considered afternoon for speakers of English. Kelvin finally told me that afternoon was after recess at school.

When the ESL teacher shifted the conversation from telling stories to talking about the benefits and inconveniences of having rain, Kelvin could not respond to the teacher's request for a response. This was unusual for Kelvin in the ESL class context. He usually answered the ESL teacher's questions well and was very active in responding to the teacher's questions the day prior to this incident. Therefore, I wondered whether this change of his behavior was because he became anxious after his struggle with the choice of words during the story-telling episodes and whether it was because he was still working on the previous task in his mind to figure out whether to use *noon* or *afternoon*. I interviewed him after class (IN-C/Sept 25, 03):

I: Is raining a good thing or bad thing?
K: A raining?
I: Raining, you know rain?
K: Oh, you mean *Xia Yu* [rain].
I: Em-Hm.
K: Well, bad thing because you can get sick.

I was actually asking Kelvin the same question his teacher asked in class. Apparently, Kelvin knew the answer to this question, but he did not respond to this question at all in class. He could not even tell the teacher if the rain touched
the ground or not. Kelvin explained to me that he did not know what to say when the teacher asked him the same question in class because he was thinking whether he should use noon or afternoon in his story telling. Thus, this interview provided some information to help me understand his behavior in the classroom. Kelvin was still persisting to figure out whether to use noon or afternoon and his persistence in the previous task influenced his attention to the next task. He actually knew the answer but could not say a word when called upon by the teacher. Kelvin’s persistence in completing his stories in the ESL class was associated with his high level of self-efficacy in speaking English in this class [IN-C/Nov 28, 03].

**Self-Awareness of English Proficiencies**

Of the 65 behaviors recorded, 41 were related to his self-awareness of English proficiency (See Table 4.1). As an English language learner, Kelvin was aware of his English language skills in certain areas. In the following paragraphs, I provide evidence that Kelvin’s awareness of his English proficiency influenced his self-efficacy beliefs to some extent. The following excerpt from an observation helped me understand that Kelvin was aware of his limited English vocabulary.

Kelvin and Jason were watching the computer demonstration of a game at Jason’s apartment (OB-P/August 7, 03). Jason made several comments that somebody on an island would come and beat them up. Kelvin did not seem to agree with Jason and kept asking Jason five times by using the phrases of “you do?” twice, “they can?”, “that island?”, and “you think so?” once. After another
couple of minutes, Jason went back to the bed and pretended to be sleeping.

Kelvin jumped toward Jason and yelled at him. Jason woke up.

Kelvin: Is that, is that, is that, so, so, so, so loud?
Jason: Yeah. And you bumped me.
Kelvin: Did I scare you?
Jason: Eh Hum. You scared me. You scared me.
Kelvin: You thought I was a ghost?
Jason: Yeah. I thought you were a ghost.
Kelvin: I'm NOT ... a ghost.
Jason: Ah Hum.
Kelvin: I'm a, is a people.

Excited with the play, Kelvin stammered on the word so because he was trying to recall the English word *loud*. Apparently, his hesitation was due to his limited English proficiency. When I asked Kelvin how well he could ask Jason about Jason’s thoughts, he replied “Not very well because there are many words I don’t know” (IN-C/August 7, 03). So, his awareness of limited English vocabulary may contribute to his low self-efficacy in using the language in communication in this situation. He also made an English grammar mistake by saying “I’m a, is a people”. Although he used self-correction as a strategy to check his own mistakes in speaking English, his over-correction revealed his limited English proficiency at the same time.

While the previous episode provided some evidence of his awareness of limited English vocabulary, the next episode implied his awareness of high English proficiency in the contexts familiar to him. Since Kelvin had been in the ESL class longer than most students and every child was not proficient in English, Kelvin reported high self-efficacy to help other children in English. His awareness of comparatively high English proficiency in his ESL class may be a
source of his high self-efficacy to help other children. For example, a student was
talking about an accident when playing on the playground, but was stuck with the
words *monkey bar* in an ESL classroom activity (OB-C/Sep 25, 03). Kelvin
figured out what he was trying to say and uttered the words *monkey bar* for him.
He later reported in an interview that he could help his ESL classmates to think of
an English word very well and he could correct their English mistakes well
because he thought his English was “good” (IN-Sept 25, 03). His self-reported
high self-efficacy to correct his classmates’ English mistakes was triangulated in
an observation later. When a student pronounced the word *wrong* as *wronger*,
Kelvin corrected her pronunciation immediately. When another student said that
she “eat” soda, Kelvin said, “You are not going to *eat* soda. That means, you
can’t *eat* soda” (OB-C/12/4/03). These behaviors of Kelvin coupled with the
follow-up interviews helped me understand that he was aware of his English
proficiency in different contexts, and he could help his friends in English when he
felt self-efficacious to do so.

Although his teacher taught in class about the use of capital letters and
the singular and plural forms of verbs, Kelvin forgot to use capital letters and
made a lot of mistakes with singular or plural forms of words in his writing
documents (DOC-W). This indicated to me that Kelvin’s English writing
proficiency was limited. An interview helped me understand that Kelvin had low
self-efficacy in writing English diaries. This might be due to his lack of practice in
writing diaries and his bias against it (IN-C/Nov 28, 03).

**I:** How well do you think you can write English diaries? You know diaries?
K: You mean like those things for girls?
I: Why are those things for girls?
K: Of course those things are for girls.
I: Why? Diaries are for girls?
K: Yes. Because girls keep it like a secret.
I: You never write diaries?
K: I never write diaries.
I: How well do you think you can write a diary if I ask you to do so?
K: Cannot do it.

Kelvin reported very low self-efficacy for writing English diaries in the interview. From the samples of Kelvin's writing documents (DOC-W) and his performance at the writing task (WRITE/Dec 28, 03), I learned that Kelvin's English writing proficiency was low, which may be associated with his low self-efficacy to write an English diary.

The previous two episodes provided some information about Kelvin's self-awareness of his English proficiencies in vocabulary and writing contexts associated with his self-efficacy beliefs. I present more about Kelvin's self-efficacy beliefs and his self-awareness of English proficiencies in listening, speaking, spelling, and reading contexts in the following paragraphs. Generally speaking, I learned from the interviews that Kelvin had high self-efficacy for listening in the classroom context but his self-efficacy to spell English words and to read English books vary across specific tasks. These self-efficacy beliefs were all associated with his self-awareness of English proficiencies in the particular language skills needed for the particular tasks about which he reported his self-efficacy beliefs.

Kelvin's self-efficacy to understand a native speaker's English was high (a level of 5) but low (a level of 3) to understand a non-native speaker in his class. I
noticed in a classroom observation (OB-C/Sept 18, 03) that William was reading
the news from the student council with a very strong accent. Therefore, I wanted
to know about Kelvin’s self-efficacy to understand William’s words in comparison
to his self-efficacy to understand his other classmates’ words.

I: How well do you think you can understand your classmates?
K: Very well.
I: William is a student from the student council. If he is reading news to
you, how well do you think you can understand him?
K: Can do it but not very well.

My classroom observations told me that William was not a classmate that
Kelvin often played with. This helped me understand why he chose 5 for
understanding his classmates but 3 for understanding William’s words. I also
learned from this interview that the discrepancy between Kelvin’s report of high
self-efficacy to talk to his peers in the regular education classroom and his
inactive participation in his regular education class was due to the classroom
context. Kelvin was quite active in the small group activities while inactive in the
whole class activities. So, he reported high self-efficacy to speak to his
classmates even in the regular education classroom because he usually talked to
his classmates within his small group in the regular education classroom.

Although he indicated comparatively high self-efficacy in understanding
both his ESL teacher and regular education classroom teacher’s instructions,
Kelvin reported low self-efficacy to answer these teachers’ questions in class (IN-
C/Oct 20, 03). He told me that he had to understand what the teacher said in
order to answer the teacher’s question. This implied to me that Kelvin was aware
that it was easier to follow the teacher’s instructions because he just needed to
do what the teacher told him to do while it was more challenging to answer the teacher’s questions because he needed not only the English language skills but also the knowledge in the content area in order to answer the teacher’s questions.

In speaking, Kelvin had higher self-efficacy (a level of 5) for telling stories about himself than telling stories he had read in a book (a level of 3). He told me in the interview (IN-C/Nov 28, 03) that he would need the book in order to tell me the story he had read. When I probed into the reason for this difference, he said that he forgot almost every single paragraph after reading. So, Kelvin was aware that retelling a story from a book was more demanding than telling a story about himself because he had to read and keep the information in mind in order to retell the story well. His reported low self-efficacy to retell a story from a book was supported by his teacher comments in the report card. His teacher said that Kelvin “should work on retelling a story – what happens at the beginning, middle, and end. He should work on connecting his ideas in a story” (DOC-R/Oct, 03). Kelvin’s low self-efficacy to retell a story was also associated with his awareness of his limited reading comprehension skills elicited from the interview (IN-C/August 28, 03).

I was very surprised to learn that Kelvin’s concept of reading was just to read out the words. When I showed him the book *Harry the Dirty Dog* and asked him how well he could read it, he said he could do this very well (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). Nevertheless, during the same interview, he said that he could not understand the book well. To him, reading and understanding were two different
things. My eight classroom observations (OB-C) helped me understand that Kelvin’s concept of reading was typical of children at his age because the teacher often referred to reading the words out loud when she was asking children to read.

For spelling English words, Kelvin reported high self-efficacy for color words and his classmates’ names but low self-efficacy for certain names of objects such as airplane and applesauce (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). I learned from classroom observation field notes that Kelvin’s teacher practiced the spelling of color words with the students (OB-C/Sept 11, 03), and Kelvin often wrote his classmates’ names correctly in class. Therefore, Kelvin reported high self-efficacy to spell the words that he was familiar with because “successes raise efficacy appraisals” (Bandura, 1986, p.399). On the other hand, I never saw Kelvin used the word airplane or applesauce before. As a result, the spelling of these words might be novel tasks for Kelvin. According to WTC model, novel situations should be detrimental to WTC because the speaker is not certain of his/her ability to communicate well in that particular situation (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Therefore, Kelvin’s low self-efficacy to spell the words such as airplane and applesauce might be due to his lack of successful experience with spelling these words. This discussion was supported by Kelvin’s other responses in which he reported high self-efficacy to read books about animals but low self-efficacy to read chapter books. My observations also told me that Kelvin often read books about animals but I never observed him reading a chapter book.
Now that I have discussed Kelvin’s persistence and self-awareness of English proficiencies associated with self-efficacy beliefs, I will turn to his willingness to engage in language activities.

Willingness to Engage in Language Activities

Of the 65 recorded behaviors, 52 were related to his willingness to engage in language activities (See Table 4.1). Kelvin had a desire to be part of the English-speaking community. Therefore, he liked to speak English and watch English TV programs. He participated actively in the ESL class, but his participation at the regular education class was somewhat passive in the context of large group discussions. He also showed hesitation and retreat from talking to older children at play.

Kelvin’s mother told me that he was required to speak Chinese at home. My observations, however, helped me notice that he sometimes spoke English at home and his parents seemed to be quite tolerant to this. Kelvin reported in the interview that he liked both English and Chinese although he preferred English channels on TV (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). He liked English cartoons more because his friends liked them and he had more chance to watch English cartoons in America. Kelvin also thought that he had to speak English with other children because “this is America.” So, like other participants, Kelvin studies English because he is expected to use English in both his school environment and in his community. Kelvin’s positive attitude towards learning English and his desire to identify and affiliate with members of the English-speaking community motivates
him to speak English more and creates more opportunities for him to engage in
an English language-learning environment.

Kelvin was willing to engage in English language-learning activities not
only at play but also in his ESL classroom. Kelvin started the conversation during
one of my classroom visits (OB-C/Sept 11, 03). He told the teacher that he
learned how to tie his shoes. Motivated by Kelvin, other children also volunteered
to talk about their experiences in learning how to tie shoe laces. So, Kelvin’s
active participation helped other children in his class choose a topic to practice
their English speaking competence. A couple of minutes later, the teacher
noticed a bruise on a girl’s leg. The topic for conversation shifted to accidents.
Kelvin searched for an episode to speak about. Not being able to find an episode
of an accident to talk about, Kelvin chose to tell a story about a time when he
could not walk well because his leg hurt (OB-C/Sept 25, 03).

Kelvin: I can’t walk so good. Yesterday when I went to the library, I can’t
walk good. My leg hurts.
Teacher: Is it because you were tired?
Kelvin: Yes. I was tired and I can’t walk good.
Teacher: Is it better now?
Kelvin: A little bit.

The fact that Kelvin chose to talk about another thing that happened to
him in order to participate in the conversation indicated his willingness to engage
in ESL classroom activities.

Kelvin also showed high engagement in the ESL class when the teacher
was reading a book about a Hermit crab (OB-C/Sept 25, 03). He proudly
announced to the class that he knew all those sea animals because he read
library books.
Through the three ESL classroom observations and five regular education classroom observations, I consistently noticed that Kelvin was less active in the regular education class than in the ESL class.

On the first day of my visit to Kelvin’s regular education classroom (OB-C/Sept 4, 03), Kelvin was sitting against the wall at the edge of the group. Although the classroom activities organized by the teacher were well designed and helpful to improve the students’ English literacy skills, Kelvin only participated in two of the eight class activities. One of them was an interaction with the teacher, and the other was a mathematics task in which Kelvin cut some figures to match the geometric figures on a school bus.

On the following classes, Kelvin gradually started to participate more, but his participation was still limited compared with that of his classmates. He usually waited until the teacher called him. His teacher had a good sense in teaching and noticed Kelvin’s hesitation to participate. When all of the other students responded to the teacher’s question about rhyming, the teacher asked Kelvin specifically (OB-C/Sept 18, 03).

When asked about the reason for his different behaviors in the ESL and regular education classrooms, he reported low self-efficacy to answer the teacher’s questions in the regular education class (IN-C/Nov 28, 03):

I: How well do you think you can answer the questions from Mrs. R (Regular education classroom teacher)?
K: I can do it but not very well.
I: Why?
K: Because sometimes I don’t know what she is talking about, so I don’t know the answer if I don’t know the problem or the solution.
I: Do you always raise your hand and answer Mrs. R’s questions?
K: Not always.
I: Why?
K: Because I don’t know the answer. I have to listen well. I have to think about it and then volunteer.

This interaction during the interview provided support for my observations and helped me understand that Kelvin participated less in the regular education because he had lower self-efficacy to answer the regular education classroom teacher’s questions in comparison with his self-efficacy to answer the ESL teacher’s questions.

A possible factor that influences an individual’s willingness to communicate is the size of the group to which he/she is speaking (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Thus, the small class size of the ESL classes and the large size of the regular education classes might be one reason that Kelvin talked less in the regular education class than he did in the ESL class. I tried to probe into this issue by asking him to estimate his self-efficacy to talk to his peers in his regular education class. To my surprise, he reported high self-efficacy for this task (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). I learned from the classroom observations, however, that Kelvin was active in his group work but not in the whole class discussions.

Another possible reason for his unwillingness to communicate is the receiver (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Most students in the regular education class were English native speakers while all students in the ESL class were speakers of English as a second language. Thus, I probed his self-efficacy to talk to English native speakers and speakers of English as a second language. I was again surprised to learn that he had high self-efficacy to talk to both groups of students (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). Therefore, I think his self-efficacy to speak in English
in class was not so much influenced by the environment as by the language tasks themselves. The language-learning tasks in the regular education class were more challenging than those in the ESL class (OB-C) for Kelvin. According to Platt (1994), learners actively construct their own environment through language use when they engage in communicative tasks in the classroom. This might be the reason that Kelvin had comparatively lower self-efficacy to answer the teacher’s questions and his participation was mostly passive in the regular education class.

Another situation where Kelvin was less willing to talk was when he was with older children and the topic of the older children’s conversation was not familiar to him. One afternoon (OB-P/August 2, 03), Carol and Eve were playing in the same apartment where Kelvin and Tom were playing, but the girls were not with the boys at the beginning. When the girls heard the conversation of the boys about Yu-Gi-Oh cards, they joined the boy’s conversation but not the game by talking about a card Tom wrote to his mother on Mother’s Day. The older children’s conversation was about Mother’s Day. At first, Kelvin was still listening and sometimes repeated clusters of words he heard. Soon afterwards, he could not keep up with the conversation. Finally, Kelvin gave up his participation in the conversation and started to draw his Yu-Gi-Oh cards on a piece of paper by himself. This part of observation indicated to me that Kelvin might have low self-efficacy to join the conversation of older children whose English is much better than his and whose knowledge is more than his. My interpretation of his behavior was triangulated through the following interview (IN-C/August 2, 03):
I: If Tom, Carol and Eve are talking to each other, how well do you think you can join them and talk to them?
K: Em. Two (his finger pointed at the second star which stands for “not very well”)
I: Why?
K: Because they speak fast and they say something I don’t know.

The interview provided some evidence that Kelvin did not participate in the older children’s conversation because he had low self-efficacy to do so. When Tom turned on the TV and turned the channel to cartoon shows, the children became quiet and shifted their attention to the TV. We can also interpret this scenario as this: The more powerful interlocutor controls the flow of the communication, and the flow is encouraged or discouraged by either party (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

**Strategic Efforts across Contexts**

Kelvin reported 27 strategies which fall into six categories of different SRL strategies (See Table 4.1). The SRL strategies that I observed Kelvin use or elicited through interviews with Kelvin are mainly seeking social assistance, organizing and transforming, and seeking information. He also reported the strategies of keeping record, rehearsing and memorizing, and environmental structuring. The following episodes provided the situations where Kelvin used his strategic efforts across contexts.

After Jason left for China in late August, Kelvin started to play with older children such as Tom, Carol, and Eve. Kelvin prefers to play with Tom because they are both boys although Tom is three years older than him. One day, Kelvin, Tom, Carol, and Eve were playing together in the apartment complex. Kelvin and Tom were playing Yu-Gi-Oh cards while Carol and Eve were chatting. When he
ran across a card that he did not recognize, Kelvin asked Tom for help (OB-P/Sept 23, 03).

Kelvin: Now, look at my Yu-Gi-Oh card, I wonder who it is. Now what’s this? What is this?
Tom: The turtle island.

When Tom claimed having won the game, Kelvin did not understand how he lost the game. Again, he asked Tom how to see if he had lost. Tom told him that he had to read the instructions on the card. Kelvin’s requests for information represent an instance of the strategy seeking social assistance because this strategy was self-initiated and he had a particular goal for using this strategy - to play the game.

Another situation where Kelvin applied the strategy of seeking social assistance was in his regular education class. When he could not use his finger to follow the words of a book under the teacher’s request, Kelvin raised his hand and asked the teacher why he couldn’t point to the words right when he was reading (OB-C/Sept 18, 03).

In addition to seeking social assistance, Kelvin used organizing and transforming frequently throughout my observations. During one of Kelvin’s ESL classes (OB-C/Sept 25, 03), the teacher asked students to make a comparison between apartments and houses. Kelvin made a good comparison between an apartment and a house, using his apartment as an example, and used his drawing skills to illustrate where he was living. In this situation, Kelvin was expected to tell others where he was living and how his apartment looked. While speaking, Kelvin drew a sketch of his apartment as well as the surroundings of
his apartment and used the sketch to support his spoken English. This use of the sketch as a tool for communication is an important self-generated strategy to achieve his goal. In terms of self-regulation, we see in this instance a form of organizing and transforming.

“To chunk the word” was Kelvin’s most commonly used strategy in decoding words, and I put this in the category of organizing and transforming as well. He learned this strategy in his class (OB-C/Sept 4, 03). When I asked him how he could read the words encountered, he said, “Actually sometimes I always … but I got to look at it and chunk it up, chunk for the part that you know. That is the strategy of reading” (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). I also noticed in the classroom observations that this was the strategy his classroom teacher often talked about in class. My classroom observation field notes helped me learn that Kelvin’s regular education classroom teacher also taught him the strategy of seeking information in reading and the strategy of organizing and transforming in reading and writing.

One more organizing and transforming strategy that Kelvin often used in learning English was the translation between English and Chinese. Kelvin used his native language, Chinese, in his communications with his friend Jason and me (OB-P/August 7, 03 and IN-C/Nov 28, 03). When I asked him how he could learn a new English word (IN-C/Nov 28, 03), Kelvin told me that he thought about what an English word meant in Chinese in order to remember that word. So, he translated an English word into Chinese in order to help him memorize the meaning of that word. I interpreted this as organizing and transforming in the
context of second language acquisition because Kelvin transformed the word from English to Chinese and made a connection to the meaning of the word in his native language in order to memorize it.

Seeking information is a very common strategy students employed during learning (Pape & Wang, 2003). Kelvin was no exception. He reported this strategy several times across different learning tasks: looking in the dictionary for unknown words, using the picture to guess what is said when reading picture books, and looking at what the characters are doing to understand the message when watching TV.

Although he did not actively participate in the whole class activities in the regular education class, Kelvin was quite involved in small group activities. At a writing workshop (OB-C/Oct 23, 03), the teacher introduced the class to strategies for writing a narrative story and gave them a group of story starters such as once upon a time, one day, in the fall, on a farm, etc. Students were given handouts with the words Beginning, Middle, and End. They were asked to think about what they were going to write and the order of the stories before cutting and gluing the pictures to add to the story they were expected to write. Students were supposed to put a title and a sentence next to each of the pictures. Since I have been to this class many times, the children regarded me as their teacher’s assistant. They frequently asked me for help spelling. Kelvin asked me how to spell the words friend and farmer. Later, a girl asked me how to spell the word than, and Kelvin pulled out his folder with poems and showed the word to the girl. When he was stuck with the word bare, he remembered that the
teacher had recently written this word on the blackboard. He looked at the blackboard and copied the word *bare* on his paper. Being able to look for sources of information is an example of a self-regulated learning strategy, seeking information. The following is the story written by Kelvin:

**Beginning:** there is a scarecrow live in a farm.
**Middle:** his friend is a squirrel and a farmer.
**End:** and then the tree are bare.

While the episodes described above provided evidence of Kelvin’s use of three SRL strategies in three different contexts, the following interview helped me understand that Kelvin had access to three strategies to accomplish a single task. I asked him what he would do if he met a word that he did not understand when he was listening to a story (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). He replied, “Think about it. Maybe you could tell your parents. First, write it on the paper, show it to your parents, and ask them what the word means in your country.” “Write it on the paper” is keeping records; “show it to your parents” is seeking social assistance; and “ask them what the word means in your country” is organizing and transforming.

Kelvin reported the strategy of rehearsing and memorizing across different learning tasks (IN-C/Nov 28, 03):

I: How do you help yourself remember what you have read?
K: Put the words in your brain.

I: If the teacher tells you that tomorrow you are going to have a spelling test, what do you do today?
K: Practice my words.

I: How do you practice?
K: Write it. Pretend I have to practice “well” and “very”. And then I say “well”, w-e-l-l. Correct? Then I say “very”, v-e-r-y. That’s what I mean practice.
As for environmental structuring, Kelvin told me that the best place for him to read was his classroom. Kelvin’s family was living in a one-bedroom apartment at the time of the study. Thus, the only room for him to read at home was the living room. Kelvin told me that he would turn off the TV if he wanted to read at home (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). He also mentioned that he was not able to study if his friends were playing at his home.

Although he could use some SRL strategies in learning English, Kelvin still needed adults’ or teachers’ assistance in class given his young age. For example, he often talked to the girl next to him whenever he finished one step of his task (OB-C/Sept 18, 03). When I asked him why he did not continue working on the task (IN-C/Sept 18, 03), his response was, “When you are done with it, you need an adult to check it. So, so, when an adult check it, you play.” This indicated that Kelvin relied on adults when accomplishing some learning tasks. So I think Kelvin was able to use many SRL strategies in learning English but I would not consider him highly self-regulated given his age.

**Summary**

In summary, Kelvin showed persistence and willingness to participate in performing language-learning tasks. In this analysis, such behaviors were considered indications of high self-efficacy beliefs in the ESL class. His participation in the regular education class may be characterized as passive, and his unwillingness to engage in these activities may be interpreted as being associated with his low self-efficacy beliefs to answer the regular classroom teacher’s questions. At play, Kelvin lacked persistence when confronted with
tasks that he had low self-efficacy to accomplish. The connection between Kelvin’s behavior at play and in the classroom with his self-efficacy beliefs to perform related tasks supported Schunk’s (1990) argument that efficacious children are more likely to participate and persist while less efficacious children are more likely to withdraw. When Kelvin was aware that his English proficiency was good, he also reported high self-efficacy. This supports Bong and Skaalvik’s (2003) claim that perceived competence is a major component of self-efficacy.

Kelvin reported six out of the 11 categories of SRL strategies regrouped by Pape and Wang (2003). He was able to seek information from course materials or ask questions from the teacher when he met difficulties in completing language-learning tasks in the classroom. He used the strategy of organizing and transforming during communication with his peers. When no social assistance was available, Kelvin wrote down his question on a piece of paper to keep records. In order to memorize the spelling of new words, Kelvin used the strategy of rehearsing and memorizing. Kelvin was also able to use the strategy of environmental structuring by turning off the TV in order to read.

His use of these strategies was possibly due to his regular education classroom teacher’s incorporation of these strategies in the curriculum. His use of SRL strategies varied across the language-learning tasks. For example, he used organizing and transforming for reading and speaking activities but not for listening or writing activities. Kelvin’s use of the strategy of rehearsing and memorizing was limited in activities related to memorizing new words or information.
Jeff – A Fourth Grader

**Jeff’s Background**

Jeff was nine years old and was in the fourth grade at the time of this study. He had his kindergarten and the first half of his first grade in Portugal when his father was a post-doctorate at a university there. He stayed in Portugal for nearly two years. Therefore, he could speak Portuguese in addition to English and Chinese. He came to the Untied States in 2001 with his parents and stayed in the ESL program for the first year (IN-P/August 2, 03).

Since Jeff’s father was very busy with his work as a post-doctorate, it was usually Jeff’s mother who took the responsibility of helping Jeff with his study. She helped Jeff doing his homework during Jeff’s first half year in the school because Jeff could not understand his homework in English at that time. Currently, Jeff no longer asked his parents to help him with the homework any more. When the teacher wanted to meet one of Jeff’s parents to share with them Jeff’s progress in the school, Jeff’s parents both went to the meeting. They said that both of them wanted to go to the meeting because they did not want to misinterpret the teacher’s message (IN-P/August 2, 03). During the meeting with the teacher, Jeff’s parents asked mostly about Jeff’s English because they claimed that they could not help Jeff with his English. They could, however, help him with his mathematics, and Jeff never had a problem with his behavior in the school.

Jeff’s parents also read the teacher’s comments on Jeff’s report cards and told Jeff his teacher’s expectations. Jeff’s parents wanted Jeff to do well with his
school work. When they read the teacher’s comment that Jeff needed to work harder because his English was not good enough, Jeff’s parents pushed Jeff to spend more time for study and reduce his time for play. According to Jeff’s parents, they did not push Jeff to get $O$, which stands for outstanding, for every subject. They believed that every child developed at a different rate, so they would be satisfied as long as Jeff tried his best with his study.

Jeff’s favorite sport was basketball, and he liked to play video games about basketball as well (IN-C/August 23, 03).

*Persistence across Contexts*

From six observations of Jeff at play, five visits to his class, and four observations of Jeff performing reading and writing activities, I observed a total of 73 behaviors that may provide evidence to his self-efficacy or self-regulation. Of these behaviors, 31 were associated with persistence (See Table 4.1). Through field note analysis, I learned that Jeff was very persistent in accomplishing the tasks he was interested in or if the tasks were required regardless of his self-efficacy. When he had a choice, however, he showed lack of persistence for tasks he had low self-efficacy to accomplish. I will discuss scenarios about Jeff’s persistence associated with self-efficacy and provide evidence to support the statements in this section.

Jeff liked playing basketball very much. Therefore, he was excited when he knew that Tom has the videogame *NBA Hang Time* (OB-P/August 15, 03). Unfortunately, Tom only had two controllers but Tom and David also wanted to play. Therefore, the kids had to decide who would have to wait. Unlike David who
argued for the reasons why he had to play first, Jeff did not talk very much. Instead, he just grabbed a controller although the one that he got was not the master one. He soon realized this, “I can’t move. I need to be … I need to be San Antonio.” When David picked San Antonio, Jeff was not happy. He talked to David, “Hey, you’re, you’re, you’re San Antonio II.” Fortunately, the game allowed both of them to pick San Antonio. But Jeff claimed, “I’m the better San Antonio.”

This game was new to Jeff but not new to David or Tom. Nevertheless, Jeff showed a high level of persistence in accomplishing the language task while playing the game. When he learned that he could do a super dunk, he asked Tom many times and demonstrated a great deal of patience listening to Tom’s instructions. Although he tried several times and failed to do a super dunk, Jeff did not give up. He paused the game and read the instructions on the screen and even asked Tom to demonstrate how to do this. Finally, Jeff managed to do a super dunk and claimed loudly that he made one, “I made a super dunk.”

Although it seemed that this scenario indicated Jeff’s persistence in playing the game, Jeff’s persistence in his communication with his peers in English could also be inferred from the same scenario. Jeff persisted in asking Tom questions and reading the instructions on the screen. Without the persistence in accomplishing these English language tasks, it would not be possible for Jeff to do a super dunk in the game.

Since Jeff persisted in asking Tom questions and reading the instructions in English in order to learn how to do a super dunk at the videogame, I interviewed him after the game (IN-C/August 15, 03):
I: If you are going to play another new game. How do you think you can learn to play it?
J: I will ask my friend and read the instructions.
I: How well do you think you can ask your friend about how to use the controllers?
J: Very well.
I: How well do you think you can read the instructions on the screen?
J: Well.
I: Why not “very well”?
J: Because, because maybe some words I don’t know.

From this interview, I learned that Jeff’s self-efficacy to ask his friends questions about how to use the controllers for a new video game was very high. His self-efficacy to read the instructions on the screen was also high but not the highest level because he anticipated some words unknown to him.

Besides basketball, Pokemon cards are also Jeff’s favorites. He liked trading Pokemon cards and playing Pokemon games with his friends. After he traded a Pokemon card with his friend, Tom, Jeff wanted to battle with Tom using his Pokemon cards (OB-P/July 24, 03). He asked Tom for the rules first, “Can you tell me the rules first because I don’t really … when I was playing with my friends, I don’t really follow the rules.” Tom read parts of the instructions on the card and told him that he did not really have to follow the rules. Jeff, however, persisted to learn rules from Tom in English. The rule of the game is that one of the boys picks the face or tail of a Pokemon coin. The coin is flipped first. The result of flipping the coin determines who attacks first, and the person who attacks may use any kind of attacks available, but the varieties of attacks are limited to and dependent on which Pokemon is chosen. They are supposed to read the instructions on the Pokemon card to see how many damages the attack has done to the opponent and how many points are left with the attacked one.
This is the language-learning activity, reading comprehension, involved in this game. Then they flip the coin again to see who is going to attack next. When Tom noticed that Jeff was supposed to use a card but used another one instead, he asked Jeff why he did not use it. Jeff replied, “No, I don’t. I don’t get it. I don’t use that … card.” Although Jeff showed a high level of persistence in learning the rules by asking Tom questions, he also showed a lack of persistence in learning how to use a particular card when he avoided reading the instructions on the card.

Jeff did not hesitate at all to ask Tom questions about the rules but he avoided reading the instructions on the Pokemon cards. Therefore, I asked Jeff after the game, “How well do you think you can ask Tom questions about the rules to play another Pokemon game?” and “How well do you think you can understand the instructions on anotherPokemon card.” Jeff told me that he could do the first task very well and the second well. When I asked him to provide justifications for his choice, Jeff said (IN-C/July 24, 03):

Ask a question is easy but read the instructions can be hard because sometimes … I don’t … just like sometimes you know it’s like thing makes up things. You know when you don’t know, it doesn’t make sense stuff. So just sometimes doesn’t make sense to me.

This conversation explained why Jeff did not use the card that he was supposed to use during the game. He told me that the instructions on that Pokemon card did not make sense to him and he did not know how to use it. As a result, he did not use it. Nevertheless, he could understand his friends’ explanation of the rules very well. So, he showed persistence in the task that he had high self-efficacy to do but he avoided the task that he had lower self-
efficacy to accomplish. This supports Schunk’s (1990) conclusion that students who hold low self-efficacy tended to avoid tasks while those who judge themselves efficacious were more likely to participate.

Jeff avoided the task, to read the instructions on the Pokemon card, when the task was optional. When the task was required, however, Jeff showed a high level of persistence although his self-efficacy to accomplish the task was low. For example, Jeff’s self-efficacy to write a journal was low, and he also reported anxiety in English writing (IN-C/August 17, 03). He said that he could write a journal but with great difficulty (a level of 2) if I gave him a limited period of time, and he could write the journal but not well (a level of 3) if there was no limit of time. This supports MacIntyre and Gardner’s (1994) argument that anxious students tended to study longer and to take longer to complete the task if they had no choice but to finish the task.

During the writing task (WRITE/August 17, 03), I asked him to write a journal to report what he did at a church on a Sunday morning. I told him that he could write as long as he wanted. Before he started writing, I asked him how well he could do this. He said that he could not do this well (a level of 3). Nevertheless, Jeff showed a great deal of persistence in accomplishing this task. This inconsistency between his low self-efficacy and high persistence might be a result of his respect to me as an adult and his interpretation of this task as required. It took him 27 minutes to write the journal with 72 words. His journal was as follows:
Dear Diary,

Today at church the parents and the 3 groups of children sang songs and prayed. Bruce went up the stage and said something about God. Then we sang again. When we were done they offered us to eat lunch there and when we were done eating lunch, we went to play in the carnival [carnival] outside the church. We played the water-gun game, playground, and that’s all we did.

Sincerely [sincerely],

Jeff

I also examined 30 samples of his writings in class. I noticed that Jeff had a good sense of the structure of writing although he needed to provide more details, and he often made some spelling mistakes. His major problem in writing was that he wrote slowly compared with his classmates. This conclusion was also supported with his teacher’s comments on his report cards (DOC-RD/Dec 1, 03).

In one of his English writing class, Jeff’s teacher asked the students to read a story about Helen Keller and then write at least three details from the story with an appropriate title (OB-C/Sept 25, 03). Jeff did not start writing until two minutes after he got the assignment. Later, he told me that he was thinking how to write (IN-C/Sept 25, 03). Two minutes later, Jeff put down the title, “Knowledge is power. More things you know more things you can do.” Although the teacher asked the students to close their books while accomplishing the writing task, Jeff opened his book and reread a couple of lines when he was stuck in the middle of writing. As I anticipated, he wrote very slowly. Finally, the teacher asked the students to stop writing because they had to work on another project. Jeff’s writing was as follows:
Helen Keller is deaf and blind. Her teacher taught her 6-7 words every day. Her teacher's name is called [is] Anne Sullivan. She knew [knows] a lot of words when she died. She was born in 1889 and died in 1968 and her teacher went to Newton.

During the follow-up interview (IN-C/Sept 25, 03), I asked him about his self-efficacy to write diaries, journals, and summaries of his readings. He reported a level of 3 (can do it but not well) for all these writing activities. His reason for this low self-efficacy to write was:

I can’t write. You know I mean I can’t write. I don’t know how to spell stuff. I could go to a dictionary or ask a friend, but the friend they might not know. The dictionary take [takes] too long and um … I just never wrote a diary before.

These interviews and observations about Jeff’s English writing indicated that Jeff was quite persistent in accomplishing the writing task if he was required to do so although his self-efficacy to write in English was low.

Self-Awareness of English Proficiencies

Of the 73 behaviors recorded, 42 were related to his self-awareness of English proficiency (See Table 4.1). The predominant self-awareness of English proficiencies that Jeff reported was his mastery of English vocabulary. He told me that he could not perform some language-learning tasks very well because he might not know all the words. This limited vocabulary was because he was not American and he had not been in the United States long enough (IN-C/August 17, 03). When he thought he knew all the words needed to accomplish a certain language task, however, Jeff reported higher self-efficacy.

For example, Jeff reported low self-efficacy to tell his friends what to do in English (a level of 3) because he was not American and he might not know all
the words (IN-C/August 17, 03). He also reported low self-efficacy to explain the rules of a game in English that he was familiar with. His justification was, “Well, sometimes I explain stuff um … I just … kind of like run out of words. I don’t know how to say so … I kind of run out of words” (IN-C/August 17, 03).

Jeff liked to read books about dinosaurs. As a result, he had a advanced vocabulary about dinosaurs (IN-C/Nov 29, 03). So when I asked him about his self-efficacy to read a new book about dinosaurs, he said he could do this very well although he said he could only read a chapter book well (a lower level than “very well”). He said that he did not choose the highest level of self-efficacy to read the chapter book because chapter books were usually long and had difficult words.

Jeff’s awareness of his limited English writing proficiencies, his lack of previous successful experience (mastery or enactive experience) with writing, and his opinion that writing took a long time were associated with his low self-efficacy to write. In his writing samples, I ran across a short passage when he was talking about his thought about a writing test he had taken. This piece of writing suggested that he held low interest in writing (DOC-W/Sept 16, 03).

I Thought The Writing Test Was …

Sept.16

I thought the writing test was easy. Well, I did forgot to put a title. The Part A on the test was very easy but Part B was kind of hard. Most times I don’t like writing tests. Do you like writing tests? You could write about your writing test too.

His teacher’s comment was, “I could! I do write. I wonder how you did?”

Jeff mentioned in this piece of writing that he did not like writing although he
thought the writing test he had taken was easy. Here, he made a clear distinction between self-efficacy beliefs and his opinions of something. Since self-efficacy is one’s belief of what one can do with one’s skills (Bandura, 1997), his opinion of the writing test he had just taken did not match his consistently reported low self-efficacy to write. This observation also indicated to me that his previous report of low self-efficacy to write journals and diaries was associated with his low interest in writing. Jeff’s low interest in writing was also supported with his responses in the interview. He told me that he did not like writing because “You use a lot of strength. You have to erase it and your hand kind of gets tired. And it’s like you can’t write good” (IN-C/August 17, 03). His teacher was encouraging him to write and his teacher’s encouragement could help him increase his self-efficacy to write in the future.

During the reading task (Read/August 17, 03), Jeff chose a chapter about ocean life. Before he started reading, I asked him about his self-efficacy to read this chapter and his self-efficacy to understand a lecture about ocean life from his science teacher. Through the interview, I learned that Jeff’s self-efficacy to read the chapter was higher than his self-efficacy to understand his teacher’s lecture about ocean life (IN-C/August 17, 03). He told me:

It’s like I can read the whole thing. I may like get the sentence like she just talk about ur… she talk about something. It’s like … it’s like science. If you just if you know the answer but you don’t know why. It’s like she tells nei ge [ur] the sentence but she doesn’t tell me the sentence before that. And I don’t know what she was talking about.

So his reason for higher self-efficacy to read the chapter was that he could read the sentences before the place where he was stuck. That previous sentence
would help him understand the part he was having difficulty with. While listening
to a lecture, however, he would not be able to review the previous sentence that
his teacher had just said. Jeff was quite aware of the difference between reading
comprehension and listening comprehension. His understanding of the process
of reading comprehension and his self-evaluation of his English proficiency in
reading contributed to his higher self-efficacy to read.

Jeff reported low self-efficacy to retell the chapter that he had read about
ocean life (IN-C/August 17, 03). When I asked him to provide me with his
reasons, he said:

Because … I am not like can memorize everything or the main, the little
parts instead of the main idea. Or what I said doesn’t make sense. Or I
said the word wrong and people don’t understand the word, what I am
saying.

Jeff’s reason for low self-efficacy to retell a chapter was influenced by his
self-awareness of his English proficiency, limited vocabulary, and his lack of
confidence to memorize what he had read.

When I asked him about his self-efficacy to leave a message to his
parents in English, he said that he could do this very well but he could do this
well if he had to write them a message (IN-C/Nov 29, 03). His justification was
that writing was harder and talking was safer. These are his original words:

Writing you might make mistakes on, you know if you forget the period or
you wrote something wrong. Writing you have to like check over and stuff
to see if you did right or you did wrong, because it is very easy to make
mistakes in writing.

Jeff’s reported self-efficacy was associated with his self-awareness of
English proficiencies. Self-awareness of English proficiencies, also known as
perceived competencies, is a central component of self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Therefore, it is not surprising that Jeff reported comparatively low self-efficacy when he was aware of his lack of competence to perform the task.

Willingness to Engage in Language Activities

Of the 73 behaviors recorded, 61 were related to his willingness to engage in language activities (See Table 4.1). My observations of Jeff's behavior and our interviews helped me understand that Jeff was very concerned with other people's opinion about him. His worry that others might laugh at his language mistakes reduced his willingness to engage in certain activities.

Although Jeff persisted in learning how to play the basketball video game at Tom's apartment, he indicated his unwillingness to talk when David reminded him that he was losing the game by six (OB-P/August 15, 03). Jeff started to shoot three when he knew that he was falling behind, but he could not talk freely at this moment. He said “I'm gonna, I'm gonna ..” but did not finish his sentence even though nobody stopped him. He showed a lot of hesitation to speak during the rest of the game. At the interview that followed (IN-C/August 15, 03), Jeff told me that he was rehearsing the words before speaking out loud because he wanted “to see if it makes sense.”

I also asked him why he spoke less and was very quiet when he was losing the game. His response was, “They were always laughing, and I was kind of nervous. I don’t know what to say.” When I asked him if he wanted to say
something at that time, he said, “Yes, I do. But I had to think what I am gonna say because I don’t wanna make another mistake, and they laugh at me again.”

This conversation between us helped me understand that Jeff had a high level of anxiety when he was losing the game. He was concerned with other people’s opinion and his potential failure. The anxiety lowered his self-perception about his competence to communicate with his peers (Cheng et al., 1999). As a consequence, Jeff had low self-efficacy to talk to his friends at that time. He did not do well playing the game, and his friends laughed at him. So, he rehearsed what he wanted to say to see if it made sense in order to avoid making a language mistake. He chose to keep quiet when he was not certain what he wanted to say. Thus, his self-efficacy to speak English to his peers was low when he was nervous, indicating that emotional state also had an impact on Jeff’s self-efficacy beliefs to speak (Bandura, 1997; Huang & Chang, 1998).

Jeff’s awareness of what others think of him not only prevented him from talking freely at play but also led to his inactive participation in class. I visited Jeff’s classroom five times and consistently noticed that Jeff talked to his classmates a lot, but he was not very active in answering the teacher’s questions. When the teacher asked the students to sit around her on a rug to share stories, he usually found a place at a corner by himself. For the reading task, the teacher usually encouraged students to raise their hands to read and asked each student to read a couple of lines. She said “popcorn” to stop the student who was reading and asked the next volunteer to read. After the whole story was read, the teacher asked the students some questions to check their
comprehension. Jeff very seldom raised his hand to volunteer to answer these questions.

One day, Jeff’s class was discussing realist versus fictions stories, and the teacher asked each student what he/she wanted to be when he/she grew-up (OB-C/Sept 25, 03). Every student in the class had a chance to answer the teacher’s question except Jeff. The teacher asked, “Who have I missed?” A student reminded the teacher that Jeff was missed. Until then, Jeff finally had an opportunity to speak. I interviewed him about this classroom visit after class (IN-C/Sept 25, 03):

I: Jeff, why didn’t you raise your hand to answer the teacher’s questions voluntarily?
J: Em... That’s too easy.
I: Why don’t you want to answer easy questions?
J: Um ... you know I don’t want to be very sensitive maybe other people know it and say it’s easy.
I: When your teacher asked you to answer some questions after reading a book, why didn’t you raise your hand sometimes?
J: One of the reasons might be I might have done another answer or ... I just don’t want to.
I: You don’t want to because?
J: Not I don’t want to, but I just ... some of the questions are hard. I don’t understand. So I don’t want to get embarrassed.

I was very surprised to learn this because his responses indicated that he did not want to answer either the easy questions or the difficult ones from the teacher. No wonder he was not very active in the class. To follow up, I tried to elicit his self-efficacy beliefs regarding classroom participation (IN-C/Sept 25, 03):

I: How well do you think you can understand your teacher’s instructions for the next class?
J: Well (a level of four).
I: Tell me why please.
J: I might not understand the ... like a word or something.
I: How well do you think you can understand your classmates next class?
J: Fifth star (very well). Since you know ... most like students stuff not adults, adults like teachers, they might use some long words, difficulty words, but most kids stuff students, they won’t use that hard words.
I: How well do you think you can answer the teacher’s questions for the next class?
J: Well. Some questions might be hard.

This interview excerpt indicated to me that Jeff’s willingness to answer his teacher’s questions in class was associated with his self-efficacy as well as his concern about others’ opinions about him. Although his self-efficacy beliefs to understand and to answer the teacher’s questions were both at a level of 4, he did not consider this level safe enough to speak because he did not want to make any language mistakes.

Strategic Efforts across Contexts

Kelvin reported 34 strategies which fall into seven categories of different SRL strategies (See Table 4.1). The most common strategies Jeff reported or used in his language-learning activities were self-evaluation, seeking information, seeking social assistance, and goal-setting and planning. I provide examples of Jeff’s use of these strategies in the following paragraphs.

Jeff told me that he checked his homework himself (IN-C/Nov 29, 03).

From his mother, I learned that Jeff used to work on his homework with his mother during his first six months in the United States (IN-P/August 23, 03). Jeff’s father was a post-doctorate in a university and I thought he must be able to help him with his homework if Jeff did not trust his mother’s English proficiency.

Therefore, I asked Jeff why he did not ask his parents to check his homework. He told me that he thought it was cheating to ask parents to check his homework.
because his teacher gave grades to his homework. He wanted his homework to show his real proficiency in English. As a consequence, Jeff checked his own homework for errors before submitting it to the teacher. His strong self-regulation, using self-evaluation to check his homework on his own, was not common among my participants. In the writing task, Jeff used the SRL strategy of self-evaluation when he was rereading to check for errors and see what to write next (WRITE/August 17, 03).

Jeff used a dictionary to figure out the meaning of the word *emerging* in the reading task (READ/August 17, 03). He also reported this strategy when I asked him what he would do if he met an unknown word in reading (IN-C/August 17, 03). This indicated to me that Jeff was able to use the strategy of seeking information from the dictionary. He also used the strategy of seeking information by looking at the table of contents before choosing the chapter to read during the reading task. While looking at the table of contents, Jeff could tell the content of the book and choose the chapter that he was most interested in reading.

Jeff did not only use the dictionary to help him with difficult words, he also used the strategy of guessing the meaning of a word from the context in reading (READ/Nov 29, 03). The following is an excerpt from our conversation:

I: What will you do if you do not understand a word while you are reading?
J: Sometimes when I don’t have time I look at the sentences and look, think, will it be able to look fit in it? Or sometimes when I have time, if I’m not in a hurry, I will go to, get a dictionary.

I learned from this interview that Jeff could use the context in which an unknown word was used to guess the meaning of that word. He was the only
child among my participants who reported this strategy of seeking information from the context in order to guess the meaning of an unknown word.

Working on the writing task (WRITE/August 17, 03), Jeff asked me whether he needed to write the date and title, using the strategy of seeking information. He also asked me whether it was OK for his writing to be short. This is also a SRL strategy of seeking information because he wanted to know the requirement of his task so that he would know how much details he was expected to write.

Jeff used other SRL strategies in the reading task as well. The following is an excerpt from this reading task (READ/August 17, 03):

J: Photo, er … photo, how do you read this?
I: Photosynthesis.
J: One and five tons. One, one and, … how do you say this one?
I: You can say one point five tons.

This interview helped me understand that Jeff used the SRL strategy of seeking social assistance when he was having difficulty reading the word photosynthesis and the number 1.5. He asked me how to spell the word diary in the writing task, which also illustrated his use of the SRL strategy of seeking social assistance.

Jeff preferred reading by himself although his mother always wanted to read together with him (IN-P/August 23, 03). His mother told me that they used to read together when he did not know how to read, but it did not take him long to notice his mother’s accent. Afterwards, Jeff started to read alone. He knew that his goal was to read like native speakers but not like his mother. Therefore, he paid attention to how his teacher and friends pronounce English words. When he
felt comfortable reading himself, he withdrew his reliance on his mother. This self-adjustment of his behaviors on purpose according to his self-set goals is goal-setting and planning in self-regulation.

During the writing task, Jeff stopped several times and asked me how much more time he could have for the writing task (WRITE/August 17, 03). Sometimes, he reread the sentences he had written when he stopped. Every time he stopped and was silent, I asked him what he was thinking. Quite often, he told me that he was thinking what to write. Finally, Jeff told me that he just needed one more or two more sentences. Jeff’s behavior of checking with me about the time he had and his use of this information to decide what to write next indicated his use of goal-setting and planning as a SRL strategy.

Jeff also reported the SRL strategy of goal-setting and planning when I asked him to justify his low self-efficacy to write a journal if the teacher gave him only a limited amount of time (IN-C/August 17, 03):

When the teacher only gives us a little bit of time, I kind of like in a hurry. I am afraid I won’t finish it and I get a low score. I just rush through. At least I can get a little bit of more score than I am not finishing it. Then I have to go to the PEAK or something and I get a low grade.

While justifying his low self-efficacy, Jeff told me that his goal was to get a higher score. In order to achieve this goal, he would check how much time was left and then make a decision of what to write. In so doing, he could still have a complete journal. He thought a complete journal would get him a higher score than a well-written but incomplete journal (IN-C/August 17, 03).

Jeff reported his use of goal-setting and planning not only in writing but also in reading tasks. When I asked him how he helped himself make sense of
the unknown words while reading, he said, "Well … sometimes … I kind of skip the sentence and then go on the other sentence and you know … come back and see where could go in the middle or just ask my friend" (IN-C/August 29, 03). When Jeff met a difficult word in reading, he skipped the word and kept reading. After reading more sentences and having a better understanding of the context, he came back to see if he could figure out the meaning of the word. This strategy had a clear purpose, step-by-step planning, and was self-generated. Therefore, it was goal-setting and planning in self-regulation.

Jeff told me that he could continue reading English books even if he saw other children playing outside (IN-C/Nov 29, 03). If they were noisy, he would shut the window and study in his own room. He said that sometimes other children were studying when he was playing. This strategy to help him find a quiet place is environmental structuring in self-regulation.

Summary

In summary, Jeff showed persistence in accomplishing assigned tasks regardless of his reported self-efficacy beliefs. When the tasks were optional, however, Jeff persisted longer on tasks that he had higher self-efficacy for accomplishing and lacked persistence to perform tasks about which he had comparatively lower self-efficacy. When he was aware that he lacked English proficiency, for example vocabulary, he reported lower self-efficacy and showed hesitation to participate. His unwillingness to participate was due to his lack of confidence and his concern of others’ opinions about him.
Jeff reported seven out of the 11 categories of SRL strategies regrouped by Pape and Wang (2003). He always checked his homework on his own and reread his writing to check for errors. When he met an unknown word in reading, Jeff sometimes used the dictionary and some times tried to guess the meaning by reading the sentences before and after the word. When more experienced members were available, Jeff employed the strategy of seeking social assistance by asking them questions. Furthermore, Jeff’s use of goal-setting and planning was manifested in two situations: (1) skipping unknown words in reading and returning to guess the meaning of the words after having a better understanding of the context; and (2) checking how much time was left while performing writing tasks in order to make a decision about what and how much to write. Jeff reported the strategy of environmental structuring when he said that he would shut the window and study in his own room if other children were playing noisy outside.

Richard – A Third Grader

Richard’s Background

Richard is a very smart boy who was going to be in the third grade when this study began. In his sitting room, there is a huge display of the trophies he won at chess tournaments. He has won five championships in the city for playing chess at his age group during the past two years. His progress in learning English, however, is comparatively slow. Unlike other children who usually stay in the ESL program for a year, he stayed in the program for a year and a half. According to his report cards (DOC-R/Dec 3, 03), he still needed improvement in
spelling, grammar, reading, and writing. In addition, he has a strong accent when speaking English.

Richard’s parents often take part in the school activities. They always volunteer at the book fair and attend international nights. His father, who is a doctoral student, often meets his teacher. According to his father, he talked with the teacher about Richard’s progress in the school (IN-P/August 3, 03). The teacher told him in which area Richard was good and in which area he still needed improvement. His teacher recommended his parents to encourage him to read more English books. His father said they went to the library twice a week and checked out a lot of books. Richard finished not only the books that he was supposed to read but also some other books that he was interested in reading. Richard’s parents realized the importance of reading also from their own experience.

Richard’s father told me that Richard was good at listening dictation of individual words but not at a sentence level (IN-P/August 3, 03). This was because his parents could only help him practice the listening dictation of words but not sentences. They did not think that their own English pronunciation was accurate, and Richard did not like the accent of his parents’ English.

His father thinks that Richard is very intelligent. Richard has never taken an IQ test, but his father trusts a fortune-teller. The fortune-teller told him that Richard was very smart and could be a very outstanding person under good directions but could also be a big problem if directed in the wrong way. His father noted that Richard’s behavior needed to be watched because he was concerned
that Richard’s talent might be used in a wrong place. Richard’s teacher reported to his parents several times about Richard’s misconduct at school. Richard’s major problem at school was that he did not follow the teacher’s directions if he did not want to. He also refused to say sorry to other kids after a conflict if he did not realize that it was his fault.

Persistence across Contexts

During five observations of Richard at play, four classroom observations, and four observations of Richard completing reading and writing tasks, I observed 62 behaviors that may provide evidence of his self-efficacy and self-regulation. Among these behaviors, 25 were related to his persistence (See Table 4.1). Through my examination of field notes, I noticed that Richard persisted in completing tasks in which he was interested. In the following paragraphs, I provide evidence that Kelvin’s persistence was also associated with his self-efficacy beliefs but not his self-evaluation of his English proficiency. He showed lack of persistence, however, to complete tasks that he was not interested in even if the tasks were assigned by the teacher. His persistence in verbal communications was influenced by his perceived willingness to listen of the audience.

Soccer is a common sport for kids in the community where Richard was living. I caught Richard playing soccer with eight children and an adult (OB-P/August 14, 03). He listened attentively when the adult was explaining the rules and he kept saying yes. When the adult was placing the children into positions, Richard volunteered to be the goalie. He said, “Hey, I’m the goalie. I’m the
goalie.” After he lost a ball, he did not want to be the goalie any more saying, “I am on my team. I am not goalie any more.”

When he found that the adult was also playing, he was confused because he thought the adult was the referee. He asked him, “Hey, is you are the referee?” The adult told him that he was playing in another team as well as doing the referee’s job. He complained that it was not fair. The adult explained to him that he was playing in a team with four girls but Richard’s team had five boys. When he noticed that his teammate did not pass the ball to him, Richard stole the ball from his own teammate. One of his teammates told him that he should not steal the ball from his own teammate, he said, “Who cares. You always pass to him so I have to.” After another couple of minutes, Richard’s team lost some balls. He wanted to be the goalie again because he thought the goalie was not doing a good job. He really wanted to win.

During the game, I noted his difficulty in speaking English fluently. He also reported that his English proficiency was not good (IN-C/August 14, 03). Nevertheless, Richard showed a high level of persistence in communicating with other players in English and did not show any hesitation to speak during the whole process. Later he reported in the interview that he was able to understand instructions of the game told by his friends or an adult very well. He also stated that he was able to say to his friends which position he wanted to be at the game very well (IN-C/August 14, 03).

Richard showed persistence in accomplishing his tasks both at play and in the class when he was interested in the tasks. When he did not have interest in
the task, however, Richard gave up easily. The following narratives indicated his persistence in one task and lack of persistence in another although both tasks were assigned by his teacher.

When I entered his classroom during a break between classes (OB-C/Oct 2, 03), Richard was concentrating on his own reading even though most other children were either talking or going to the restroom. He was trying to finish his reading before the next class started. When the teacher asked all the students to read an article from a journal and then answer the questions, Richard started to read word by word immediately while most other children were cutting and gluing the pages before reading. A couple of minutes later, a student in his class told the teacher that he knew how to spell metamorphic and sedimentary. The teacher asked him to finish his work first and then they could have a spelling test. Richard commented, “Then we won’t finish the reading.” Although the teacher was not serious in saying that they could have a spelling test (the teacher did not mention the spelling test any more afterwards), I learned from Richard’s response that Richard wanted to finish the reading and persisted in finishing the reading assignment.

Richard showed lack of persistence, however, when he was supposed to answer questions from a journal article after reading (OB-C/Dec 11, 03). He answered the first three questions on his own but was stuck with the fourth one. Instead of searching for information from the reading, Richard looked at his partner’s answer and copied his answer. This behavior indicated to me that he was not persistent in answering the reading comprehension questions but
wanted to choose a way to finish his task with the minimum effort. During the follow-up interview, Richard told me that he did not like the article from the journal and he did not think he could answer the questions very well (IN-C/Dec. 11, 03).

Another case when Richard showed lack of persistence was when he was asked to retell what he had read in a chapter (READ/Nov 23, 03). I asked him to choose a chapter from The book of questions and answers. He chose the chapter Solid, liquid, and gases and told me that the reason for choosing this chapter was that they were learning about solid, liquid, and gases in class. After the reading, I asked him to tell me what he had read in the chapter. He could tell pieces of information but not the main idea from the chapter. He gave up quickly and told me that he could not do it. Then, I asked him to reread the chapter. Richard read a few lines and tried to retell again, but his retelling was clearly not based on what he read but from his memory of what he learned in his class. For instance, I noticed that he said that evaporation was when gas changed to solid while the original message from the book was, “Evaporation takes place at the surface of a liquid. There, some of liquid’s molecules ‘jump’ clear of the surface and become a gas or vapor” (p. 132).

I helped him locate this sentence in the book and asked him to reread this particular sentence again. After rereading this time, he told me that evaporation was when liquid turned into solid. I asked him to read the sentence one more time. After rereading for the fourth time, Richard said, “Evaporation is when gas
turned into liquid.” The word *solid* was not in the original sentence, but Richard was still using the word *solid* after reading the sentence three times.

Richard missed a lot of information during the retelling, but he did not try to get more information even when I asked him to reread. Therefore, I interpreted this as his lack of persistence to retell the chapter. Even after the fourth reading of the sentence, Richard still got the meaning in an opposite way although he did use the right words *liquid* and *gas*. He just wanted to give me an answer by guessing or using his memory of what he learned in class in order to finish the task of retelling. Although his misinterpretation of the meaning of the sentence might also indicate his limited reading comprehension ability, his attitude toward the task of retelling implied lack of persistence. Before he actually started to retell the chapter, I asked him to report his self-efficacy to do so. He reported a level of 2, which is considered low. Thus, his lack of persistence was associated with his reported low self-efficacy to retell what he had read.

Richard’s persistence in communicating with his teammates when playing soccer was associated with his very high self-efficacy (a level of 5) to understand instructions spoken in English and to talk to his friends during the game (IN-C/August 14, 03). His high persistence to read in the class was also associated with his high self-efficacy (a level of 4) to read (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). His lack of persistence, however, in answering the reading comprehension questions and retelling was associated with his low self-efficacy. This is consistent to the findings of Schunk (1981) for children solving arithmetic problems.
It is interesting to note here that Richard had comparatively high self-efficacy to speak English during the soccer game and to read in class although his English proficiency in speaking and reading were not high (DOC-R/Dec 3, 03). This indicates that something besides English proficiency, such as interest, also has an impact on his persistence and self-efficacy beliefs. The following scenario illustrated his lack of persistence and low self-efficacy to talk to his friends in a particular context.

Richard also liked to play video games. One day, he was playing an NBA video game with David, Tom, and Jim in Tom’s apartment (OB-P/August 14, 03). Although it was Tom’s apartment, David seemed to take the role of making decisions. Richard was very quiet during the whole process and became bored with the game very soon. He wanted to play another game, but nobody listened to him. His sentences were broken and he showed a lot of hesitation to speak. When Richard was trying to say something but nobody seemed to be listening, he stopped talking immediately. During an interview about his self-efficacy to speak to different receivers, Richard reported low self-efficacy to talk to his friends, high self-efficacy to talk to his teacher, and very high self-efficacy to talk to his parents in English (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). His justification was very interesting, “If I tell my friends, it’s a little bit boring, they just get away. If I explain that to my teacher, and the teacher [does not] like it very well, she just say stop reading it. And if I tell to my parents, no matter how bad is it, they just listen to it.” So, Richard’s self-efficacy to speak in English was influenced by his audience rather than his English proficiency. If he perceived his audience to be listening, he felt
more self-efficacious. He felt less self-efficacious if his audience was not perceived to be listening.

**Self-Awareness of English Proficiencies**

Of the 62 behaviors recorded, 37 were related to his self-awareness of English proficiency (See Table 4.1). Richard was aware that his listening comprehension competence was high, his writing competence was low, and his reading competence was in between (IN-C/Nov, 23, 03). He told me that he could read well but could not answer the reading comprehension questions well because he knew that some questions were hard.

For language tasks that involve English listening comprehension, Richard reported very high self-efficacy (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). He said that he could understand his teacher’s instructions, his friends’ English, and English TV programs very well. Although I used future tense in eliciting his self-efficacy to do these tasks, his past experience (mastery or enactive experience) certainly influenced his self-efficacy to do future similar tasks. This is because an individual’s strong sense of efficacy was likely to be developed through repeated successes (Bandura, 1997).

Richard’s self-efficacy to read English story books was higher than his self-efficacy to read chapter books. This was not surprising to me because most children think that story books were easier to read. I was surprised, however, to learn that Richard’s self-efficacy to read chess books was also lower than his self-efficacy to read story books. I thought he must have read a lot of chess books in order to play chess so well. And if he often reads chess books, his self-
efficacy to read a new chess book should be very high (a level of 5). The following interview solved my puzzle (IN-C/Nov 23, 03):

I: How well do you think you can read books about chess?
R: Four.
I: Four? I thought you were very good at chess.
R: I didn’t read them. I learn them on computers.
I: Are there anything on the computer that you can read?
R: They read them for me.
I: They read it for you? The computer read it aloud? So you just listen? Then how well do you think you can understand the computer if it is reading the directions to you?
R: Very well.

I learned from this conversation that he gained most of his knowledge about chess from the computer instead of from chess books using his listening comprehension skills rather than his reading comprehension skills. This explained that his self-efficacy to read chess books was not as high as I expected.

Retelling stories from a book was not a task that Richard had high self-efficacy about. He told me in the interview that he was not good at retelling stories. The following conversation also gave me a surprise (IN-C/Nov 23, 03):

I: If you have just seen a movie, how well do you think you can tell me about the movie?
R: Five.
I: Five. Why did you choose five here?
R: I’m just good at explaining movies.
I: But not from the book?
R: UmHm.

Richard explained to me that he forgot almost every single paragraph from a book but he did not forget the pictures of a movie. This explained why he had higher self-efficacy to retell movies. He received information about the movie with his listening comprehension skills, and the pictures of the movie helped him
remember the story. This indicated to me that it was easier for children at his age to learn English with the assistance of visual images. I also learned from this interview that Richard’s self-efficacy for retelling stories depended on how the input was received.

Another interview helped me understand that Richard’s self-efficacy varied across different social contexts. Talking about the rules of a game is a very common phenomenon for children at play. When I asked him his self-efficacy to tell rules to his friends, Richard reported low self-efficacy to tell the rules to Frank but high self-efficacy to tell rules to other kids (IN-C/August 14, 03). He explained to me that Frank always asked him to follow his rules and did not listen to him. If it were at Frank’s house, Frank would say that it was his house so Richard had to listen to him. If it were at Richard’s house, Frank would say that he was older than Richard, and again Richard had to listen to him. Telling the rules for a game is not simply a language task but a social interaction with the use of language skills. Social context, together with English proficiency, had an impact on Richard’s self-efficacy to accomplish this English language task.

Consistent with his self-awareness of writing proficiency, Richard only reported a level of 3 (not able to do it well) to write diaries and journals (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). He also told me in the interview that he rarely wrote journals, even in his class. Therefore, I wanted to elicit his self-efficacy to write a summary of what he had read. After Richard read a chapter about solid, liquid, and gas in the reading task, I asked him his self-efficacy to write a summary about what he read. His response was low (a level of 3), and the following is his writing:
In this chapter I learned mostly about solids, liquids, and gas. I also learned some facts about atoms. Solids are things that do not take the shape of it’s container and have mass. A [An] air tank is solid a stone is solid too. Liquids are things that do take the shaps [shapes] of it’s container [container] and have mass. Water is liquid and glass is made of liquid too. Gas [gas] take [takes] the shape of their container [container] and have mass too. Air, steam, and smoke are all gas [gas].

It was not difficult to notice that Richard misspelled many words such as

learned, shape, gas, container, in this writing of 85 words. He told me in the interview that he used not only the information from the chapter but also what he learned in his class to write this summary. He missed a lot of information from the chapter as well. So, his low self-efficacy to write this summary was linked to his low English proficiency in writing.

Richard’s low self-efficacy in writing was not only associated with his English proficiency but also associated with the social persuasions from his parents and his teacher. His teacher gave him low grading (S-) for writing (DOC-R). There are mainly three levels for teacher’s grading: U for unsatisfactory, S for satisfactory, and O for outstanding. His parents also frequently told him that his English proficiency was low (IN-P/Jan 3, 04). A friend of his parents, who was a public school teacher, once visited them and told them that Richard’s English was very bad, and he needed to go to a “better” school in order to improve his English. As a result, Richard’s family moved to a more expensive apartment so that he could go to a school in a district where public school education was supposed to be better than that in his original district. So, consistent social persuasions, especially those from significant people to him, influenced Richard’s
self-efficacy beliefs and his self-awareness of his English proficiency (Keyser & Barling, 1981).

**Willingness to Engage in Language Activities**

Of the 62 behaviors recorded, 53 were related to his willingness to engage in language activities (See Table 4.1). My observations of Richard’s behaviors during the process of this study indicated that he was willing to engage in activities that he was interested in. When he was not interested in the activities, however, he would not participate unless he was asked to. His willingness to participate did not seem to be connected to his self-efficacy beliefs.

Everybody in the community knew that Richard was the best chess player at his age. When I visited him on August 2, 2003, he was watching a boy and a girl playing chess. Richard was trying to give his advice to the boy, “You don’t take it. You trap it.” He also told the boy that everything could go backward except pawns. When the boy refused to take his advice, he said that he was going to the girl’s side. After the girl lost the game, Richard wanted to play against the boy. It was not surprising that Richard beat the boy in just a couple of minutes. In this situation, Richard was very willing to talk to his friends in English. He provided some advice to his friends regarding playing chess as well. His willingness to communicate in this situation was associated with his high self-efficacy to tell his friends what to do in playing chess (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). Since he had high self-efficacy to provide advice to his friends in playing chess, he must have low anxiety to do so. Lack of anxiety contributed to his willingness to talk (Clement et al., 2003).
The scenario described above indicated Richard’s willingness to speak in English to his peers when he had high self-efficacy, the following excerpt from my classroom observations, however, showed his reluctance to speak although he had high self-efficacy to do so.

On one of my visits to Richard’s class, I found students all sitting on the rug at a corner (OB-C/Sept 17, 03). The teacher was reading a chapter book entitled *Harriet the Spy* by Louise Fitzhugh. The teacher stopped reading once in a while and asked the class questions to check if the students were following her. Richard did not answer any one of the questions. His inactive participation in this activity indicated to me that he might have low self-efficacy or high anxiety to do so. Therefore I asked him about his self-efficacy to understand if the teacher was reading a chapter book in class and how well he could answer the teacher’s questions if his teacher asked him questions based on his understanding of the book. For both these activities, Richard reported a level of 4, which meant he could do this well.

Richard reported a high level of self-efficacy for the two language-learning activities above: providing his advice about how to win a chess game and answering the teacher’s questions in class. The completion of both activities requires speaking competence and willingness to talk. He participated actively in one context, playing chess with his friends, but inactively in another context, answering the teacher’s questions. He was willing to talk when playing chess but not willing to talk during the classroom reading activity. His different behaviors in the context of similar language-learning tasks that he had the same level of self-
efficacy aroused my interest. When I asked him to tell me why he did not participate in the classroom activity during the follow-up interview, he told me that he did not want to although he could. He further explained that he did not want to participate because he was not interested in story books (IN-C/Sept, 17, 03). Therefore, Richard's willingness to engage in activities was more associated with his interest in the activity per se rather than his self-efficacy to perform those language-learning activities.

**Strategic Efforts across Contexts**

Richard reported 24 strategies which fall into four categories of different SRL strategies (See table 4.1). The SRL strategies Richard used in the observations or reported during the interviews were seeking information, seeking social assistance, reviewing records, and environmental structuring.

In one of the reading and writing classes, Richard was asked to write a summary of what he had read (OB-C/Oct 2, 03). Before writing the summary, students were supposed to answer the reading comprehension questions. Responses to these questions would serve as guidance to the writing of the summary. When he was not sure how to answer a question, Richard asked his teacher:

R: Do you have to write the words exactly the same?
T: No. Write in your own words.

Here, Richard was using the SRL strategy of seeking information to clarify the teacher's expectation from him regarding the writing assignment.

Although he used seeking information as a strategy to obtain information needed, Richard's use of this strategy was only through verbal communication.
When he met an unknown word in reading, he never used a dictionary unless he was told to. I asked him to use a dictionary to tell me the meaning of the word *vibrate* during the reading task (READ/Nov 23, 03). It took him two minutes to find this word, which indicated to me he very seldom used the dictionary as a resource of information.

Seeking social assistance was another SRL strategy that Richard often used. When he did not understand what his teacher was talking about, he usually raised his hand and asked his teacher, “Mrs. T, I don’t know what we are talking about. Can you tell me?” He also asked his teacher if he had some difficulty in doing his own work at school (OB-C/Dec 11, 03).

Richard reported that he would reread the book before examination (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). Rereading the book before an examination was reviewing records in self-regulation. His statement was triangulated with my observation during the reading task when he used this SRL strategy of reviewing texts to answer my question from the chapter that he had just read.

Unlike other children who were likely to be influenced by their environment, Richard was very good at environmental structuring, a SRL strategy. He was often found concentrating on his task no matter what other children were doing near him, and no matter what they were saying both at play and in his classroom. If he was determined to do something, he would not be distracted by the environment easily. His favorite place to read was his own room.
Summary

In summary, Richard’s behavior was more controlled by his own interest and his self-efficacy than the requirement from the teacher or an adult. When he was asked to accomplish a task that he was not interested in and he was not efficacious about, for example answering the reading comprehension questions in class and retelling the chapter, Richard did not want to put effort in doing it. He simply copied his classmate’s answers or used his knowledge instead of the reading to retell. His lack of persistence in performing the required tasks was consistent with his low self-efficacy and low interest to accomplish these tasks.

His persistence was consistent with his self-efficacy but not with his self-awareness of English proficiencies. For example, he persisted in communicating with his peers playing soccer and reported high self-efficacy but low English proficiency to do so. Richard’s willingness to engage in language activities, however, was not associated with his self-efficacy but with his interest only. For instance, he reported high self-efficacy to provide advice about how to play chess and to answer the teacher’s questions in class. Nevertheless, he showed a high level of willingness to participate in the former task but lack of willingness to participate in the latter.

Richards’ self-efficacy beliefs were also found to be influenced by the social contexts. His self-efficacy to speak English was high when he thought that his audience was listening but low when he thought his audience was not paying attention to his words.
Although he reported only four out of the 11 categories of SRL strategies regrouped by Pape and Wang (2003), Richard was strong at environmental structuring. He could concentrate on his own work regardless of what other children were doing near him. He was not easily distracted by the environment easily. When he had a choice, he always chose to read in his own room. When the teacher was available, Richard was able to ask the teacher for information or seek help from the teacher. Before an examination, Richard knew that he needed to review the textbook.

David – A Third Grader

David’s Background

David is a very cute boy who is never shy to speak. When he just came to the United States in 2000, he could not speak English at all. Unlike most newcomers who always feel shy and are most of the time silent with English speakers, David talked to English-speakers, but in Chinese. He told them that he could not speak English because he was Chinese. A couple of weeks after his arrival, David realized that he was supposed to speak English and picked up some English words very quickly. When he was riding the campus bus with his mother on a Saturday morning, he talked to the bus driver all the way in a mixture of English and Chinese (IN-P/August 3, 03). This happened during his first month in the United States! He did not feel shy to talk in public places at all. He stayed in the ESL program for a year when he was in the Kindergarten.

He was eight years old and was going to be in the third grade when this study started in the summer of 2003. David liked to read story books. He had a
collection of all five series of *Harry Potter*. Some of them were bought by his mother, some others were bought by David himself at the school book fair. According to his father, David had read all the four books and was reading the fifth one by the summer of 2003.

His father told me that they often went to the teacher’s meetings to learn about David’s progress at school (IN-P/August 3, 03). The teacher told them that David was very good at mathematics but asked them to help David with his English writing. David’s major problem in writing was his lack of patience. He always wanted to finish the writing in the shortest time possible. Since both David’s parents were doctoral students, they seldom had time to help him with his study. His father said that he checked David’s homework when he was in the first grade. At the time of this study, David already made a great progress with his English. Therefore, his parents no longer checked his homework.

**Persistence across Contexts**

From six observations of David at play, four classroom observations, and four other observations of David performing English reading and writing tasks, I observed a total of 67 behaviors that may provide evidence of his self-efficacy or self-regulation. Of all these behaviors, 18 were related to his persistence. This is only about 27% of the total number of observed behaviors, the smallest proportion among all participants for all emerging themes (See Table 4.1). In the following paragraphs, I provide evidence that David lacked persistence across home-based and school-based contexts. Although his lack of persistence in writing was associated with his low self-efficacy to write, his lack of persistence in
other language-learning activities seemed to be more linked to affective variables such as his attitude toward the language-learning activity, lack of interest, and bad mood.

In one of his reading classes, the teacher asked the students to work in pairs on the reading comprehension tasks while reading a journal article (OB-C/Dec 11, 03). The article, entitled *A safety net for salmon*, was from a section of the *Time* journal on March 26, 1999. There are some pictures of salmons and the sea across the two pages in the article, and the pictures lost their integrity when the teacher photocopied the article on two separate sheets of paper. While most students just put the two pages side by side so that they could look at the pictures, David and his partner wanted to glue the two pages together on a large piece of paper to make the pictures integral again. When they finished gluing the pages, they went to join another pair of students and formed a group of four. David went directly to the questions instead of reading the article. The first question was “Where are salmon born?” David read the question and said, “Salmon are born by their mom,” touching his own stomach.

After talking to the other boys for a while, David started to look for information to answer the first question. He still did not read the article but instead looked at the answers of another boy. The second question asked them to explain the salmon’s “circle of life.” Seeing that there was a picture showing salmon’s circle of life in the article, David asked the teacher if he could draw a picture to answer this question. The teacher told him that he could draw a picture of his own. He was very happy and sketched the circle copying the picture. So,
David answered the first two questions without actually reading the article per se. When he reached the third question, however, David was stuck. The question asked them to name five things that were threatening the salmon with extinction. Since none of the students in the group answered this question, David turned me for help. He wanted to have the work done as soon as possible. I did not give him the answer but encouraged him to read the article by himself. At this moment, I was actually following his teacher’s strategy to encourage him to read and work out the problem by himself. When David asked his teacher for help in another reading class, his teacher’s response was, “Did you read it? After you read it, it will come clear” (OB-C/Doc 2, 03). He was very disappointed and skipped this question. There were four other questions left. David answered the questions of which information was easy to be located in the passage but did not answer the other questions that needed careful reading.

David’ lack of persistence in answering the reading comprehension questions and his avoidance to read the article itself were triangulated in an interview about his reading activities at play (IN-C/Nov 27, 03):

I: How well do you think you can read the instructions on Pokemon cards?
D: I don’t read any instructions. I don’t have any instructions.
I: There are some words on the Pokemon cards, right?
D: Yeah. But I don’t read them.
I: What if I ask you read them now? How well do you think you can understand the instructions?
D: Four. Sometimes I don’t get them.
I: If you don’t get what they mean, how can you play?
D: No no no. We just make it up ourselves.

David reported high self-efficacy (a level of 4) to read another non-fiction article during the follow-up interview (IN-C/Dec 11, 03). He also said that he
could read that article in class well although he did not read it. When I asked him why he did not read the article to answer the questions, he said that he was not interested in non-fiction articles. He also explained that he did not read the instructions on the Pokemon card because sometimes he could not understand them (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). The classroom observation and the two interviews helped me understand that David did not persist to answer the reading comprehension questions by reading in class because he did not like to read articles that he did not like and he did not want to read something that he had difficulty with. Therefore, David’s lack of persistence in completing the reading comprehension questions in class and in reading the instructions on the Pokemon cards was associated with his attitude towards reading and his comparatively low self-efficacy to read.

David also showed his lack of patience to communicate in English at play. When he was not satisfied with other people’s behaviors, he usually did not talk to them but rather showed his anger. When he was playing chess with another boy at his age in his class at recess (OB-C/Dec 11, 03), the boy said a move but regretted and wanted to move another piece. David got very mad. He kicked the pieces of the chess and simply walked away. When he was playing video games with his friends, he was also easy to get mad if others messed up his game or did not treat him fairly (OB-P/August 15, 03).

When I interviewed him after the class how well he could talk to his friends when he was not happy with what they had done, to my surprise, he reported a high level of self-efficacy to make a complaint in English (IN-C/Dec 11, 03). He
justified his not complaining to his friends in my observations by saying that he
could do it well but he did not want to because he was mad at that time. So,
David’s persistence to complain to his peers depends not on his self-efficacy but
on his mood.

David did not like writing and reported low self-efficacy to write at the
interview (IN-C/August 17, 03). Therefore, it was not surprising to observe his
lack of persistence in writing activities.

David went to a church on a Sunday morning to have a performance after
participating in a program for a week in the summer. In order to watch his
behaviors in writing English journals and see how his journal looked like. I asked
him to write a journal afterwards (WRITE/August 17, 03). He spent only two
minutes in writing, and the journal he wrote was as follows:

I first sang. I sang a long time. After I sang, we got snacks. When we were
finished we got our crafts and played games.

On another occasion, David went to a recreation park and came to my
apartment to play. I asked him to write a journal about his visit (WRITE/Nov 22,
03), and he agreed. Again, I started by eliciting his self-efficacy first:

I: How well do you think you can write a journal of today’s visit to the
recreation center?
D: Not very well.
I: Why do you think so?
D: Because I don’t like writing.

He spent only four minutes in writing and could not write more even with
my encouragement. The following was his writing:

We saw a boring movie called “Bears”. After we were done, we went to
“Adventures”. We figured out all of the codes. Then we played some
games. Then we went on Kid Coaster. Then we played some games. The End.

My observation of David’s lack of persistence in writing was supported by his teacher’s comments. His teacher mentioned that David really needed to slow down and describe things more in detail (DOC-R/2002-2003). His low self-efficacy in writing and his low English writing proficiency were associated with his low interest and lack of persistence in writing. According to him, he did not like writing because it hurt his hands, and he thought writing was slow. His handwriting was very sloppy. He simply crossed out words misused and he did not bother to refer back to the book for more information when writing (WRITE/August 17 & Nov 22, 03).

Self-Awareness of English Proficiencies

Of the 67 behaviors recorded, 45 were related to his self-awareness of English proficiency (See Table 4.1). Generally speaking, David was aware that his English speaking and listening skills were high, but his English writing proficiency was low. His reading proficiency was in between. He said that storybooks were easier to read than chapter books. His self-efficacy was associated with his awareness of English proficiency in some contexts, but not in some other contexts.

David reported high self-efficacy for reading tasks that were easy but comparatively low self-efficacy for reading tasks that were more difficulty (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). For example, he said he could read English storybooks very well but English chapter books not very well. His justification for the difference was that story books were easy to understand but chapter books were hard to
understand. This indicated that his self-awareness of his English proficiency skills influenced his self-efficacy to read.

For all listening comprehension tasks, either in the classroom or at play, David reported very high self-efficacy (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). He said he could understand English movie or TV programs very well, he could understand his teacher’s instructions very well, and he could understand his friends’ English if they did not have strong accents. His high self-efficacy in listening comprehension tasks was supported by his high grades in listening on his report cards (DOC-R/2001-2003).

David’s self-efficacy to speak in English was also very high (IN-C/August 17, 03). He reported five (the highest level) for most language-learning tasks to speak to his friends or the teacher. When he reported comparatively low self-efficacy in these cases, it was not because of his own English proficiency but because of the tasks themselves:

I: So how well do you think you can ask your friend if they want to play with you?
D: Three.
I: Why?
D: Because I don’t know them and I think they are gonna be mean.
I: Alright. How well do you think you can tell your friends what you think about somebody?
D: Oh … four.
I: And how well do you think you can tell your friends about what you think about some games?
D: Oh five.
I: Why five for games and four for somebody?
D: Four because maybe they want, don’t want me to talk about them and five because it’s just like a game.

David reported low self-efficacy to speak to his friends if they were mean. I understand from this interview that David’s self-efficacy belief to talk to his friends
in English was influenced by the receiver as well. He reported comparatively higher self-efficacy to talk about games than to talk about his friends because he was concerned that his friends did not like him to talk about them, but games had no feelings (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). According to WTC theory, significant others’ support in L2 communication motivated individuals sufficiently because they were more likely to perform a behavior of which others approve (MacIntyre et al., 2001). In this context, David reported higher self-efficacy to talk about games because he thought others would approve his doing so while reported comparatively lower self-efficacy to talk about his friends because he knew that others would not approve of his doing this task.

**Willingness to Engage in Language Activities**

Of the 67 behaviors recorded, 60 were related to his willingness to engage in activities (See Table 4.1). Willingness to engage in language-learning activities might be the most predominant characteristic of David. He was found most of the time actively participating in the activities and speaking a lot. His willingness to talk was associated with his self-efficacy to speak English across all observed language-learning activities.

David talks a lot in his class. When I visited his class for the first time, he introduced me to his teacher as the father of his friend (OB-C/Oct 2, 03). In the class, David was the person who asked the most questions. Whenever he had a question, he either raised his hand or walked to the teacher directly saying, “I don’t get this.” When the teacher asked the class a question, David always put his hand high in the sky requesting an opportunity to speak. Quite often, David
could get the answers when the teacher gave him a chance. Sometimes, however, David could not give an answer when the teacher allowed him to speak. David’s active participation in the class activities could be interpreted as having high self-efficacy to ask teacher questions. In order to support this interpretation, I asked him about his self-efficacy to communicate with his teachers and classmates in the interview (IN-C/Oct 2, 03). He reported very high self-efficacy for both speaking and listening to English native speakers but relatively low self-efficacy to listen to non-native English speakers who have strong accents.

A couple of minutes later, the teacher read a passage about rocks with the students (OB-C/Oct 2, 03). She also brought her own collection of rocks to share with the students. David was very excited to see the rocks and asked the teacher, “What if I found a volcano and the igneous rocks that is cooled”? Although David had difficulty in pronouncing the word *igneous*, he did not look embarrassed at all. The teacher helped him out, and David’s question initiated a hot topic in the class. David’s another question, “What if I found some rocks hot melted them together,” caused another climax in the class. The students talked about rocks and magma. His self-efficacy to ask the teacher questions in class and to ask his friends at play, triangulated through interviews, turned out to be very high.

David’s active participation in the classroom interactions indicated that he had low level of anxiety from a cognitive psychological perspective (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). Since anxiety-arousal was associated with distracting, excessive
self-evaluation, worry over potential failure, and concern over the opinions of others, it had a negative effect on an individual’s communication performance. David did not seem to have language anxiety because he reported in the interview that he was never shy when speaking English, and he never worried about making English grammar mistakes while speaking (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). Therefore, David’s low language anxiety helped him engage more often than his peers, and he benefited from this by having more opportunities to practice his English.

At play, David was also the boy who talked the most. When David came to Tom’s apartment to play with Tom, Tom had not finished his breakfast yet (OB-P/August 3, 03). Although Tom’s mother recommended David to read a book or play the Gameboy on his own while her son was eating, David could not keep silent. “Do you ever heard …. Have you ever heard Richard called me …?” David realized his own English grammar mistake when speaking English but corrected the mistake himself and then continued to complain about Richard’s making up his name. Making up other children’s names was a very common activity among the children in this community. I often heard children doing this. Tom was eating and responded only when he had to. David continued to talk about how time flew meant time went fast or time went super fast until two other children came.

When Tom finished his breakfast, all the boys started to play Pokemon games on Nintendo64. David frequently asked other boys about how they made some tricks and made comments about others’ performance while other boys talked much less (OB-P/August 3, 03). While the boys were playing the game,
they talked about the rules of the game. They also discussed what they were going to play and how they could take turns to play since there were only two controllers. David did not show any hesitation to speak in English during the whole game. When Tom was showing them how to use the buttons on the controller for various actions, David was again the person who asked the most questions. Therefore, I asked him during the follow-up interview to elicit his self-efficacy to speak if he were to play new games in the future and got very positive responses from him, which indicated his very high self-efficacy to speak in English to his peers at play.

One day in my apartment, David and two other children were playing a video game that he was very familiar with (OB-P/August 15, 03). Since one of the boys did not play that game before, David taught him how to use the controller and how to play the game. When the boy was playing the game versus the other boy, David sat beside him and kept telling him what to do. “Whoever loses his life has,” David was setting the rules but stopped to watch the game and then continued, “Whoever loses his life has to give up the controller, and the next person died should give his controller.” David reported in the interview that he could make a suggestion for the rules to play in a game very well and he could teach other children very well in English how to play a game that he was familiar with. I learned from these observations and interviews that David’s self-efficacy to speak in English in these tasks was high.

The only time that I noticed David to be quiet and hesitating to speak was when he was playing soccer (OB-P/August 14, 03). He was most of the time
listening. He spoke in broken sentences because he lost two points when he was the goalie and because he was not playing well even when he was playing the defense. His teammate blamed him, “You shouldn’t just stand there. You should do something else.” David’s response was “I don’t know.” I learned later that David did not like soccer very much, and he did not often play soccer. He told me that he could not talk to his teammates very well in English while playing soccer because he did not know many English words in soccer and because he did not know the rules in soccer either (IN-C/August 14, 03).

Strategic Efforts across Contexts

David reported 19 strategies which fall into five categories of different SRL strategies (See Table 4.1). The predominant strategy that David used during the observations or reported during the interviews was seeking social assistance although he also used seeking information, self-evaluation, rehearsing and memorizing, and environmental structuring occasionally. He did not like to seek information from books or dictionaries because it took time.

David was very active in his class and he used a lot of seeking social assistance strategies (OB-C/Oct 2, 03). When the teacher assigned the students a task to figure out the structure of a passage they had just read, David told his teacher that he did not know how to answer the first question. The question was to tell the main idea of the passage. Instead of giving him the answer directly, the teacher elicited an answer from him:

D: I don’t get this.
T: If I want you tell me what you are reading in one word.
D: Rocks.
T: Yes. You got it.
In this scenario, David used seeking social assistance from his teacher when he could not tell the main idea of the passage. He liked seeking social assistance so much that he even used this strategy to seek information. For example, he asked his teacher about the requirement of the reading comprehension task (OB-C/Dec 11, 03). According to him, looking the word up in a dictionary or other sources costs his time for play.

David’s use of SRL strategies was more common in social interactions than in independent studies. For example, he seldom used strategies to understand the unknown words in reading or listening (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). Although skipping an unknown word in reading or listening is a language-learning strategy (Oxford, 1990), it is not a SRL strategy unless the person goes back to the word later after a more comprehensive understanding of the reading context. Therefore, David’s ignoring the unknown words in this context was not a SRL strategy. When he was reading books or watching English TV programs, even when the books or programs were interesting to him, he still just ignored the unknown words. On the other hand, David reported that he could ask his friends or his teacher if he met an unknown word when talking to his friends or the teacher. His reason for this difference was that “Because I can’t ask the book or ask the TV” (IN-C/Nov 27, 03).

Actively participating in language-learning activities in school and at home might be another dominant strategy that David used in learning English as a second language. In order to investigate whether this strategy was SRL strategy, I asked him what he would do in order to improve his English proficiency. His
response was to speak more English (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). He had a purpose to use this strategy and this strategy was self generated. So, I think this is self-regulation to him. He also told me that he never felt shy and he was never afraid of making mistakes when he spoke English.

When an examination was coming, David reported in the interview that he would reread his textbooks using the SRL strategy of reviewing records (IN-C/Nov 27, 03), but this was the only strategy elicited from him in this situation.

Self-evaluation was not reported by David for reading or writing activities. He said he never checked his homework before turning it in to the teacher (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). I never saw him checking his reading comprehension questions or writing across all reading and writing contexts either. Nevertheless, he corrected his own language mistakes in speaking. For example, he changed “do you ever heard” to “Have you ever heard” and “What’s type” to “What type is yours” while talking to Tom at breakfast (OB-P/August 3, 03).

When asked about the best place to read, David said that he liked to read in his own room and in the classroom. This statement indicated environmental structuring because he chose to read in these places to avoid distraction.

In general, I think David’s lack of the use of SRL strategies was associated with the goals he set for him. David did not set a very high goal for himself. He indicated that he was satisfied with his grades because he did not get an F (IN-C/Nov 27, 03).

I: How many B+’s did you get?
D: A lot, a lot. I got two D’s.
I: How did this happen?
D: Once I lost the book so I don't know the answer, so I just guess like “Lua”. And the second time I did not read it good enough, so I got a “Lua”.
I: Got a D?
D: EmHm. I never got an F.

Goal-setting is a highly significant predictor of one’s use of SRL strategies (Huang & Chang, 1998). David’s low expectation of his grades helped me understand his infrequent use of SRL strategies in the process of learning English.  

Summary
In summary, David lacked persistence in performing English language-learning activities across home-based and school-based contexts. Whenever he met a difficulty or when he did not feel efficacious to accomplish the task well, he either gave up or avoided taking the risk. Nevertheless, he is very willing to engage in oral communications. Some of his behaviors were consistent with his self-efficacy beliefs. For example, he reported low self-efficacy to write English journal entries and showed lack of persistence in writing. Some of his other behaviors, however, were not consistent with his self-efficacy beliefs. For instance, David reported a high level of self-efficacy to talk to his peers in English but showed lack of persistence in complaining to his peers when he was upset. So, David's self-efficacy beliefs were associated with his persistence in completing the task, his self-awareness of English proficiencies, his interest and attitude toward the activity, the social context of the activity, and his mood.

According to my observation field notes, the most common SRL strategy that David used was seeking social assistance. Whenever he met a difficulty in
learning English, he asked either the teacher or his friends for help. Although he was not aware of using the strategy of self-evaluation in reading or writing activities, David corrected his own English language mistakes in his oral communications with peers. When asked about how he could improve his English, David replied that he would speak more English. Actively seeking opportunities to practice the target language in order to improve one’s proficiency in that language is a cognitive strategy according to Oxford (1990) but does not match any one of the 11 categories of SRL strategies regrouped by Pape and Wang (2003). This is perhaps a particular SRL strategy in the context of learning second/foreign language. His use of environmental structuring was to read in his own room and the classroom.

Cross-Case Analyses: Discussion on Four Children’s Self-efficacy Beliefs and SRL Strategies

I have discussed each participant’s persistence, self-awareness of English proficiencies, willingness to engage in language activities, and strategic efforts used across home-based and classroom-based contexts. Although each child’s self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategy use differ, there were commonalities that resulted in emerging themes across cases. Common factors that influenced these children’s self-efficacy beliefs were noted. Some SRL strategies were favored by individual children and were more favorable than others for a particular task. Participants, however, reported similar categories of strategies within particular language-learning contexts. To address the research questions, I will discuss these children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies.
Research Purpose One

Research Question One is related to self-efficacy and consists of the following sub questions:

a. What ESL children’s behaviors may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English across different learning tasks and across school-based and home-based contexts?

b. What are their self-efficacy beliefs across these contexts?

c. What factors impact the development of children’s self-efficacy?

d. How do ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English vary across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?

Behaviors Related to Self-Efficacy

Research question 1a asked “What ESL children’s behaviors may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English across different learning tasks and across school-based and home-based contexts?” The main answer to this question is that children’s hand-raising behavior in class, willingness to talk, and persistence in performing the task may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs. The following paragraphs address each of these behaviors accordingly.

Hand-raising behavior in class. Research indicates that the hand-raising behavior is considered a nonverbal communicative event that might indicate a student’s self-confidence to answer the particular question (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Self-confidence is a central component of self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik,
Therefore, the students’ hand-raising behavior may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs, but this is not always true. For example, I noted the consistency between students’ hand-raising behavior and their self-efficacy beliefs related to answering the teacher’s questions throughout the classroom observations.

Kelvin raised his hands more often in the ESL class than in the regular education class. His self-efficacy to answer the ESL teacher’s questions was also higher than that for answering the regular education classroom teacher’s questions. Kelvin raised his hand whenever he thought he could answer his teacher’s question well. Jeff would not raise his hands unless he thought he could do it well and the question was not easy. Sometimes Jeff did not raise his hand because he thought the question was too easy to answer or he thought the teacher might want other children to answer since he had already answered a question. Richard would raise his hand to answer the teacher’s question if he thought he was able to do it well and if he was interested in the activity. David always raised his hand in the class. His behavior of hand-raising was an indication of his willingness to participate and was mostly associated with his high self-efficacy to answer the teacher’s questions. Sometimes, however, David’s hand-raising was not associated with his self-efficacy at all. He raised his hand for almost every question asked, but failed to answer some questions when the teacher gave him a chance. When I asked him why he could not answer the question that he raised his answer to answer, he said that he did not understand
the question well. Therefore, David sometimes raised his hand without even thinking about whether he could answer the questions well or not.

_Willingness to talk._ Verbal communication is viewed as a volitional act (McCroskey & Baer, 1985). Generally speaking, people are least willing to talk in public and most willing to talk during one-on-one conversations. They have low willingness to communicate to strangers but high willingness to talk to friends (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990a). If we treat the classroom as a miniature of society, talking to others in small groups or students nearby is similar to talking to friends, and talking to the whole class is comparable to talking in public. The students who raise their hands were assumed to feel confident to answer the question and have a desire to speak. Students who are not willing to talk do not raise their hand although they may believe they can answer the teacher’s question well. Although hand-raising behavior may or may not provide evidence of students’ self-efficacy, it is an indication of their willingness to talk. Participants were found willing to talk in activities that they were interested in and they had high self-efficacy about.

Kelvin reported high self-efficacy to talk to his classmates in both the ESL and regular education classes. He spoke freely to his ESL classmates and his group members in the regular education class. When the regular education classroom teacher called for participation in the whole-class activity, however, Kelvin showed a lot of hesitation and unwillingness to talk. Jeff, on the other hand, was more passive in the class. He seldom answered the teacher’s questions. When asked for the reason, he said that he could not answer some of
the questions well and he was concerned with his classmates’ responses to his answers. Richard was quite active in participating in the classroom activities that he was interested in. He reported that he was able to talk to his friends in English and answer the teacher’s questions very well. David was the most active student in the classes that I observed. He always raised his hand up high and leaned his body forward in order to have an opportunity to talk. Meanwhile, his self-efficacy beliefs to speak English in public and to answer the teacher’s questions were both very high.

_Persistence in performing the task._ Another behavior that may provide evidence of self-efficacy beliefs is persistence in performing the task. Participants in this study persisted longer in the activities that they believed they could do well but gave up easily or avoided performing the tasks that they did not think they could do very well.

Self-efficacy refers to the judgments of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses rather than the judgments of the skills themselves (Bandura, 1997). Confronted with a particular language task, participants who believed that they were capable of accomplishing the task persisted whereas participants who doubted their capabilities gave up easily. This is in line with MacIntyre et al.’s (1997) claim that students with low self-confidence tended to underestimate their ability and therefore felt more anxious in the face of the language-learning tasks.

Kelvin showed a lot more persistence in his ESL classroom activities than in the regular education classroom activities. As discussed in the previous
session, this difference was not due to the class size nor the teacher, but rather the language tasks. When the language tasks were more challenging, Kelvin’s self-efficacy for that particular task was low. As a result, his persistence in completing the task turned out to be low too.

Jeff showed high level of persistence in completing language tasks of which he had low self-efficacy when the tasks were required. When the tasks were optional, however, all participants persisted in doing language tasks that they thought he could do well but avoided performing the tasks that they had low self-efficacy about. For example, Jeff and David indicated lack of persistence in reading the instructions on the Pokemon cards when playing Pokemon games. Richard persisted in talking to his teammates in English while playing soccer although his self-evaluation of his speaking skills was “not good.” His persistence was associated with his self-efficacy beliefs rather than his judgment of his language skills. The discussions above about the four Chinese boys’ persistence in completing language-learning tasks associated with their self-efficacy beliefs support Schunk’s (1990) statement that students with low self-efficacy tended to avoid tasks and those who held high self-efficacy beliefs were more likely to participate.

Children’s Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Research question 1b asked “What are their (Children’s) self-efficacy beliefs across these (home-based and school-based) contexts?” The main answer to this question is that the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs were manifested across different language-learning tasks and across home-based and
school-based contexts. Participants reported their self-efficacy beliefs for performing language tasks in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation, respectively.

In home-based context, participants reported their self-efficacy to accomplish listening activities such as to understand the rules of a game by listening to their peer’s instructions and to understand the English TV programs or English movies. Participants were mostly involved in speaking activities at play and reported a variety of self-efficacy beliefs in speaking activities. They reported beliefs of their capabilities to tell the rules of a game to their friends, provide advice to their friends about how to win a chess game, ask their friends how to play a game in English, talk to their friends in English during play (e.g., which position they wanted to play in a soccer game), make a complaint about their friend’s behaviors to their parents, join the conversation of older children, and make a comparison between two games or the characters in the games. As for reading and writing activities, participants reported their self-efficacy beliefs to read instructions on Pokemon cards, read books about dinosaurs, other animals, or chess, and write a message to their parents or a journal entry. The only self-efficacy belief related to translation participants reported was their beliefs about their capability to translate Chinese terms into English and vice versa. This might be due to the fact that participants spoke English most of the time and only used single Chinese words occasionally. Every child involved in the play was able to understand some English. Therefore, participants may not need to translate whole Chinese sentences into English or vice versa during the play.
In school-based context, participants reported self-efficacy beliefs to accomplish listening tasks such as to understand the teacher’s instructions and to understand native English speakers and non-native English speakers in class. They also reported many self-efficacy beliefs related to speaking tasks in this context. They reported their capabilities to ask or answer the teacher questions, talk to their classmates in English, tell a story about themselves or a story read. As for reading and writing activities, participants reported their self-efficacy beliefs to read storybooks or chapter books, answer the reading comprehension questions, spell words familiar and not familiar to them, and write diaries, journal entries, and a summary of what they read. While no self-efficacy beliefs about the translation tasks were reported by the participants in this study, they reported self-efficacy to correct their classmates’ English language mistakes.

Factors Impact the Development of Children’s Self-Efficacy

Research question 1c asked “What factors impact the development of children’s self-efficacy?” The main answer to this question is that these factors include self-awareness of English proficiency, past experience of success associated with effort, expertise in the content area, task difficulty level, social persuasion, physiological or emotional state, interest, attitude toward the English language and the English speaking community, and the social cultural context.

Previous research proposed a significant relationship between students’ self-efficacy and their academic achievements (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pajares et al., 1999). Students involved in learning activities observe their own performance, and this self-observation affects their sense of
self-efficacy. When a student puts forth great effort in carrying out a difficult task, success will not strongly influence the person’s self-efficacy whereas failure may undermine his/her self-efficacy (Nicholls & Miller, 1984). On the contrary, poor performance with feeble effort expenditure has little impact on a person’s self-efficacy beliefs but success with little effort does signify a high level of self-efficacy. Therefore, a student’s self-efficacy beliefs are associated with not only the student’s past positive or negative experience but also with the effort expended in trying to complete the task. Discussions of the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs associated with their self-evaluation of English proficiencies and past experience are provided in the following paragraphs.

**Self-awareness of English proficiency.** All the participants were aware that their English vocabulary was limited. Accordingly, they reported comparatively low self-efficacy to accomplish language tasks that require a mastery of vocabulary. Kelvin said that he could not ask his friends about their opinions very well because there were many words he did not know. Jeff reported low self-efficacy to explain the rules of a game because he might run out of words. Both Richard and David thought that reading chapter books was much more difficulty than reading English story books because chapter books might have more words that they did not know. The participants evaluated their English vocabulary as limited. As a result, there might be more impending danger or risk to participate in a language-learning activity that needs a good mastery of vocabulary. Therefore, they all reported comparatively low self-efficacy to complete the reading and speaking tasks that had a demand of advanced vocabulary. The
above discussion indicates that students’ self-efficacy beliefs might develop with the development of their English proficiencies and their self-awareness of their own English proficiencies. Thus, helping children develop their English proficiency might enhance their English self-efficacy beliefs.

Past experience of success associated with effort. Kelvin reported high self-efficacy for spelling words that he had successful experience with but low self-efficacy for spelling words that he was not familiar with. Richard also said that he never wrote a diary in English or Chinese. Jeff and David’s writing documents indicated that they children had negative experience in English writing. This negative experience is possibly associated with their reported low self-efficacy to write English diaries or journal entries. This discussion supports the research findings that positive prior experience (success) enhances one’s self-efficacy whereas negative experience (failure) undermines self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Nicholls & Miller, 1984).

Expertise in the content area. Not only mastery or enactive experience but also expertise in the content area affects students’ self-confidence to perform a language activity (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990a). Self-confidence is a central component of self-efficacy (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Therefore, expertise in the content area might also impact the development of children’s self-efficacy. Topical expertise and the familiarity with a certain task boosts one’s linguistic self-confidence since the superior content knowledge may override the person’s anxiety about his/her limited L2 proficiency. Novel situations should be detrimental to WTC because the speaker is not certain of his/her ability to
communicate well in that particular situation. The following paragraph focuses on students’ self-efficacy beliefs for performing language-learning tasks associated with their expertise in certain areas.

Kelvin had expertise in sea animals because he often read books about them. Jeff learned many vocabularies about dinosaurs. Richard was exceptionally good at chess and he knew the rules and tricks of playing chess very well. Pokemon Stadium was David’s favorite game. Each participant had his own expertise in certain areas and reported high self-efficacy for performing language activities in the area where he could use his expertise. Therefore, students’ expertise in the content area boosted their self-efficacy to accomplish these tasks (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990a). In the following paragraphs, I provide evidence that these students’ self-efficacy beliefs were influenced by task difficulty level and social persuasion.

**Task difficulty level.** The task’s difficulty level also influenced the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs. Kelvin had higher self-efficacy to answer his ESL teacher’s questions than to answer his regular education classroom teacher’s questions. This was because his classmates in the ESL class were all English language learners. As a result, the teacher’s questions were mostly about spelling of common words, English number system, simple sentence structure, and very short reading and writing problems. The questions from his regular education classroom teacher, however, were more challenging. Sometimes the teacher read a story and asked the students to answer questions based on the comprehension of the story. Some other times, the teacher asked
students to write short journal entries. The task difficulty level for reading comprehension and writing journal entries should be higher than that for spelling words and writing simple sentences. This is not surprising because most students in the regular education classroom were native speakers of English. Their English average proficiency level is supposed to be higher than that of the students in the ESL class at the same grade. Therefore, Kelvin’s self-efficacy for performing language activities was higher in the ESL classroom than in the regular education classroom.

The same is true for other participants. When I asked them how well they could write a note to their parents in English, all reported very high self-efficacy. When asked about writing a summary of a chapter, however, all reported very low self-efficacy. This was because they had to read and understand the chapter in order to write a summary and writing a summary usually takes much longer than writing a brief note. Therefore, task difficulty level impacted the development of children’s self-efficacy beliefs.

Social persuasion. Feedback from significant others influences children’s self-efficacy beliefs (Schunk, 1981), and it was continuous rather than delayed or intermittent feedback that was influential to students’ self-efficacy beliefs (Keyser & Barling, 1981).

Richard reported low self-efficacy in reading and writing, and his beliefs were found to be associated with the social persuasions from his parents and his teacher. His teacher gave him low grading (S or S-) for oral communication, reading, and writing compared to his classmates. His teacher expressed her
concern about Richard’s reading and writing several times and called on his parents to borrow some books for him to read (DOC-R/2002 -2003). His parents also frequently told me in front of him that his English proficiency was low (e.g., IN-P/Jan 3, 04). The continuous feedback from the parents and the teacher might have impacted Richard’s self-efficacy to read and write.

Other children’s self-efficacy beliefs also seemed to be influenced by the comments of their past performance on certain tasks from their teachers and parents. The participants received a report card at the end of each quarter and an interim progress report in the middle of the quarter from the teacher. Kelvin’s teacher mentioned in the report card (DOC-R/Oct, 03) that Kelvin needed to work on retelling a story, indicating that Kelvin’s competence to retell a story was not satisfactory. Kelvin reported in the interview (IN-C/Nov 28, 03) that he would need the book in order to tell me the story from the book. Jeff’s report of high self-efficacy to read English chapter books was also found to be connected with this teacher’s comments about his great progress in reading fluency and vocabulary (DOC-R/Oct, 2003) and his parents’ encouragement (IN-P/August 2, 03). David reported low self-efficacy to write a journal in English (IN-C/Nov 27, 03). This was consistent with the comments from his parents and the teacher about his writing skills. His teacher said that “his writing will improve by slowing down, giving the topic more thought, and adding more details and descriptions” (DOC-R/Oct, 03).

Physiological or emotional state. Emotional state, such as fear and mood, was found to influence students’ self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997). Self-
confidence refers to an individual’s overall belief of their capabilities to communicate in the L2 in an adaptive and efficient manner. There are two components of L2 confidence: self-evaluation of L2 skills and language anxiety. The first component is cognitive and the second one is affective (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Research in the WTC area indicates that two strongest predictors of WTC are perceived communication competence and communication anxiety (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 2001). Perceiving that one has the ability to communicate, regardless of one’s actual proficiency, can affect the rate of participation in L2 conversation (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Self-perception of one’s ability to accomplish a certain task is defined as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Thus, an individual’s self-efficacy beliefs, rather than self-concept, are affected by the person’s anxiety to perform the task.

Jeff’s self-efficacy to write a journal entry was low, and he reported anxiety in English writing (IN-C/August 17, 03). He said that he could write a journal but with great difficulty if I gave him a limited period of time. He also said that he could write the journal but not well if there was no limit of time. This supports MacIntyre and Gardner’s (1994) argument that anxious students tended to study longer and to take longer to complete the tasks. The reason for the slower speed for anxious students to complete a task is that anxious students usually have to divide their attention between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient (Eysenck, 1979). As a result, it takes
anxious language learners longer to learn the language compared with relaxed students (Price, 1991). In another case, Jeff justified his comparatively low self-efficacy to answer the teacher’s questions in class by saying that he had to think about whether he was able to answer the questions as well as what his classmates would think of his answers.

Richard and David seldom indicated language anxiety across the home-based and school-based context. They were often found actively participating in the language-learning activities. They reported very high self-efficacy for so doing although their English proficiencies required for these tasks were not necessarily very high. This is because anxious students tended to underestimate their ability and less anxious students tended to overestimate their ability. That is, less anxious students are more likely to hold higher self-efficacy (MacIntyre et al., 1997). This is in line with Hashimoto’s (2002) claim that language anxiety reduces perceived communicative competence. David and Richard were less anxious. Therefore, they reported high self-efficacy to perform the language-learning tasks and actively participated in those activities.

In addition to anxiety, an individual’s mood also impacts the person’s self-efficacy. A positive mood activates thoughts of accomplishment and boosts perceived self-efficacy. A sad mood leads to thoughts of past failings and diminishes self-perceptions of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). My observations of David and Richard’s behavior at play indicated that they easily gave up their effort to complain to others in English when they lost their temper. They both reported low self-efficacy to make a complaint to others. Kelvin liked playing
Pokemon cards, and Jeff liked playing basketball. When I saw these children playing the game that they enjoyed, they both showed a high level of persistence and reported high self-efficacy to communicate with their peers in English.

**Attitude and interest.** Students’ attitude toward learning English also impacts their self-efficacy beliefs. A positive attitude toward an ethnic group leads to positive interactions with that group, and negative intergroup issues such as prejudice and discrimination hinders the interactions (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

All my participants stated in the interviews that they liked English. They liked America and wanted to be a part of the English speaking community. Their positive attitude toward the English speaking community in America led to increased involvement with the community (Noels et al., 2000). Their frequent use of English and success in using the English language in daily life increased their self-efficacy to speak English (Pajares et al., 1999). Research also indicates that attitudes towards the L2 itself influences one’s motivation to learn as well (Yashima, 2002). Enjoyment and satisfaction encourages communication. In this study, the participants reported that they enjoyed learning English as a second language. They all have high motivation to learn English, and their self-efficacy to speak English is generally high across different contexts.

All participants in this study spoke English when they were playing together although they all shared another language: Chinese. My observation helped me understand that they used Chinese infrequently when they met some vocabulary that they did not know in English. Although they frequently spoke Chinese at home, they still spoke more English than Chinese. As discussed
earlier, the participants were willing to identify with the American English speaking community. Maybe this identification was under a normative pressure to speak English in this community, which is not the focus of this study. The pressure to identify with the L2 group entails seeking more active contact in the L2 (Clement et al., 2003).

Social cultural context. Finally, the social cultural context also influenced the development of participants’ self-efficacy. The social cultural contexts such as the relationship between the interlocutors and cultural understandings of the appropriateness of performing some tasks impacted the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs. For instance, Richard reported low self-efficacy to tell rules of a game to his friend, Frank, but high self-efficacy to tell the same rules to other kids. This was because Frank always tried to dominate at play. Frank always found a reason to let Richard follow his rules. David was also concerned with the social cultural context when reporting his self-efficacy. When asked about his self-efficacy to make a comment about a game, he reported very high self-efficacy. When asked to make a comment about some people, however, David reported low self-efficacy because he said people might not want him to talk about them.

Although vicarious experience was believed to have an impact on students’ self-efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1997) and young children are likely to rely on peer modeling (Wang & RiCharde, 1987), my observations of the participants and interviews did not support these statements. I think it might be due to the design of the study. This is not an experimental design, and all observations happened in natural settings. Peer modeling just did not happen
during my observations or my participants did not have an understanding of peer modeling.

*Self-Efficacy across Different tasks and Contexts*

Research question 1d asked “How do ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs related to learning English vary across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?” The following paragraphs address this question.

From the discussions of the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs, we can see that children’s self-efficacy varies across language-learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts. For example, all the participants reported high self-efficacy in listening and speaking. They all reported that they could understand the classroom instructions and talk to their friends in English very well. They had comparatively lower self-efficacy related to reading. Within reading activities, they generally held higher self-efficacy for reading stories than for reading chapter books. As for writing, all of them had low self-efficacy.

In both home-based and school-based contexts, participants thought that they could accomplish the language-learning tasks very well if the tasks were familiar to them and reported much lower self-efficacy to perform novel tasks. Participants’ self-efficacy beliefs were also found to be influenced by the social cultural context. Their self-efficacy beliefs for the same language task varied in relation to the attitude of the interlocutors and the relationship between them. In the home-based context, participants’ reported self-efficacy beliefs about language interactions during play. They reported their self-efficacy beliefs to
understand the rules, communicate with their friends, and solve problems occurred at play using the English language. In the school-based context, participants reported more self-efficacy beliefs regarding reading and writing activities.

While answering questions for Research Purpose One, I have discussed the participants' behaviors that may provide evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs to perform certain tasks. I also reported participants’ self-efficacy beliefs across different language-learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts. Possible factors related to the development of their self-efficacy beliefs were also presented. I address the questions for Research Purpose Two in the following section.

Research Purpose Two

There are two questions for this purpose to understand ESL children’s use of SRL strategies in learning the English language:

a. What SRL strategies do ESL children employ in learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?

b. How do ESL children use SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across school-based and home-based contexts while learning English?

As discussed in Chapter Two, the social cognitive theory of SRL focuses on students’ cognition. Self-regulation involves personal, behavioral, and environmental triadic processes (Bandura, 1986). In order to be self-regulated in
learning, students need to set goals, make plans, and choose strategies available to achieve the self-set goals. Based on the self-awareness of their performance to achieve the goals, students monitor their goals and strategies and control social and physical settings. This is to say that a self-regulated student goes through three important processes: self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction.

From sociocultural perspectives, the interaction between the learner and the teacher plays an important role. The student learns under the guidance of the teacher and is regulated by the teacher at preliminary stages. Gradually, the teacher withdraws the scaffolding as the student internalizes the commands and directives from the teacher and takes over the teacher’s regulating role. With the help of language, children gain greater flexibility and independence from the stimulus in the environment and become more guided by a plan. The self-regulated child masters his/her own behavior and gains control of the environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

**SRL Strategies**

Research question 2a asked “What SRL strategies do ESL children employ in learning English across different learning tasks and across home-based and school-based contexts?” The main answer to this question is that the participants in this study reported nine out of the 11 classes of SRL strategies across home-based and classroom-based contexts: self-evaluation, organizing and transforming, goal setting and planning, seeking information, keeping records and monitoring, environmental structuring, rehearsing and memorizing,
seeking social assistance, and reviewing records (See Table 2.1). Self-consequences and attentional control were not reported. The total number of SRL strategies, the total number of different SRL strategies, and all categories of strategies reported by each participant are included in Table 4.1. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the participants’ use of each strategy.

**Self-evaluation.** Self-evaluation takes different forms for each participant. Some self-checked their homework or writing assignments in class for errors, others corrected their own language mistakes while speaking.

Jeff used this strategy in different situations. When he was writing, Jeff always reread the sentences he had written to check for errors and to see what he should write next. He also did not allow his parents to check his homework, claiming that it was his work and the teacher’s scores would not reflect his real proficiency level if he asked his parents to check it.

David reported in the interview that he never checked his homework or asked his parents to check his homework. Nevertheless, I observed him correcting his own mistakes while speaking English. Both Jeff and David used the strategy of self-evaluation to check their work, either written or oral, and corrected their language mistakes when they noticed them. I did not notice Kelvin or Richard using this strategy during the whole study, including classroom observations and the reading and writing tasks.

**Organizing and transforming.** This strategy was reported by Kelvin only. His use of this strategy was to use sketching or his native language in
communication and to chunk the word when he was trying to figure out how to pronounce or understand a single word.

Kelvin employed this strategy when he sketched his apartment in order to make a comparison between an apartment and a house (OB-C/Sept 25, 03). Kelvin also used this strategy when he was decoding an unknown word. He said that he would chunk the word and read each section of the word in order to figure out how to read the word and how to understand the word (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). Kelvin also used his native language, Chinese, during the communication with his Chinese friends. When he had some difficulty in reading, he asked his mother to translate some English words into Chinese for him to understand. Although Kelvin is the youngest of my participants, he was the only one who reported and used this strategy in the study.

Goal-setting and planning. This strategy was reported by Jeff only. He applied this strategy to make sure that his writing is complete and to skip unknown words and return to them later while reading.

In order to get a higher score in writing, Jeff often checked the remaining time with his teacher in order to make decisions. During the writing task, Jeff asked me how much time he had in the middle of the writing (WRITE/August 17, 03). He told me in the interview that he wanted to make sure that he had time to write the ending because he believed he could get a higher score if his work was complete (IN-C/August 17, 03).

Jeff also reported that he would use this strategy in reading (IN-C/August 29, 03). Jeff reported frequently skipping an unknown word while reading and
then coming back to it after having a better understanding of the context of the reading task. He said that he could usually guess the meaning of the unknown word after he read more sentences around it. Therefore, he chose to skip the word for the moment and then guess the meaning of it after he read further.

Seeking information. Participants in this study employed varieties of strategies to seek information while learning. They used pictures from a book or TV to help them understand. The dictionary is another common source of information to assist participants in figuring out the meaning of an unknown word. To guess the meaning of an unknown word from the context by reading sentences around it was reported by Jeff only.

Kelvin used the pictures from a book or TV to help him understand what a character said. He also searched in his folder of poems and the blackboard for the spelling of some words. Kelvin did not have his own dictionary at home, but told me in the interview that he sometimes used the dictionary in his class when he wanted to know how to spell a word. He sometimes asked his mother to use her dictionary when he needed to find the meaning of a word. His mother would translate the word into Chinese for him.

Jeff was in the fourth grade at the time of this study and older than Kelvin, which may account for some of the varieties of strategies to seek information. In addition to using the dictionary, Jeff also guessed the meaning of the word by reading the sentences around it. When I asked him to choose a chapter to read during the reading task, Jeff looked at the table of contents to seek information about the book. Like Jeff, Richard also reported that he guessed the meaning of
an unknown word while reading but based his guess on comparisons with other words rather than the context (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). Both Richard and David claimed that they seldom used the dictionary to seek information because it took a lot of time.

*Keeping records and monitoring.* This strategy was reported the least by participants in this study with regard to frequency. None of my participants took notes in class. Maybe they never learned how to take notes yet. When Kelvin met an unknown word in reading, he wrote it down on paper and then asked his mother to check the word in a dictionary for him. In this situation, he wrote the word on paper to keep a record of his questions.

*Environmental structuring.* All participants in the study reported awareness of the importance of a quiet place to study. They told me that their favorite place to study was their own rooms or the classroom, and they could not concentrate if other kids were playing around them.

Kelvin said his classroom was also a good place to study. When asked about his living room, Kelvin said that he could not study there if the TV was on or if other children were playing in the same room, and if they were noisy. Jeff told me that he could still concentrate on his study although he saw his friends playing outside. He explained that he knew sometimes when he was playing, other children were studying too.

Richard was very good at environmental control both at play and in the class. As long as the activity was interesting to him, Richard showed high persistence for it. He would not give up until he finished it. I found him reading
alone at recess when all other children were playing (OB-C/Oct 2, 03). He told me that he wanted to finish reading before playing because he wanted to know the end of the story (IN-C/Oct 2, 03).

*Rehearsing and memorizing.* Only Kelvin and Jeff reported this category of SRL strategy. While Kelvin used this strategy to memorize new words, Jeff used it as a rehearsal in order to avoid making mistakes in speaking English.

Kelvin reported in the interview that in order to memorize a new English word, he would repeat the word many times and “put the word in my brain” (IN-C/Nov 28, 03). He also told me that he would practice the list of words to be tested before the exam. He gave me an example to show how he practiced, “Pretend I have to practice ‘well’ and ‘very’. And then I say ‘well’, w-e-l-l. Correct? Then I say ‘very’, v-e-r-y. That’s what I mean practice.”

While rehearsing was employed by Kelvin to memorize words for a test, Jeff used rehearsing to avoid making mistakes. He reported in the interview that he sometimes spoke to himself to see if it made sense (IN-C/Nov 29, 03).

*Seeking social assistance.* Seeking social assistance is the most common strategy reported by the participants in this study. It refers to seeking peer assistance, seeking teacher assistance, and seeking adult assistance when difficulties were encountered in performing language-learning tasks (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986). All participants in this study employed this strategy when they encountered difficulties while communicating with peers or performing reading or writing assignments.
While Kelvin sought assistance from all possible resources available, peers, teachers, and parents, Richard reported that he did not ask his friends for assistance. He reported in the interview that he would ask his parents when he had difficulties in his homework (IN-C/Nov 23, 03). When he got something wrong on homework, his parents usually asked him to fix it by giving him a hint. Richard asked his teacher when he was not certain how to answer a question about reading (OB-C/Dec 11, 03). He reported in the interview that he would raise his hands and ask the teacher to repeat what she said if he could not follow the teacher’s words in class (IN-C/Nov 23, 03).

**Reviewing records.** Reviewing records includes reviewing tests, reviewing notes, and reviewing texts (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986). Kelvin was the only child who did not report this strategy. It is possible that he did not have to review his records because first graders did not have textbooks to review before an exam. Other participants reread texts to prepare for an exam or in the process of working with reading and writing activities.

Richard reported that he would reread the book before the exam. Although not successful, Richard reread a couple of sentences answer my questions during the reading task (READ/Nov 23, 03). This is consistent with the findings from Pape and Wang’s (2003) study for students solving mathematics problems. In that study, students’ number of rereadings of the problem did not turn out to be significantly related to the problem solving success. Both these studies indicate that rereading alone does not help the students’ comprehension of the reading materials.
Jeff also employed his strategy while writing. When he was asked to write a summary of an article about Helen Keller, Jeff reread some sentences of the article at this writing process in order to add some details to his writing (OB-C/Sept 25, 03). When asked about how he would prepare for a test, Jeff said that he would take the book home and review the vocabulary (IN-C/Nov 29, 03). Under the same situation, David said he would take the book home and read it.

**SRL Strategies across Different tasks and Contexts**

Research question 2b asked “How do ESL children use SRL strategies across different learning tasks and across school-based and home-based contexts while learning English?” The following paragraphs address this question.

The most commonly used SRL strategies employed by all my participants were seeking social assistance, seeking information, and environmental structuring. These strategies were used by all the participants across different language-learning tasks. Participants reported the use of seeking social assistance in home-based context playing games, working on homework assignments, and watching English TV programs. In school-based contexts, participants asked their teachers for help when they encountered difficulties performing assigned reading or writing tasks. Seeking information was used in listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities in both home-based and school-based contexts. All participants were aware of the importance of a quiet place to read English books. As a result, they all chose to read in their own rooms or the classroom.
Other strategies, however, were favored by individuals only. While self-evaluation was reported by David and Jeff, rehearsing and memorizing was reported by Jeff and Kelvin. Kelvin was the only participant who reported organizing and transforming as well as keeping records and monitoring. Jeff was the only child who reported goal-setting and planning.

Certain strategies were most commonly used for particular language learning tasks. For example, goal-setting and planning was used only by the participants in performing reading and writing activities but not in performing listening or speaking activities. Participants used self-evaluation only in speaking and writing activities but not in reading or listening activities. Across learning tasks, participants reported more SRL strategies for performing reading tasks than writing tasks. This finding echoed the results from previous research studies (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999). It is important to note that the only strategy for writing tasks reported in Chamot and El-Dinary’s (1989) study was goal-setting and planning. Participants in the present study, however, reported four different categories of SRL strategies in the context of writing: goal-setting and planning, seeking social assistance, seeking information, and self-evaluation.

Participants also tended to use particular strategies in certain situations. Rehearsing and memorizing and reviewing records were used more often before examinations than in other situations. Maybe participants understood the importance to use these strategies only in such situations.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored four Chinese children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies in the process of learning English as a second language across home-based and school-based contexts. Participant observation, guided interviews, reading and writing tasks, and student academic work were used as data sources. The in-depth description of each child’s behavior at play and in the language-learning classroom was interpreted through recent developments in the field of self-efficacy, the social cognitive theory and sociocultural perspectives of self-regulation, and the Willingness To Communicate model in second language acquisition.

Research in the area of self-efficacy consistently supports the contention that students’ self-efficacy beliefs are malleable instead of fixed (Klassen, 2004), and students with high self-efficacy are more likely to succeed in subsequent achievement tests (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Graham, 1999; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pajares et al., 1999). Therefore, enhancing ESL students’ self-efficacy beliefs may help them achieve more in the English language-learning process as well. In order to enhance students’ self-efficacy, we need to understand their self-efficacy beliefs and factors related to the development of
their efficacy beliefs. Differences between successful and less successful learners have also been noted. Successful learners used more SRL strategies and more flexibly monitor and adapt their strategies than less successful learners (Abraham & Vann, 1987; Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Pape & Wang, 2003; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988). Thus, ESL children might also benefit from learning varied SRL strategies. In the present study, the observation of participants’ behaviors in learning English across home-based and school-based contexts coupled with follow-up interviews helped me understand their self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies. I will draw conclusions from these reports of individual cases and cross-case analyses following the order of the research questions.

Conclusions

Students’ behaviors such as hand-raising in the classroom, willingness to engage in language activities, and persistence in performing the task were identified as possible evidence of their self-efficacy beliefs. Efficacious students are more likely to participate while less efficacious students are more likely to withdraw when confronted with difficulties (Schunk, 1990). Therefore, students who believe that they are capable of obtaining a successful outcome are more likely to raise their hand and to participate in the activity. I learned from most of the classroom observations and the follow-up interviews that the participants raised their hands to answer the teacher’s questions when they thought they could do them well and were reluctant to raise their hands when they were not efficacious enough to do so. Sometimes, however, participants do not raise their hands...
hands because they thought the questions were too easy or they thought the
teacher wanted other students to answer. Therefore, hand-raising may provide
evidence of students’ self-efficacy beliefs, but observing this behavior alone is
not sufficient to make a judgment of students’ self-efficacy. Follow-up interviews
were needed to elicit students’ beliefs.

Willingness to engage in language activities may also provide evidence of
students’ self-efficacy beliefs. For most of the cases, participants in this study
were willing to participate in the language-learning activities in the classroom and
during play when they had high self-efficacy to accomplish the tasks. They
hesitated to participate or avoided participation when they felt less efficacious.
Nevertheless, participants sometimes were not willing to engage in language
activities even when they reported that they would do them well if they were not
interested in the tasks. So, the observation of students’ willingness to talk alone
is not sufficient to help us understand their self-efficacy beliefs.

When the language tasks were optional, all participants showed
persistence when they believed they could do them well and lack of persistence if
they had low self-efficacy to do so. When the language tasks were required, Jeff
was the only participant who persisted even when he thought he could not do
them well. This might be due to his respect to the teacher or adult or his concern
for his grades.

Participants’ self-efficacy beliefs across different language-learning tasks
and across home-based and school-based contexts were listed in the cross-case
analyses in Chapter Four. The contexts for these self-efficacy beliefs were
playing games, watching English TV programs or movies, reading English books of different topics, writing English dairies, journal entries, and summaries, classroom communications, and daily communications with peers in particular situations such as telling stories/news, making a complaint, and talking about Pokemon cards.

A close examination of participants’ self-efficacy efficacy helped me understand that each individual child’s self-efficacy is task-specific. Take reading comprehension as an example, participants reported different levels of self-efficacy for reading activities. Their self-efficacy to read storybooks was higher than to read chapter books. They also reported comparatively higher self-efficacy to read books about animals or chess because they were familiar with the content of these books. This is to say that children’s self-efficacy is amenable to change depending on the specific task. We need to provide children with a specific task in order to elicit their self-efficacy beliefs.

The cross-case analyses also helped me understand that factors that influenced the development of their self-efficacy beliefs were expertise in the content area, self-perception of English proficiency, task difficulty level, past experience of success associated with effort, social persuasion, physiological or emotional state, interest, attitude toward the English language and the English speaking community, and the social cultural context. Understanding these factors is important for us to learn how to help our children develop high self-efficacy in the process of learning ESL. For example, we might enhance children’s self-efficacy beliefs by helping them develop their interest in the language-learning
task, helping them develop a good attitude toward the English language and English speaking community, lowering the task difficulty level so that they can experience success, providing them with encouragement and positive feedback, and helping them develop their English language proficiencies. Children who have low self-efficacious in one area may not necessarily hold these same beliefs in all areas, and low self-efficacious children can develop into high self-efficacious students by putting effort in the language-learning process and experiencing successes.

With regard to participants’ use of SRL strategies, Table 4.1 presented all different categories of SRL strategies each participant used in the observations or reported during the interviews. An examination of the situation where these strategies were employed helped me learn that the most commonly used SRL strategies employed by all my participants and across different learning contexts were seeking social assistance, seeking information, and environmental structuring. These strategies seemed to be context-free. Children might use them in any language-learning activities. Other strategies, however, were more context-specific. For example, goal-setting and planning was only used in reading and writing contexts but not for speaking and listening tasks by my participants. Participants in this study reported more strategies in reading context than in writing context.

Another finding of this study is that children’s access to SRL strategies varies to a great degree. Although previous research indicates that the longer the student is involved in learning the language, the more strategies they have
access to (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989), Kelvin, the youngest participant who studied English for the shortest time period, employed more strategies than Richard and David. I learned from the classroom observations that Kelvin’s teacher often introduced language-learning strategies in the classroom activities. Thus, while students are able to construct SRL strategies of their own and become self-regulated, instruction can impact students’ construction of SRL strategies.

Jeff reported the most number of different SRL strategies and was the only child who reported goal-setting and planning. He was also the oldest participant although his exposure to English language environment was shorter than that of Richard and David. My interviews with this child helped me understand that Jeff was very concerned with his English performance. Richard and David reported fewer different SRL strategies and were less concerned with their performance. This indicates to me that highly motivated children might use a variety of strategies to achieve their self-set goals (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Wenden, 1987; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990, 1992).

These conclusions have significant implications in the fields of self-efficacy study and self-regulation as well as the WTC model and ESL classroom teaching. I will discuss the implications in each of these fields specifically in the paragraphs that follow.

Significance for the Field of Self-Efficacy and Self-Regulation

This study extends the literature on cross-cultural perspectives of self-efficacy. Although considerable research has been devoted to the study of self-
efficacy in educational settings, most of the students under study were from Western cultures and were usually in American settings (Klassen, 2004). As a result, Pajares (2000) calls for a “culturally attentive” educational psychology to investigate students in a range of social and cultural settings.

There has been a recent trend for cross-cultural studies of students’ self-efficacy beliefs, but most of these studies were conducted in the paradigm of quantitative research methodology (Klassen, 2004). Asian students, mostly Chinese, Japanese, and Indian, were found to hold lower self-efficacy beliefs than Western students, mostly American, Puerto Rican, and German. Asian students, however, were more accurate at calibrating their efficacy beliefs with subsequent performance in academic settings (Earley, 1999; Eaton & Dembo, 1997; Salili, Chiu, & Lao, 2001; Scholz, Gutierrez-Dona, Sud, & Schwarzer, 2002; Schwarzer & Born, 1997). This is to say that Asian students’ report of their self-efficacy beliefs were more realistic and matched their subsequent performance better than Western students’ self-reported self-efficacy.

The “thick descriptions” of the four Chinese children’s self-efficacy beliefs associated with their subsequent performance supported the conclusions in previous cross-cultural studies about self-efficacy. Their self-reported high or low self-efficacy beliefs during the reading and writing tasks were in line with their actual subsequent performance in accomplishing the reading and writing tasks. All the participants reported low self-efficacy to write, and their writings turned out to be less proficient. The children also reported lower self-efficacy to read
chapter books than to read storybooks. In fact, they performed worse reading chapter books than reading picture books.

Although previous cross-cultural studies of students’ efficacy beliefs reached remarkable findings about many ethnic group students in the world, we need to bear in mind that each culture has its own diversity. We cannot assume that self-efficacy functions in the same way with all Asian students or with any other ethnic group of students. Therefore, qualitative research provides a more in-depth understanding of self-efficacy beliefs in the academic settings and “would provide more of an emic approach to a heretofore imposed etic construct” (Klassen, 2004, p. 228).

This study provided in-depth descriptions of four Chinese children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies from participants’ perspectives. The children’s self-efficacy beliefs for performing language-learning activities both at play in the home environment and during study in the classroom were described in details. Their use of SRL strategies in performing these tasks were also elicited or observed during interviews or observations. These descriptions might serve as a reference for researchers to investigate other students’ self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies although the findings are not generalizable to other students or other cultures.

Moreover, this study with ESL children provided some information about their self-efficacy beliefs. This information is also an addition to the literature of self-efficacy studies in the field of teaching and learning ESL in the elementary schools.
Significance for ESL

Thus far, I have discussed the implications of this study in the field of self-efficacy and self-regulation in general. In the following paragraphs, I examine the implications of this study of self-efficacy and self-regulation in the context of ESL in particular.

As discussed in Chapter One, there is considerable convergence of the findings that students’ self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies are important components of the learning process (Pajares & Miller, 1994; Schunk, 1994; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1986, 1988, 1990). Compared with other students, higher achieving students have been found to have higher self-efficacy beliefs and employed more different categories of SRL strategies in learning (Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Pape & Wang, 2003).

ESL students’ perceived self-efficacy has not been examined systematically even though it is particularly important for language learning (Huang & Chang, 1998; Huang et al., 1999). Huang and his colleague’s studies examined Chinese adult language learners’ self-efficacy beliefs with classroom observations, interviews, and document analyses. The present study extends prior research by examining four Chinese children learning ESL. Observations of these children at play in the home environment were incorporated with classroom observations as well as reading and writing tasks. The inclusion of home environment and the study of young children in elementary schools were contributions of this study to the investigation of self-efficacy beliefs of ESL children.
Unlike the situation of self-efficacy, substantial studies have investigated students’ use of language-learning strategies (Oxford, 1990; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Wenden, 1987). Bialystok (1981) reported that inferencing was engaged more often for written materials than for oral language. Third grade and fourth grade students used twice as many as the number of strategies for reading than for writing (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999). Participants in the current study reported more SRL strategies in reading tasks than in writing tasks and used more strategies with written materials than with oral English. Thus, the findings from previous research studies were supported in this study. While SRL strategies also involve language-learning strategies, students’ own initiative was emphasized. A strategy is considered self-regulated only when the student has a particular self-set goal in his/her mind and the implementation of the strategy is to achieve the self-set goals. A self-regulated student also readjusts his/her goals and SRL strategies according to the feedback received in the execution of his/her plans.

In addition, few measures of children’s self-efficacy are available (Heyne, King, Tonge, Rollings, Pritchard, Young, & Myerson, 1998). Wang and Pape (in press) developed two questionnaires to measure ESL children’s self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies based on a case study with four Chinese-speaking children. These two questionnaires were developed into post-interview questions (Appendix E) according to the information provided by the observations during the current study and used to elicit the participants’ self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies. These interview questions might
be helpful for further research to investigate ESL elementary school students’ self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies.

Significance for WTC

According to the WTC model, self-confidence in general and perceived competence in specific are the most significant predictors of an individual’s willingness to talk across different language-learning contexts (Hashimoto, 2002; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre et al., 2001). Since perceived competence is a major component of self-confidence, and self-confidence is the central component of self-efficacy, self-efficacy should also be associated with WTC. I learned from this study that the children’s self-efficacy beliefs also influenced their willingness to communicate across home-based and school-based contexts. Self-efficacy was more amenable to change. It is easier for teachers to help students increase their self-efficacy than to increase students’ self-confidence since self-confidence is more stable. Therefore, the study of self-efficacy seems to be more encouraging for classroom teachers. MacIntyre et al. (1998) claimed that there might be additional variables that needed to be added to the WTC model. Self-efficacy and self-regulation might be those additional variables to be added. Therefore, this study also contributes to the WTC model by providing two variables, self-efficacy and self-regulation, to be considered in this model.

Significance for Classroom Teaching

In an interview about the importance of the construct of self-efficacy, Anita Woolfolk Hoy said, “… self-efficacy is the most useful self-schema for education because it relates to choices and actions that affect learning such as goal-setting,
persistence, resilience, effort, and strategy” (Shaughnessy, 2004, p. 172).

Teachers must know their students. They need really good ways to observe and understand their students. They must understand their students’ beliefs and strategies to make sense of the learning subjects. To do this, classroom teachers may use the findings from this study as references. The methodology used in this study might serve as a reference for classroom teachers to understand their students’ self-efficacy beliefs and use of SRL strategies in performing language-learning tasks.

Studies of students’ use of language-learning strategies have indicated that effective learners were more flexible with their repertoire of strategies and more effective at monitoring and adapting their strategies. Moreover, less effective learners focused on details whereas more effective learners focused more on the task as a whole. For instance, more effective learners seemed more comfortable guessing or skipping some individual words when they were decoding them. They used background knowledge and made inferences. Less effective students, however, used the dictionary only when decoding words (Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Wang & Pape, in press).

In this study, Richard and David reported fewer varieties of strategies than Kelvin and Jeff in learning English as a second language, but previous research studies reported that students having access to more SRL strategies were more likely to succeed in their academic study (Pape & Wang, 2003; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988). Therefore, it is important for teachers to incorporate SRL strategies in the classroom teaching English as a second language so that
students construct their own strategies and have more choices when they meet difficulties in their English language-learning process.

Student performance has been shown to be significantly improved after the training of SRL strategies (Butler, 1998; Neilans & Israel, 1981; O’Malley, 1987). Students trained with strategies have become more self-regulated (Travers & Sheckley, 2000). Kelvin was the youngest child and had the shortest exposure to the English language environment in this study, but he reported more SRL strategies than Richard and David. Classroom observations helped me understand that his classroom teacher was consistently teaching the children language-learning strategies. Kelvin’s case indicates that incorporating SRL strategies in the curriculum for classroom teaching has an impact on the students’ use of these strategies in their learning process.

Teaching students different cognitive and self-regulatory strategies may be more important for improving their actual performance on classroom academic tasks, but improving students’ self-efficacy beliefs may lead to more use of these cognitive strategies (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990). Researchers interested in the relationship between self-efficacy and self-regulation reported that low self-efficacious children were not likely to use as many SRL strategies as high self-efficacious children (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990).

The findings from this study as well as from previous studies indicate that students’ self-efficacy beliefs are not fixed but rather task specific (Klassen, 2004). This is very encouraging to classroom teachers because students not so successful in one area can be taught to be successful in another area, and
students can also be taught from not successful to successful in a particular area. Their self-efficacy beliefs to perform language-learning tasks can then be enhanced through their successful past experience and lead to their future success in similar language-learning contexts.

Enhancing student self-efficacy beliefs and helping students become self-regulated is not an easy task. Teachers need to provide scaffolding and establish a friendly environment in the classroom and the school. Specifically, teachers may help students become self-efficacious and self-regulated through the following methods (Gaskill & Woolfolk Hoy, 2002).

**Modeling**

- Find some peer models in class and ask them to demonstrate how they performed a task by verbalizing their thoughts and reasoning.
- Encourage cooperative learning activities through group work and use flexible grouping to avoid labeling individuals.
- Make sure that low-achieving students are mixed with high achieving students.
- Discourage comparisons between groups and encourage students to observe their own progress through comparisons with their past achievement.

**Mastery or Enactive Experience**

- Make sure that the learning task is on an appropriate level for all students and create individualized tasks as necessary.
• Create opportunities for students to experience success. This requires instructional support.

• Help students keep track of their own progress by portfolios so that students see their own progress and learn that effort pays off.

**Social Persuasion**

• Provide feedback that focuses on effort. Help students understand that they can succeed through hard work.

• Help students maintain incremental views of intelligence. Intelligence is not innate but nurtured through instruction and practice.

• Avoid making judgments of the difficulty level from the teacher’s point of view. Be aware that a task might be easy for some students but difficult for others.

**Physiological or Emotional State**

• Reduce students’ anxiety by making all instructions clear. Check with students to make sure that they understand what they are expected to do in the language-learning tasks. Provide students with examples if necessary.

• Teach test-taking skills and give practice tests. Use multiple ways to evaluate students’ learning: oral, written, open-book, closed-book, portfolios, oral presentations, etc.

**SRL Strategies**

• Teach cognitive and metacognitive skills such as goal-setting, planning, monitoring the progress, and self-evaluation.
• Teach specific SRL strategies to improve language learning such as seeking information, organizing and transforming, keeping records, seeking social assistance, environmental structuring and attentional control, rehearsing and memorizing, and reviewing records.

• Help students practice newly acquired strategies and make sure that strategy execution during practice is easy.

Given that individuals are more likely to perform a behavior of which others approve (MacIntyre et al. 2001), the belief that significant others’ support for engaging in L2 communication might be sufficiently motivating. Therefore, support from classroom teachers is of crucial importance to children’s use of English. Teachers of ESL children may enhance the children’s self-efficacy beliefs and encourage them to take risks in communicating in English. The children’s self-efficacy beliefs to participate in classroom activities may increase to a great degree, and their behaviors in the classroom might become more self-regulated.

“To foster sustained learning, it may not be sufficient to convince students that language learning is interesting and enjoyable; they may need to be persuaded that it is also personally important for them” (Noels et al., 2000, p. 75). This implies that teachers should also help students recognize the importance of learning L2 in addition to promoting students’ interest in learning the language tasks so as to help students become more motivated and more self-regulated.

Students who learn an L2 in an autonomous and supportive environment where feedback enhanced their sense of competence increased their sense of
competence in the learning task. They are less likely to feel anxious in the learning process and more likely to be persistent (Noels et al., 2000). The classroom environment is important. Teachers should give students autonomy and be supportive to their students’ learning. It is important to provide positive feedback and promote students’ interest in the language-learning tasks.

Clement et al. (1994) argued that language acquisition was a complex social process. Group cohesion was associated with a positive evaluation of the learning environment. Good classroom atmosphere promotes student involvement and activity while moderating anxiety and promoting self-confidence. On the other hand, the student brings into the classroom a level of self-confidence and anxiety related to extra-curricula experiences with the language, the quality and quantity of which would then influence classroom behavior, achievement, and anxiety. Therefore, a friendly environment is not only necessary in the school environment but also important in the home community environment. Students commuting between these two environments bring their attitude toward the L2 and the L2 community across home-based and school-based contexts.

Limitations of this Study

All the participants in this study were Chinese boys and have at least one year of exposure to the English language-learning environment. Another common feature of these children is that all of them lived in international graduate student families. Their parents had low-income and limited amount of time for the children. Therefore, this descriptive study is not intended to
generalize the findings to students of other cultures and families. Special caution should be kept in mind even when generating the results to students of similar characteristics because each individual is different from others even if common characteristics are shared in the group.

Another limitation of this study is that classroom teachers were not involved although their permission to observe their classrooms was obtained. Teachers’ participation would have brought the teachers’ perspectives into the study and would have helped me better understand the children's behaviors in the classroom.

Finally, this study was conducted in a natural setting, and no intervention was implemented. Students were observed while they were playing or studying as they would usually do without this study. Therefore, some research interests, such as the relationship between peer modeling and self-efficacy and factors influencing students' choice of SRL strategies, were not investigated.

Research of language-learning strategies indicates that factors influencing students’ choice of strategies are usually learner variables such as learner’s self-efficacy beliefs, beliefs of the usefulness of the task, and motivation (Huang & Chang, 1998; Pajares & Valiante, 1997; Wenden, 1987; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990, 1992). Oxford and Nyikos (1989) reported that learners who were highly motivated to learn a language were more likely to use a variety of strategies. For example, students who elected to learn the language used more strategies than students who took the course as a graduation requirement. In addition, gender, years of study, and language proficiencies all had significant
effects on the choice of strategies. For instance, the longer they learned the language, the more strategies they used.

Since my study is descriptive in nature and there were only four participants, it was not possible for me to investigate these relationships. Jeff, who was the oldest among the participants, did report the most strategies. Richard and David, however, reported fewer strategies than Kelvin although they were both older than Kelvin and they had more years of study in English.

The fact that all my participants were male and they all had a strong interest and motivation to learn English made it impossible for me to discuss the gender and motivation effect on their choice of strategies. They did report more strategies in reading than in writing, and their perceived proficiency in reading was higher than that in writing. Nevertheless, I could not tell whether this difference was because of the tasks themselves or because of the difference in their perceived competence in reading and writing.

Although student academic achievement scores on standardized tests were obtained, they were not used in the interpretation of the relationship between students’ academic achievement and their self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies. Instead, reading and writing tasks were used to see if efficacious children achieved better and used more SRL strategies in the subsequent English reading and writing tasks.

Recommendations for Future Research

As discussed in the previous session, teacher participation is appreciated to investigate students' self-efficacy beliefs and their use of SRL strategies.
Teacher efficacy beliefs in teaching these ESL children to perform different language-learning tasks might also be an interesting variable to study.

Teacher participation also makes it possible to implement quasi-experimental designs to investigate ESL students’ self-efficacy and self-regulation. In addition to natural settings, students can also be observed in an experimental setting where self-efficacy, self-regulation, and peer-modeling are incorporated in the classroom.

Newly arrived students and students from a variety of family backgrounds are recommended for future research, and both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies should be used to obtain in-depth descriptions of individual students as well as results that are able to be generalized from samples to populations.
APPENDIX A

SELF-REGULATION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Questions</th>
<th>Psychological Dimensions</th>
<th>Task conditions</th>
<th>Self-regulatory Attributes</th>
<th>Self-regulatory processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Motive</td>
<td>Choose to participate</td>
<td>Intrinsically or self-motivated</td>
<td>Self-goals, self-efficacy, values, attributes, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How?</td>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Choose method</td>
<td>Planned or automatized</td>
<td>Strategy use, relaxation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
<td>Performance outcomes</td>
<td>Choose performance outcomes</td>
<td>Self-aware of performance outcomes</td>
<td>Self-monitoring, self-judgment, action control, volition, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>Environmental (social)</td>
<td>Control social and physical setting</td>
<td>Environmentally / socially sensitive and resourceful</td>
<td>Environmental structuring, help seeking, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX B

LEARNING STRATEGIES FAVORED BY GOOD LANGUAGE LEARNERS
## Learning Strategies Favored by Good Language Learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dichotomous Classification</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Sub-strategies</th>
<th>Examples of strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Strategies</td>
<td>Memory strategies</td>
<td>Creating mental linkages</td>
<td>Grouping/Associating/Elaborating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applying images &amp; sounds</td>
<td>Reviewing</td>
<td>Using imagery/Semantic mapping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employing action</td>
<td></td>
<td>Structured reviewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using physical responses/Using mechanical tricks of sensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive strategies</td>
<td>Practicing</td>
<td>Repeating/Formally practicing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receiving &amp; sending</td>
<td></td>
<td>Getting the idea quickly/Using resources for receiving and sending messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>messages</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reasoning deductively/Analyzing expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analyzing &amp; reasoning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Taking notes/Summarizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating structure for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>input &amp; output</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compensation strategies</td>
<td>Guessing intelligently</td>
<td>Using linguistic clues/Using other clues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overcoming limitations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Switching to the mother tongue/Getting help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>expression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect Strategies</td>
<td>Metacognitive strategies</td>
<td>Centering the learning</td>
<td>Linking with known material/Paying attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arranging &amp; planning the</td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizing/Setting goals and objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-monitoring/Self-evaluating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluating the learning</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective strategies</td>
<td>Lowering the anxiety</td>
<td>Using music or meditation/Using laughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging oneself</td>
<td></td>
<td>Making positive statements/Rewarding oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taking the emotional</td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing a language learning diary/Discussing ones’ feelings with others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>temperature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social strategies</td>
<td>Asking questions</td>
<td>Asking for clarification/Asking for correction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperating with others</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperating with peers/Cooperating with proficient users of the language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empathizing with others</td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing cultural understanding/Becoming aware of others’ thoughts and feelings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX C

APPROVAL NOTICES FROM HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE
Research Involving Human Subjects
ACTION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

X Full Committee Review

X Original Review

X Expedited Review

Continuing Review

Amendment

With regard to the employment of human subjects in the proposed research protocol:

2003B0145 Self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning strategies of children learning English as a second language, Stephen J. Pape, Patricia Enciso, Chuang Wang, School of Teaching and Learning

THE BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES HUMAN SUBJECTS IRB HAS TAKEN THE FOLLOWING ACTION:

APPROVED

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS *

DISAPPROVED

WAIVER OF WRITTEN CONSENT GRANTED

* Conditions stated by the IRB have been met by the investigator and, therefore, the protocol is APPROVED.

- No procedural changes may be made without prior review and approval from the IRB.
- You are reminded that you must promptly report any problems to the IRB.
- You are also reminded that the identity of the research participants must be kept confidential.
- It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to retain a copy of each signed consent form for at least three (3) years beyond the termination of the subject's participation in the proposed activity. Should the principal investigator leave the University, signed consent forms are to be transferred to the Human Subjects IRB for the required retention period.

Date: May 23, 2003

Signed: Thomas E. Nygren, Chair

HS-025B (Rev. 2/94)
Research Involving Human Subjects

ACTION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Committee Review</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Original Review</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expedited Review</td>
<td></td>
<td>Continuing Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the employment of human subjects in the proposed research protocol

2003B0145 SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING STRATEGIES OF CHILDREN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, Stephen Pape, Patricia Enciso, Ching-Wang, Teaching & Learning

Subjects were deemed to be at NO GREATER THAN MINIMAL RISK, and the protocol was APPROVED WITH CONDITION(S) by means of expedited review (category 8) on April 14, 2004.

the Behavioral and Social Sciences IRB has taken the following action:

X APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS *

* Conditions stated by the IRB have been met by the investigator and, therefore, the protocol is APPROVED.

WAIVER OF WRITTEN CONSENT GRANTED

EXPEDITED REVIEW CATEGORY (When applicable)

- No procedural changes may be made without prior review and approval from the IRB.
- You are reminded that you must promptly report any problems to the IRB.
- You are also reminded that the identity of the research participants must be kept confidential.
- It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to retain a copy of each signed consent form for at least three (3) years beyond the termination of the subject's participation in the proposed activity. Should the principal investigator leave the University, signed consent forms are to be transferred to the Human Subjects IRB for the required retention period.

Date: April 14, 2004

Signed: Thomas E. Nygren, OIRB
APPENDIX D

PARENTAL LETTER OF NOTIFICATION AND CONSENT FORM
Letter of Introduction for Participant in Social and Behavioral Research

Protocol Title: Self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning strategies of children learning English as a second language

Protocol Number: 2003B1045
Principal Investigator: Stephen J. Pape, Ph.D.

Dear Participants:
My name is Chuang Wang, and I am a doctoral student at The Ohio State University working with Dr. Stephen Pape and Dr. Patricia Enciso. I would like to invite you and your child to take part in my dissertation study.

The purpose of the study is to examine children’s beliefs in their ability to perform English language tasks and the behaviors they use to learn the language. Your participation and your child’s participation are very important and will help to improve teaching English as a second language in the future.

The whole process of this study is as follows:
1. An interview in your home. The process will be audiotaped.
2. Your child will work on English reading and writing tasks and I will ask your child to speak out loud what he/she is thinking while working on these tasks. The process will be videotaped.
3. I will watch your child’s behaviors at play once a week for a period of three months. Observations of your child at play may be conducted in one of the children’s home and the process will be videotaped.
4. I will watch your child’s behaviors in the classroom once a week for a period of three months. The process will be videotaped.
5. An in-depth interview with you and your child. The process will be audiotaped.

You will be invited to look at my report to ensure that I have accurately interpreted your response. This study will last for about six months.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time during the study. All information will be kept strictly confidential. I will assign a participant code for your name and your child’s name on all materials. No names will be used in any report of the research. The audiotapes, videotapes, and field notes will be used for research purposes only. They may be shown to professional colleagues for the purpose of explaining the research. All data will be secured in an office at the university for safekeeping and will be destroyed in the year 2010.

If you have any questions related to this study, please feel free to contact me at (614) 292-4382/(614) 688-9134 or Dr. Pape at (614) 292-8344. If you have any question concerning your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the Office of Research Risks Protection, The Ohio State University at (614) 292-6950.

Sincerely,
Chuang Wang

Signature: ________________________

Stephen Pape

Signature: ________________________
Consent From for Participation in Social and Behavioral Research

Protocol title: Self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning strategies of children learning English as a second language

Principal Investigator: Stephen J. Pape, Ph.D.
Phone number: (614) 292-8344 (O) Email: pape.12@osu.edu

Date: ___________ Participant Code (to be filled in by researcher): _____________
Protocol Number: 2003B0145

Please print your name: _____________________

I, ____________________, consent to participate and provide consent for my child,
______________________, to participate in the research project entitled:

Self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning strategies of children learning English as a second language.

Chuang Wang has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and the expected duration of my participation. I acknowledge that any questions I have raised have been answered to my full satisfaction. Furthermore, I understand that I am free to withdraw consent at any time and to discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.

I consent to the use of audiotapes and/or videotapes. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study. I can contact the investigators at (614) 688-9134. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I can call the Office of Research Risks Protection at (614) 688-4792.

Finally, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Signature: ________________________________

I agree to participate in the following activities by providing my initial in the boxes that follow each activity:

1. Interview   2. My child works on English reading and writing tasks
3. Watch my child’s behavior at play   4. Watch my child’s behavior in the classroom   5. In-depth interview
APPENDIX E

GUIDE FOR INTERVIEWS
## Child Pre-Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How old are you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What grade are you in?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Where were you born?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How long have you been in the United States?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What language is spoken at your home?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What language do you use speaking to your parents?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. When did you start learning English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Why are you studying English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you like studying English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. With whom do you speak English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. With whom do you speak Chinese?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Do you prefer watching English programs or Chinese program on TV?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Do you prefer playing with English speakers or Chinese speakers?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Do you feel shy when you speak English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Are you afraid of making English language mistakes?
### Parent Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Code: _____________</th>
<th>Location: ____________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date: ________________________</td>
<td>Time: ________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How long have you been in the United States?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What language do you use when speak to your child (the participant)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. With whom do you speak Chinese?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What’s your latest academic degree?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What’s your current profession?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you feel comfortable speaking English? Why or why not?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Do you want your child to learn English well? Why or why not? If yes, what do you think you are doing to help your child to study English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you think your child likes studying English? Why do you think so?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. (Skip this if the answer to the above question is positive) How do you think you can help him/her become interested in studying English?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How much time does your child spend on studying English each day on average?</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Do you have clear goals for your child to study English? What are these goals?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. How often do you check your child’s English homework?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. In what situations would you help your child in doing his/her English homework?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. When you and your child are watching English TV programs together, what do you do in order to help your child understand the program well?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Have you noticed improvements of your child’s English since he/she came here? If so, what do you think contributes to this improvement?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. What do you usually do when your child’s English grade on the report card improved?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Self-efficacy in Learning English as a Second Language
(Post Interview)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcriptions and Descriptions</th>
<th>Theoretical Reflections/Notes</th>
<th>Methodological Reflections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I: Look, you remember the stars? You remember I asked you before? D: Um. I: So, this star (5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;) means that you can do it very well, this star (4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;) means you can do it well, this star (3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;) means you can do it but not well, this star (1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;) means that you can not do it. D: But two is can not do it? I: Actually, one is you can not do it, but two means you can do it but with great difficulties. You understand that? So the bigger star you choose? D: The more better I am I: Exactly. You are so smart!</td>
<td>The scale is consisted of five stars of different size and each of the star is numbered from 1 to 5 with 1 representing the smallest one and 5 representing the biggest one.</td>
<td>I reviewed the scale that I used before with him. I skipped the explanation of the second star but he asked me for clarification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Guided Interview questions
(Probing questions together with theoretical and methodological reflections were omitted to save space here)
1. How well do you think you can tell others what to do and where to go at play?
In English, ok?
2. How well do you think you can explain the rules of a game?
3. How well do you think you can explain to your friends why something happened?
4. How well do you think you can make a suggestion about how to play a game?
5. How well do you think you can give directions to your friends about how to play a game?
6. How well do you think you can tell news to your friends?
7. How well do you think you can tell the news to your parents?
8. How well do you think you can tell the news to your teacher?
9. How well can you tell a joke to your friends?
10. How well do you think you can tell a joke to your parents?
11. How well do you think you can tell a joke to your teacher?
12. How well do you think you can ask your friend how to do something in a game?
13. How well do you think you can ask your friend if they want to play with you?
14. How well do you think you can ask your friends what they want to play?
15. How well do you think you can ask your friend who they are in the game?
16. How well do you think you can ask your friend where they are in the game?
17. How well do you think you can ask your teacher for permissions?
18. How well do you think you can tell your friends what you think about somebody?
19. How well do you think you can tell your friends about what you think about some games?
20. How well do you think you can tell your friend whether you like or dislike something?
21. How well do you think you can make a complaint about something?
22. How well do you think you can read chapter books?
23. How well do you think you can read story books?
24. How well do you think you can read books about science?
25. How well do you think you can read books about chess?
26. How well do you think you can read books about sea animals?
27. How well do you think you can read the instructions on Pokemon cards?
28. How well do you think you can write a birthday card to your friend?
29. How well do you think you can write a diary?
30. How well do you think you can leave a message for your parents in writing?
31. How well do you think you can do it if I ask you to write something about what happened in the morning at the church?
32. How well do you think you can understand your teacher’s instructions?
33. How well do you think you can understand your friends in English?
34. How well do you think you can correct your friends’ English mistakes?
35. How well do you think you can describe things that you do not know the name?
36. How well do you think you can make a comparison between two characters in the movie?
37. How well do you think you can make a comparison between two characters in the game?
38. How well do you think you can make a comparison between two games?
39. How well can you tell others what you have read?
40. How well do you think you can tell me what happened in the movie?
41. How well do you think you can translate Chinese words into English?
42. How well do you think you can translate English words into English?
43. When you are watching English movie or TV, how well do you think you can understand it?
44. How well do you think you can understand the words on the computer?
Self-Regulation in Learning English as a Second Language  
(Post Interview)

Participant Code(s):______  Location:  __________________
Date:  ______    Activity:  Interview about self-regulation
Time In:__________   Time Out: __________

Setting: This is a two-story apartment. The first floor is consisted of a kitchen and a sitting room and the second floor is a combination of two bedrooms and a bathroom. The interview took place in a bedroom on the second floor because it is quiet upstairs with the door shut and other children can still play in the sitting room.

Purpose:
1. To elicit a participant’s self-regulated learning strategies in learning English as a second language.
2. To triangulate some of the participant’s behaviors during the observations in order to see if the strategies used were self-regulated.

Guided Interview questions  
(Probing questions together with theoretical and methodological reflections were omitted to save space here)

1. What do you do if you meet some words you do not know when you are watching TV?
2. What do you do if you meet some words you do not know when you are reading?
3. What do you do if you meet some words you do not know when you are talking to your friends?
4. When you are playing games with your friends, if your friends use some English words you do not know, what do you do?
5. What do you do if you meet some words you do not know when you are listening to the teacher’s lecture in class?
6. Do you check you homework?
7. Do you ask your parents to check your homework?
8. What do you do when you make mistakes in your homework?
9. Do you take notes in class?
10. If you are going to have a test tomorrow, what do you do today?
11. How well can you concentrate on reading English if other people are watching TV?
12. How well can you concentrate on reading English if other children are playing outside?
13. What do you do when you are happy because you made a great progress in studying English?
14. I noticed in your class that you asked your teacher a lot of questions. Why did you ask the teacher those questions?
APPENDIX F

OBSERVATION FIELD NOTES
Field Notes on Observations at Play

Participant Code(s): Jeff  
Location: Tom’s Apartment  
Observations Date: 7/24/03  
Type of Play: Pokemon Cards  
Time In: 1:19 p.m.  
Time Out: 2:22 p.m.

Setting of the Observation site:
This is a two-story two-bedroom apartment. The children were playing in the sitting room on the first floor. There are two windows in this room, one to the south the other to the north. Therefore, illumination is excellent. Children played on the rug. A camcorder and a tape recorder were set beside them. An extended microphone was used to get quality recoding.

Purpose:
(2) To observe children’s behavior that might be related to their self-efficacy beliefs to perform language communication activities at play;
(3) To observe children’s strategies in verbal and non-verbal interactions with peers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Theoretical Reflections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Playing Pokemon cards in a battle)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J: Can you tell me the rules first because I don’t really … when I was playing with my friends, I don’t really follow the rules.</td>
<td>Many children do not follow rules. They just invented their own rules to avoid reading the instructions on the card.</td>
<td>Jeff was seeking social assistance from his friend Tom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T: You don’t really need to. Well it says you need to flip. Well it says the tail’s attack did nothing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field Notes on Classroom Observations

Participant: Kelvin
Location: Cranbrook Elementary
Observations Date: 10/23/03
Type of Class: Reading & Writing
Time In: 2:30 p.m.
Time Out: 3:02 p.m.

Classroom Setting: The classroom is located in a flat building. The door is open to a hallway and a TV set is hung between the door and the blackboard. The students are sitting towards the blackboard in three rows. Kelvin is sitting in the last row and the second from left. There are five personal computers at the back corner of the classroom and a printer in the middle of the computers. Only one of the four walls has windows. The windows are pretty large and the illumination of the classroom is quite good. The size of the student’s desk is just enough for one student and it has an open drawer. Students put some crayons, scissors, erasers, and other stuff like these in the drawer and put their books and notebooks in a bag on the back of their chairs.

Purposes:
1. To see what and how Kelvin learns English reading and writing in the main stream classroom.
2. To observe Kelvin’s SRL strategies and his behaviors to see how his self-efficacy beliefs and SRL strategies in his ESL classroom are different from those in his ESL classroom and at play in his home community.
3. To get acquainted with the reading and writing materials and activities that Kelvin is familiar with so that I can use similar ones for the reading and writing tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time (p.m.)</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Theoretical Reflections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2:57</td>
<td>Kelvin started to glue a picture next to the sentence he had just written. The girl in front of him asked me how to spell “than”. Kelvin pulled out his folder with poems and showed her the word “than” highlighted.</td>
<td>I think the teacher must have taught the students how to spell “than” and asked them to highlight this word before. Kelvin remembered this and as a result showed her the work they did before.</td>
<td>Seeking information in SRL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

ENGLISH READING AND WRITING TASKS
English Reading

Participant Number: ____________________  Location: ____________________
Time to start: ________________________  Time to finish: ___________________

Directions: Please select a chapter from this book and read it in as much time as you need and then I will ask you some question from this chapter. Remember, you may use whatever resources that you can think of. But please speak out loud whatever you are thinking and doing.
Directions: Please write as much as you can about what you did this morning at the church. Remember, you may use whatever resources that you can think of. But please speak out loud whatever you are thinking and doing.
LIST OF REFERENCES


