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## Forms of absorption that facilitate the aesthetic and explanatory effects of literary reading

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Rather than articulating a univocal conception of absorption, we provide a theoretical rationale for the Absorption-like States Questionnaire (ASQ), an instrument that incorporates alternative conceptions of absorption based upon contrasts between forms of (1) attention (sustained concentration and attentional reorienting); (2) embodied space (peri-personal and extra-personal space); (3) self-other relations (pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking); and (4) verisimilitude (generalizing realism and self-implicating givenness). Structural equation modeling indicated that, in conjunction with open reflection, a type of absorption called expressive enactment distinctively predicted aesthetic outcomes. In contrast, also in conjunction with open reflection, a type of absorption called integrative comprehension distinctively predicted explanatory outcomes.

**Keywords:** absorption, attention, empathy, verisimilitude, embodiment, situation models, aesthetic attitude, sublime feeling, structural equation models

### 1. Introduction

Diverse conceptions of absorption (e.g., transportation, immersion) are complemented by equally diverse conceptions of its purported effects (e.g., attitude change, aesthetic feeling). Rather than attempting theoretical integration of such diversity, we have adopted a research strategy that *contrasts* different forms of absorption and their effects. This approach motivates a psychometric project that, rather than articulating a univocal conception of absorption as a trait (e.g., Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974) or state (e.g., Green & Brock, 2000), incorporates alternative conceptions of absorption within a single instrument and alternative conceptions of absorption's effects within another, separate instrument.

We will describe a newly developed questionnaire that assesses three different forms of absorption (integrative comprehension, expressive enactment, and reactive engagement) and that differentially predicts particular effects of literary reading (e.g., aesthetic response, social explanation). This questionnaire (the Absorption-like States Questionnaire; ASQ) is designed to complement another recently developed instrument (the Experiencing Questionnaire; EQ; Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012). Our project is derived from a phenomenological approach to literary reading that suggests several pivotal distinctions between forms of absorption and their effects.

Development of a new measure of absorption-like states presents a dilemma. On the one hand, the psychometric objective of traditional Likert scaling (with either exploratory [EFA] or confirmatory factor analysis [CFA]) is a set of hierarchically organized facets of a single multi-faceted construct. On the other hand, hierarchical arrangement of these (factorially independent) facets does not ensure understanding of their integrated function. For example, the Busselle and Bilandzic (2009) measure of Narrative Engagement (NE) includes four facets (attentional focus, emotional engagement, narrative presence, narrative understanding). However, they found that, while each facet contributed independently to prediction of *story enjoyment*, attentional focus, emotional engagement, and narrative presence (but not narrative understanding) predicted endorsement of *story-related attitudes*. Similarly, the Kuijpers, Hakemulder, Tan, and Doicaru (2014) Story World Absorption Scale (SWAS) includes four facets (attention, transportation, mental imagery, emotional engagement). However, their concluding study indicated that attention, transportation, and mental imagery (but not emotional engagement) predicted *story enjoyment*, while attention and emotional engagement (but neither transportation nor mental imagery) predicted *story impact*.

Kuijpers et al. (2014) emphasize the possibility that different texts precipitate different “type[s] of absorption” (p. 116), suggesting that the SWAS may be used to identify forms of absorption that predict “complex evaluative responses” other than story enjoyment or story impact (e.g., “meaningfulness contemplation”) (p. 117).<sup>1</sup> However, we suggest that the larger task Kuijpers et al. propose requires development of a questionnaire that explicitly incorporates existing tensions between cognitive psychological and phenomenological conceptions of absorption. The tensions incorporated into the ASQ involve: (1) sustained concentration and attentional reorienting (see Section 1.3.1); (2) peri-personal and extra-personal

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1. Green and Brock’s (2000) Transportation Scale (TS) is not comparably suited to such an endeavor; their factorially independent subscales “generally did not differentially predict relevant outcomes” (p. 704). Another limitation is that their “visual imagery” subscale is, in all likelihood, confounded with method variance because of its factor-specific question format.

space (see Section 1.3.2); (3) pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking (see Section 1.3.3); and (4) generalizing realism and self-implicating givenness (see Section 1.3.4). These antinomies are theory-driven; rather than inductively deriving questionnaire items using discourse garnered from actual readers (e.g., in think-aloud studies), we generated items that capture the tensions between two basic theories (and perhaps types) of absorption.

### 1.1 Contrasting assumptions about absorption-like states

The ASQ begins to address a family of conceptual issues that pervade studies of absorption-like states. The phenomenological perspective guiding ASQ development (cf. Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012; Kuiken & Oliver, 2013) contrasts with – and perhaps complements – the dualistic conception of absorption based on “situation models.” Under the latter conception, a reading “subject” attempts *inference-driven interpretation* of a separate textual “object.” That is, the wording of a first-level textual object (literal wording and immediately derivative local inferences) is passively perceived before the subject provides inferences that explain, “*why* actions, events, and states, are mentioned” in that first-level text (italics ours; Graesser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994, p. 372). Such explanatory inferences articulate causal relations, background states (emotions, attitudes), author motives, etc. (p. 375). In short, “construction” of a coherent situation model depends upon inference-driven interpretation of the literal propositional structure of a first-level textual object. Extensions of this model in studies of absorption also postulate a shift in reader perspective to the deictic center of such an interpretatively constructed situation (Zwaan, 1999). Similar cognitivist proposals characterize theories of “transportation” (Gerrig, 1993, p. 6); “narrative engagement” (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009, p. 341), and “immersion” (Jacobs, 2015).

In contrast with that generic cognitivist view, the phenomenological perspective attributes to readers a process that depends upon *expression-centered explication*. From this perspective, an embodied subject and textual object are co-constituted in a manner that does not give temporal or foundational priority to the first-level literal structure of the textual object (Merleau-Ponty, 2012). Instead, the reader purportedly “lives through” multi-modal, multi-level ambiguity (or even indeterminacy) during experiential disclosure of an intentional object. Experiential disclosure occurs through descriptive explication of a vaguely sensed textual object, iterative re-expression of what that vaguely sensed object “is like,” and potentially category-shifting “realization” of the kind of object it is (Ingarden, 1961; Natanson, 1998). Roughly, rather than addressing the “why” questions of inference-driven interpretation, expression-centered explication addresses questions about “how” a textual object is presented (what it “is like” and what “kind of” object it is).

## 1.2 Aesthetic attitude (re-visited)

Expression-centered explication has been focal in continental philosophy, including its 20th century phenomenological extensions (cf. Cazeaux, 2007). However, in empirical studies, expression-centered explication has repeatedly been assimilated to inference-driven interpretation, impeding examination of what is distinctive about the process of experiential disclosure – and its aesthetic effects. To substantiate this claim, it is useful to re-consider how traditional conceptions of the “aesthetic attitude” (Fenner, 1996; Stolnitz, 1978) have been construed by empirically oriented investigators (e.g., Cupchik, 2002). According to traditional conceptions, the goal of contemplation is comprehension of a potentially aesthetic object “for its own sake.” In the case of literary reading, the focus of this goal is comprehension of a text’s intrinsic meaning (i.e., its Fregean “sense” or “epistemic intension”; Chalmers, 2002). This epistemic goal requires careful articulation – and perhaps protection – within a cognitivist research community that emphasizes the “subjectivity” of absorbing pleasure, emotion, and appreciation during “construction” of a situation model.

Active comprehension of a text’s intrinsic meaning contrasts with other viable (and valued) reading objectives. Some of these objectives are concerned with intrinsic meaning but only with the meaning of a text’s parts (e.g., cataloguing its metaphors); others presume intrinsic meaning but provide extrinsic explanations of its origins (e.g., inferring an author’s historical background). Some of these objectives are concerned with intrinsic meaning but are “personal” (e.g., identifying similarity between autobiographical and narrative events); others presume intrinsic meaning but are “impersonal” (e.g., preparing a publishable manuscript about the text’s style). Thus, reading for intrinsic meaning often occurs in concert with extrinsic (often “pragmatic”) goals (Kemp, 1999) that hypothetically impede aesthetic experience. Perhaps because of the prevalence of such motivational blends, direct experimental examination of the outcomes of the aesthetic attitude is rare (cf. Kuiken, Busink, Miall, & Cey, 2003).

One response to these complexities is to articulate a composite index of reading for intrinsic meaning that crosses a broad spectrum of motivational blends. An influential version of this response (Cupchik, 2002) has been the derivation of a single “distance” continuum (with under-distancing and over-distancing endpoints) from Bullough’s (1912) discussion of the aesthetic attitude (see also Scheff, 1979). However, exploring endpoints – or identifying an “optimal” midpoint – along this continuum involves all the empirical challenges that accompany investigation of a curvilinear relationship. In addition, optimism about a one-dimensional distance metric is inconsistent with the multidimensional results of psychometric studies of absorption (e.g., Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009; Kuijpers et al., 2014). Despite these difficulties, a generic conception of distance (and its presumed

equivalent, “detachment”) remains commonplace in discussions of literary reading (cf. Andringa, 1996; Koopman & Hakemulder, 2015).

Invoking a one-dimensional distance metric to address the complexity of motivational blends has reinforced the impression that the aesthetic attitude involves “subjective” distance from – within a deictic shift toward – the alterity of an inference-driven model of the narrated situation. For example, after reviewing the scholarly background to Bullough’s (1912) discussion of psychical distance, Cupchik (2002) urged closer examination of the “subjective and interpretive” construction of textual coherence (p. 177). Cupchik’s proposal echoes the emphasis on (“subjective”) inference-driven construction of situation models in theories of transportation (Gerrig, 1993), narrative engagement (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009), and immersion (Jacobs, 2015). The issue is not whether inference-driven interpretation shapes aspects of literary reading (it clearly does), but rather whether such interpretation *also* explains those aspects of literary reading that involve expression-centered explication. And, the issue is not whether expression-centered explication discloses the “true meaning” (Cupchik, 2002, p. 176) of literary works, but rather whether it is a separate aspect of literary reading with its own distinctive (and perhaps distinctively aesthetic) outcomes.

We suggest that empirical identification of expression-centered explication requires departure from a one-dimensional conception of psychical distance and reconsideration of sources of epistemic *bivalence* at the core of the aesthetic attitude. To his credit, Cupchik (2002, p. 167) begins to locate such bivalence in Bullough’s identification of a Kantian “antinomy” within the distance metaphor, as well as in the Kreitlers’ (1972) proposal that “distance is a factor inherent in the very act of experiencing art fully and uninhibitedly” (p. 282). Nonetheless, Cupchik concludes that Bullough’s “modern innovation” was to treat distance as a “matter of degrees” along a continuum extending from under-distancing to over-distancing (p. 167). The phenomenological perspective, in contrast, identifies two sources of bivalence that resist assimilation to such a distance metric: open reflection and performative explication. These sources of bivalence point toward a conception of the aesthetic attitude that is not reflected in Cupchik’s review – or in extant psychometric studies of absorption-like states.

### 1.2.1 *Open reflection*

One source of bivalence can be traced to Stolnitz’s (1978) alternative account of the aesthetic attitude. His review of traditional conceptions emphasized the perceptual “creativity” of the aesthetic attitude, rather than “static” attention to the aesthetic qualia of a “beautiful” object (p. 415). Thus, by his account, “interested” (i.e., extrinsically motivated) contemplation supports *inflexibly* sustained concentration on preconceived aspects of an aesthetic object, while “disinterested” (i.e.,

intrinsically motivated) contemplation supports *flexibly* sustained concentration, allowing attention to shift across an array of unanticipated features of an aesthetic object (Stolnitz, 1960). While Dickie's (1964) critique of Stolnitz's model postulated only one kind of attention (sustained concentration), his critique failed to address the possibility that the aesthetic attitude involves the bivalence of sustained – and yet flexibly changing – attention.

The phenomenological perspective offers a model of *open reflection* (Ihde, 2007) in which a bivalent mode of sustained and yet flexibly changing attention is directed neither toward a separate textual object nor toward the reader's inner world, but rather toward an initially vague intentional object that progressively "gives itself." Husserl's (1962) portrayal of open reflection centers on the *epoché*, i.e., contemplation of a vague sense of "something more" that becomes accessible by putting into abeyance habitual convictions about what a particular intentional object "is like." Within open reflection, expressive explication of a vaguely sensed meaning accentuates that vaguely "felt sense" of something more (Gendlin, 1992) and facilitates recognition of other intentional objects with the same or a similar meaning (Sowa, 2011, p. 22). Openness to accentuation of an anticipated "again" or to a sense of "something more" is central to a phenomenological account of the aesthetic attitude. Moreover, consideration of the *epoché* creates a theoretical bridge to state differences in open reflection (in the ASQ), trait differences in "openness to experience" (Tellegen & Atkinson, 1974; DeYoung, Quilty, & Peterson, 2007), and the aesthetic correlates of both (Silvia & Nusbaum, 2011; Wild, Kuiken, & Schopflocher, 1995).

### 1.2.2 *Performative explication*

Another source of bivalence in the aesthetic attitude can be found in the phenomenological account of metaphor comprehension. According to Ricoeur (1981), metaphor comprehension generates category transformation through expression-centered explication, rather than through inference-driven interpretation. That is, open reflection provides a temporal site for "living metaphor," i.e., the kind of expression-centered explication that facilitates experiential disclosure (Cazeaux, 2007). Within living metaphor, novel meanings emerge from the interaction between metaphoric expressions and their literal conceptual explication. Such interaction carries forward – without completely resolving – the tension between a metaphoric *is* and a literal *is not* (*A is [and is not] B*; "Death *is* [and *is not*] a fat fly"). Metaphors that "live" within this tension prompt a reader to "think more" during literal conceptual explication (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 301), potentially disclosing what a metaphorically given textual object "is like" – even though what is disclosed remains "more" than can be "said".

For Ricoeur (1981), tension between the metaphoric *is* and *is not* occurs at levels of analysis ranging from the comprehension of sentential metaphors to engagement with the metaphoric import of an entire text. Thus, his discussion of living metaphor has implications not only for a theory of the *local* dynamics of literary reading (e.g., engagement with the metaphoric components of foregrounding; Miall & Kuiken, 1994) but also for a theory of the *global* dynamics of literary reading (e.g., metaphoric forms of engagement with extended character descriptions or with the text as a whole; Kuiken, Miall, & Sikora, 2004). While the local dynamics of living metaphor may contribute to momentary intrigue (e.g., the engaging “strikingness” of metaphorically enriched passages), the global dynamics of living metaphor may contribute to the temporally extended dynamics of absorption-like states. The latter may occur in two contexts: (1) within a reader’s “transporting” shift to the deictic center of an interpretatively “constructed” textual situation (Gerrig, 1993; Zwaan, 1999) and (2) within a reader’s “empathic” shift to a narrated character’s perspective on an interpretatively “simulated” textual situation (Mar & Oatley, 2008; Zunshine, 2006). Both of these shifts may be *better* understood as a transition toward expression-centered *performative* explication.

That is, a “transporting” performative shift to the deictic center of the world of the text plausibly possesses the epistemic bivalence of living metaphor – a bivalence that is obscured by dualistic separation of the internality and externality of the textual world. At times (and for some readers) what is internal and external are as clearly separate – and yet as clearly intertwined – as the *is* and *is not* of metaphoric expressions (e.g., “I *am* [and *am not*] in the world of the text”). Similarly, an “empathic” performative shift to a narrative personae’s perspective on the textual world possesses an epistemic bivalence that is obscured by dualistic separation of self and other. At times (and for some readers), self and other are as separate – and yet as intertwined – as the *is* and *is not* of metaphoric expressions (e.g., “I *am* [and *am not*] character X”). Words and phrases referring to these shifts toward performative explication often are themselves metaphors (e.g., “transportation” into the world of the text; “putting oneself in the shoes of another”), but the possibility that they also refer to the expression-centered *performative* explication of absorption-like states is less often considered (although see Cohen, 2012; Kuiken, Miall, & Sikora, 2004).

Articulating the experiential disclosure that occurs through performative explication requires specification of the process by which either local or global metaphors evoke “emergent” meaning. How does (local or global) metaphoricity disclose attributes of a metaphoric topic that were not previously sensed as attributes of *either the metaphoric vehicle or topic considered in isolation* (Becker, 1997; Gineste, Indurkha, & Scart, 2000; Vega-Moreno, 2004; Tourangeau & Rips, 1991)? The explication of a metaphor that yields emergent meaning begins by “mapping” salient features of the vehicle onto a topic for which those features were not previously



salient (e.g., for “My lawyer is a shark,” mapping the shark’s *assertive aggression* onto the lawyer) (Ortony, 1979). That first phase (vehicle-to-topic mapping) establishes constraints within which, in turn, salient properties of the topic are mapped onto a vehicle for which those features were not previously salient (e.g., mapping the lawyer’s skill onto the shark, enabling combinatory disclosure of the lawyer’s *skillfully assertive aggression*). In this second phase (topic-to-vehicle mapping), aspects of the topic mapped onto the vehicle may derive from its polysemes (Black, 1962; Tourangeau & Sternberg, 1982), its hypernyms (Glucksberg & Keysar, 1990), or its integrative relations with the vehicle (Gagné & Spalding, 2009). In fact, emergent meanings expressed as integrative relations may constitute a third phase of metaphoric explication that gives rise to a germinal narrative structure (e.g., an agent-action-object relation; the lawyer’s *skillfully assertive aggression toward persistent antagonists* [for lawyers, opposing lawyers; for sharks, threatening dolphins]).

Explication of the bivalent *is* and *is not* of a living metaphor may involve a process analogous to explication of a sentential metaphor – but at the global level of textual engagement we are calling performative explication. That is, a globally “transporting” performative shift to a text’s deictic center may enable explication of emergent meanings through one form of living metaphor (“*I am* [and *I am not*] in the world of the text”); a globally “empathic” performative shift to a narrative personae’s perspective may enable explication of emergent meanings within another form of living metaphor (“*I am* [and *I am not*] character X”). Unlike being “transported” into or becoming “lost” in a book, these two forms of performative explication are neither metaphors for something else nor hyperbolic descriptions of proximity to (or distance from) the alterity of the text or narrative personae. Performative explication refers to the inherently bivalent metaphoricity of these two global aspects of absorbed reading.

The performance metaphor has been invoked before – although usually not in the sense identified here (Kivy, 2006). Gerrig (1993), for example, supplemented his discussion of the “transportation” metaphor with discussion of a “performance” metaphor (p. 17ff). However, his account differs from ours in two ways. First, he argued that the performative “merging of textual information” with “pre-existing knowledge” serves a “gap-filling” function, much as is posited by interpretation-driven situation models. Thus, he is not concerned with the distinctive characteristics of expression-centered performative explication. Second, Gerrig’s empirical studies of performance-like interactions with text personae (“side participation”; cf. Gerrig & Jacovina, 2009) examine readers’ *alter-egoic reactions* to a narrative situation (e.g., encouraging a character to take an alternative course of action), rather than the *performative metaphoricity* of either “transportation” or “empathy.”

Conceptual clarification and empirical concretization of performative explication remains a challenge. Prior efforts have garnered relevant evidence from readers' generalizing use of second person pronouns in retrospective accounts of reading experience ("metaphors of personal identification"; Fialho, 2012; Kuiken, Miall, & Sikora, 2004). While first person pronouns usually refer to the speaker, second person pronouns to the addressee, and third person pronouns to another person, in a generalizing form of second person pronoun use, "you" may be a character, the narrator, the reader, or their combination (De Hoop & Hogeweg, 2014). Brunyé, Ditman, Mahoney, and Taylor (2011) have suggested that generalizing second person pronoun forms (e.g., "you," "je," "il") contribute to resonance between a reader's frame of reference and that of a narrator or character. We suggest that such second person forms of expression mark the resonance of performative explication during literary reading; that is, they are evidence of the *performative metaphoricality* of "transportation" and "empathy." In the research described here, the ASQ was used to provide psychometrically sound evidence that this kind of performative explication is differentiable from interpretive construction of a narrative situation.

### 1.3 Identifying specific sources of tension in theories of absorption

During development of the ASQ, we contrasted the kind of absorption that reflects inference-driven interpretation (cognitivist models) with the kind that reflects expression-centered explication (phenomenological models). In what follows, we will present our rationale for several categories of ASQ item content, with particular focus on contrasts between: (1) sustained concentration and attentional reorienting; (2) peri-personal space and extra-personal space; (3) pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking; and (4) generalizing realism and self-implicating givenness. One member of each of these concept pairs refers to a process that is hypothetically conducive to expression-centered explication; the other refers to a process that hypothetically contributes to inference-driven interpretation.

We will provide evidence of the local (first-order) factorial independence of small groups of items ("mini-scales") that distinguish members of each of the preceding concept pairs. This evidence is derived from a study in which 365 undergraduate students were asked to read an excerpt from the novel *On Chesil Beach* (McEwan, 2008), a story that describes a protagonist's response to termination of a marital relationship amidst both partners' reluctance to speak honestly with each other. After reading, participants were asked to write recursively and expressively about their experience of a pivotal (preselected) passage and then to describe their reflections using (1) a preliminary version of the ASQ and (2) a number of items selected from the EQ (Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012).

Following conceptual presentation and initial empirical evaluation of these mini-scales, we will present the results of two second-order EFAs, one identifying a set of mini-scales suitable for an aggregate measure of Open Reflection and another identifying groups of mini-scales suitable for aggregate measures of two distinct absorption-like states: Integrative Comprehension and Expressive Enactment. Finally, we will present a structural equation model (SEM) indicating that Open Reflection predicts both Integrative Comprehension and Expressive Enactment, while Integrative Comprehension and Expressive Enactment, in turn, differentially predict aesthetic and explanatory reading outcomes.

### 1.3.1 *Sustained concentration and attentional reorienting*

Although it is commonly proposed that absorption involves attention, it is unclear which aspects of attention are relevant. Investigators refer to “deep concentration” (Kuijpers et al., 2014), “attentional focus” (Green & Brock, 2000), and absence of “distraction” (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009). These terms uniformly suggest *sustained concentration* on task-relevant activities (Petersen & Posner, 2012), including selective attention to task-relevant information and resistance to distraction by task-irrelevant information. In the context of literary reading, sustained concentration involves persistent concern with the text’s meaning (its “sense,” its “epistemic intension”; Chalmers, 2002), including attending selectively to the text’s meaning and resisting distraction by meaning-irrelevant personal concerns (e.g., autobiographical diversions; Sikora, Kuiken, & Miall, 2011) or task requirements (e.g., medium interference; Mangen & Kuiken, 2014).

While sustained concentration is addressed in measures of absorption (e.g., Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009; Kuijpers, et al., 2014), *attentional reorienting* (i.e., sustained readiness to shift attention) is not. Attentional reorienting involves readiness to disengage from currently focal task-relevant information, redirect attention to unexpected task-relevant information, and utilize or elaborate such unexpected information (Peterson & Posner, 2012). During literary reading, attentional reorienting requires disengaging from currently focal text meanings (e.g., literal narrative description), redirecting attention to unexpected text meanings (e.g., figurative narrative description), and then using or elaborating those unexpected meanings. The interaction between sustained concentration and attentional reorienting creates a subtle conflict between resistance to distraction by *meaning-irrelevant* information and readiness to shift attention to unexpected *meaning-relevant* information. Because the capacity for sustained concentration and the capacity for attentional reorienting are independent of each other (Fan, McCandliss, Sommer, Raz, &

Posner, 2002), management of this conflict requires their integrated function. Their integrated function constitutes the bivalence of open reflection.

To specify the depth of open reflection during literary reading, it is useful to differentiate two aspects of attentional reorienting. Within the attentional reorienting system, Peterson and Posner (2012) distinguish between a “task switching” executive subsystem and a “salience monitoring” reflective subsystem. While the former has been implicated in the evaluation of creative ideas, the latter has been implicated in their generation (Ellamil, Dobson, Beeman, & Christoff, 2012). From the phenomenological perspective (Ihde, 2007), salience monitoring is an aspect of attentional reorienting that is analogous to close listening. During close listening, a person intentionally “gestures” away from sound and toward silence; the more effectively silence is realized, the more noticeable previously unheard sounds become. While listening closely, sounds come from silence and return to silence through time; the waxing and waning of sound embodies a sense of time and makes salient the passage of time.

Something analogous to close listening occurs during literary reading (whether reading silently or aloud; cf. Perrone-Bertolotti, Kujala, Vidal, et al., 2012). Searching in the silence of a feeling for what might be but has not yet been said is like listening within silence for a succession of sounds that emerge and fade away. Temporal attunement reflects the depth of attentional reorienting – and the anticipatory openness of reflection.

### *ASQ Attention items*

The present version of the ASQ includes (1) three separate mini-scales for sustained attention (Meaning Focus, Resisting Personal Distraction, Resisting Task-related Distraction) and (2) two mini-scales for attentional reorienting (Shift to Narrative Time, Altered Sense of Time). Each of these five mini-scales involves participant ratings on three questionnaire items; in the study summarized here, each set of three items was factorially independent of the others (5-factor Principal Components EFA; Direct Oblimin rotation; no substantial double loadings); and each item set manifested satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .64-.76$ ). This analytic approach, which reduced 15 individual attention items to five mini-scale means, enabled second-level analysis of semantically coherent and factorially independent mini-scales. (Sample items for each of these attention mini-scales can be found in Table 1.)

**Table 1.** Sample items for mini-scales contributing to the ASQ Attention factor (Open Reflection)

Latent variable (with mini-scales)		Sample item
Open Reflection	Shift to Narrative Time	I was attuned to how time flowed in the story world – rather than in my everyday world
	Altered Sense of Time	I underestimated (or overestimated) how much time had passed
	Resisting Task-related Distraction	I forgot I was actually “here” in this room, reading for research purposes
	Resisting Personal Distraction	I somehow put aside thoughts about my everyday tasks and responsibilities

### 1.3.2 *Peri-personal and extra-personal space*

Absorption during reading plausibly involves instantiation of abstract event representations within a concretely embodied situation model (Zwaan, 2008, 2014; Zwaan & Radvansky, 1998). Elaborations of this proposal specify a reader’s deictic shift to the place and time of the narrated situation (Segal, 1995). Busselle and Bilandzic (2009) explicitly affirm this shift, suggesting that deictic expressions (e.g., “this,” “here”) mark a reader’s transition to the “deictic center” of the narrative world. Accordingly, items on their narrative presence subscale reflect the “sensation” of leaving the actual world and entering the narrative world (p. 341). Similarly, Kuijpers et al. (2014) frame the deictic shift as “movement from actual world to story world,” and items on their transportation subscale reflect the “feeling” of entry into and return from the narrative world (p. 93). Green and Brock (2000) broadly concur: readers abandon the world of origin and “enter a narrative world” (p. 702). However, their measure relies upon questionnaire items that *directly* reflect vivid visual imagery and lingering affect as *indirect* evidence of entry into the world of the text.

What is it like to “enter” the world of the text? Increasingly compelling evidence suggests that either an actual, remembered, or imaginal here-and-now involves dissociable peri-personal (proximal, “within reach”) and extra-personal (distal, “beyond reach”) forms of embodiment. That is, object perception depends upon the parallel function of two neurocognitive systems, one extracting integrated *visuospatial* features for the purpose of object recognition and another extracting integrated *sensorimotor* features for the purpose of pragmatic engagement (Maranesi, Bonini, & Fogassi, 2014). *Extra-personal space* is a scene-relevant frame of reference that integrates visuospatial perception of the relative locations of recognizable objects (Goodale & Milner, 2004). Such distal object-object relations are sensed through covert activation of cross-modal correspondences that make the scene

seem *potentially navigated*. In contrast, *peri-personal space* is a self-relevant frame of reference that integrates sensorimotor perception of recognizable objects that are within bodily reach. Such proximal self-object relations are sensed through covert activation of sensorimotor correspondences that make those objects seem *potentially manipulated* (through movement, touch, and gesture; Klatzky, 1998; Stern, 2010).

The relevance of peri-personal space for an imaginal here-and-now during literary reading is substantiated by evidence of correspondence between activation of somatotopic areas of the *motor* cortex and (1) comprehension of action verbs (e.g., run, hit), speaking verbs (e.g., shout, whisper), state change verbs (e.g., shatter, crack), and contact verbs (e.g., hit, poke) (Kemmerer, Castillo, Talavage, Patterson, & Wiley, 2008); (2) detection of the action implications of object-related nouns (e.g., mouth movements with food nouns) (Carota, Moseley, & Pulvermüller, 2012); and (3) detection of the action implications of emotion words (even abstract emotion words such as “dread”) (Moseley, Carota, Hauk, Mohr, & Pulvermüller, 2012). Moreover, a person’s sense of peri-personal space can be (1) extended by viewing oneself in a mirror (Hohwy & Paton, 2010); (2) expanded to include shadows cast by an individual’s body parts (Pavani & Castiello, 2003); and (3) altered by the presence of virtual actors (Cardellicchio, Sinigaglia, & Costantini, 2013). Similar extensions or expansions of a reader’s peri-personal space may occur during the deictic shift that marks “entry” into the world of the text.

However, peri-personal space and extra-personal space may contribute differently to textual engagement. Both involve embodied, rather than abstract, representations (Zwaan, 2014), but peri-personal space may provide embodied access to the “intimacy” of movement, position, and touch that is especially supportive of expressive explication (Gendlin, 1997; Fuchs & Koch, 2014). Sometimes, then, the embodied world “entered” during a deictic shift may be mediated by synaesthetic linguistic compounds that contribute to a reader’s sense of peri-personal space. That is, an array of synaesthetic compounds (e.g., sentential metaphors) may fuse the proximal (e.g., tactile, kinesthetic) *sensorimotor* modalities of a modifying term (e.g., a metaphoric vehicle) with the relative *abstractness* of the modified term (e.g., a metaphoric topic). Such compounds (e.g., “cold light”) may support entry into the relative intimacy of peri-personal space. On the other hand, the embodied world “entered” during a deictic shift may be mediated by synaesthetic linguistic compounds that contribute to a reader’s sense of extra-personal space. That is, an array of synaesthetic compounds (e.g., sentential metaphors) may fuse the distal (e.g., visual, auditory) *visuospatial* modalities of the modifying term (e.g., the vehicle) with the relative *abstractness* of the modified term (e.g., the topic). Such compounds (e.g., “covered with dust and glory”) may support entry into the relative “remoteness” of extra-personal space.

*ASQ embodied space items*

The ASQ includes separate 3-item mini-scales for Peri-personal Space and Extra-personal Space. In the study summarized here, each set of three items was factorially independent of the other (2-factor Principal Components EFA; Direct Oblimin rotation; no substantial double loadings), and each item set manifested satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .73-.78$ ). Aggregates of each of these sets of embodied space items create semantically coherent and factorially independent mini-scales. (Sample items for each mini-scale are presented in Table 2).

**Table 2.** Sample items for mini-scales contributing to the ASQ Integrative Comprehension, Expressive Enactment, and Reactive Engagement factors

Latent variables (with mini-scales)		Sample item
Integrative Comprehension	Realistic Conduct	This character's actions seemed similar to what I observe people doing in "real" life
	Affective Realism	The character's feelings, attitudes, and concerns seemed life-like
	Cognitive Perspective-taking	I could understand events in the story from the perspective of each different character
	Extra-personal Space	I could see (in my mind's eye) the same setting (or environment) that was "there" for a character to see
Expressive Enactment	Self-implicating Givenness	Remembering experiences in my own life helped me to sense what the character was going through
	Peri-personal Space	I could almost feel what it would be like to move or change position in relation to the things (objects, characters) in the story world
	Pre-enactive Empathy	For a moment I felt like I "was" the character described there
Reactive Engagement	Alternative Perspective	I identified with someone other than the character described in that part of the story
	Side Participation	I felt close enough to the situation to think I understood it better than a character did
	Explanatory Revision	I thought about how this part of the story might have unfolded differently

### 1.3.3 *Pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking*

In discussions of absorption, the reader's deictic shift to the world of the text is usually conceived as movement toward the narrator's or a character's frame of reference (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009, p. 323; Kuijpers et al., 2014, p. 93) – although the reader's stance within such an altered frame of reference is not precisely described. We

propose differentiation between two “empathic” frames of reference (pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking) – and that both can be distinguished from reactive engagement with narrative personae.

Recent evidence suggests that several empathic frames of reference are grounded in primary intersubjectivity, i.e., the fusion of one’s own and another’s embodied intentionality (Gallagher, 2012; Sopčák, 2011). From a phenomenological perspective, primary intersubjectivity is the substrate of several types of *secondary* intersubjectivity, each of which entails a different relation between self and other (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007). One type of secondary intersubjectivity, *contagion*, can be set aside for present purposes. Two other types of secondary intersubjectivity are especially relevant here. In *pre-enactive empathy*, the fusion of one’s own and another’s embodied intentionality provides a resonant felt sense that initiates performative explication of what is “the same” across self and other (Cohen, 2012; Kuiken, Miall, & Sikora, 2004). Such performative explication depends upon a tacitly metaphoric shift to a text personae’s perspective (e.g., “I am [and am not] Lear”). In contrast, in *cognitive perspective-taking* (cf. Davis, 1980), the fusion of one’s own and another’s embodied intentionality is sensed as (non-metaphoric) perspective coordination (Przyrembel, Smallwood, Pauen, & Singer, 2012). Such literal coordination provides a simile-like – and comparative – frame of reference during a deictic shift to a narrative personae’s perspective (e.g., “I am like Lear”).

Both pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking provide epistemic access to the world of the text – but in different ways. As with the sensed similarity between metaphoric vehicle and topic, pre-enactive empathy provides a performative site from which aspects of self-other similarity that were *not previously salient in either the self or the other* become salient (“emergent meanings”). In contrast, as with the sensed similarity between the terms of a simile, cognitive perspective-taking provides a site from which aspects of self-other similarity *that were already salient in the other but not in the self* are made salient in both. The performative structure of pre-enactive empathy involves explicit awareness of the other and tacit awareness of the self (the reader); the comparative structure of cognitive perspective-taking involves explicit awareness of self *and* other, potentially shifting the balance of explicit awareness toward the reader (e.g., autobiographical diversions; Sikora, Kuiken, & Miall, 2011).

Two conceptual issues follow from this formulation. First, the phrase pre-enactive empathy was chosen to identify a vaguely felt sense of “the same” that “gives a direction to thought” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 235). Unlike atemporal enactment (Gallagher, 2012) and rather than replicative re-enactment (Stueber, 2012), pre-enactive empathy involves the *anticipatory* aspect of meaning “horizontality” that is central to phenomenological models (Geniusas, 2012). This anticipatory (but not predictive) sense of “more” is compatible with evidence that premotor



activation anticipates explicit imagery – and the subsequent recognition of relevant words, phrases, syntax, etc. (Glenberg & Gallese, 2012; Willems, Toni, Hagoort, & Casasanto, 2010).

Second, because considerable research indicates that bodily sensations, postures, gestures and expressions are components of affective resonance (Fuchs & Koch, 2014), pre-enactive empathy might seem equivalent to “affective empathy” (e.g., Perry & Shamay-Tsoory, 2013; Walter, 2012). However, *either* pre-enactive empathy *or* cognitive perspective-taking may involve affect; either a tacitly self-implicating self-other metaphor or an explicitly coordinated self-other comparison may provide reflective access to the embodied intersubjectivity of affect. Moreover, while the metaphoricity of pre-enactive empathy may facilitate affective *disclosure*, the comparative structure of cognitive perspective-taking may facilitate affective *mentalizing*, such as inferring plausible social causes (explanatory attributions) (Spunt & Lieberman, 2011) or integrating knowledge about emotion with knowledge about the social impact of such emotion (Gallagher & Hutto, 2008). Thus, the present formulation contrasts with the notion that empathy is a distinctively emotional source of “immersion” (and transportation, absorption, or flow; Jacobs, 2014, p. 149). It also contrasts with the suggestion that generic empathy characterizes narrative engagement – and that it is unnecessary to distinguish between pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009; Kuijpers et al., 2014). Empirical studies have substantiated the separate influence of these two distinct sources of “empathic” affective resonance (e.g., Raz, Jacob, Gonen, Winetraub, Flash, et al., 2014).

In addition to the *resonant* engagement provided by pre-enactive empathy and cognitive perspective-taking, self-other relations involving narrative personae may entail *reactive* engagement: sympathy, side-participation, and alternative perspectives. First, in sympathy (pity, compassion), the reader covertly expresses concern for narrative personae who are vulnerable or in need (Lishner, Batson, & Huss, 2011). Second, in side participation, the reader covertly presents narrative personae with problem solving suggestions, urges alternative courses of action, or provides positive or negative evaluations of their choices (Bezdek, Foy, & Gerrig, 2013). Third, alternative perspectives emerge when the reader identifies with or feels closer to secondary than to primary narrative personae (e.g., usually other characters, but also narrators offering ironic commentary on a primary character). Such self-other separation may be supported by focalizing literary devices very like those that support empathy (e.g., free-indirect discourse; Fletcher & Monterosso, 2016; Kotovych, Dixon, Bortolussi, & Holden, 2011).

### *ASQ self-other relation items*

Separate mini-scales for Pre-enactive Empathy, Cognitive Perspective-taking, Compassion/Sympathy, Side Participation, and Alternative Perspectives were created by summing participant ratings on small sets of factorially independent items. In the study summarized here, each of these five sets of 3–4 items was factorially independent of the others (5-factor Principal Components EFA; Direct Oblimin rotation; no substantial double loadings), and each set showed satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .69-.83$ ). (Sample items for these mini-scales are presented in Table 2.)

#### 1.3.4 *Self-implicating givenness and generalizing realism*

Doubts and convictions about the verisimilitude (apparent truth) of textually portrayed events somehow persist during deeply absorbing states. There may be dream-like “departure” from the “real” world when lost in a text (Nell, 1998, Chapter 10), but it is not due to dream-like *elimination* of the reader's capacity to judge whether the text somehow “refers” to a world beyond the text. But how? Busselle and Bilandzic (2008) propose that, beyond the tendency to assume by default that there is “consistency” between textual representations and schematic world knowledge, engaged readers also become aware while reading that they are interpreting fictional events in the same manner as they interpret extra-textual (“actual”) events. Thus, readers both tacitly and reflectively assess the level of consistency between their interpretation-driven situation model and their schema-driven world knowledge. The presence of such generic consistency can be called *generalizing realism*.

However, not all convictions about the verisimilitude of textually portrayed events occur schematically. An alternative is *self-implicating givenness*, a form of verisimilitude that depends upon imaginative variation, rather than inference, and upon first-person experience, rather than schematic world knowledge (Husserl, 1983). Roughly, this alternative process involves interplay between the exemplars of semantic categories and the category-altering particularity of episodic (personal) memories. A vague sense that an exemplar and particular personal memory belong to “the same” category motivates explication of “what it is like” for these jointly grasped events to seem “given” as “the same.” According to this account (Hintikka, 2003), such moments of pre-reflectively sensed “sameness” indicate that further – and potentially fulfilling – explication of this self-implicating sameness is possible (Gendlin, 1997).

While it is possible for category-modifying interplay between a category exemplar and a particular personal memory to occur through the tacit self-reference of performative (metaphoric) explication, it is also possible for category modifying interplay between an exemplar and memory to occur through explicit and literal self-other comparisons (simile). That semantic categories are modified in both ways

is substantiated by studies of category development in cognitive psychology (cf. Smith, Zakrzewski, Herberger, Boomer, Roeder, et al., 2015), although comparable studies of first-person category modification have not been undertaken for literary reading (although see Seilman & Larson, 1989; Tsunemi & Ksumi, 2011). Of particular importance is the possibility that either or both forms of category modification reinforce convictions about verisimilitude, especially through the self-relevant “familiarity” of personal events and vividly portrayed text events.

#### *ASQ verisimilitude items*

The ASQ includes one 3-item mini-scale for Self-implicating Givenness and two for Generalizing Realism (Realistic Conduct, Affective Realism). In the study summarized here, self-implicating Givenness was factorially independent of *both* of these Generalizing Realism mini-scales (2-factor Principal Components EFA; Direct Oblimin rotation; no substantial double loadings), and each of these item sets manifested very good internal consistency (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .81-.85$ ). (Sample items for these mini-scales are presented in Table 2.)

### 1.4 Different forms of absorption

We conducted two second-order EFAs, one to clarify the attentional components and another to identify the experiential components of absorption-like states. Our working hypothesis is that attention is a low-level common component of a few higher-level but differentiable absorption-like states. In general, the results were consistent with these assumptions.

#### *Open reflection*

Principal components EFA of the mini-scales for sustained concentration (Meaning Focus, Resisting Task-related Distraction, Resisting Personal Distraction) and attentional reorienting (Shift to Narrative Time, Altered Sense of Time) yielded a single inclusive factor (eigen value > 1) (see Table 3). On the one hand, this result was disappointing; we had expected to differentiate sustained concentration from attentional reorienting. On the other hand, this pattern is compatible with the notion that the four mini-scales comprising this factor mark the *integration* of sustained concentration and attentional reorienting.

**Table 3.** Component matrix for a single-factor EFA of the ASQ Attention mini-scales. See Table 1 for sample items

Second order factor (with mini-scales)		
Open Reflection	Shift to Narrative Time	.859
	Resisting Task-related Distraction	.776
	Altered Sense of Time	.707
	Resisting Personal Distraction	.705
	Story Focus (Reverse scored)	.282

*Integrative Comprehension, Expressive Enactment, Reactive Engagement*

A second principal components EFA included the mini-scales for embodied space (Peri-personal Space, Extra-personal Space), self-other relations (Pre-enactive Empathy, Cognitive Perspective-taking), and verisimilitude (Generalizing Realism, Self-implicating Givenness), as well as for reactive engagement (Side Participation, Alternative Perspectives, Explanatory Revision). As indicated in Table 4, this EFA provided three factors that we have labelled Integrative Comprehension, Expressive Enactment, and Reactive Engagement.

**Table 4.** Pattern matrix for a three-factor EFA of the ASQ Embodied Space, Self-Other Relation, and Verisimilitude mini-scales (Principal Components; Direct Oblimin, Kaiser Normalization). See Table 1 for sample items

Second order factors (with mini-scales)		1	2	3
Integrative Comprehension	Realistic Conduct	.918		
	Affective Realism	.820		
	Cognitive Perspective-taking	.510		.436
	Extra-personal Space	.418		
Expressive Enactment	Pre-enactive Empathy		.915	
	Peri-personal Space		.809	
	Self-implicating Givenness		.756	
Reactive Engagement	Alternative Perspective			.898
	Side Participation			.636
	Explanatory Revision	.472		.506

The dimension called Integrative Comprehension involved Extra-personal Space, Cognitive Perspective-taking, and Generalizing Realism (i.e., Realistic Conduct, Affective Realism). Its components are evidence that Integrative Comprehension integrates (1) the distal visuospatial modalities of extra-personal space; (2) the inference-driven interpretation that coordinates the perspectives of text personae; and (3) assessment of the correspondence between textual representations and

schematic world knowledge. The dimension called Expressive Enactment involved Peri-personal Space, Pre-enactive Empathy, and Self-implicating Givenness). Its components are evidence that Expressive Enactment integrates (1) the proximal sensorimotor modalities of peripersonal space; (2) expression-centered (performative) explication of the pre-enactive sense of “the same” in the reader and text personae; and (3) categorial interplay between the exemplars of semantic categories and the particularity of episodic (personal) memories. So, Integrative Comprehension and Expressive Enactment became the core of a structural equation model designed to assess their differential contributions to the aesthetic and explanatory outcomes of literary reading.

To our knowledge this is the first psychometric study of absorption-like states to assess reactive engagement. Whether to construe Reactive Engagement as a separate absorption-like state is an open question. For now, we are inclined to treat its factorial independence at least as evidence of the discriminant validity of Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension. The results for Compassion/Sympathy reinforce such caution. Although for conceptual reasons we expected that Compassion/Sympathy would be a component of the Reactive Engagement factor, its inclusion in this EFA disrupted factor integrity (double loadings). Perhaps this is understandable. Self-reported sympathy is often confused with empathy because of a few relevant – but ambiguous – colloquial expressions (e.g., “feeling for”; Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009, p. 331), but it also can be confused with “pity,” which is more clearly reactive.

#### 1.4.1 *Aesthetic and explanatory reading outcomes*

We expected that Integrative Comprehension and Expressive Enactment, as assessed by the ASQ, would differentially predict the outcomes of literary reading. Specifically, we anticipated that the effects of reading a literary text (e.g., *On Chesil Beach*) would differ depending upon whether participants read in the expressively explicative manner called Expressive Enactment or in the inference-driven manner called Integrative Comprehension. Of particular importance was whether Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension would differentially predict aesthetic outcomes (e.g., the affective and epistemic complexities of sublime feeling) and social explanatory outcomes (e.g., explanatory understanding of textual and extra-textual personae).

#### *Aesthetic outcomes*

It remains unclear whether absorption – in any form – mediates (or moderates) the effects of literary reading on aesthetic response. This claim might seem contradicted by evidence that absorption predicts reading pleasure (enjoyment) (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009; Green, Brock, & Kaufman, 2004; Kuijpers et al., 2014). However,

aesthetic response traditionally involves epistemic (appetitive) *interest*, which can be distinguished from satiating (consummatory) *pleasure* (Silvia, 2010; Panksepp & Biven, 2012) – and perhaps also from non-satiating (anticipatory) *pleasure* (e.g., joy) (Koelsch, Jacobs, Menninghaus, Liebal, Klann-Delius, et al., 2015). Beyond that, we suggest that the structure of *sublime feeling* is affectively and epistemically more complex – and perhaps more distinctively aesthetic – than either pleasure or interest.

Recent studies of response to music (Konečni, 2008; Zentner, Grandjean, & Scherer, 2008) and literature (Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012; Kuiken & Sharma, 2013) promise empirical access to sublime feeling. In our formulation (Kuiken, Campbell, Sopčák, 2012), sublime feeling combines “unpleasure” in the “inexpressibility” of a disclosure, the “pleasure” of “being moved” closer to “full” disclosure (a “felt shift”; Gendlin, 1997), and the affective “disquietude” or “enthralment” that depends upon the affective tone of such a poignant recognition. In fact, the complexity of sublime feeling has resisted articulation – sufficiently so to motivate even sympathetic scholars to argue that a theory of the sublime is not possible (Forsey, 2007; Sircello, 1993). And yet, literary theories of the sublime, however well-suited to their objectives, have persisted beyond their 18th and 19th century romantic versions (e.g., Kant, Coleridge) to include 20th and 21st century modern (Mallarmé, Woolf) and postmodern renderings (Lyotard, Celan).

Expressive Enactment seems especially likely to precipitate sublime feeling. The expression-centered explication on which it depends begins with detection of a vaguely sensed textual object that seems to mean “more” than can be “said.” This “felt sense” (or feeling-of-knowing; Koriat, 2000) “gives a direction to thought” (Merleau-Ponty, 2012, p. 235) by constraining reflective search for “more” than can currently be “said.” Our account of this search (Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012; Kuiken & Oliver, 2013) describes engagement with a series of prosodic/semantic structures that give resonant presence to variations on a theme. Metaphor-like grasp of these structures’ resonant identity-in-difference (Natanson, 1998; Crowell, 2005) is much like reading a series of thematically linked “poems in miniature” (Beardsley, 1981, p. 144). The outcome, we suggest, is sublime feeling.

To examine this possibility among readers of *On Chesil Beach*, we calculated the interactive combination (cross-product) of the following three EQ scales to assess sublime disquietude: (1) inexpressible realizations; (2) disquietude; and (3) self-perceptual depth (cf. Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012; Kuiken & Sharma, 2013). We also assessed three other aspects of aesthetic response: (1) Being Moved, a 4-item scale that most nearly corresponds to what Menninghaus, Wagner, Hanich, Wassiliwizky, Kuehnast, and Jacobsen (2015) have called “being sadly moved” (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .72$ ); (2) Evocative Imagery, a 3-item scale indicating the experience of compelling and generative imagery (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .69$ ); and (3) Deeply

Captured, a 3-item scale indicating “depth” of comprehension (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .84$ ). (See Table 5 for sample items for each of these measures.)

**Table 5.** Sample items for mini-scales used as outcomes in tests of the structural equation model

<b>Aesthetic outcomes</b>	
Sublime Disquietude	“The interactive combination of EQ Inexpressible realizations, EQ Disquietude, and EQ Self-perceptual Depth”
Self-perceptual Depth	I felt sensitive to aspects of my life that I usually ignore
Inexpressible Realizations	What seemed clear to me also seemed beyond words
Perceived Discord	I felt profoundly ill-at-ease
Being Moved	I was moved to tears
Evocative Imagery	I experienced images that I can ponder again and again
Being Deeply Captured	I suddenly felt more deeply drawn into the core meaning of the story
<b>Explanatory outcomes</b>	
Narrator Intelligibility	I began to understand why the narrator (or author) portrayed story events in this particular way
Causal Explanation	I tried to figure out how the character’s background might explain the actions taken in this situation
Plot Coherence	I was able to see how “this” event was understandable in relation to the overall story
Explanatory Revision	I thought about how this part of the story might have unfolded differently

In our structural equation model (see Figure 1), the Open Reflection factor predicted both Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension, and Expressive Enactment (but not Integrative Comprehension) predicted aesthetic outcomes, including Sublime Disquietude as well as measures of Being Moved, Evocative Imagery, and Deeply Captured. (For summaries of the related model fit indices, see Table 6.)

### *Explanatory outcomes*

Recent studies also suggest that absorbed reading facilitates “simulation” of the “thinking styles” of narrative personae (Djikic & Oatley, 2014) and facilitates increases in subsequent social understanding (Kidd & Costano, 2013; Mar & Oatley, 2008; Zunshine, 2006). Although Oatley (2011) emphasizes the metaphoric and enactive character of such “simulations,” we suggest that enriched social understanding is more likely to follow the “mentalizing” that occurs during the inference-driven “construction” of situation models. During literary reading, construction of a situation model involves the articulation of causal relations despite

**Table 6.** Coefficients and model fit indices for the differential effects of Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension

Model	Expressive Enactment Coefficient	Integrative Comprehension Coefficient	$\chi^2$	TLI	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	RMSEA Low/High
<b>Aesthetic outcomes</b>								
Sublime	.90	-.03	192.8	.922	.941	.923	.089	.076/.102
Disquietude								
Being Moved	.91	-.17	181.0	.925	.943	.923	.085	.072/.098
Evocative Imagery	.68	.14	200.5	.915	.935	.916	.091	.078/.094
Deeply Captured	.61	.21	189.8	.920	.940	.920	.088	.075/.101
<b>Explanatory outcomes</b>								
Narrator	.25	.52	212.4	.906	.929	.910	.094	.082/.108
Intelligibility								
Causal Explanation	.14	.50	189.6	.915	.936	.915	.088	.075/.101
Plot Coherence	-.12	.85	209.3	.908	.931	.911	.094	.081/.107
Explanatory Revision	.10	.53	200.3	.909	.931	.911	.091	.078/.104

several complicating factors: (1) causally related events may cross discontinuous passages, (2) causally related events may be chronologically reordered, and (3) the portrayed relations between antecedent and consequent events may be unexpected (Gerrig, 2011). Understandably, readers vary in the extent to which they respond to the preceding complications by working toward a coherent causal account of narrative events.<sup>2</sup> In fact, single-minded concern with causal explanation has been referred to as “story-driven” reading (Vipond & Hunt, 1984; Hunt & Vipond, 1986).

If the “simulations” that support “mentalizing” depend upon inference-driven “construction” of situation models, enriched social understanding is likely to follow Integrative Comprehension, rather than Expressive Enactment. To examine this

2. In their measure of Narrative Engagement, Busselle and Bilandzic (2009) assessed the extent of readers’ focus on “narrative understanding.” Their items for that factor reflect perceived realism and cognitive perspective-taking, suggesting convergence with ASQ Integrative Comprehension (Realistic Conduct, Affective Realism, Cognitive Perspective-taking). Moreover, the Busselle and Bilandzic (2009) items for “emotional engagement” include reference to empathy, suggesting convergence with ASQ Expressive Enactment (perhaps Pre-enactive Empathy). However, they consistently invoke inference-driven interpretation as background to both narrative understanding and emotional engagement.



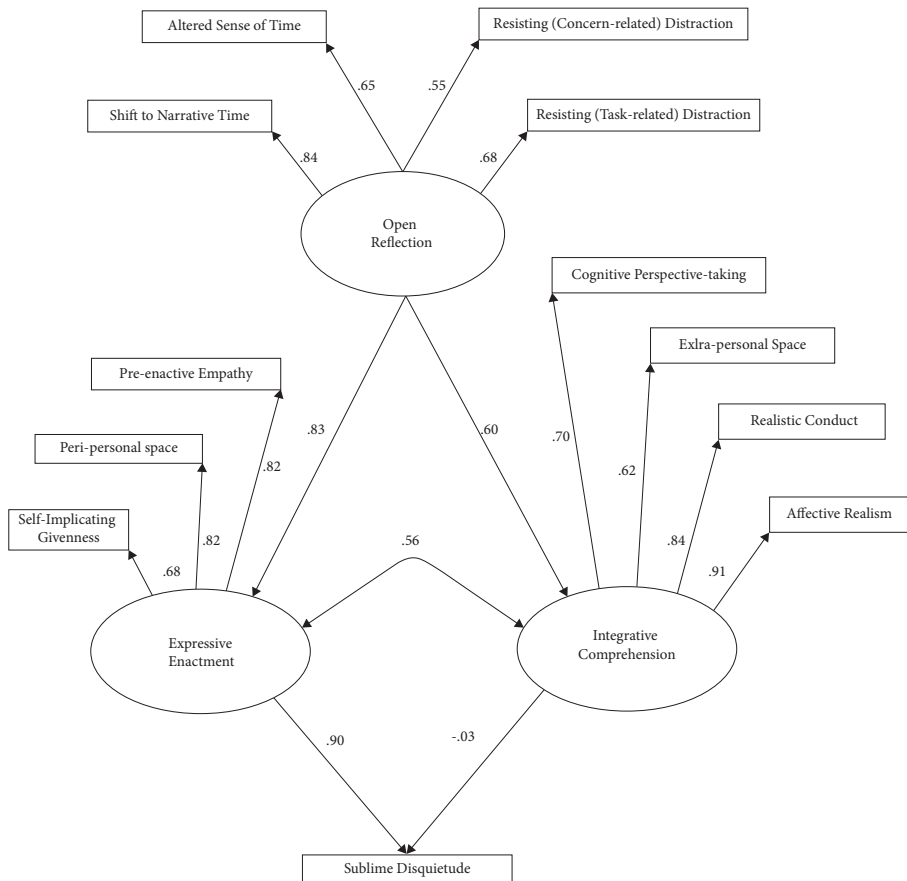
possibility among readers of *On Chesil Beach*, we applied our model to measures of explanatory reading outcomes: (1) Causal Explanation, a 4-item scale that reflects efforts to grasp the antecedents and consequences of character actions (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .74$ ); (2) Plot Coherence, a 3-item scale indicating the coherence of narrative events (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .75$ ); (3) Explanatory Revision, a 3-item scale indicating the formulation of alternative narrative outcomes (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .70$ ); and (4) Narrator Intelligibility, a 3-item scale indicating comprehension of a narrator's point of view (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .74$ ). (See Table 5 for sample items for each of these measures.) We found that Integrative Comprehension (but not Expressive Enactment) predicted explanatory outcomes, including Causal Explanation and Plot Coherence, as well as measures of Explanatory Revision and Narrator Intelligibility. (See Table 6 for the related model fit indices.)

## 2. Discussion

The preceding results indicate that Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension differentially produce aesthetic and social explanatory outcomes, respectively. This contrast is reminiscent of Jacobs' (2015; Chapter 3) distinction between background and foreground reading trajectories. Their background trajectory involves response to text features that facilitate "automatic (implicit) activation of familiar cognitive schemata, situation models, and affective responses," while their foreground trajectory involves response to text features that "interrupt reading fluency" and create tensions that "result in aesthetic feelings." Similarly, Integrative Comprehension is a form of inference-driven interpretation that facilitates construction of a situation model – and mediates changes in social understanding. And, Expressive Enactment is a form of expression-centered engagement that facilitates performative (metaphoric) explication – and mediates distinctively aesthetic effects (e.g., sublime disquietude).

However, Jacobs and Lüdtke propose that only the background trajectory facilitates absorption ("immersion"), including setting immersion, plot immersion, and empathic [affective] immersion. In contrast, we propose that *both* Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension are "immersive" – even though they involve contrasting forms of embodied space (peri-personal vs. extra-personal), self-other relations (pre-enactive empathy vs. cognitive perspective-taking), and verisimilitude (generalizing realism vs. self-implicating givenness).

The metaphoric (*is* and *is not*) structure of peri-personal space, pre-enactive empathy, and self-implicating givenness may be the source of the aesthetic effects of Expressive Enactment. Previously we attributed this metaphoric structure to pre-enactive empathy alone (aka metaphors of personal identification) (Kuiken,



**Figure 1.** SEM model predicting the effects of absorbed literary reading: Sublime Disquietude

Miall, & Sikora, 2004; Sikora, Kuiken, & Miall, 2011), but here we also attribute that metaphoric structure to a distinctively intimate form of pre-enactive empathy that becomes centered in an embodied peri-personal space and that generates self- and category-altering verisimilitude. This metaphoric structure may facilitate the “striking” – but inexpressible – recognitions that consistently are reported in response to foregrounded passages (Miall & Kuiken, 1994; Hunt & Vipond, 1985; van Peer, 1986; Sopčák, 2007). But, such reported strikingness may also initiate the globally performative metaphoricity that generates inexpressible realizations, self-perceptual depth, and sublime disquietude.

## 2.1 Research prospects

The ASQ has been developed for diversity. Rather than expecting hierarchically organized facets of a single multi-faceted construct, we are working toward articulation of forms of absorption that depend upon distinctions between types of attention, types of embodied space, types of self-other relation, and types of verisimilitude. Describing and explaining the integrated function of these contrasting components of Expressive Enactment and Integrative Comprehension remains a theoretical *and* empirical challenge.

Our goal also is to develop an instrument that distinctively predicts aesthetic and explanatory reading outcomes. We are especially concerned with the poignant outcomes (e.g., sublime feeling) that go beyond reading interest and pleasure (Kuiken & Oliver, 2013; Oliver & Woolley, 2011). So, while certain texts (e.g., Celan's "Death Fugue") evoke "brushes" with sublime disquietude and others (e.g., Shelley's "Mont Blanc") evoke "brushes" with sublime enthrallment (cf. Kuiken, Campbell, & Sopčák, 2012), Expressive Enactment may moderate these text effects and allow more precise study of the determinants of these sublime reading moments.

Focus on the aesthetic consequences of absorbed literary reading often suggests lively, open generativity. For example, Djikic and Oatley (2014) suggest that absorbed reading enables the reader to "simulate the thinking styles" of narrative personae – and cultivate tolerance for ambiguity. However, our discussion of peri-personal space, pre-enactive empathy, and self-implicating givenness suggests that absorbed literary reading entails a metaphor-like tension between *is* and *is not* that simulation theories do not address. Moreover, metaphor-like reconstructive thought (Ricoeur, 1981; Natanson, 1998) should be evident not only during but also *after* deeply absorbed reading, especially after the mode of absorbed reading we are calling Expressive Enactment. Such effects may include not only reduced need for closure (Djikic, Oatley, & Moldoveanu, 2013) but also increased capacity for the comprehension and generation of apt metaphoric expressions (cf. Jones & Estes, 2005; Forgács, Bohrn, Baudewig, Hofmann, Pléh, & Jacobs, 2012). Such metaphoric disclosure of emergent meanings may comprise the generativity – and creativity – of deeply engaged literary reading.

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