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Reading Teacher's Perceptions of the Implementation of Third-Grade Reading Guarantee

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Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

State legislators in the Midwestern United States implemented a Third Grade Reading

Guarantee law to prevent the promotion of Grade 3 students with poor reading skills to

Grade 4. As a result, schools implemented innovative reading interventions, thereby

driving a need to determine teachers' concerns and levels of use (LoU) of these

innovative interventions. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand

Grade 3 reading teachers' stages of concerns (SoC) and LoU in implementing reading

interventions, and teachers' comprehension of the innovation configurations, in view of

the new Third Grade Reading Guarantee law. The conceptual framework used to

undergird this study was the concerns-based adoption model. The SoC described 7

categories of possible concerns for an innovation, and the LoU described 8 behavioral

profiles that educators used in practice. Data collection occurred through in-depth

interview sessions using a purposeful sample of 10 Ohio Grade 3 reading teachers.

Emergent themes were identified through a coding and thematic data-analysis process.

Findings revealed that Ohio Grade 3 teachers' dominant SoC was a need for

collaboration with other teachers. The second dominant SoC was a need to refocus on

how the reading interventions would be used for the following school year. Findings

showed that teachers' level of usage in Year 1 were at the mechanical level, focusing on

the daily usage of the manual. In Year 2, teachers refined their practice and were better

able to vary implementation format. Teachers' use of innovations improve at-risk

students' reading skills, making them better scholars, who are then able to compete on

many levels, and as future adults they will be able to make a positive social change by

giving back to their communities.

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Dedication

To my late mother, who passed away before I completed my program: You always encouraged and inspired me. I have kept my promise to you that I will complete my doctoral program. You gave me a love for learning, teaching, exploring, and giving. You taught me to never give up, give in, or give out, and how to live a lifestyle of faith. You taught me never to settle for mediocrity. You believed in me when at times I did not believe in myself. Your steadfast belief in God in three persons and education was unwavering. I will always honor, love, and miss you. Thank you for your unconditional love and prayers. You left me with a rich spiritual legacy that I can pass on to my grandchildren. Thank for being an authentic mother, my friend, and my SHERO.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank God first, who is the author and finisher of my faith. Without Him I am nothing; with Him I can do all things. I want to thank Walden University's staff, faculty, and committee members for their expertise and guidance throughout the process of my doctoral study. A special thanks to my chair, Dr. Andrea Thompson, and committee. Dr. Thompson encouraged and inspired me to think like a scholar. Thank you to my prayer partner and dear friend, Ruby Finn, for your sister-like support, your seed, and sincere prayers throughout the whole process of this journey. To my family, friends, and associates who are too many to name, thank you all for your prayers and kind words of encouragement. Lastly and most importantly, words cannot express my love, gratitude, and appreciation to my son, Hank, and daughter-in-law, Angie. To my two most precious grandchildren in the world, Cannon and Marleigh, thank you for keeping me grounded and rooted in true unconditional love. You all have made such an amazing contribution to me during this arduous and extraordinary journey of my life.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

During the 2012–2013 academic year, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE)

implemented the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG) law in Ohio's public schools.

Under the new law, third grade reading teachers had to inform parents about their child's

reading ability by the end of the first month of school (ODE, 2012a). Poor reading skills

among third grade students are a significant problem in the state's schools and continue

to attract district leaders' attention. When states mandate new policies, education officials

must review and explain the new laws to ensure the state board is implementing

education laws properly (Bowers, 2001). The implementation of the TGRG law is an

attempt to improve students' reading test scores (Hernandez, 2012).

According to the 2009 Ohio Achievement Assessment state test (ODE, 2011),

40% of Grade 3 students scored proficient or above in one of the state's southwestern

school districts, compared to 77.4% on statewide test scores. In October of 2012, the

state's third grade students, although still below proficient, improved, achieving a score

of 59%. The increase in scores hailed an improvement over the below-proficient scores

previously recorded (Smyth, 2012). Presently, students scoring 400 on the Ohio

Achievement Assessment are rated *proficient*, 385 is *basic* level, and anything below 385

is *limited* level in reading (ODE, 2013a). According to ODE (2015), the cut score for the

2013–2014 year was 392 (not quite proficient). The score of 392 is the state minimum-

standard policy for student retention in third grade.

Henceforth, students in the 2014–2015 school term who scored below a

proficiency level of 394 were retained in the third grade, with exceptions for special

education and English-language-learning students (ODE, 2013b). The ODE (2013b)

estimated that, given current levels of student progress, at least 40% of third grade students in 2013–2014 would be retained. Proficiency test scores for 2013–2014 school year were posted as 73.4%, showing a decrease from 75.8% in the 2012–2013 school year. This study explored a Title I school district in the Midwest to identify Grade 3 teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Senate Bill 316 (ODE, 2013c).

The impetus behind conducting this study was to explore how third grade reading teachers perceived the implementation of the TGRG and to understand third grade teachers' stages of concern (SoC) and levels of use (LoU) in the implementation of reading interventions, and teachers' comprehension of the innovation configurations in view of the new TGRG law. My goal was to identify whether teachers' implementation of innovations has helped increase reading skills among third grade students.

This section includes the introduction; historical background of local and U.S. school systems; the problem statement, which addresses the issue of poor reading skills on a local and national level to gain a broader scope of the problem; the conceptual framework; and the purpose of the study. In additional, this section includes the overarching question: What are third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law in schools? This central question guided the direction of the study along with the subquestions, definitions of terms, limitations, delimitations, and significance of the study. I present a saturated review of literature to substantiate the local problem, topics supporting the conceptual framework of the study, different methodologies, and a critical essay on the TGRG law in greater detail in Section 2.

Background

Local Public School District (Historical Background)

This brief historical background of the state's local public schools aids in developing a frame of reference about the state's school systems. One of the oldest public school districts is located in the southwestern part of Ohio. The school system officially began in 1829 as a district called The *Common Schools,* containing the oldest public school west of the Allegheny Mountains. The school, opened in 1831, was located downtown (Hurley, 1982). The district went 20 years without a superintendent and was run by "The Board of Trustees and Visitors," later changing its name in 1868 to the present "Board of Education" (Shotwell, 1902). The first printed report on the district appeared in 1833. In that report, the district reported enrollment of 1,900 students and had spent $7,778 on its schools in 1832 (Shotwell, 1902).

U.S. Public Schools (Historical)

Public school systems throughout United States have transformed through many shapes, stages, and forms. The creation of public schools was one of the most pivotal developments in U.S. history for young people in the 19th century (Reese, 2008). However, by the 21st century, statistics showed that reform to close the achievement gap still challenged U.S. educators. For example, the Nation's Report Card reported that test results in reading among fourth grade students increased in 2013 more than in previous years, on a national level (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2013). In Ohio, Black students underperformed compared to White students by 36 points in reading, on average (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2013). Additionally, fourth grade students from low-income families, as indicated by free or reduced-price school lunch

status, lagged their unassisted peers by 29 points on average in 2013 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Factors of race and socioeconomic status have helped shape public schools in an essential way. Race and poverty are not the only factors: changes in education policy, such as trends in other states to change the minimum standards, high-stakes testing for promotion or retention, and even exit examinations for graduation from high school have also helped shape education in public schools across the United States.

In the early 1800s, one-room schoolhouses housed public education where reading, writing, and arithmetic were the primary subjects taught. Most children across the United States received and got what they needed at home (Reese, 2008). In contrast to the past, certified teachers in the elementary grades teach most urban children. Children who remain poor readers upon entering intermediate school may have struggled to master these skills during their first years of elementary school (Torgesen, 1998). Traditional education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, also known as *Back-to-the Basics,* formed during the early 19th century (Iserbyt, 2004). "Most schools however, embraced tradition and rejected these ideas as unsound and impractical" (Reese, 2008, para. 13). Ohio legislators implemented the TGRG law due to poor reading skills affecting student achievement among elementary students, especially third grade students. Similar to *Back-to-the-Basics,* the TGRG law modified requirements such that a student cannot progress academically unless he or she possesses the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic computation (ODE, 2012b).

In 1890, the second Morrill Act passed the legislature. This act supported land-grant colleges for Black students in states that opposed the enrollment of Black students in existing land-grant institutions (Gutek, 1986). As a result of the Morrill Act, land-grant

agricultural and mechanical colleges are part of state universities. Such state universities

existed in Maine (1865), Illinois and West Virginia (1871), and in the Alaska

Agricultural College and School of Mines (1922). According to Reese, "in elementary

schools, new forms of classroom organization, such as ability grouping, first found in

urban graded classrooms in the early 1900s, forever changed the experience of going to

school" (2008, p. 4).

During the early 1980s, a backlash arose toward the increasing popularity of the

ideas of educational theorist Dewey. Dewey promoted the experiential-based learning

model that, by the early 1960s, had a strong grip on U.S. schools (Jeynes, 2007). This

backlash set in place the return of *Back-to-the-Basics* educational reform (Siskin, 2007),

which led the way for the State of Ohio to implement the TGRG law in 2012. The TGRG

law's fundamental purpose is to ensure students can read by the third grade, a

modification of *Back-to-the-Basics*. However, no system in place identifies reading

challenges for third grade students until remediation becomes much more difficult

(Torgesen, 1998).

The end of the 20th century brought about the next major shift in education

reform. A major report released in 1983 called *A Nation at Risk* was a response to the

radical school reforms of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

> Prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, a group
>
> appointed by President Reagan's secretary of education … the report was an
>
> immediate sensation. [The report's] conclusions were alarming and its language
>
> was blunt to the point of being incendiary,

stating that the educational structure of the United States was weakening in a process that risked great harmed in the future (Ravitch, 2010, p. 27). In response to *A Nation at Risk,* Congress implemented the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reform of 2002 into federal law (Ravitch, 2010). Marked for its marginalized students, millions in federal funds would be jeopardized if any state or district refused to adhere to NCLB mandates. Increasing poor test scores in reading and mathematics were the impetus behind NCLB reforms. NCLB did not educate children but created mounds of data rather than enhancing knowledge (Ravitch, 2010).

The late 20th century accompanied a huge economic change in the United States. According to the National Science Board (1983), the general competencies of U.S. students in science and mathematics had declined. Many changes were needed to remedy the decline in academics. The Reagan administration (Gutek, 1986) averred the decline had imperiled U.S. education, especially efforts at equality of educational opportunity for women, minority groups, and people with handicaps. The Task Force on Education for Economic Growth issued a report in 1983 entitled *Action for Excellence*. The report framers aimed to bring together a partnership between businesses and schools to make U.S. schooling more effective and responsive to economic needs (Gutek, 1986).

In the early 21st century, schools implemented the tenets of NCLB to address the spiraling decline in academics in the United States. On January 23, 2001, President Bush presented plans for school reform, focused on ensuring students would be educated in every school in the United States (Ravitch, 2006). Additionally, the President's principles stressed students in the third through eighth grades should be assessed every year and any struggling student would receive assistance to pass to the next grade (Ravitch, 2006). The

United States' greatest nationwide educational-support program, NCLB was the newest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which grew out of the War on Poverty of 1965 (Braden & Schroeder, 2004). Many policies under review and implementation today directly resulted from NCLB requirements.

Currently, in the 21st century, national education standards and assessments receive revived observation from the Obama Administration, seeking to amend the formula for U.S. education reform (Burke & Marshall, 2010). Burke and Marshall (2010) stated, "centralized standard-setting will likely result in the standardization of mediocrity, not excellence" (p. 1). Also,

> Title I is the most important component of NCLB … for two reasons: (a) The vast majority of funds are committed to Title I and (b) Title I requires substantial state accountability for improved student learning, reflected on statewide tests. (Braden & Schroeder, 2004, p. S3-73)

School districts throughout the states must assess students in, for example, Grades 4, 8, and 10 annually and demonstrate test score improvement or adequate yearly progress (Braden & Schroeder, 2004). States are tasked with choosing areas to assess and the ramifications of not reaching adequate yearly progress goals; high-stakes testing means that test scores influence significant (*high*) consequences (*stakes*; Braden & Schroeder, 2004). For example, schools and districts in Florida receive a straightforward A-to-F grade. That kind of openness about a school progress could enable students and their guardians make well-informed choices (Burke & Marshall, 2010).

According to a recent report,

four major theories underlie current [U.S.] reliance on high-stakes tests:

motivational theory, which argues that test-based accountability can motivate

improvement; the *theory of alignment*, which contends that test-based

accountability can spur alignment of major components of the educational system;

information theory, holding that such systems provide information that can be

used to guide improvement; and *symbolism,* which maintains that such a system

signals important values to stakeholders. (Supovitz, 2015, para. 4)

As high school students perform to attain high test scores to graduate and embark on

college, workforce expectations and concerns are different from grades. Employers place

less importance on test results than they do on students' work and problem-solving

examples, such as portfolios (Peter D. Hart Research Associates, 2008) or grades.

"National standards are unlikely to make public schools accountable to families; rather

they are more likely to make schools responsive to Washington, DC" (Burke & Marshall,

2010, p. 9). Good public policy would "better align power and incentives by

strengthening state accountability systems, increasing transparency about results, and

empowering parents to act on that information" (Burke & Marshall, 2010, p. 10).

Problem Statement

An important indicator of a child's academic success is their ability to score

proficient or better on reading tests by Grade 3 (Hernandez, 2012). Due to the significant

problem of poor reading skills among third grade students, Ohio's educators,

stakeholders, and leaders worked to rectify the local problem (Partin, 2011). The NCLB

reform has reached its deadline date of 2016. Educators throughout the United States

have been working to meet NCLB requirements. The NCLB reform set a minimum

requirement that all children should be achieving at state-defined proficiency levels by the end of academic year 2013–2014 (Cowan, Manasevit, Edwards, & Sattler, 2002). The aforementioned scores reveal that third grade students continue to struggle to improve their reading skills. At one large public school district in the Midwest, third grade students scored 60.3% during the 2008–2009 academic year, 66.1% during the 2010–2011 academic year, and 73.6% in the 2011–2012 academic year (ODE, 2012a). Although their test scores increased, the school district still had not met the state score level of 75% by 2013 (ODE, 2013b). Low test scores among third grade students were the primary reason the TGRG law was approved and implemented in Ohio (ODE, 2012a).

Educators have been working to meet the new TGRG requirements throughout the state's school districts since before the beginning of the 2012 school year. New reading requirements and qualifications require kindergarten through third grade teachers to attain a reading endorsement, certified reading license, or a master's degree in reading (ODE, 2013c). The potential success of TGRG policy may depend in part on what kind of reading qualifications many teachers possess. Since the 2013–2014 academic year school term, teachers with special reading credentials teach third grade students who were retained due to low reading scores (ODE, 2013c).

It was important to explore how third grade reading teachers' perceived the implementation of the TGRG law. It was also important to understand how they understood their SoCs and LoU in the implementation of reading interventions and comprehension innovations configurations in response to the TGRG's law have affected student achievement in reading, as well as the law's association with the recent

implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Initiative. Curriculum change requires educators to teach differently (CCSS, 2012; ODE, 2012a). To meet state demands for English language arts and literacy academic standards, schools must ensure that all K–12 students are literate and schools can prepare students to compete at the college level upon graduation. This broad and deep policy focus was the overall premise of the CCSS (ODE, 2012a). Shortly following the start of the CCSS, Ohio's southwestern public schools implemented the first requirements of the TGRG (ODE, 2012b). The first phase of implementation required informing parents of the new changes, explaining the purpose of the TGRG, and determining if students were reading at their appropriate grade level by assessing students to identify if they are reading at, above, or below grade level (ODE, 2012b).

Emphasis on student achievement in reading inspired me to explore third grade teachers' perception of the implementation of the TGRG law and how educators understood their SoC and LoU when implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law in schools. The TGRG law could potentially define the outcome of its success with third grade students' reading performance and achievement by understanding teachers' SoC and LoU. With increased accountability comes added pressure for teachers in the state to demonstrate improvement in students' reading skills. Academic measurements and teachers' evaluations were increasing the tension educators experience (Pandya, 2012). The State's policymakers, who passed the TGRG law, have required the state's public school districts to implement more rigorous academic curricula and intervention plans in reading (Partin, 2011). However, performance alone can be a

limiting measure, inadequate by assuming all students can read, write, or learn in the same way (Jones et al., 2009).

Educators do not share consensus on the value of test-promoting polices for students (Schwerdt & West, 2013). Decisions to retain low-performing student have been quite consistent in U.S. school systems. Although educators know that low-performing students do better when working with peers with stronger academic acumen (Schwerdt & West, 2013) and benefit from extra instruction when tackling difficult material, state test scores revealed that prior to 2009, southwestern public schools districts in the state faced challenges with poor reading skills among third grade students (ODE, 2013a). According to the public school report card for the 2012 school year, 25% of third grade students did not meet proficiency requirements in reading. Currently, ODE's report card for one public school district in one southwest state showed 65.7% of third grade students were proficient (ODE, 2012a). Consequently, 36% of third grade students who failed the test would not graduate with their class (Hernandez, 2012).

At the beginning of the 2012–2013 academic year, the ODE (2012b) implemented the TGRG law. Scholars and educators realized that reading proficiently as a third grade student was quite serious (Hernandez, 2012). As indicated in an extensive report, used by the state's governor to support the passing of the TGRG law, the TGRG law must be supported in the learning milieu to be effective (Hernandez, 2012). However, reading skills would not improve merely by holding back third grade students, according to the nonpartisan Education Commission of the States (2012). How teachers' understand the innovation configurations in response to the TGRG law may help teachers (Guskey, 2001) examine new ways to connect students to rigorous reading curriculum on all grade

levels. Lesson execution looks different in every school (Pandya, 2012). Teachers have the greatest influence over their students' achievement. The kind of expectation a teacher places on students significantly affects how well students perform (Education Commission of the States, 2012; Guskey, 2001). Third grade students reading at or above their grade level have a greater chance of advancing to the fourth grade and graduating from high school.

According to the Early Grade-Level Reading Campaign (2012) report, in 2010–2011 an Ohio State southwestern school district graduating class increased substantially from 51% in 2000 to 81.9% in 2011. A recent report showed school districts in a southwest state had a significant increase in high school graduation in 2010–2011. The number of drop-outs reported at their grade level decreased (Early Grade-Level Reading Campaign, 2012). This increase of success can significantly impact younger students' attitudes toward education and motivation to learn. Of students, 16% fail to finish 12th grade by 18 years of age, at least 4 times more than students who are proficient readers (Hernandez, 2012). Mathematics and reading are two main areas in which educators assess student progress (Cowan et al., 2002).

In the United States, when considering third grade students' poor reading skills and the implementation of policies such as the TGRG law, concerns arise across the nation. The NCLB reform and President Obama's administration hold public school districts more accountable. President Obama (as cited in Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010) affirmed, "the relative decline of American education is untenable for our economy, unsustainable for our democracy, and unacceptable for our children, and we cannot afford to let it continue" (p. 4). The Reading Report Card for fourth grade students

revealed a below-average grade in reading (Musti-Rao, Hawkins, & Barkley, 2009), and Cartledge and Lo (2006) also noted U.S. fourth grade students read below basic grade levels.

During the last decade, Texas implemented an English language arts and reading program for third grade students. Texas initiated the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in 2009 (Texas Educational Agency, 2011). Florida implemented a law similar to the TGRG law during that period as well (Florida Department of Education, 2009). The premise was that poor reading skills among third and fourth grade students in public schools around the country were not a problem local to Ohio, but a national issue. Virginia and Maryland schools discovered almost two thirds of third grade students did not read at grade level, foreshadowing future academic failure (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010). In Colorado, fourth grade teachers also found it more difficult to work with incoming third grade students due to poor reading scores (Norton, 2010).

Moreover, in Florida, "45 percent of children couldn't keep up with their third grade classmates. Thirty-three percent of third graders read below grade level" (Suarez-Verciana, 2011, p. 1). National statistics indicated that two thirds of U.S. fourth grade students did not read at grade level (Suarez-Verciana, 2011). Additionally, "many schools in Michigan have applied for and received grant money to implement Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative as a foundation for their [Response to Intervention] RtI model" (Eichhorn, 2009, p. 5) and in Montana, researchers discovered a very strong correlation between economic status and reading proficiency, where 79% of children who qualified for free or reduced-price lunches were poor readers (Thale, 2010).

Several school districts in Utah reported using multiple assessment instruments to measure kindergartners' reading progress. Utah's K–3 literacy framework stated "early and appropriate intervention with research-based practices is critical" if all students are to become successful readers (Koehler, Makkonen, & Wei, 2007, p. H2). Iowa, North Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Washington have implemented some form of response to intervention (RtI) program, which emphasizes the identification process to provide early support and intervention to struggling students in their schools. Similarly, newly implemented reading interventions mandated to Ohio's local schools appear to fundamentally mirror the RtI in reading. The RtI initiative can be used in early interventions to help pinpoint students with learning disabilities (Mesmer & Mesmer, 2008).

The 1975 Individuals with Disabilities Act, enacted to help children with disabilities receive the education they deserve, is changing the relationship between intervention programs and general education since the implementation of the TGRG (Curtis, 2012). Intervention methods such as RtI, Reading First Provision, and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills were a few initiatives used in some schools around the country. States demonstrated they faced challenges with third grade students' poor reading skills.

Nature of the Study

This research study's focus was primarily on how third grade reading teachers in one Ohio southwestern urban school district understood the innovation configurations in view of the new TGRG law; the innovation might also affect students in upper grades. Students who were unable to meet the major requirement of reading proficiently by the

third grade often start falling behind in their academic acumen as they age, and may drop out before graduation (Hernandez, 2012).

The objective of this study was to explore the local problem by examining how teachers responded to the TGRG law and how teachers described their SoC and LoU in implementing reading interventions that complied with the TGRG law. Innovative reading interventions may also play a part in how third grade reading teachers teach and assess reading (Guskey, 2001). The concerns-based adoption model (CBAM), which was the conceptual framework of the study, would help substantiate the aforementioned objectives. I discuss the CBAM in greater detail in the literature review Section 3.

Research Question

The overarching question driving this study was as follows:

RQ: What are third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law in schools?

Supported by the conceptual framework of the CBAM, I explained the SoC, LoU, and its innovation configurations in greater detail in the conceptual framework subsection. Using CBAM's stages, educational leaders assess and respond to teachers' anxieties and outlooks, as they understand the changing face of teaching (Hord, Stiegelbauer, Hall, & George, 2006). In addition, during implementation of the innovation, the LoU depicts whether any actual behaviors change (Loucks-Horsley, 2005).

This study had three subquestions:

SQ1. How do third grade reading teachers describe their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to the TGRG law?

SQ2. How do third grade reading teachers describe their SoC when implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law?

SQ3. How do third grade reading teachers describe their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions that comply with the requirements of the TGRG law?

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law and to understand these teachers' SoC and LoU implementing reading interventions. Although many factors affect student performance, another purpose of this study was to assess how third grade reading teachers described their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to the state's TGRG law. I sought to address some issues concerning how third grade teachers described their SoC in implementing interventions. In additional, I was able to understand how teachers described their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions in compliance with the state's TGRG law. Improving student achievement in Ohio southwestern elementary schools was the impetus for another reading guarantee, such as the TGRG law (Partin, 2011). A similar law was set to be implemented in the 2001–2002 academic year with fourth grade students in the state, but it was ruled an unfunded mandate and eventually phased out (Partin, 2011); therefore, the focus was on the current TGRG law. Learning the outcome

of reading teachers' SoC and LoU implementing reading interventions in response to Ohio's TGRG law was the essential reason to conduct this research study.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework supporting this study was the CBAM (Hall, Wallace, & Dossett, 1973). When implementing new programs, stakeholders often measure and evaluate based on whether stakeholders executed the programs with fidelity (Hall et al., 1973; Hord et al., 2006). Usually, at the start of a new policy, school or district leaders worked closely with staff to develop an innovation configuration that showed what each phase should look like in the innovation process. An innovation configuration describes different ways someone might implement an innovation (Hord et al., 2006) such as would be the case in implementation of the TGRG law and reading interventions in alignment with the law. As educators put these new interventions in place, for example the new TGRG law, I explored and sought to understand third grade reading teachers' SoC and LoU in the implementation of reading interventions in response to the state's TGRG law, as it relates to the CBAM conceptual framework and its SoC and LoU component. Using the stages of CBAM, educational leaders can assess and respond to the anxieties, attitudes, and perceptions of staff (teachers) as they understand the challenges of changing the way they work and teach (Hord et al., 2006). The state's TGRG law implementation of 2012 was now underway but research concerning teachers' SoC and LoU in the implementation of reading interventions are necessary; hence, the need for this study.

The CBAM contained and depicted three components of an implementation: SoC, LoU, and innovation configurations. To maintain fidelity, teachers should not alter the

innovation-configuration process during the course of the instructional component and during the implementation of interventions. The innovation configurations helped teachers gain a clear vision of how a new program should work in practice and gives a clear image of what would constitute an excellent or deficient syllabus execution (Hord et al., 2006); therefore, as reading inventions were put into place, they could be modified, customized, or adjusted to fit each student level of learning. The innovation configuration guides the staff in implementing a program with fidelity and has a greater chance of a positive outcome. innovation configurations are a process to identify and describe the various forms of innovation different teachers adopt (Hord et al., 2006). The innovation-configuration process helped teachers provide a well-defined picture of how instructional learning components innovations and implementation of reading interventions should manifest in accordance with Ohio TGRG law. When preparing for this study, each interview question had to align with the seven SoC in implementing reading interventions as an innovation and in response to the Ohio TGRG law. During interview sessions, as teachers became more comfortable with the inquiry, their concerns focused on broader impacts (Hord et al., 2006).

The SoC component consists of seven innovation-related categories of concern: *unconcerned, informational, personal, management, consequence, collaboration,* and *refocusing*. The third component, LoU, consists of eight categories of use in an innovation. Interview questions aligned with the eight LoU in the implementation of reading interventions that comply with the requirements of Ohio's TGRG law: *nonuse, orientation, preparation, mechanical use, routine use, refinement, integration,* and *renewal*. During implementation of the innovation, the LoU depicts whether any actual

behaviors changed (Hord et al., 2006; Loucks-Horsley, 2005). I developed interview questions with components of SoC and LoU as they related to teachers describing their understanding of SoC and LoU in the implementation of reading interventions at each school that complied with the requirements of Ohio's TGRG law. I discuss the conceptual framework of CBAM further in the literature review section.

Definitions of Terms

Adequate yearly progress: Educators define adequate yearly progress "as *progress* toward meeting the goal that 100% of all children in a state to meet state proficiency standards by 2014" (Braden & Schroeder, 2004, p. S3-73). Educators may use "other indicators (e.g., attendance) … to track progress, but achievement is considered to be the essential goal" (Braden & Schroeder, 2004, p. S3-73).

Common Core State Standards (CCSS):

The standards establish guidelines for English language arts (ELA) as well as for literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects. Because students must learn to read, write, speak, listen, and use language effectively in a variety of content areas, the standards promote the literacy skills and concepts required for college and career readiness in multiple disciplines. (CCSS, 2012, para. 2).

Ohio Achievement Assessment: The State of Ohio proficiency test, formerly called Ohio Achievement Test, requires a score of 75% or higher (ODE, 2009).

Ohio Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG) law: In the 2012–2013 school year, Ohio passed Ohio Legislation SB316, which prohibited a district from promoting to the fourth grade any student who does not achieve a benchmark on the third grade English language arts assessment (ODE, 2012b).

Professional learning community: A group of educators who meet periodically, share knowledge, and work together to better their educational skills and their students' academic performance. The term also applies to schools or teaching faculties that use small-group collaboration as a form of professional development (Great Schools Partnership, 2014).

Response to intervention (RtI): A significant change in the law of special education, RtI helps identify students with specific learning disabilities. It moves the emphasis from identification to supporting struggling students early on. Similarly, the Reading First provisions of the NCLB required effective educational methods to reduce reading difficulties. According to Mesmer and Mesmer (2008),

> RtI will alter the work of reading teachers because more than 80% of students identified for special education struggle with literacy and the law names reading teachers as qualified participants in the RtI process because of the International Reading Association's lobbying efforts. (p. 280)

Title I schools: Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act offers monetary help to school districts and states in meeting at-risk students' needs. Title I schools must demonstrate a need for additional assistance in providing educational services and activities to support students most at risk of not meeting the state's reading, mathematics, and writing standards (U.S. Department of Education, 2004).

Urban schools: Urban schools in Ohio are located in counties with a population of more than 200,000 and inside a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. The average enrollment per grade level at the secondary level exceeds 300 students (McCracken & Barcinas, 1991).

Limitations

Limiting the study to include 10 participants to understand how third grade reading teachers' comprehension of the innovation configurations in view of the Ohio TGRG law, their SoC, and LoU as they related to implementing reading interventions in accordance to the Ohio TGRG law in schools could potentially limit the saturation and richness of data. Recognizing limitations in a study helps identify potential weakness (Creswell, 2003). Using a small number of participants from one school district, primarily due to the purposeful sampling procedure, reduced judgment in a purposeful category (Patton, 1990). Although this qualitative study may be subject to multiple interpretations (Kunes, 1991), I used only one type of data (teachers' comprehension) to assess teachers implementation of instructional, learning components, and reading interventions as they complied to the Ohio's TGRG law in this study. According to Creswell (2003), during the proposal stage, researchers often have difficulty identifying weaknesses in the study before it has begun. Nevertheless, some public schools were unavailable to participate in the study, which could have been another potential weakness.

Delimitations

This study applies to Title I schools in the Midwestern United States. Researchers use delimitations to focus a study (Creswell, 2003). For this reason, educators selected for the study hail specifically from the study site region instead of the entire state. According to Creswell (2003), the scope may focus on specific participants or narrow to one type of research design, such as a case study. This study was delimited to 10 teachers from one school district that was subject to laws such as the state TGRG law, indicating that

students were unable to pass to the next grade if they were not reading on their grade level (ODE, 2013a).

Significance of the Study

This research was significant to professionals and scholar-practitioners in the field of education. Results from this study described in detail third grade teachers' perceptions of the TGRG law and how teachers understood the SoC and LoU in the implementation of reading interventions in response to Ohio's TGRG law; these findings could benefit teachers, school district leaders, local professional-learning communities, and stakeholders. Teachers are the lifeline of education to every student. Third grade represents a significant transition: Students in earlier grades learn to read, whereas students in later grades read to learn (Hernandez, 2012). Students' relationships with teachers are relevant to how they perform in class. Educators who foster hidden biases in perceptions of a students' culture, socioeconomic background, and many other profile indicators form the type of educational environment in which teachers are most comfortable. These entrenched perceptions ultimately may cause harm to a child due to invisible prejudices; in contrast, teachers may try to create a more cohesive teacher–student relationship (Lightfoot, 1978).

Doubting that bias is important, Brophy (1985) acknowledged, "few teachers can sustain grossly inaccurate expectations for many of their students in the face of daily feedback that contradicts those expectations" (p. 304). More recently, Ferguson (2003) noted, as educators work closely with students to define expectations, both parties will be better able to implement objectives that will positively influence measures of academic achievement. At the same time, understanding teachers' SoC and LoU when

implementing reading interventions in schools could influence how educators teach reading curriculum and implement reading-intervention plans in the classrooms, connecting to students' motivation levels to learn (Guskey, 2001; Kinnes, 2014). Therefore, understanding how third grade teachers described their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations, how teachers described their SoC in implementing reading interventions, and how they described their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions in compliance with the TGRG law, can potentially impact the outcome of the TGRG laws' success among third grade students. How teachers' perceived the implementation of the TGRG law, whether negative or positive, may define levels of expectations toward students' learning. Teachers' preconceived attitudes toward students affect academic performance (Education Commission of the States, 2012). For example, teachers who profile students based on race, ethnicity, or intelligence may influence students positively or negatively (Education Commission of the States, 2012). By profiling a child, teachers and parents may set goals too low for children, because parents' and teachers' assessments of students' ability impact children's intellect (Ferguson, 2003). Education leaders should give teachers the necessary support and resources to set and pursue high goals for each student, regardless of race (Ferguson, 2003).

The U.S. educational system has been evolving from mastering high-stakes tests to a mastery-learning community that is teaching more 21st-century international readiness skills (Dede, 2004). Reading skills tracked daily by teachers reveal much information about students (Wahlstrom, 2002). This study can contribute valuable information to the local challenges facing urban third grade educators in reading.

Additionally, this study may help professional learning communities promote and lend educators a voice, from a pedagogical perspective, about what teachers witness and experience first-hand in the classroom (Dede, 2004), as researchers begin to understand the results from the recent implementations of reading interventions in response to the TGRG law. Results from this study revealed how teachers' implementation of reading interventions and innovations inspired teachers to motivate students in reading (Hernandez, 2012), which is significant to the local problem of this study. Ultimately, educators can use the data-driven results that emerged from this study to promote reading programs and enable stakeholders in learning communities (Dede, 2004) to make better financial decisions by investing in appropriate training and intervention products.

Summary

Implementation of the TGRG law in schools has gradually taken place throughout the state's school districts (ODE, 2012b). Exploring how third grade teachers perceive the implementation of the TGRG and understanding third grade reading teachers' SoCs and LoU in the implementation of reading intervention in view of the TGRG law was the driving force behind this study. When concentrating on well-developed reading skills among grade levels, the TGRG law offers a chance to benefit student learning (Chandler-Olcott & Zeleznik, 2013; Kern, 2012; Simpson, 2014). Additionally, learning the outcome may bring a wealth of information to the local learning community, which in turn impacts social change. Educators do not know what amount of time it will take to learn the success or failure the TGRG law will have in this Midwestern school district. Nevertheless, as Part 1 of NCLB comes to an end, the Midwest state legislative passage

of Senate Bill 316 in June 2012 was an honest attempt to meet the spirit of NCLB 2013–2014 reform (ODE, 2012b).

The goal of this research study was to augment positive social change in society. When reading skills improve, test scores increase and students become better scholars, better able to compete locally, nationally, and globally. Further social change will occur when urban students' future can improve with opportunities to attend college, to receive vocational training, or to start their own business. Consequently, these opportunities enable students, as future adults, to give back to their communities, causing a rippling effect and creating positive social change throughout society as a whole. The outcomes of this research study may make social change in other ways. This data-driven research not only can contribute to the continual improvement of students' academic achievement in reading, but also can contribute to the field of education in Ohio's southwestern urban public schools. Section 2 will include a saturated literature review, detecting the themes and topics that support the conceptual framework of this research study.

Section 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review section consists of review of a variety of scholarly works that relate to the study. This section reflects what may have led to Midwestern students' academic and reading challenges (Partin, 2011). The content of the reviewed literature also substantiated the conceptual framework for this study. The conceptual framework supporting this study is CBAM (Hall et al., 1973). The CBAM framework helped me develop the research interview questions. The literature reviewed for this section illustrated the importance of understanding third grade reading teachers' SoC and LoU when implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law in schools. This review includes published literature from other studies and research related to different methods and thematic analysis. Additionally, a critical essay on the most relevant and current knowledge on the topic of the state's TGRG law and information on teachers' perceptions and perspectives regarding the implementation of programs are an integral part to this section.

Organization of Review

This section is organized to reflect a large saturation of literature, yielding insight to the research study (Creswell, 2003). Saturated literature reviews help researchers connect emerging themes (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Each literature review description connects the themes that emerge, such as reading teachers' perceptions. Themes reveal how multiple concepts and ideas connect.

The strategy I used to search for literature that would provide valuable information to support the local problem in the southwestern urban area of the state's

public schools was quite extensive. Literature about a topic helps a study fill gaps with ongoing alignment to prior studies (Cooper, 1984; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). I conducted multiple searches to collect current and relevant literature. I used the Academic Search Premier database, which includes works ranging from ERIC to ProQuest, Academic Search Complete, Education Researcher Starter, and EBSCO*host*. Search words consisted of *CBAM, CCSS, implementation of school policies, reading programs, reading interventions, students' reading skills, teachers' perceptions, the state's TGRG law,* and *Title I programs*.

The objective for searching scholarly literature is to support the problem statement related to the study (Creswell, 2003). The Midwestern state's lawmakers have continued to debate how to stimulate the states' public schools to implement additional rigorous academic support and K–2 testing to get all stakeholders prepared for the requirements (Partin, 2011). The literature connects teachers' perceptions of other policies (innovation configurations) implemented in schools in the United States, while aligning with the overarching question driving this study: What are third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law in schools? The three subquestions were as follows:

SQ1. How do third grade reading teachers describe their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to the TGRG law?

SQ2. How do third grade reading teachers describe their SoC when implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law?

SQ3.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their LoU in the

implementation of reading interventions that comply with the requirements of

the TGRG law?

The Conceptual Framework

Concerns-Based Adoption Model

When looking through a broad and comprehensive body of knowledge, I used the

CBAM as the conceptual framework for this study. Researchers can measure the progress

of a new innovation such as the TGRG law implemented in 2012 by how well it is

executed, compared with policy implementation guidelines. Lack of ongoing knowledge

is one of the great challenges when implementing an innovation (Heath & Heath, 2010).

One model for change in individuals, the CBAM, applies to all those experiencing

change: policymakers, teachers, parents, and students (Hall & Hord, 2011; Hord,

Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987; Loucks-Horsley & Stiegelbauer, 1991). I used

the CBAM to understand teachers' perceptions of their roles in the implementation of the

TGRG law. I did not assess all components of the CBAM. Rather, the impetus to conduct

this study was to explore how third grade teachers described their SoC and LoU in

implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law. Using CBAM's stages,

educational leaders assess and respond to teachers' anxieties and outlooks as they

understand the changing face of teaching (Hord et al., 2006). Table 1 illustrates each SoC

in CBAM.

The components of CBAM assisted me to comprehend the ability of a new

program, such as the TGRG law, to accomplish its purpose. It was imperative to confront

the issues of the people assigned to implement the new program. When implementing a

new policy, program, or process, one should conduct regular follow up with teachers to see how well teachers and administrators are executing the new policy in the school. Failure in a new program often takes place due to the lack of follow up (Hord et al., 2006).

Table 1

Stages of Concern

Stage	Typical statement
Unconcerned	I think I heard something about it, but I'm too busy right now.
Informational	This seems interesting, and I would like to know more about it.
Personal	I'm concerned about the changes I'll need to make in my routines.
Management	I'm concerned about how much time it takes to get ready to teach with this new approach.
Consequence	How will this new approach affect my students?
Collaboration	I'm looking forward to sharing some ideas about it with teachers.
Refocusing	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.

Note: Adapted from *Measuring Implementation in Schools: The Stages of Concern Questionnaire,* by A. A. George, G. E. Hall, & S. M. Stiegelbauer, 2006, Appendix A, pages 79–82. Austin, TX: SEDL. The "Stages of Concern" model is available at http://www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/cbam21.html. Used with permission.

The CBAM contains and depicts three groups of possible concerns about implementation. The first possible concern was innovation configurations, which formed the different levels of the implementation of reading interventions and showed how they should function. The innovation configurations can be altered by individual teachers. Innovation configurations is a tool to identify and describe the various forms of an innovation that different teachers adopt (Hord et al., 2006). The innovation-configuration process helped by providing a well-defined picture of an instructional and learning component and how implementation of reading interventions should take place in accordance with the Ohio TGRG law. For example, I aligned each interview question

with the seven SoC in implementing reading interventions as an innovation, in response to the TGRG law. During the interview sessions, as teachers became more comfortable with the inquiry, their concerns sometimes shifted to broader issues, for example, the initiative's effect on students and professional relationships. This type of reflection assists educators to determine whether programs affect students' learning or whether the teacher needs to adjust instruction (Hord et al., 2006).

The SoC related to the way teachers expressed concerns as personal, managerial, or related to the influence of the innovations. SoC also focused on how individual teachers reacted to change at different stages. The SoC include *consequence*, *collaboration*, and *refinement* subgroups that played an integral role in teachers implementing innovations such as reading interventions (see Table 2). I used the SoC in the study to help develop the interview questions. In addition, the SoC helped me gauge teachers' perceptions, provide information for the data analysis, and learn SoC in the implementation of reading interventions.

The third dimension of the CBAM was the LoU, which consisted of eight behavioral profiles. During implementation of the innovation, the LoU depicted whether any actual behavior changes take place. The LoU component indicated if individuals lacked knowledge of the innovation (see Table 2).

The LoU was an integral part of the CBAM to explore the local problem. I used the SoC and LoU as tools to gauge and analyze teachers' responses to the interview questions. During the data-analysis phase, I searched for patterns of themes, coding data that emerged and connected with components of SoC and LoU. The steps entailed identifying the data, coding the data, searching for themes, reviewing recurring patterns

of themes that emerged, and defining and naming the themes using a software program. According to Boyatzis (1998), coding the data is one of the most important steps in the process. I developed each question from SoC and LoU dimensions to understand Ohio's third grade urban teachers' SoC and LoU as they related to implementing reading interventions and teachers' comprehension of the innovation configurations in view of the state's TGRG law. Analysis of the data yielded information about needed modifications.

Table 2

Levels of Use

LoU	Typical Statement
Nonuse	I've heard about it but, honestly, I have too many other things to do right now.
Orientation	I'm looking at materials pertaining to the innovation and considering using it sometime in the future.
Preparation	I've attended the workshop and I've set aside time every week for studying the materials.
Mechanical use	Most of my time is spent organizing materials and keeping things going as smoothly as possible every day.
Routine use	This year it has worked out beautifully, I'm sure there will be a few changes next year, but basically I will use it the same way I did this year.
Refinement	I recently developed a more detailed assessment instrument to gain more specific information from students to see where I need to change my use of the innovation.
Integration	Not everyone has all the skills needed to use the program so that it has the greatest impact on student learning. I've been working with another teacher for 2 years, and recently a third teacher began working with us.
Renewal	I am still interested in the program and using it with modifications. Frankly, I'm reading, talking, and even doing a little research to see whether some other approach might be better for the students.

Note: Adapted from *Measuring Implementation in Schools: Levels of Use,* by G. E. Hall, D. J. Dirksen, & A. A. George, 2006, Austin, TX: SEDL. A PDF of the manual is available for download at http://www.sedl.org/cbam/lou_manual_201410.pdf, and the "Levels of Use" instrument is available at https://www.sedl.org/cbam/levels_of_use.html. Used with permission.

The SoC described seven groups of potential concerns related to an implementation. Over a period of time, learning development changes through different

milieu, expertise, and needs (Loucks-Horsley, 2005). The seven SoC are *unconcerned* (I am not concerned), *informational* (I would like to know more), *personal* (I am concerned about the changes.), *management* (I am concerned about spending all my time), *consequence* (How will this new approach affect my students), *collaboration* (I'm looking forward to sharing … with other teachers), and *refocusing* (I have some ideas … that would work even better). CBAM attends to the myriad of needs for data, help, and inspiration to individuals and groups (Loucks-Horsley, 2005). The literature review on the CBAM established the conceptual framework for this study by providing dimensional structures based on how third grade teachers understand their respective SoC and LoU in implementing reading inventions in response to the TGRG law. The CBAM framework helped guide the data I coded and analyzed during the data collection and analysis phases of the study.

Past Studies

In this section, I used the CBAM conceptual framework in the literature to support how teachers described their SoC in relation to adoptions or implementation of an innovation. In a study relevant to the CBAM to understand the implementation of the strategies for active and independent learning approach, the Ministry of Education (MOE, 2014) used various dimensions of CBAM. Strategies for Active and Independent Learning is an innovative teaching and learning approach that seeks to help students develop into reflective, lifelong learners. The MOE conducted a study to understand the SoC teachers experience as they engaged in the process of innovation adoption and implementation of the Strategies for Active and Independent Learning approach. Researchers examined whether the implementation of Strategies for Active and

Independent Learning in the teaching and learning of mathematics in primary schools was effective (MOE, 2014). Without ongoing resource and facilitator support, organizations have difficulty sustaining use of the innovation (Loucks-Horsley, 2005). Thus, teachers frequently struggle independently to understand and use educational innovations (MOE, 2014). Findings aligned with CBAM concerns and showed that information may not have passed accurately to teachers, as one school had the impression that the Strategies for Active and Independent Learning package had to be used in its entirety and should be changed, causing teachers to have marked concerns in the related areas (MOE, 2014).

In a more recent multiple case study, the theoretical foundation used was constructivism and social learning theory. The purpose of the study was to explore the impact of implementation of the CCSS in Georgia K–12 on the professional development needs of educators (Hipsher, 2014). The researcher aimed to examine the types of support educators requested and analyzed teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the CCSS and effective professional-development practices. Similarly, Shively (2013) conducted a recent qualitative study on perceptions of secondary reading teachers' experiences while they implemented Florida's secondary reading policy. In contrast to the multiple-case study in Georgia, the study in Florida used shared leadership and political-systems theory as the theoretical and conceptual frame for the study. Although researchers conducted both studies in the south and shared a qualitative research design, their conceptual frameworks differed, as did the purpose of their studies. The overarching themes from each study were quite different as well; the themes that emerged from the Hipsher (2014) study identified frustration educators felt throughout the implementation

year. The themes that emerged from reading teachers in Florida provided a guide to the selection of important and relevant ideas. Three overarching themes arose from the analysis of teachers' experiences: (a) a sudden change of content is a challenge to implementing policy change; (b) challenges from inside and outside of the classroom hindered policy implementation; (c) policy implementation brings insights: changing trends in assessment formats and instructional implications may call for new instructional strategies. Shively's study found teachers were not adequately prepared in all areas to undertake the implementation of a new content area. In conclusion, each study's author recommended additional research.

Perceptions of Implementations of Policies and Programs

The CBAM (and similar models) holds that the kinds of questions people have when considering and experiencing change evolve. The CBAM helps researchers identify and assess seven SoC (Loucks-Horsley, 2005). Nevertheless, many studies on teachers' perceptions or perspectives use other effective conceptual frameworks and other designs that relate to implementation of innovations (programs or policies). For example, A. T. Smith (2011) conducted a recent "qualitative case study [that] investigated middle grades literacy coaches' perspectives on their efforts to facilitate teacher change and impact classroom practice" (p. 1).

A "literacy coach is … a person who supports teachers as they gain and implement instructional knowledge and skills (Toll, 2005) and provides leadership for a school's literacy program (Sturtevant, 2003)" (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 2). The challenge of poor reading skills among third grade students that brought about the implementation of reading interventions can give value to the role of a literacy coach. Coaches conceptually

emphasize "knowledge sharing (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996), a form of professional development that focuses on bridging the gap between knowledge introduced in learning contexts and application in classroom settings" (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 2). "Other major coaching [responsibilities emphasize] group work through afterschool training sessions, professional development meetings, and school-wide literacy initiatives (Sturtevant, 2003; Walpole & McKenna, 2004)" (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 2).

Similar to the CBAM SoC dimension, "two standards for middle and secondary literacy coaches reflect this responsibility: Standard 1, skillful collaborators [SoC 5: Collaboration] … and Standard 3, skillful evaluators of literacy needs [SoC 4: Consequence] who collaborate with school leadership" (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 2). "The purpose of literacy coaching is to support teacher change in knowledge and practice, thereby impacting student learning" (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 4). In a study of coaches' perspective, the researcher used a multiple-case research design to examine "the work of three coaches in two districts in the western United States" (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 4).

> Three major themes emerged from the analysis of coaches' perspective. … First, coaches emphasized the usefulness of serving as a curriculum resource for teachers. Second, they highlighted the importance of establishing and developing positive working relationships with teachers across subject areas. Third, they raised concerns about advising and about tensions with authorities in the middle school structure. These themes highlight the complexity of coaching roles and the manner in which roles played out in context. (A. T. Smith, 2011, p. 6)

In a qualitative case-study by Griggs (2012), the researcher explored teachers' perceptions of the implementation of RtI in upper grades, understanding these teachers'

perceptions were imperative. RtI's historical roots hailed from the work of Deno (1985) and of Bergen (1977). Deno's (1985) data-based program-modification model and Bergen's behavioral-consultation model constituted the research-based foundation that supported RtI, whereas the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (2004) provided RtI with the legislative mandates. Themes emerging from this study were consistent with findings from other studies that suggested RtI is an innovative approach that could cut special-education referrals (Bollman, Silberglitt, & Gibbon, 2007; Farmer, Vernon-Feagans, & Hannum, 2008; Mellard & Johnson, 2008; National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 2005). Findings from the study indicated that the number of special-education referrals went down at the same time the school implemented the RtI program READ 180. Teachers admitted they did not know much about RtI in their school. Teachers' perceptions of the off-the-shelf RtI model were not grounded on much knowledge about it and none of the teachers received training (Griggs, 2012). However, Griggs conducted the study in a relatively high-achieving school. Researchers need to conduct studies at elementary levels in low-performing schools to gain rich comparisons of teachers' perception of the implementation of RtI in contrasting settings (Griggs, 2012).

Millhouse-Pettis's (2011) study of RtI and staff perceptions of a three-tier intervention model's development and implementation showed a correlation with a previous study. Griggs (2012) and Millhouse-Pettis's research topics included examining the RtI initiative and both discussions comprehensively focused on the three-tier model. Researchers worked from different research designs and contrasting themes emerged from their studies. Millhouse-Pettis's study recognized that Deno's (1985) data-based

program-modification model addressing academic skills in the early 1970s and Bergen's

(1977) behavioral-consultation model primarily developed the RtI initiatives (Batsche et

al., 2005; Fuchs, Mock, Morgan, & Young, 2003; Hawkins, Kroeger, Musti-Rao, Barnett,

& Ward, 2008). "The implementation of RtI and its concepts requires a paradigm shift

(Ardoin, Witt, Connell, & Koenig, 2005)" (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 21). The ideology

and framework surrounding RtI frameworks required "school districts to rethink and

reexamine their quality of instruction, reevaluate who and how they identify students

deemed at-risk for academic failure, and reassess when students are referred for special-

education services" (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 21).

The themes that emerged from Millhouse-Pettis's (2011) study resulted from

"interview responses … compared to … themes that emerge[d] from survey responses"

(Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 56). Survey and interview responses allowed Millhouse-Pettis

to develop five thematic categories. Themes that emerged described the understanding of

core principles of RtI and district procedures by average certified staff in Illinois.

Trainings "assisted staff in their understanding of the implementation process; however,

all did not agree on how student progress should be monitored and suggest additional

training in this area is needed" (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 70).

Understanding the importance of poor reading skills among elementary students

and how teachers perceive the implementation of new programs is vital to the success of

the program or innovation. McCoss-Yergian and Krepps (2010) used a mixed-

methodology study to

> Identify beliefs about content-area literacy commonly held by teachers and to
>
> evaluate whether these collective professional convictions and suppositions affect

[content-area] instructors' implementation of content area reading strategies in their classrooms. (p. 1)

The researchers gathered qualitative and quantitative data from 39 middle and high school core and elective content-area teachers. McCoss-Yergian and Krepps conducted individual interviews to examine participants' professional practices in implementing "reading strategy instruction in content-area classrooms" (McCoss-Yergian & Krepps, 2010, p. 1).

The vast majority of middle and high school teachers in the study thought that limited teaching time provided cause for judging instruction of reading strategies as wasteful. These results are similar to those of Park and Osborne's research which suggested teachers feel that reading instruction infringes on content-area time (2006). According to Ness (2008), secondary teachers frequently explain their lack of explicit strategy instruction by citing time shortages. Thibodeau's findings also suggest that … teachers are concerned about the time literacy … instruction might take away from content instruction (2008). (McCoss-Yergian & Krepps, 2010, p. 12)

McCoss-Yergian and Krepps (2010) found that, "in large numbers, secondary teachers do harbor attitudes, in five broad categories, toward content area reading instruction that are unfavorable and that" (p. 1) the teachers' paradigms of instruction "negatively impacted" (McCoss-Yergian & Krepps, 2010, p. 1) implementation of strategies, lesson plans, and curricula in their classrooms.

Houston (2009) conducted a "phenomenological study … to understand teachers' experiences related to the implementation of *Reading First* in the classroom and … how

Reading First has impacted curriculum, instruction, assessment, student achievement, and professional development" (p. vi). "The Reading First program is based on 'scientifically-based research' that identifies and defines five essential components of early reading" (Houston, 2009, p. 10). According to the Report of the National Reading Panel (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2000),

> The Panel's work identified five essential components of successful reading instruction. The components include:
>
> - Phonemic awareness—the ability to hear and identify individual sounds in spoken words.
>
> - Phonics—the relationship between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language.
>
> - Fluency—the capacity to read text accurately and quickly.
>
> - Vocabulary—the words students know to communicate effectively.
>
> - Comprehension—the ability to understand and gain meaning from what students read. (Houston, 2009, p. 11)

Houston (2009) interviewed "five certified kindergarten and first grade public school teachers" (p. vi). Themes that emerged from Houston's study included

1. There are advantages and disadvantages for both students and for teachers. The biggest disadvantage for teachers was the lack of flexibility and instructional decision-making imposed by Reading First.

2. Most teachers felt there needed to be more of a focused on comprehension, not just phoneme segmentation and oral reading fluency.

3. Some teachers felt that Reading First hurts some students, especially the lowest kids and the above level kids.

4. All participants in this study reported collaboration with other teachers, interventionists, and reading coaches regarding curriculum, instruction, assessment, and student achievement.

5. All of the teachers stated that they had received professional training as a result of Reading First, which in turn helped them become more effective teachers. (Houston, 2009, p. vi)

The third and last study regarding teachers' perceptions, perspectives, and attitudes reviewed in this section was conducted by Conway (2006). Conway used a five-point rating and open-ended response survey to explore elementary teachers' self-reporting of work with a reading coach, and attitudes, perceptions, and practices in teaching reading. The premise of the study was that an investment in extensive coaching, by providing school-based professional development, would help teachers improve instruction in reading and reduce the number of struggling readers (Conway, 2006). The main goal of professional development is to facilitate change that will bring better student outcomes (Guskey, 2001). In contrast to the proposed study, using 10 public school teachers from one school district in Ohio, Conway selected five public elementary schools in Collier County, Florida. Results indicated that coaching made a difference for these teachers. The aggregated and disaggregated data revealed small to large and significant correlations to coaching. The evidence of positive relationships of attitudes, perceptions, and practices to work with a coach is an important finding. Additional research is needed to determine whether the content of the professional development

offered by coaches is comprehensive enough to impact reading-proficiency levels of all students (Conway, 2006).

The commonality of themes that connected the last three studies emphasized the effort schools around the country are making to ensure teachers are skilled, trained, and prepared to help struggling students in reading. Coaching, training, and keeping the teacher involved in decision making encouraged teachers to be a more significant part of the team and practice. To reiterate, Griggs's (2012) study revealed that ultimately teachers did not know much about RtI interventions implemented in their school; Millhouse-Pettis's (2011) study revealed that teachers agreed that after training they were able to understand the core principle of the implementation of RtI and their districts' procedures; Houston's (2009) study revealed teachers agreed with the implementation of reading coaches to improve instruction in reading and reduce the number of struggling readers. Conway's (2006) study supported Houston's by revealing teachers perceived that professional development offered by coaches made a difference in their respective schools.

According to Klieger and Yakobovitch (2012), support from of all members in the implementation group builds the motivation necessary to lead all members through the challenges presented by the implementation process. However, the issue of time appeared to be a main theme and major factor in teaching among middle and high school teachers. According to McCoss-Yergian and Krepps (2010), Thibodeau (2008), Ness (2007), and Park and Osborne (2006), teachers are concerned that time used for reading instruction and literacy instruction causes shortages in time to teach content subjects. Overall, the

aforementioned studies relate to various conceptual frameworks that influenced each study.

Literature Related to the Methods

The literature reviewed for this subsection relates to the qualitative case-study strategy I used in my study. The saturation of literature provides information for an in-depth discussion related to a qualitative design, qualitative-research methods, and qualitative case-study research design. Current textbooks and handbooks (e.g., Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 2002; Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, & Silverman, 2004; J. A. Smith, 2003; Weinberg, 2001) typically described a variety of research methods that make use of language data. Creswell (1998) suggested that many approaches can be arranged under five basic traditions: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. Phenomenology underlies qualitative-approach research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Newman & Benz, 1998). Phenomenology is the study of "phenomena" or the things people experience and the ways people experience such things (Creswell, 2003).

A case study is an approach to research that focuses on gaining an in-depth understanding of a particular entity or event at a specific time (Willig, 2008). Therefore, case studies "are not characterized by the methods used to collect and analyze data, but rather its focus on a particular unit of analysis" (Willig, 2008, p. 74). In a qualitative case-study design, a case study attempts to shed light on the phenomena (Yin, 2009). The case might be an individual, an incident, a group, or an organization. H. E. Mills's (2013) study used a qualitative case-study design framed by culturally responsive methodologies (Berryman, Soohoo, & Nevin, 2013), informed by a grounded-theory approach to analysis. H. E. Mills's study involved interviewing five experienced teachers in a high-

poverty, high-minority, urban public school, investigating how teachers navigated the challenges of NCLB requirements while teaching in an authorized International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. In Adomou's (2011) qualitative multiple-case study, the purpose was to give a voice to middle and high school English and mathematics teachers (Grades 6–12) by exploring how they perceived the effects of standards-based reform on their curriculum and their instructional practices.

Qualitative researchers face three challenges: "representation, legitimation, and praxis" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 560). Representation means the difficulty of adequately capturing lived experiences; yet this challenge raises a question about whether qualitative researchers can authentically represent the other's experience with text (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 21). Although the use of case studies in research is still difficult (Yin, 2009), creating a complete plan to fairly gather, explore and present data remains the goal (Yin, 2009).

Literature Related to Differing Methodologies

Many studies used multiple methods to justify and determine outcomes or findings. Although different types and terms for designing a proposal abound, researchers use three basic methods of approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches (Creswell, 2003, 2007). A quantitative method will dictate the kinds of research methodologies a researcher uses to underpin the work and methods they use to collect data (Wisker, 2007). Researchers who wish to collect quantitative data measure variables and verify or question existing theories or hypotheses. Roby's (2004) quantitative study focused on teachers' attendance as a variable potentially affecting

student achievement. Roby compared schools in Ohio with low teacher-attendance rates to schools with high teacher-attendance averages.

Wisker (2007) claimed that questionnaires often seem a logical and easy option as a way to collect information from people. The process usually involves gathering and massaging data into numerical form so the researcher can make statistical calculations and draw conclusions (Wisker, 2007). Roby's (2004) study used statistical analysis that compared means, standards deviations, percentages, and t-test ratios. Researchers collect a variety of data based on strict processes for statistical analysis. Nowadays, researchers conduct quantitative research with the aid of sophisticated statistical computer packages (Alzheimer Europe, 2013).

Researchers using a qualitative method work to understand meanings, consider, describe, and understand intangible experiences, ideas, beliefs, and values. For example, Griggs's (2012) constructivist case-study research explored teachers' perceptions of the implementation of RtI in upper grades. Griggs interviewed fifth- and sixth grade teachers from one elementary school. Conducting interviews enables face-to-face discussion with human subjects (Wisker, 2007). Qualitative researchers' tack is often inductive, so researchers advance a theory or seek pattern based on the collected data, allowing for great flexibility (Alzheimer Europe, 2013).

The third type of research design is a mixed method. "The development and perceived legitimacy of both qualitative and quantitative research in the social and human sciences … is expanding" (Creswell, 2003, p. 208). Mixed-methods researchers employ "data collection associated with both forms of data" (Creswell, 2003, p. 208). Additionally, a mixed method is most suitable for those for whom only the quantitative

approach or the qualitative approach is inadequate to develop multiple perspectives and a complete understanding of a research problem or question (Creswell, Klassen, Clark, & Smith, 2010). Multiple findings come from using different methodologies. Baggett's (2000) study used a mixed-methods triangulation design to analyze data from stakeholders. The study included collecting 108 student surveys, 10 student interviews, and two teacher focus groups. Baggett used quantitative and qualitative methods to enhance the findings in a single study. Baggett used quantitative methods for two facets of the study and qualitative methods for a portion of the teacher survey. The researcher analyzed survey responses from open-ended questions using qualitative methods and employed quantitative methods to report the perceptions of teachers at the site who had taught using the early literacy program designed using a cross-sectional survey with a Likert-type scale response (Baggett, 2000).

The literature reviewed in this section ranged from qualitative to quantitative and mixed methods that researchers used to meet specific goals. The purpose of my study, using a qualitative case-study design, was to create a solid case study and to fairly gather, explore, and present the data (Yin, 2009). Each researcher used their respective methodologies to investigate the goals of each study; in addition, every researcher described in this section made recommendations for further research. According to Polkinghorne (2005), qualitative methods have significantly affected sociology, nursing, and education. They can have the same effect in education.

Critical Essay

This section includes an integrated critical essay on some of the most relevant and current literature published on the topic of a Midwestern state's TGRG law. Major ideas

and themes center on the CBAM conceptual framework. More importantly, I discuss understanding of the role the TGRG law plays in the state's educational system in this essay, which concludes the literature-review section. In June 2012, legislators in a state in the Midwest passed Senate Bill 316. This new law made changes to education in every public school district in the state. One of the most significant changes is the TGRG section. The primary purpose of this law is to ensure that children entering the fourth grade are reading on level (ODE, 2012b).

Currently, public schools in a southwestern part of the state were making major changes in education regarding reading and reading interventions. The decisions educators make about assessing a student signals the student about what educators value (Stoner, Higgins, & Bonilla, 2012). NCLB reform is nearing its final years in which many states have implemented newly required laws and policies to meet the NCLB deadline (Partin, 2011).

What third grade reading teachers' perceptions are of the implementation of the TGRG law in schools, how teachers' describe their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations, and how teachers describes their SoC and LoU when implementing reading interventions in response to TGRG law can potentially affect how well students succeed in school. The national implication to hold teachers to the task of student achievement is evident in the emphasis on adding value, allowing families and educational leaders to follow children's progress on standardized tests in each teachers' learning community (Felch, Song, & Smith, 2010; Rothstein et al., 2010). ODE (2013b) recently disclosed that for the 2014–2015 academic year, each student on a reading-improvement and monitoring plan in K–3rd grades, or

students retained by the TGRG must be assigned to a teacher who has been engaged actively in the reading instruction of students for the previous 3 years. Districts are to assess reading skills at the end of first and second grades with the requirement that each K–3 student's reading skills be assessed by September 30th. Preassessment, formative assessment, and summative assessments are three tests that are part of the learning process (Kelting-Gibson, 2013). Teachers' decision making is imperative in that teachers' participation expounds on the magnitude of their role (de Segovia & Hardison, 2009). Teachers' perceptions toward the implementation of a program, along with their experience, can facilitate or impede the success of the implementation (Webb & Jones, 2009).

The implementation of a program or policy needs effective implementation (Wallace, Blase, Fixsen, & Naoom, 2008). Teachers can use three dimensions of LoU: *mechanical* (the user is making changes to better organize use of the innovation), *routine* (the user is making few or no changes and has established a pattern of use), and *refinement* (the user is making changes to increase outcomes). Some behaviors may overlap at different stages of the innovation (Hord et al., 2006; see Table 2). Wallace and associates stated that, "teachers are the interventions" (as cited in Protheroe, 2008, p. 38). The two dimensions of SoC during this stage of the reading interventions as the innovation are *consequence* (How is my use affecting learners? How can I refine it to have more impact?) and *collaboration* (How can I relate what I am doing to what others are doing?; Hord et al., 2006).

Presently, test scores from fall 2013 revealed that nearly 40% of students in the third grade were unable to be promoted to the fourth grade in one of the state's

southwestern public school districts (ODE, 2013a). Although, 63% of students in third grade performed well enough to be promoted, state school officials put a safeguard in place in March and established three types of alternative testing, allowing students two other options to be promoted (Rice, 2014). Three dimensions of LoU teachers can use in this stage of the implementation of the reading interventions are *refinement* (changes by the user for improved outcomes), *integration* (deliberate efforts by the user to coordinate using the innovation with others), and *renewal* (efforts by the user to find more effective alternative uses for the innovation; Hord et al., 2006). Schools throughout a Midwestern state are implementing intervention reading programs and assessment initiatives, including in the southwestern area of the Midwest region of the United States.

The state's southwestern school district "intervention-based assessment is a three-tier pre-referral problem solving method that includes collaborative consultation" (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 40). Telzrow, McNamara, and Hollinger (2000) conducted a study to "determine the fidelity of the process as it relates to student outcomes" (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 40) and found very low student outcomes and integrity. "Factors contributing to the low integrity were: teachers' resistance to change, teachers' lack of skills, knowledge, and ownership of the process, and inadequate resources in the general curriculum" (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 40). The failure of the implementation process can be traced to these barriers (McNamara & Hollinger, 2003).

Teachers are not accepting the responsibility to fulfill their content-area duties. They ignore decades of confirmed research showing that literacy instruction integrated into content-area classes helps adolescent learners' academic outcomes (Cantrell, Burns, & Callaway, 2009). Teachers' attitudes and perceptions contribute to their power to

produce a desired effect through sustained practice (Guskey, 2001). Exploring and understanding how teachers in Title 1 schools perceive implementation of the reading interventions is paramount to the potential success of students' improved reading skills. The more positive teachers' attitudes and perceptions, the greater the belief that working with struggling readers is a challenge that can be mastered through expert instruction (Pajares, 2003). Every teacher in Midwestern's schools has the chance to set the tone for potential success in each of their classrooms. The state is a *local control* state for academics. Local control allows autonomy for each school district to customize curriculum to fit their diverse population in urban or rural communities (Bowers, 2001).

In Section 3, I described the methodology I used in the qualitative case-study research design. In Section 4, I detailed the generation, gathering, analysis, interpretation, and final results of the data using the research instrument explained and described in the methodology section. The intent of this research was to encourage continual support in the area of scientifically based research for the advancement and improvement of the state's local and regional educational communities. The overall goal of this research study was to make a positive social change in society and in the field of education.

Section 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case-study design study was to explore and understand teachers' perception of the implementation of the TGRG law in schools. The purpose was also to investigate how third grade reading teachers described their level of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovation configurations, and how teachers described their SoC and LoU in implementing reading interventions in response to the state's TGRG law. In a case study, once the researcher determines what the case will be, he or she must consider what the case will not be.

> Yin (2003) and Stake (1995) suggested that placing boundaries on a case could prevent an explosion of purpose from occurring. Suggestions on how to bind a case include (a) by time and place (Creswell, 2003); (b) by time and activity (Stake, 1995); and (c) by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994). (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 546)

In this bounded qualitative case study, I explored the perceptions of 10 third grade teachers from one school district. Defining the boundaries or specifying the unit of analysis is the key decision point in a case-study design (Hatch, 2002).

Examples of such bounded phenomena in education include "a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (Merriam, 1988, p. 13). A qualitative case-study design supported the purpose of this study. The design helped me to explore how third grade teachers described their SoC and LoU in implementing reading interventions and innovation configurations, stimulated by Ohio's TGRG law. The following subsections include the research design, research question, subquestions,

and justification for the study, including population sampling and demographics, participants' rights, the researcher's role, participants' criterion, data collection (how, when, and tools), and data analysis.

Research Design

A qualitative case-study design was the most appropriate strategy to use for this study because (a) the study involves "how" and "why" questions, (b) the behavior of the participants cannot be manipulated, (c) I believe that contextual conditions are important in the studied phenomenon, and (d) the phenomenon has unclear boundaries with the context (Yin, 2003). This study focused on the "how" of a phenomenon—the implementation of an innovation configuration in schools—and teachers' perceptions could not be manipulated. A quantitative research design would have been inappropriate because the research questions require teachers' perceptions of the implementation process, which cannot be quantified.

Similar to a study by Baxter and Jack (2008), I was unable to attain a true picture of teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law and the implementation of reading interventions in schools without considering the context in which the implementation occurred. Additionally, the philosophical assumption I used in this research study was a constructivist approach. Constructivist learning rests on the notion that learners construct knowledge of the world based on their experiences (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010) or worldview. "Stake (1995) and Yin (2003) based their approaches to case studies on a constructivist paradigm. Constructivists claim that truth is relative and depends on one's perspective" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545), which supported my decision to use a qualitative case study.

I considered other research designs such as grounded theory study, but later found the grounded theory design would be less effective because I was not trying to construct a theory based on participants' lived experiences. Grounded theory, qualitative research based on interpretation without rigid guidelines, focuses on the investigator's viewpoint and learning from the experiences found in concealed webs, situations, and connections (Charmaz, 2005). Although a grounded theory design was similar to my design, its strategy of inquiry was to discover a process, activity, or event; these were not the focus of this study's design. I considered three other research designs: (a) a narrative research, which emphasizes the study of individuals, (b) an ethnography, which studies the cultural-sharing behavior of individuals or groups (Creswell, 2003), and (c) a phenomenology strategy, which explains a lived experience shared by individuals such as death or sorrow (Creswell, 2007). Another type of phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994) design is called transcendental or psychological and focuses on one concept, *epoche* (or bracketing), in which the researchers looks at the phenomenon as if for the first time. Narrative research focuses on reporting the story; ethnographic studies seek to understand the broad culture-sharing behavior of individuals or groups, and phenomenology describes the experiences (Creswell, 2007). None of these strategies were appropriate for this study. As a result, those research designs were considered unlikely choices.

The research questions and tools used for the study (Polkinghorne, 2005) rendered the aforementioned research designs less effective in collecting data for this study. The defining feature of a case study is its holistic approach: It aims to capture all details of a particular individual or group (a small group, classroom, or even a school), that are relevant to the purpose of the study, in a real-life context (Yin, 2009). The strategy of

inquiry for this study was to explore teachers' perceptions of a phenomenon: implementation of the innovation configurations in schools. For this reason, to gain different perspectives from 10 teachers from one school district, a single case study was the most appropriate design. The following subsections include the research questions, justification of the data, population/sampling/demographics, participants' rights, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Question(s)

The overarching research question driving this study was this: What are third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law in schools?

The three subquestions that assist in addressing the central question follow:

SQ1.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to the TGRG law?

SQ2.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their SoC when implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law?

SQ3.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions that comply with the requirements of the TGRG law?

Formulating the research questions is an integral part of a research study (Hatch, 2002). Subquestions are mostly small in numbers and are general in nature; however, they support the overarching question of the research and purpose of the study (Creswell,

2007; Hatch, 2002). The overarching question and subquestions were essential and reflected the direction of this study.

Justification for the Research Design

The most appropriate research design for this study would help understand common or shared experiences of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). This qualitative case study was about understanding human factors from 10 third grade teachers' in Title 1 schools. I studied teachers' SoC and LoU in implementing reading interventions that complied with requirements of Ohio's TGRG law. This single case study was appropriate because it was bound to one school district in the Midwest. Case-study designs are bound to a setting or context in a bounded system (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 1988). Their focus on bounded systems (L. M. Smith, 1979) makes qualitative case studies different from other qualitative study designs. In this case-study design, I investigated one analytic unit (school district), interviewing 10 participants to find "common themes that transcend the cases (Yin, 2003). This analysis is rich in the context of the case or setting in which the case presents itself (Merriam, 1988)" (Creswell, 2007, p. 77). As a result, a qualitative case study was the most suitable design to use to understand third grade reading teachers in Title 1 in the state's southwestern region.

Population

I narrowed this bounded case-study population to third grade teachers in one school district. I used a purposeful sampling method, meaning that I selected each participant in the population according to a set of established criteria (Creswell, 2003). The criteria were based on teachers working in noncharter and urban Title 1 schools, and teaching students dubbed at risk in reading. Each participant selected was certified or

licensed in their respective content area. The population consisted of 10 educators

teaching in Title 1-designated public schools from one school district in southwest Ohio.

Creswell (2003) recommended researchers identify the population in a study and state the

size of this population and the means of identifying individuals in the population. No

students or parents participated in this study.

Sampling

I purposefully chose candidates from a list of all Title 1 schools in urban areas

based on their acceptance of the invitation to participate. The procedure to gain access to

each teacher began by contacting the school district research department specially

designated to grant permission to conduct a study. To gain access to the context or

setting, researchers must gain approval of school-level administrators in larger school

districts (Hatch, 2002). Researchers should select the number of teachers to interview

realistically, based on the time needed for the study. I had 3 weeks to invite and select

each teacher, make introductions, meet with teachers, secure research locations, have

consent forms signed (Creswell, 2007), and arrange interviewing sessions with each

teacher during the school year. The amount of time was determined by each teacher's

availability and school schedule. The selected school district services 33,000 students in

55 schools that spread across the third largest public school district in southwestern Ohio.

I contacted each participant by phone, e-mail, or text. I retrieved the list of public schools

from the ODE website and school districts' research departments.

Demographics

Selected teachers fit the following criteria: (a) each teacher was located in one of

Ohio's southwest urban school districts; the selected teachers for this case study came

from 10 Title 1 schools. Determining where to conduct a study, as well as planning how to gain access and entry is a vital component in a qualitative research design (Hatch, 2002); (b) each teacher worked with at-risk students; and (c) each teacher worked with students who received reduced-price or free lunch. Each school's population consisted of approximately 96% African American students (ODE, 2009). I invited one teacher from each school until 10 teachers had agreed to participate in the study. The setting of a study is vital because it will substantiate the type of data being collected that addresses the research question (Hatch, 2002).

Participants' Rights

The procedure for gaining access to each teacher began by contacting each teacher by telephone, text, or e-mail. Next, I scheduled appointments to meet each teacher in person. At that point, I answered all clarifying questions and informed teachers of the strategies put in place to secure their anonymity and confidentiality. I informed teachers that their data would not be shared with anyone. Because of security, the school asked me to destroy all data at the completion of my research study. I agreed to honor their request by e-mail. The data are being stored in a locked file cabinet at my home until completion of this study and will then be immediately destroyed in a paper shredder five years after the study was completed. I did not associated names with the data; rather I assigned each participant a pseudonym and was able to choose a comfortable location to conduct interviews. I received permission from administrators to interview teachers at their respective schools, upon the request of the teacher. I also made myself available to interview teachers at their neighborhood library or a public setting of their choice. I informed teachers they could withdraw from the study without repercussions. Once I

explained the aforementioned, teachers could ask questions. At that point, they were able to begin setting appointments for a one-time 45- to 60-minute interview.

According to Yin (2009), when a researcher recognizes the identity of the population (i.e., teachers) before conducting the study, the study is considered to be relatively straightforward. I used telephone, text, or e-mail to secure permission from school administrators to use each participant's school site to collect data through in-depth interviews. I did not use participants' classrooms during instructional time to collect data of any kind. According to Creswell (2003), each site selected for research and every participant needs to be shown the greatest level of respect.

Measures of Participant Confidentiality

I took measures to protect each participant, including all necessary procedures, legal rights, confidentiality and consent forms submitted to every participant, community partner, if applicable, and school officials to ensure confidentiality, safety, and protection from harm for all participants involved in the research study. Creswell (2003) emphasized that a researcher should never put a participant in the way of harm and should be mindful of vulnerable populations. Each participant signed a confidentiality and consent form before I collected data. I explained participants' rights and security of data before participants signed the consent form (Creswell, 2003; Hatch, 2002). Thus, I protected participants' identity and rendered them unidentifiable through pseudonyms. The procedure to have each participant sign confidentiality and consent forms took approximately 5 to 10 minutes, not including traveling time.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher of this study, I have a total of 15 years of experience in Grades K–12 dedicated to the field of education. I am currently a fourth grade English language arts teacher /K–5 Reading Coach in a charter school. Thus, I ensured I did not have a working relationship with the participants. One way of ensuring this was to purposively select teachers with whom I have never worked, and teachers who work only in noncharter schools. I did not offer participants any form of monetary compensation or gifts. Researchers have a greater level of ethical responsibilities when working in an educational setting, especially with faculty and young lives (Hatch, 2002).

Past/Current Professional Role in the Setting

I did not have a professional role in any of the public school settings. I only collected data from teachers at local public schools. I presently work at a local urban charter school. Working directly with a researcher's own company or staff members can compromise a study (Creswell, 2003); therefore, I did not work directly with any teachers, parents, or students in the charter-school district in which I am employed.

Past/Current Professional Role in Relationship

I did not have any past or current professional relationship with any prospective participants. Although I did work briefly in the local public school system, I did not have a past or current relationship with any of the participants I invited to participate in the research study. Therefore, the potential of the study to be compromised was limited.

Researcher–Participant Role/Relationship

Presently, I am a fourth grade teacher/K-5 Reading Coach at a local charter school. My role allowed each participant to be more relaxed and comfortable in the

interviews. As a qualitative interviewer, I attempted to enter each interview setting with

questions, but also generated questions during the interview in response to participants'

responses, the social contexts being discussed, and the degree of rapport established

(Hatch, 2002). I explained the intent and purpose of the research in full detail and

refrained from any form of deception (Creswell, 2007) or intimidation of participants that

might have hindered them from freely sharing their true thoughts. I approached each

participant as one of their peers, allowing the participant to feel more like the expert,

assisting me to glean information from their experiences. This approach was more

humbling, lacking the form of authority to cause any potential threat or fear of backlash

from their responses to the interview questions. I explained the purpose of the research

while establishing a researcher–participant working relationship. Rubin and Rubin (2005)

asserted that trust can be established once teachers recognize that the researcher has a

similar background; however, Hatch (2002) claimed that, in comparison to researchers,

many times educators see themselves in a less academic position. Nevertheless, this

approach also enabled a greater level of candidness during my interaction with each

participant.

Researcher Bias

I made a conscientious and concerted effort to remain objective throughout the

data-collection phase through bracketing my feelings regarding implementation of

English language arts strategies, and by withholding my views on comments made in

response to interview questions. According to Yin (2009), data being reported in a case

study must be reported justly and researchers must work arduously to ensure they report

in that manner. One strategy to do this was by bracketing: a concept originated by

Husserl that is popular in a phenomenological study (Creswell, 2007). A

phenomenological study includes a mindset of being constantly aware of the researcher's

preconceived thoughts, feelings, and opinions, and the researcher should bracket them

(document outside of recorded data) to remain open-minded (Anzul, Ely, Freidman,

Garner, & McCormack-Steinmetz, 1991). Some other strategies included being mindful

of the researcher's facial expressions in response to participants' answers, refraining from

agreeing or disagreeing with participants' answers, and refraining from sharing the

researcher's views or opinions. A researcher must also try to be *adaptive* and *flexible*

(Yin, 2009).

To ensure validity, I used member-checking, thereby allowing participants to

check the interpretation of their data and verify it for plausibility. Member checking also

helped minimize bias, subjectivity, or discrepancy in the data (Creswell, 2007) that I

could have potentially brought to the study. Member checking helped clarify and ensured

I did not bring bias to the study. Another method to ensure the study was valid and

reliable was to self-reflect. This was done by keeping a researcher log where I entered

self-reflective thoughts during the process. Self-reflection created an open and honest

narrative (Creswell, 2007).

Participants

The criterion for the sample size of 10 participants was to balance the depth of

inquiry. Attempts to explore how third grade teachers perceived the implementation of

the TGRG law and understood their SoC and LoU when implementing reading

interventions were justified using 10 participants in this study. According to Mason

(2010), samples for qualitative studies are generally much smaller than those used in quantitative studies.

The smaller the sample size, the richer the inquiry with each participant (Creswell, 2007). With a sample size of 10 purposively selected participants, saturation occurred. With a small sample size, in-depth interviewing with probing questions took place. A time arose in data collection when additional interviews did not yield any new information. This is when saturation was reached.

Exploring and understanding how teachers perceived the implementation of the TGRG law—how teachers described their understanding of their SoC and LoU in implementing reading interventions in response to the state's TGRG law from 10 different schools—could potentially better represent the local problem. I ensured that multiple public school teachers' perceptions were included when collecting and analyzing data (as suggested by Creswell, 2007).

Data Collection

When conducting a qualitative case study, the researcher is at the mercy of each participant's time, schedule, and availability, rather than the reverse (Yin, 2009). Additionally, the researcher must be mindful that, when inviting a participant to become involved in a study, the researcher is asking much (Hatch, 2002) from the participants. The amount of time was determined by each teacher's availability and teachers' school calendar.

Data-Collection Procedures

I gathered data in the form of semistructured interviews to aid in gaining rich responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Semistructured interviews allow for probing, which

could not be done in closed-ended interviews. I could have conducted unstructured

interviews but deemed they allow for too much openness, which in many instances

causes interviewers and interviewees to get off topic. I developed each interview question

around the CBAM, specifically the SoC and LoU component. Although the interview

protocol (see Appendix A) consisted of 10 interview questions, additional probing

questions helped me gather rich in-depth responses (Hatch, 2002; Turner, 2010). The

interview protocol consisted of main, follow-up, and probing questions, formulated to

stimulate deep thinking and accurate, open, and heartfelt responses (as suggested by

Rubin & Rubin, 2005), as well as included dimensions of CBAM as a frame of reference.

Prior to starting the interview process, I presented an overview of the SoC and

LoU elements. This served to familiarize participants with the terms used in the

questioning. I asked the main question to stimulate the interviewee to voluntarily divulge

information that related to the study problem (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Because the

interview questions stemmed from the elements of the SoC and LoU, I had no need to

conduct a preliminary procedure to assess whether the interview questions were effective

(Creswell, 2007). I used probing questions to ensure I received in-depth responses. Due

to potential time constraints of participants' work schedules and considering each

participant's work location, the interviews lasted 45 to 60 minutes.

Data-Collection Procedure

Semistructured interviews took place after school hours or at an agreed time and

at an agreed location, such as a local public library, classroom, or conference room in the

school. Each interview session lasted no longer than 1 hour. Being respectful of each

participant's time schedule and availability was very important (Creswell, 2007; Hatch,

2002). I conducted one face-to-face interview and one follow-up session with each participant to share interpretation of the data, providing member checking. I conducted the follow-ups by e-mail. The aforementioned strategies allowed flexibility for each participant's availability.

Interview Protocol

I used an interview protocol when conducting interviews. The interview protocol was a form five pages in length (Creswell, 2007) that included the interview questions, with space between each question to record the interviewees' responses. The protocol includes the instrument and outlines the rules and procedures of the study (Yin, 2009). Using a protocol can improve the case study's *reliability*, guiding the investigator in carrying out the data collection from a single case (Yin, 2009).

The interview protocol began with essential information on the research and a reminder to review the study's purpose with the participant (Creswell, 2007). It then had 10 open-ended queries with plenty of space between to note the participant's comments (Creswell, 2007), and to record probing questions and answers. With the permission of each participant, I conducted the interviews using a digital tape recorder. Afterward, I transferred data to a file on a computer. Formal interviews occurred at a set time, with me leading the interview using a tape recorder, sometimes called *semistructured*, or *in-depth* interviews (Hatch, 2002). I recorded notes on the interview protocol in case the recorder failed, recognizing that such notes may be imperfect due to the difficulty of simultaneously posing questions and recording responses (Creswell, 2007). Copies of the interview protocol appear in Appendix A.

Measures of Data Security

Due to the pseudonym process, I protected every participant's identity. I stored hard-copy data in prearranged file folders in a locked cabinet at my home and will destroy them at the completion of this study with a paper shredder, as requested by local school district. I have stored electronic data on a computer secured in a locked room, and will destroy that data at the completion of this research. I have attempted to ensure the greatest level of integrity and discretion throughout the research process.

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Data Analysis

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Once I collected the data, the next process was to analyze the data. Good data analysis (and research design) combines appropriate elements and techniques from across traditions and epistemological perspectives (Guest, McQueen, & Namey, 2012). Therefore, to analyze data well, investigators, and especially novices, must carefully research analysis tools; the familiarity bred by such diligence should produce the desired result (Yin, 2009). This subsection explains how and when I analyzed data; use of a software program to aid in the coding process, reducing information into themes; the data-analysis procedure after coding; and a section on the trustworthiness of this study.

I used thematic analysis as the inductive-analysis method. I transcribed the data from the audiotaped interviews, then coded them through the open-coding process, reducing data to categories and labels. NVivo software was instrumental in the coding process of two research questions. I transferred data from the interview transcripts to NVivo for coding. The efficiency of the NVivo software program makes it easier for researchers to relinquish manual coding. Software has become more diverse and functional over the past decade (Yin, 2009). The available tools helped code and

categorize large amounts of narrative text collected from open-ended interviews (Yin, 2009). Guidance on coding skills and techniques also improved with computer software (Boyatzis, 1998). The software did not do the analysis; however, it served as a reliable assistant and tool. First I input the data source, then NVivo located in the textual data all words or phrases matching codes with nodes. By counting the incidence and occurrence of the words or codes, patterns and themes started to emerge. These codes were colonies of the analysis method (Yin, 2009).

I monitored the frequency of patterns and themes from the codes generated in NVivo and placed them in small chunks on a large chart. This process helped me sort, categorize, and code specific themes from the software program (Creswell, 2007). Partitioning themes and interpreting their meanings through the coding process of two interview responses helped me figure out what each bit of coded data meant.

The second phase was reviewing each theme and categorizing them on the chart under the central research question and Subquestion 1 to see if they linked. Then I identified themes. Data analysis holistic, reviewing the entire case, or embedded, focusing on a specific aspect (Yin, 2003). Analyzing tests and other forms of data challenges qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2007). For data analysis to be insightful, researchers must have familiarity with the data collected.

> Data analysis in qualitative research consists of organizing the data (i.e., text data as in transcripts, or image data as in photographs) for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion. (Creswell, 2007, p. 148)

When developing the case-study protocol, researchers should consider analytic approaches due to the challenges that exist in analyzing evidence (Yin, 2009). During the analysis process, I identified a limited number of themes that adequately reflected the textual data (G. E. Mills, 2010). Researchers systematically examine the different interviews to clarify what is meant by specific concepts and themes and synthesize different versions of events to gain an understanding of the overall narrative (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 207). The meaning of the case emerged as I systematically and iteratively analyzed, sorted, compared patterns and consistencies, and made connections (as outlined by Creswell, 2007) from the analytical software.

Case studies include inferences based on the whole content of evidence, which can entail interviews, documents, or artifact material (Yin, 2009). As a result, I made inferences over the entire time of collecting data and evidence. Transcribing the data was important because it also assisted in analyzing themes and patterns of third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Ohio's TGRG law and their understanding of the implementation of reading interventions. I used protocols to ensure reliability of the process (Creswell, 2007). The interview transcript themes appear in Appendix B.

Themes and Concepts

Themes are broad categories of information (codes grouped together). Themes can describe a setting and what occurred. A researcher should create five to seven themes or categories (Creswell, 2003). The themes should consist of what the researcher would expect and what the researcher would not expect (unusual themes). Themes are broad categories of grouped information (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2004). Thematic analysis moved beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focused on identifying and

describing implicit and explicit ideas with the data: themes (Guest et al., 2012). For example, by looking at tension between what people say and the emotion they express, Rubin and Rubin (2005) claimed that when someone explains they were divorced for 10 years and have gotten over it, the researcher can detect pain in the interviewee's voice; thus, the researcher can deduce a theme of denial of pain.

Boyatzis (1998) listed a variety of thematic-analysis strategies, depending on the methodology and research questions. Boyatzis showed that many different approaches to thematic analysis have the same rigor. Boyatzis contrasted theory-driven codes, coming from existing theories; inductive codes, coming from the data; and codes based on prior research. He argued that each approach has value in qualitative data analysis. Thematic analysis is flexible; once the themes are revealed the researcher's intentions determine what is done with them (Boyatzis, 1998). Typology was another way to create concepts with a set of related concepts. The dimensions and concepts inherent in the CBAM guided the themes identified in the analysis process for Subquestions 2 and 3. The way a researcher constructs a typology and then interprets what it says can help suggest new concepts (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Procedures for Discrepant Cases

I engaged procedures to report to my chair any discrepancies that arose. I created protocols for this stage of the data-collection and data-analysis phase that assisted in identifying any discrepancies, to help remedy any discrepancies immediately. If any data did not fit in any category, it was deemed discrepant and eliminated.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Threats to credibility or transferability could raise concerns of a researcher's ability to conclude the outcome of the research. Potential issues include (a) the number of participants available to participate in the study, (b) the researcher maintained and retained the same number of participants throughout the data-collection and -analysis process, and (c) each participant appeared to be honest and open when answering the in-depth open-ended interview questions. Being mindful of the researcher's role in the data-collection process and remaining objective was imperative.

Transferability depends on the research reader. The reader is able to "transfer" the study's results to other contexts (Colorado State University, 2015). I attempted to provide a thick description of the context so the reader can transfer information from this study to similar settings. For example, similarities between the situations may help readers infer that the research results could be similar in their own context (Colorado State University, 2015). The use of a researcher log strengthens the study's validity and trustworthiness. Member checking so participants could verify interpretation of their data, and bracketing of researcher's bias were two procedures used in this study to strengthen its trustworthiness, credibility, and validity.

Conclusion

I chose the qualitative case strategy using a constructivist approach for this study to discover the following: (a) What are third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law in schools, (b) how do third grade reading teachers described their levels of understanding of the instructional and learning components of the innovations, and (c) how do they described their SoC and LoU in

implementing reading interventions in response to state's TGRG law? The goal was to learn what the results revealed about improving third grade reading skills in Title 1 schools. The methodology component of this study addressed the gathering, analysis, and interpretation of data on the problem of poor reading skills among third grade students, which were vital in the initial exploration of this phenomenon.

The outcome of the study could help inform stakeholders how to better change, shape, and implement policies or intervention programs in their local school districts. This was a way of impacting social change. Moreover, educators may gain better insight as to how to create intensive curriculum or interventions in their schools (Guskey, 2001). The Ohio TGRG law has been in place for 3 to 4 years and little data confirms whether implementation of the law has helped to improve reading skills.

The result in Section 4 follows the methodology section, also includes the generation, gathering, findings, themes, and Evidence of Quality. Section 5 is the discussion, conclusion, and recommendation section, the last section of the research study. I discussed in narrative the interpretation of findings, implications for social change, recommendation for action, recommendations for further study, and summary.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

During the data collection phase of this qualitative case study, the generation of data started by collecting signed consent forms from each participant. Conducting semistructured interviews followed. I used bracketed notes as the system to keep track of data. The local research district granted permission to conduct this qualitative case study. In addition, I solicited and obtained Institutional Review Board approval from Walden University (approval number 07-27-15-0066968). This section includes the findings, which build on the problem and research design, as well as address the research question and subquestions. I explained discrepant cases and described the patterns, relationships, and themes supported by data. Provision of evidence of quality concludes this section.

Findings

The exploration for this qualitative research design stemmed from the problem of third grade students who were unable to advance to the fourth grade because of poor reading skills in a Midwest urban school district. The legislature implemented TGRG to prevent students from being retained. I explored how third grade teachers perceived the implementation of the TGRG law and attempted to understand teachers' level of understanding of the innovations of configurations, as well as understand how teachers described their SoC and LoU when implementing reading interventions, in view of the TGRG law. By addressing the research questions, my objective was to find whether teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law and reading interventions helped increase reading skills among third grade students. I selected each participant who fit the following criteria: (a) located in one of Ohio's southwestern urban school districts

or came from one of 10 Title 1 schools; (b) worked with at-risk students; and (c) worked

with students who received reduced-price or free lunch. Of the 35 Title 1 schools

solicited that met the criteria, I invited one third grade reading teacher, reading specialist,

or English language arts teacher from each school until 10 participants agreed to

participate in the study. Table 3 provides criteria of participant selection.

Table 3

Reading Participants' Criteria

Pseudonym	At-risk	Free/reduced-price lunch	English language arts or reading specialist	Gender
A1	yes	yes	Reading specialist	Female
B1	yes	yes	Reading specialist	Female
C1	yes	yes	English language arts	Female
D1	yes	yes	Reading specialist	Female
E1	yes	yes	English language arts	Female
F1	yes	yes	Reading specialist	Female
G1	yes	yes	English language arts with endorsement	Female
H1	yes	yes	Reading specialist	Female
I1	yes	yes	Reading specialist	Female
J1	yes	yes	English language arts with endorsement	Female

Four participants taught English language arts (40%), two had a reading

endorsement, and the other two were preparing to take the reading endorsement test. One

participant had a teaching degree in reading. Six participants (60%) were reading

specialists. Although each participant was hired within the last 3 to 4 years, one of the six

participants had a reading endorsement for 23 years but had only been a reading specialist

for 3 years. One participant was hired and worked as a reading specialist in the district for

4 years. The other four participants obtained a reading endorsement within the last couple

of years. All participants were women. Using this qualitative design and inviting participants to participate in this study helped me get closer to finding the answers to each of the research questions and consequently to glean solutions to solve the problem of poor reading skills among third grade students.

Research Questions: Overarching and Subquestions

The overarching research question was the following: What are third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law in schools?

The three subquestions follow:

SQ1.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to the TGRG law?

SQ2.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their SoC when implementing reading interventions in response to the TGRG law?

SQ3.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions that comply with the requirements of the TGRG law?

Research Question: Teachers Initial Perception(s)

The research question examined third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG in their schools. The emerging themes that appeared most frequently as they related to the research questions were (a) teachers initial knowledge of the TGRG, (b) retention, (c) the TGRG was misguided, and (d) challenges and successes.

Initial Knowledge of the TGRG

Teachers' initial knowledge of the TGRG varied from teacher to teacher. Their perception(s) of the TGRG when it was initially implemented in 2012–2013 ranged from very limited to understanding it very well. For example, Participant A1 was not exposed to the TGRG law in 2012–2013; she was unfamiliar with it. However, A1 did have a reading endorsement during that time. Participant B1 shared she never realized there was a deficit in other populations compared to the more suburban populations where the participant went to school. Participant B1 graduated from college during 2012–2013. Since working in an urban school, Participant B1 has come to realize the importance of the TGRG. Similarly, Participant I1 was initially confused about the TGRG and why it focused so heavily on third grade. However, since Participant I1 has become a third grade teacher, she has a better understanding of the TGRG. In contrast to limited and little knowledge of the TGRG, Participant E1's understanding was that it was a true high-stakes test and was not sure about how or if the TGRG was going to yield the results legislators wanted. Participant H1 initially perceived the TGRG law as just another law and Participant J1 perceived the TGRG as fluctuating between being a positive and a negative policy. Ultimately, Participant J1 understood the state wanted to ensure students were learning.

Student Retention

In addition to the common theme of teachers' initial perception(s) of the implementation of the TGRG, student retention also emerged. Although the range of third grade teachers' understanding of the implementation of the TGRG varied, it appeared that third grade students being retained because of the law brought concerns. Participant

D1 shared that because of the TGRG, third grade students either passed to the fourth

grade or, if they did not pass the test, stayed in third grade. Participant I1 did not

understand how one test could make a life decision for a child. The participant believed

children were being labeled. Participant G1 indicated that if students did not perform

proficiently in reading on the state test, the student could be held back. Participant G1

also shared that possibility, depending on the structure of the school. A child could

receive fourth grade instruction in other subject areas. Along with Participant G1,

Participant J1 believed the TGRG is good on paper, but in reality, it has put pressure on

students. Additionally, J1 found third grade students who were being retained were

giving up and feeling defeated, and the TGRG law had forgotten about the emotional

aspect of students' lives.

TGRG Misguided

The range of third grade reading teachers' initial knowledge of the TGRG

implementation and students' retention varied. Most participants' attitudes toward the

TGRG law appeared to focus on the premise that the TGRG law is misguided because it

does not target the appropriate grade. For example, Participant A1 asserted, "the TGRG is

a great thing, but should take place in the first grade instead of third grade—that is where

it is more serious and crucial." Participant C1 believed children with learning disabilities

are not identified until they reach third grade because of the test; Participant D1 also

believed the TGRG is not a third grade problem. Participant E1 and J1 believed that third

to fourth grade is a huge transition. They shared that the TGRG is not a third grade

teachers' problem; it is a K–3 problem; and students should come in ready to learn by

time they enter third grade. Additionally, Participant J1 shared that third grade students

read to comprehend, compared to K–2 students who are just learning how to read. Similarly, Participant F1 did not believe there should be a TGRG; however, she did support early interventions. Participant F1 believed the TGRG should start in second grade and not in the year children should be tested to determine if they are not prepared. One question Participant E1 had was why the TGRG was happening in third grade and not at a younger age.

Teachers' Perceptions of TGRG Challenges and Successes

As themes continued to emerge, participants described the challenges and successes of the TGRG. One challenge Participant G1 shared about the TGRG was that she would enjoy it if kindergarten teachers, first grade, and second grade teachers were Orton–Gillingham trained. G1 stated,

> if all of their students are taught by Orton trained teachers, then by time they can come up the ladder to her, when the students get to third grade, the third grade teachers probably would not need to use their Orton Gillingham training.

Participant I1 identified another challenge: the TGRG put fear in teachers to make sure the children passed the state test. Participant I1 stated, "the theory of the TGRG might have sounded good on paper, but now that it has been implemented, it is not a good idea. Maybe it's causing more damage than good!"

As in the other three themes, teachers' perceptions of TGRG success varied. For example, Participants G1 and I1 believed the TGRG law was not successful at all. Participant E1 stated she "was unsure if the TGRG was going to accomplish what her school wanted it to accomplish." However, Participant C1 believed the TGRG encouraged students to read more and Participant G1 also understood the goal of TGRG

was for students to pass the state test. Participant G1 stated, "when the TGRG moves a little bit further in development through time, that will be the beauty of the third grade." Additionally G1 stated, "then the TGRG law will move down to second grade and although the third graders will still take the test, that will not be the focus."

Research Subquestion 1: Levels of Understanding of Instructional Components

In Subquestion 1, I explored how third grade teachers described their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of innovations in response to the TGRG law. The common themes that emerged from participants were (a) Orton–Gillingham training, (b) reading endorsement, and (c) professional development. Each participant described various trainings, tools, and learning programs implemented at their respective schools since the start of the TGRG. Only one participant, D1, did not respond to the question with names of instructional or learning components. Table 4 lists the instructional or learning components of the innovations teachers mentioned, but does not include other components each participant's school may or may not have been using.

Orton–Gillingham training. Apart from Participant F1, all participants were Orton–Gillingham trained and used it regularly as an instructional component. Participant G1 explained, "The district brought in Orton Gillingham methodology as an intervention instructional component, once the TGRG law was implemented." According to Participant A1, "Orton Gillingham is a multisensory method of teaching phonics and sounds. It also helps to build the basic reading foundation in a child." Additionally she stated, "Although OG progress monitoring assessment was not on the list of state approved tests, efforts are underway to have it included on the list." As seen in Table 4, Participant A1 was crossed-trained in many instructional components as well as in

Orton–Gillingham. One main concern of Participant A1 was that "a lot of children were missing out on decoding skills: there are gaps in student's phonics."

Table 4

Participants' Understanding of Instructional and Learning Components Described by a List of Each Program

Participant	A to Z reading	DRA	DIBELS	SPIRE	LETRS	PALS	Recipe 4 Reading	OG
A1	X	X	X	X	X			X
B1	X		X	X		X	X	X
C1	X		X	X		X	X	X
E1	X		X		X			X
F1			X					
G1								X
H1			X					X
I1	X		X	X			X	X
J1			X			X		X

Note. DRA = Developmental Reading Assessment; DIBELS = Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills; SPIRE = Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence; LETRS = Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling; PALS = Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening; OG = Orton–Gillingham.

In addition to A1, Participant G1 believed in the strategies she learned from Orton–Gillingham. She stated, "the strategies work." Additionally, Participant G1 described her understanding of the implementation of Orton–Gillingham as an instructional component that builds the foundation of reading, blending words together. She taught full lessons that included individual sounds, identification of vowels, diphthongs, consonants, and consonant blends. Participant G1 asserted, "Each lesson varied all according to the level of the student." Participant G1 also found that schools are requiring more of students, but have not given the students more. Thus, G1 was a strong advocate of Orton–Gillingham.

Participant E1 described, "As she went through the sequence and scope it was very important to get it." She explained, "I was trying to get the basics down—like 2

minutes for this, 4 minutes for this, 3 minutes for this—and really do a good

implementation." Additionally, it is important to note that Participant E1 was also being

credentialed for the program. She had taken a more advanced course during her training

and implementation of Orton–Gillingham. As seen on Table 4, 90% of participants were

Orton–Gillingham trained. Those nine participants described their understanding of

Orton–Gillingham as an instructional and learning component that, according to the Ohio

TGRG law, has been instrumental in helping third grade students read. In contrast to A1

and G1, Participant E1 believed the TGRG did not really change the instructional or

learning components that already existed.

Reading endorsement. Another theme that emerged from the data analysis was

each participant's preparedness to teach reading. Every participant described that having

a reading endorsement was key to their preparedness to teach reading to third grade

students. Having or obtaining a reading endorsement played an important role in their

level of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in

response to the TGRG law. According to ODE (2015),

> A teacher of a grade 3 student who has been retained or is on a reading
>
> improvement and monitoring plan must have at least one year of teaching
>
> experience and must meet one of the following qualifications required in law.
>
> - Has a k-12 reading endorsement on the teacher's license;
>
> - Completed a master's degree with a major in reading or literacy;
>
> - Rated "most effective" for reading instruction consecutively for the most
>
>   recent two years based on state-approved tests of student growth;

- Rated "above expected value added" in reading instruction consecutively for the most recent two school years;

- Earned a passing score on a rigorous test of principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction;

- Holds an educator license for teaching grades preK-3 or 4-9 issued on or after July 1, 2017;

- Expires July 1, 2016: Holds an alternative qualification approved by the department or has successfully completed training that is based on principles of scientifically research-based reading instruction that has been approved by the department; or

- Holds a license issued by the Board of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology under Chapter 4753 of the Ohio Revised Code and a professional pupil services license as a school speech- pathologist issued by the state board of education. (p. 12)

Districts and community schools must submit staffing plans to the department if they do not have a sufficient number of teachers who meet the required teaching credentials to work with students who are on a reading-improvement plan or have been retained in third grade, according to ODE (2015). Having or obtaining a reading endorsement was a commonality each participant shared. It was also very important to each teachers' understanding to implement reading interventions that they must have a reading endorsement. They equated having a reading endorsement with being prepared to implement and teach reading to third grade students. Table 1 shows that each participant

has a reading endorsement except for two participants. According to Participant J1, "if you don't have a reading endorsement you will not get hired at most schools."

Participant C1 participated in a training course through the American Federated Teachers for Reading Specialist, which has now expired. According to Participant C1, she still needed to take the required test to receive a reading endorsement to continue teaching English language arts to third grade children. Participant F1, also went through the American Federated Teachers (ODE approved) intensive program for 1 month and is presently taking a course to receive a reading endorsement. Additionally, Participant D1 attended a year-long training in the school district to prepare for a reading endorsement. Participant D1 has been a Reading Specialist for 4 years. Each participant believed their level of understanding of instructional and learning components was strengthened by having or obtaining a reading endorsement, because it was now mandatory by ODE.

Professional development. Responses to each emerging theme appeared to vary from one participant to the other. However, many participants described that their level of understanding of instructional and learning components related to ongoing training and resources. Many participants explained that professional development provided training and resources to help teachers grow in their role as reading teachers. For example, Participant A1 received a 6-hour training session that introduced the TGRG to her and faculty members. Participant A1's level of understanding of instructional and learning components improved because she received a good deal of professional-development training from the school district. "The district have been wonderful in providing training and resources," stated A1. Additionally, A1 attends reading-specialist meetings once a month and if the meeting provides any new information, she is able to pass it on to the

teachers. Participant A1 affirmed, "The district had provided me with the needed training to understand instructional and learning components and I feel prepared." She reported her school definitely met the guarantee with 100% passage last year.

Participant B1 had a couple of professional-development days before school started, to review the TGRG. She also attended monthly reading-specialist meetings, where she would go over the instructional and learning components, as well as data. She stated, "I discussed what was coming down the pipeline, new instructional and learning components and what steps would be taken to move forward." Participant C1 received ongoing resources from professional-developments days and learned about Common Core teaching styles that helped students with the test. C1 also attended a workshop about the test. She explained, "professional development played a key part in her gaining a greater level of understanding toward instructional and learning components at her school."

Participant E1 received professional-development training that focused on the legal aspects of the law. It provided information on the reading-improvement plan, if students were retained. Participant E1 added, "my level of understanding of instructional and learning components grew every time I attended a professional development class." Participant H1 received professional development and books. She stated, she had "a very good understanding of instructional and learning components because of the professional development and books she received from her district."

Participant I1 also went to professional-development workshops every other week where she discussed techniques to get students ready and engaged in their learning. Participant I1, described her level of understanding of instructional and learning

components as strong. She stated, "I have a good understanding of the instructional and learning components at my school." She added, "I believe that attending all of the professional development classes the district offered helped a lot."

Research Subquestion 2: Teachers Described SoC of Reading Interventions

In Subquestion 2, I explored how third grade teachers described their SoC in the implementation of reading interventions in response to the state's TGRG law in their school. I explained the conceptual framework of this study to each participant. The SoC consisted of and described seven categories of possible concerns related to an innovation. The innovation in this study was the implementation of reading interventions. Therefore, instead of emerging themes, I discuss participants' SoC in this section, displayed in Table 1. Each participant described their SoC in the implementation of reading interventions in response to the TGRG law. These are displayed in Table 5 using SoC categories as they related to each participant's concerns.

Table 5

Participants' Described Their Concerns-Based Adoption Model Stages of Concern in the Implementation of Reading Interventions

Participant	Unconcerned	Informational	Personal	Management	Consequence	Collaboration	Refocusing
A1				X	X	X	X
B1			X	X	X		
C1			X	X	X	X	
D1			X	X		X	X
E1	X		X	X	X	X	X
F1					X	X	X
G1			X	X	X	X	X
H1	X			X		X	X
I1			X		X	X	X
J1	X	X				X	X

Unconcerned. Participant E1 remarked she was never unconcerned as it related to implementation of reading interventions. She noted, "I was never on unconcerned, because my job was to be concerned about the reading interventions, so, I don't know that I was really ever unconcerned." No other participant selected unconcerned.

Informational. This was a concern for Participant E1 as reading interventions were being implemented because she was not initially familiar with Orton–Gillingham. According to E1, "so, I definitely started at informational because I was not familiar with Orton Gillingham, then I continue going to classes for it." F1 also selected this concern because she needed to make changes. She explained, "I needed to makes changes in the classroom. A lot of kids were not reading on grade level. It's been a big adjustment." Participant J1 selected this concern too because she was going to make it work and wanted to know how the TGRG was going to yield results. She recounted, "I was very concerned about how I was going to make it work, implementing the interventions: I want to know more about how it [Orton–Gillingham] was going to play out."

Personal. B1 selected personal. She expounded,

I definitely feel that my stages of concern [SoC] when it came to implementing reading interventions would be personal because I was concerned about the changes that would change my routine and my daily life as a classroom teacher and as a third grade teacher.

Participant D1 selected personal because of her concern about what her role would be as reading interventions were implemented at the school. She stated, "in terms of levels of concerns we were concerned about the changes that we would need to make in terms of what my role would be at the school." Participant E1 was concerned about personal

because she stated, "the OG program had to be implemented." Participant F1 selected this concern along with informational when reading interventions were being put into place. She asserted, "I needed to make changes in the classroom." She found that many of her students were not reading on grade level. Participant G1 selected this concern because she explained, "I was making changes to my routine and it was rough when I first tried to integrate—a good lesson is 45 minutes to an hour." J1 selected personal concern when reading interventions were being implemented in her school as well. She stated, "my routine and everything to change my classroom management was an important thing once interventions were being implemented."

Management. Participant B1 selected management because as a reading specialist she wanted to ensure she was effective. She stated, "management was huge— what do I need to do—I want to make sure that the interventions will be effective for my students and how it's going to make them successful." Participant C1 selected management because her students take the test on laptops. She stated, "the management part is important because we have to use technology." Also managing new reading interventions were important to C1. She explained, "I have too many students that are constantly behind and this should not be."

Participant D1 was concerned with who was going to be responsible for which piece on the intervention. She disclosed, "I found that the intervention piece was 'very high': I had to come up with really needing to be specific to identify the needs in my building." D1's building was in a high-poverty community. Participant E1 selected management. She stated, "I was concerned about just how I would 'fit-it' or 'break-it' up, the OG intervention piece." E1 also added, "The key part is the success of the program."

G1 selected management because she was concerned about being in the classroom alone and needed to know how she would give her lesson. G1 explained, "my management concern was being in my classroom by myself. How will I give this lesson and I still have a classroom, having to manage other students." Participant H1 selected management too, because of how much time it takes to get ready to teach with the new approach. She asserted, "I'm concerned about how much time it takes to get ready to teach with the new approach: just the different amount of things the school is asking us to do." H1 also described managing reading intervention as "natural and ongoing because it's getting to the core of what the children lack or where they may need to be pushed a little further."

Consequence. B1 selected consequence because she was concerned with how she was going to help students. She stated, "as a reading specialist and interventions are coming in I wanted to be sure the interventions were going to help my students succeed." Participant C1 selected consequence, but did not expound on her selection. She remarked, "I'm just going down the list." This was another concern for E1, because she explained, "I was seeing enormous gains with my students: that first year I was in awe." This was a concern for Participant F1, as reading interventions were implemented in her school. She stated, "I was concerned about how the interventions would affect my students. I moved around wanting to keep them wanting more." Participant G1 was concerned about running out of time while implementing reading interventions. She explained, "if I run over with the first group, even though they may need more—you know, my time is my time—then I'm sacrificing on another group. That was a consequence, but an unfair consequence."

Collaboration. Participant A1 selected this concern because she found that sharing ideas with other teachers was very important during the implementation of reading interventions. According to Participant A1, "I exchanged materials, ideas, and shared information back and forth with teachers." A1 also stated that, "The TGRG is here to stay. It needs to adapt my style and collaborate with others to meet the needs better." Participant B1 selected collaboration as it also related to the implementation of reading interventions. However, she only stated, "I am between 'collaboration' and 'refocusing.'" C1 also selected collaboration but did not expound on her selection.

Participant D1 believed this concern was important while implementing interventions in her school. She asserted, "I needed to know how I was going to make sure that I was on task and on track with my students with each intervention." Participant E1 started implementing this concern in the last few years. She explained,

collaboration has come in the last few years: how can we get the pieces, am I implementing all the pieces because that type of lesson planning is—there are so many different pieces to the OG and collaborating is key.

F1 selected this concern because she collaborated with many master teachers during the implementation of reading interventions, although she did not agree with the TGRG law. However she asserted, "they gave me new ideas and at a high performance school. I brought a lot of ideas too." F1 also stated, "collaboration is real important to me during the implementation stage. We also have cross curriculum; we have that kind of dialogue." Participant G1 explained, "I thought it, collaboration, would be great once the district started hiring specialists." She also found that collaboration was key with reading specialists and intervention specialists. She explained, "collaboration is key during

implementation of reading interventions, because not a lot of teachers had their reading endorsement or was Orton trained."

Participant I1 selected this concern because, "I was pleased that the district provided the reading specialists with a lot of information to share with the teachers to prepare third graders and to make sure they were not only promotable, but proficient." Participant J1 selected this concern because she believed collaboration was important while interventions were being implemented in her school. She also asserted, "it also worked very well for me because I collaborated a lot, especially when it came to implementing my lesson plans."

Refocusing. Participant B1 selected refocusing, but did not speak about it comprehensively. She simply stated, "I am in between collaboration and refocusing." Participant D1 selected refocusing because she worked with tutors while reading interventions were implemented. She explained, "there was a component when we had tutors helping with implementing interventions we were very concerned about what they were doing." Participant E1 selected refocusing: "I don't know if there is anything better but I just like reorganizing it, in order to do the things in the best way for my students while implementing the interventions." Participant F1 also selected this concern because of her style of teaching, consistently refining her interventions. She stated that she reflects by asking, "Is it me?"

Refocusing was always in the back of Participant G1's mind during the implementation of interventions. When teaching a lesson, Participant G1 asked herself, "What could I had done better?" Participant I1 selected refocusing too, because she had some ideas about something that would work better when she was implementing reading

interventions at her school. She pulled back from teaching the test and went back to ensuring children could perform the main skills. She stated, "I focused on the main standards that were going to be exposed to my students on the test." I1 wanted to ensure children were on point with "ask and answer" questions to understand text and discern if it was informational. Additionally, Participant I1 asserted, "I wanted to make sure the kids were able to use certain strategies on the test during the implementation of reading interventions." Participant J1 selected refocusing because she reported, "I wanted to know how to get my students to be more engaged while I was implementing reading interventions."

Research Subquestion 3: Teachers Described LoU of Reading Interventions

In Subquestion 3, I explored how third grade teachers described their LoU in implemented reading interventions that complied with the requirements of the state's TGRG law in their school. I explained the conceptual framework of this study to each participant. Therefore, instead of emerging themes, I discuss participants' LoU in this section, displayed in Table 2. Each participant described their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions that complied with the requirements of the state's TGRG law. Their responses appear in Table 6 using LoU categories as they related to each participant's concerns.

Nonuse. Nonuse was the only tool or profile not used by any of the participants.

Orientation. Participant C1 used this tool to describe implementation of reading interventions, because it had to do with laptops. She stated, "I was told my students were taking the state test on laptops not desk top Mac computers which they had practiced on." E1 used orientation because she was not implementing reading interventions as much

initially. She reported, "the first few months I was trying to watch videos and look at materials before implementing a true lesson during the implementation of interventions." Participant I1 used this profile to describe how she consistently sought new ways to help her students. She stated, "I am constantly looking for new and innovative way to help the kids." Additionally, she asserted, "I look at materials pertaining to the innovation of new reading interventions that are being implemented at my school."

Table 6

Participants' Described Their Concerns-Based Adoption Model Levels of Use in the Implementation of Reading Interventions

Participant	Nonuse	Orientation	Preparation	Mechanical	Routine	Refinement	Integration	Renewal
A1				X	X	X	X	
B1					X			
C1		X	X	X				
D1				X	X	X	X	X
E1		X	X	X	X	X		
F1				X		X		X
G1					X	X		
H1					X	X	X	X
I1		X	X	X			X	X
J1			X	X		X		

Preparation. Participant C1 used preparation because it had to do with laptops. C1 stated that, "during implementation of interventions we also had to prepare the students to take the test on laptops." She described her LoU by adding, "they had given us materials that we had to use." During the stage when reading interventions were being implemented at her school, Participant E1 stated, "I definitely went through a preparation stage because of all the training I received." Participant I1 also used this profile to

describe attending multiple workshops before implementing reading interventions. She reported, "I was constantly looking at videos for more effective ways to teach standards and implement interventions." Additionally she stated, "I also helped prepare the students for the test and for rigorous work." Participant J1 used this profile to describe going to professional workshops every other week. She reported, "during the implementation of interventions we discussed techniques on how to get students ready and engaged in their learning."

Mechanical use. Participant A1 chose mechanical because during the implementation of interventions she spent a good deal of her time organizing material. She asserted, "I think most of my time was not just instructional time. I was spending a lot of time organizing material that year." B1 used this tool because while implementing reading interventions her students also had to do use laptops. B1 stated, "my students practiced on desktops, but now they're going to be using laptops with no mice: we had to use the little pads on the laptops." Participant D1 used this tool to describe how, during the implementation of reading interventions at her school, she spent most of her time organizing materials. She reported, "I was spending most of my time organizing the materials, coming up with the materials, and making sure that the materials were of quality during the implementing of interventions."

Participant E1 used this profile because she described, "at some point I started using OG as one of our reading interventions." Participant F1 used this profile during the implementation of reading interventions because, "sometimes I was not as organized as I should be and I wanted to enrich the students that were on task." E1 described the LoU

for this tool as mechanical because, "most of my things were at my fingertips in the back of the classroom where I am set up."

Participant I1 used this profile because, while implementing reading interventions, she was spending much time organizing and trying to keep organized. According to I1, "I was organizing materials, analyzing data, and keeping things going as smoothly as possible." Participant J1 also used this tool during the implementation of interventions at her school. She stated, "I had to organize materials with comprehension facts or opinions for my students: that was part of the interventions too."

Routine use. Participant A1 stated she used this tool because, "the next year it turned from mechanical to routine." She did not expound in-depth. Participant B1 used routine because her school was already set up with a routine. She stated, "already with me coming in the door was also a routine set up for implementing interventions." Participant D1 described routine use during the implementation of reading interventions. She asserted, "I had to put together a schedule and checked in every week to see what was working and what was not working with the interventions." Participant E1 believed it was important to routinely use this profile. She reported, "I used it the way it was set out and designed to be used for implementing interventions—it's important." Participant G1 used routine as well: "I also spent a lot of time getting materials together while implementing interventions." Participant H1 uses this tool too. She reported, "I routinely get materials and any information to help the teachers to implement interventions effectively." Routine use was how Participant J1 would teach or use concepts. She noted, "I thought about how I would teach or use concepts while implementing reading interventions to my kids."

Refinement. Participant A1 used this profile because, "this year it was more refinement after implementing interventions." D1 used this tool because she believed refinement was her biggest challenge once interventions were implemented in her school. She asserted, "our biggest challenge was making sure that what we're doing is being effective in the implementation." Participant E1 stated, "I did not do much refining the first year because of training, but I eventually started refining interventions the next year." Participant F1 used refinement, stating, "refinement was the assessment instrument I needed to change after the implementing reading interventions." She needed to gauge students' levels. For example she stated, "I needed to know where they were at inferencing, getting information and adding it all to my plan."

Participant G1 used this refinement because that is where she made changes. She asserted, "this is what I call reflection. I guess refinement because it is where I would make some changes now the interventions are implemented." Participant H1 used refinement, indicating "a teacher has to be taught and a teacher should always remain a student." H1 opined, "You can't teach without being a student." Participant J1 used refinement after the implementation of reading interventions because, "I did more reinforcing at the end of each lesson to see if students were learning and then targeted their specific needs to make sure the interventions were working."

Integration. Participant A1 used this tool. She stated, "this year it was also more integration" but did not expound any further. Integration was used while implementing reading interventions in Participant D1's school. She stated, "I believed that everyone I worked with would not be certified in reading. The integration work was really the key while putting interventions in place." I1 also used this profile during the implementation

of interventions: "I was working with other teachers and helping them build their skills as interventions are being implemented."

Renewal. Participant D1 used this profile during the implementation of reading interventions. Participant D1 explained, "my new team was working the best they could to identify what was going to work next year." Participant H1 used this profile, but did not expound on it. Participant I1 also used this tool during the implementations of interventions, stating, "because anything new I went back to revisit it to make any changes with the intervention program." She shared comprehensively some of the wealth of resources made accessible to her during the implementation of reading interventions. All but two "wealth" of resources were listed in Table 4.

Discrepant Cases

No obvious discrepant cases arose or were noted in the findings. I did not engage in any procedures regarding reporting any discrepancies to my chair. I did not need to create any protocols during the data-collection and data-analysis phases. The protocols would have assisted me in identifying any discrepancy, to help remedy any discrepancy immediately. If there were any data that did not fit in any categories, it would have been deemed discrepant and would have been eliminated. Therefore, I did not report such cases to my chair.

Patterns, Relationships, and Themes

I entered transcripts into NVivo, which in turned coded data by identifying small sections and chunks of data. I placed the patterns of codes and themes attached to each research question and each participant's pseudonym, on a data wallboard. I reviewed each theme and categorized them on the chart under each central research question and

subquestion. Under the central research question, the following themes emerged: *Knowledge of TGRG*, *Student Retention*, *TGRG Misguided*, *TGRG Challenges and Successes*. Under Subquestion 1, the following themes emerged: *Orton Gillingham Training*, *Reading Endorsement*, and *Professional Development*. The CBAM guided the themes identified in the analysis process for Subquestion 2: *SoC* and Subquestion 3: *LoU*. I discussed all findings of salient data related to themes and patterns in full detailed in conjunction with using the CBAM in the research question and subquestions section.

Evidence of Quality

This study followed procedures to assure accuracy of the data processed. For example, an interview protocol of about five pages (Creswell, 2007) included the interview questions with space between each question to record interviewees' responses. In a case study, the protocol includes the instrument and outlines the rules and procedures of the study (Yin, 2009). A protocol can improve the case study's *reliability*, guiding the investigator to carry out data collection from a single case (Yin, 2009).

Each interview protocol began with essential information on the research and a reminder to review the study's purpose with the participant (Creswell, 2007). The interview protocol consisted of 10 open-ended queries with plenty of space between to note the participant's comments (Creswell, 2007) and to record probing questions and answers. I transferred data from the interview transcripts to NVivo for coding.

The efficiency of the NVivo software program helped me relinquish manual coding. However, the software did not do the analysis portion of the study; it only served as a reliable assistant and tool. I used a wall chart, taking themes from NVivo and attaching them to the wall to see them more clearly. Commonality of themes emerged for

the central research question and Subquestion 1. I did not use NVivo for Subquestions 2 and 3 because of their SoC and LoU profile. I was unfamiliar with how to input the source data to get any codes that were unnecessary for SoC and LoU formatting. The commonalities of concerns and profile emerged from the repetition of use by each participant. Although it was quite time consuming, I analyzed and interpreted the data from Subquestions 2 and 3 manually. I began synthesizing and interpreting themes into a narrative for each participant.

Threats to the credibility and quality of findings were minimized during the member-check process. Member checking allowed interviewees to confirm and approve my interpretation of their data. Participants reviewed and approved a copy of my interpreted transcript through e-mail. This process was convenient for participants, mindful of their schedules and limited availability. Therefore, no verbal discussions were needed. The corrections made by each participant were minor, such as typographical errors. After the corrections were made and approved, each participant kept a copy of the interpretations. I also used bracketing to record any biases that could have appeared during data collection. However, due to the effectiveness of the member checking, no notable biases arose during the data-collection phase.

I used two procedures in this study to strengthen its trustworthiness, credibility, and validity: member checking and bracketing. The success of my data collection, analysis, and findings came about through the following concerns that concluded the outcome of the research findings with fidelity. These issues included (a) the number of participants available to participate in the study, (b) the ability to maintain and retain the same number of participants throughout the data-collection and -analysis process, and (c)

the appearance of honesty and openness of each participant when they answered the open-ended interview questions. Additionally, I remained quite mindful of my role in the data-collection process and remained as objective as possible. Although each interview session stayed within the set timeframe, the research protocol helped strengthen the study's validity and trustworthiness.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

This qualitative case study research was conducted to meet the objective of exploring third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the state's TGRG law. Additionally, this study addressed teachers' understanding of the following:

SQ1.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to TGRG law?

SQ2.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their SoC when implementing reading interventions in response to the state's TGRG law?

SQ3.   How do third grade reading teachers describe their LoU in the implementation of reading interventions that comply with the requirements of the TGRG law?

In summation of the findings, the goals for third grade teachers were to share their perceptions of the implementation of TGRG and their SoC and LoU when implementing reading interventions and its influence on third grade students' achievement in reading. The strength of this research was demonstrated in interviews with 10 third grade reading teachers who voiced their concerns about whether this policy, implemented in 2012–2013, has led to a rise in third grade students' reading skills. They perceived the TGRG law to be misguided and in need of reexamination to address kindergarten through second grade reading challenges. Each teacher who participated in this study was a highly educated, experienced, and dedicated educator with solid credentials. Their knowledge of the TGRG was sound and they each brought a wealth of knowledge about their (a)

respective schools, (b) position on student retention, (c) attitudes toward the TGRG, (d)

challenges and successes in implementing the TGRG law, (e) thoughts and opinions

about Orton–Gillingham training, (f) the importance of a reading endorsement, and (g)

the value of professional development.

Teachers discussed many other topics and concerns; however, their primary focus

was on the state's TGRG law and that it has not achieved its aims. Many teachers were

hopeful and had witnessed some growth in their students. Overall, they believed the

TGRG has not accomplish what it was created to do and will not succeed until it is

changed to target the lower grades. According to Hurst (2013) at Reading Horizons,

"We'll have to get bigger desks," "Third graders will be sporting beards," "It's

about time teachers' feet are held to the fire." These are just some responses

elicited by proposals to retain students who are not reading on grade level by the

end of their third grade year. (para. 1)

Interpretation of Findings

Commonalities and conclusions identified in answering Research Question 1

explored third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG

law in their schools. Results revealed that third grade reading teachers have been working

quite diligently to help students succeed in not only passing the state test, but also

effectively learning at their grade level. Teachers' initial perceptions and overall

knowledge of the implementation of the law varied. Although their knowledge ranged

from unaware of the law to indifference to the law to quite familiar with the law during

the initial phase, at the time of data collection every teacher was knowledgeable and

understood the TGRG law well. All teachers understood the state's primary goal was to ensure students were learning.

Findings from this study added to the body of knowledge, comparing the findings, for example, to several studies cited in the literature review section. The commonality that most of the literature shared with this study related to educators understanding the importance of poor reading skills among elementary students and how teachers perceive the implementation of new programs (innovations) is vital to the success of the program or innovation. For example, McCoss-Yergian and Krepps (2010) used a mixed-methodology study to identify beliefs about content-area literacy commonly held by content-area teachers about their effectiveness in implementing content-area reading strategies in their classroom. McCoss-Yergian and Krepps's study consisted of 39 content-area teachers, in contrast to this study that consisted of 10 reading teachers. Results showed that limited time for teaching made teachers believe reading strategies were a waste of time. Similarly, Park and Osborne (2006) suggested teachers believed reading instruction imposed on content-area time. Ness (2007) found secondary teachers frequently explained their lack of explicit strategy instruction by citing time shortage. Thibodeau (2008) also suggested that teachers were concerned about the time literacy instruction might take away from content instruction. At least one participant from this study shared the same concern. For example, Participant G1 stated that, "a good content lesson is 45 minutes to an hour … I almost always ran over and so that shortens another group time."

Additionally, researchers conducted two similar qualitative case studies: one in Georgia explored the impact of the CCSS implemented in K–12 on the professional

development needs of educators (Hipsher, 2014); one in Florida focused on perceptions of secondary reading teachers' experiences while they implemented Florida's secondary reading policy (Shively, 2013). Findings from Hipsher's (2014) study were similar to those of the present study, whereas Shively's (2013) results contrasted with these results. Although both studies were conducted in the south and were qualitative case studies, the researchers used different theoretical foundations and conceptual frameworks.

Similar to this research, Hipsher (2014) identified the frustration teachers felt throughout the implementation year. In like manner, teachers in the present research also felt frustration with implementation of the TGRG law. Teachers believed the TGRG law was misguided. Nevertheless, the Georgia study did not support my findings. Although teachers in each study were frustrated, according to Hipsher, Georgia's teachers identified needing additional support from administrators, but the Ohio southwestern district teachers did receive the needed support from their district.

According to Participant A1, "I really feel the district is on the mark; I just applaud the district from their support and resources." Shively (2013), in contrast, found that teachers were inadequately prepared in all areas to undertake the implementation of a new content area. The teachers in this study were adequately prepared by their school district to undertake the implementation of the new innovation of reading interventions. According to Participant A1, "I feel like the district has provided us with the needed training: I feel prepared." Authors of the Georgia and Florida studies recommended additional research (Hipsher, 2014; Shively, 2013).

Findings showed that regardless of the TGRG, some teachers believed strongly that students should not be retained. One teacher did not believe the TGRG held

sufficient power to make that kind of life decision for a child. She believed a student becomes labeled once they are held back. Teachers also believed the chance a student could repeat a grade puts added stress on third grade teachers, as well as students. Some teachers witnessed their students feeling defeated and wanting to give up. In contrast, one teacher believed that if a student is retained, it should happen during the student's early years in school. This notion supports the premise that teachers' perceptions of the implementation of policies to help their students are important to their learning community. Hipsher (2014) asserted that "teacher perceptions and attitudes also play an integral role implementing the new standards, and are the primary impetus for change" (p. 15).

One teacher found that children with learning disabilities were not identified until third grade. Teachers' attitudes toward the TGRG, its challenges, and its successes were less than favorable because "the TGRG law is not a third grade problem. Transitioning from third grade to fourth grade is huge for a student." Teachers perceived students should be entering third grade ready to learn by being strong readers, able to comprehend text effectively. Teachers found, several years after the enactment of the law, that the assessment to retain a child should not take place in the third grade. Assessing whether students have a strong foundation in phonics, are proficient in sounds and vowel blends in kindergarten and first grade, is paramount. These skills are vital to a child successfully becoming a solid reader. Teachers believed that if educators teach and closely monitor skills early, students would move into third grade reading to learn proficiently. Additionally, many teachers' attitudes or perceptions about the law were that it should not be a third grade law, but a First Grade Reading Guarantee law.

Findings answering Subquestion 1 revealed how third grade teachers described their levels of understanding of instructional and learning components of the innovations in response to the TGRG law. Teachers primarily focused on Orton–Gillingham training, having a reading endorsement, and professional development. Orton–Gillingham training appeared not only to be an effective teaching methodology, but many reading teachers and reading specialists liked and used the program daily or regularly.

Additionally, findings revealed that a reading endorsement is mandatory to be a reading teacher in the district. According to the TGRG law, a teacher must have a reading endorsement along with their degree and certification to teach reading in the third grade. Not having a reading endorsement has caused frustration for one teacher who just received her master's degree and now has to take the required test to receive a reading endorsement. Only one other teacher was preparing to take the test to get a reading endorsement, which is a prerequisite for all new reading teachers who desire to become teachers in the district.

Findings revealed that professional development was very important to teachers. Teachers actively attended professional development workshops. Teachers were also sharing, exchanging, or receiving important information provided by the school district. The district has its own facility that allows teachers to attend locally because the building is centrally located. Although English language arts teachers did not attend professional development meetings as often as reading specialists, reading specialists act as liaisons, attending monthly meetings. They share the information and materials with English language arts at their respective schools. One reading specialist believed the district was quite good at training teachers. A. T. Smith's (2011) recent qualitative case study, similar

to this study, also found professional development to be significant during the investigation of middle grades literacy coaches' perspectives on their efforts to facilitate teacher change and impact classroom practice. To reiterate, coaches conceptually sharing knowledge (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1996) is a form of professional development that focuses on bridging the gap between knowledge introduced in learning contexts and application in classroom settings. Similar to this study's objective, A. T. Smith also attempted to explore whether students were learning. Many participants explained that professional development provided training and resources to help teachers grow in their role as reading teachers.

Findings from Subquestion 2 revealed the SoC in the implementation of reading interventions in response to the state's TGRG law in their school. Three teachers adopted informational, seven teachers adopted personal, seven teachers selected management, seven teachers chose consequence, nine selected collaboration, and eight teachers selected refocusing as areas of concern. Collaboration was the dominant concern selected by teachers. These findings revealed that teachers believed collaborating with each other was important in building a strong teaching community in their schools. According to a study by the MOE (2014), collaboration (SoC: 5) was also significant, "in this era of school improvement, many schools are looking for ways to make their teaching practices more effective and collaborative" (p. 4). One participant selected this concern because she collaborated with many master teachers during the implementation of reading interventions. She asserted, "collaboration is real important to me during the implementation stage." Another participant explained, "I thought it, collaboration, would be great once the district started hiring specialists." She also found that collaboration was

key with reading specialists and intervention specialists. She explained, "collaboration is key during implementation of reading interventions."

Refocusing was the next most important concern teachers selected. Seven teachers selected personal, management, and consequence, which was the median and appeared to be chosen as the greatest concern of teachers. The SoC related to the way teachers expressed concerns as personal, managerial (Hord et al., 2006), and due to the influence of the TGRG law. The SoC are *unconcerned* (I am not concerned), *informational* (I would like to know more), *personal* (I am concerned about the changes), *management* (I am concerned about spending all my time), *consequence* (How will this new approach affect my students), *collaboration* (I'm looking forward to sharing … with other teachers), and *refocusing* (I have some ideas … that would work even better; Loucks-Horsley, 2005).

Adding further to the body of knowledge, another study related to the CBAM conceptual framework of this study was conducted by the MOE (2014). The Strategies for Active and Independent Learning approach was an educational innovation put in place to understand teachers' SoCs as they engaged in the process of innovations and to help them move to higher quality implementation of change. Unlike this study, in which both SoCs and LoU were used, SoCs were the only tool used in MOE's study. The innovation was implemented by teachers who sought to engage primary students in active and reflective learning in math in order for students to demonstrate how well they had learned. Although MOE's study used CBAM, it was quite larger than this study. MOE's study had 43 teachers who completed the SoC Questionnaire and 14 teachers were interviews (p. 11). However, both studies shared similar objectives that students were

learning, after the implementation of the innovations. Additionally, similar to this study according to MOE, "the results could help to change leaders like policy makers and school leaders understand the factors that influence the change process" (p. 4).

Subquestion 3 focused on how third grade teachers' described their LoU in implementing reading interventions that comply with the TGRG law. Findings revealed that three teachers described orientation, four teachers described preparation, seven teachers selected mechanical use, six teachers described routine use, seven teachers described refinement, four teachers described integration, and four teachers selected renewal as their most used practices. Seven teachers described mechanical use and refinement as their LoU when implementing reading interventions. These two LoU were the most important tools teachers used as they became familiar with the implementation selected to describe their LoU. Four teachers described preparation, integration, and renewal; and orientation was the least LoU described by three teachers. There are many studies on teachers' perceptions or perspectives that have used other effective conceptual frameworks and other designs that related to the implementation of innovations (programs or policies), as stated earlier in this study. For example, Griggs (2012) conducted a recent qualitative case-study that explored teachers' perceptions of the implementation of RtI in upper grades, understanding these teacher's perceptions were imperative. Similar to this study's TGRG law, RtI was a legislative mandated innovation. Findings from Griggs (2011) study revealed that the number of special-education referrals went down at the same at the same time the school implemented the RtI program 180. Teachers admitted they did not know much about RtI in their school (Griggs, 2012). Contrast to this study where the teachers at the time of this study understood the

implementation of the TGRG law very well; but did not know whether students' reading skills had improved, evident through state test scores. Additionally, teachers' SoC and LoU varied in the implementation of reading innovations.

Unlike the SoC, the LoU consisted of eight behavioral profiles: *nonuse* (I've heard about it I have too many things to do), *orientation* (I'm looking at material pertaining to the innovation considering using it sometime in the future), *preparation* (I've attended the workshop and I've set aside time every week for studying the materials), *mechanical use* (Most of my time is spent organizing materials and keeping things going smoothly as possible every day), *routine use* (This year it has worked out beautifully … I will use it the same way I did this year), *refinement* (I recently developed a more detailed assessment instrument to gain more specific information from students …), *integration* (Not everyone has all the skills needed to use the program so that it has the greatest impact on student learning. I've been working with another teacher for 2 years and now a third teacher), and *renewal* (I am still interested in the program and using it with modifications … I'm researching some other approaches; Loucks-Horsley, 2005). Findings related to each interview question aligned with CBAM, the conceptual framework, the CBAM helped reveal the practical applications of the findings.

Implications for Social Change

The results of this study rendered the implications of third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law. Results could help improve, influence, change, or modify the original law. Today, all third grade reading teachers and specialists understand the law quite well. Considering the length of time that the TGRG law has been in place, teachers' expressed concerns appear to be timely. The wealth of

information they shared regarding student retention, TGRG challenges and successes, reading-intervention programs being implemented, teachers having the proper credentials, training, the benefits of professional development, and much more are strong implications of a school district focused on improving their learning community.

One other past study corresponds to the finding in this study and adds to the body of knowledge of this study, discussed in the literature review and in this section. The study on RtI and staff perceptions of the implementation and development of a three-tiered model of intervention by Millhouse-Pettis (2011) addressed students' low academic skills. The present study supported Millhouse-Pettis's study on how policymakers should realign laws or ideologies that influence these laws or practices. Although, RtI is an intervention program, the implementation of RtI required a paradigm shift (Ardoin, Witt, Connell, & Koenig, 2005). The ideology and framework surrounding "the RtI framework required school districts to rethink and reexamine their quality of instruction, reevaluate who and how they identify students deemed at-risk for academic failure, and reassess when students are referred for special-education services." (Millhouse-Pettis, 2011, p. 21)

The present study also focused on the implementation of interventions, the premise that the TGRG law is misguided, and teachers wanting policymakers to rethink and reexamine the law to target PreK through second grade, much like the framework of the RtI. Participant G1, asked, "Why aren't we making sure that kids are proficient at the end of kindergarten or at the end of first grade?" Additionally, the participant stated, "this is a KG, first grade, and or second grade guarantee issue." It appears, from Millhouse-Pettis's (2011) study and this research, that the RtI and the TGRG law should be

realigned, reevaluated, reexamined, and redirected because they are not effectively addressing the needs of students. Together with understanding the importance of poor reading skills among elementary students, understanding how teachers perceive implementation of new programs is vital to the success of the program or innovation.

The implications that derived from this study speak to school administrators, legislators, and stakeholders, because teachers have shared their perceptions of a law that they believe is not working effectively. Results from this study recounted teachers' concerns that the TGRG law is not as effective as it can be, following implementation in the 2012–2013 school year. In 2012–2013, 75.8% of third grade students passed the reading test and in 2014–2015, 73.4% of third grade students passed the reading test. Test scores for 2015–2016 are presently unavailable.

Additionally, this study offered implications for third grade teachers because they voiced their concerns by sharing their perceptions. They wanted their voices to be heard. They wanted to suggest policymakers respond to this data-driven study and restructure the TGRG to target the needs of students in PreK through second grade. Nobel Laureate James Heckman has made this suggestion for years. "Systemic, integrated, high-quality early learning is the first and most important step to improving reading performance, closing the achievement gap, and competing internationally in science and mathematics" (Marietta, 2010, p. 2). Teachers believed students at every grade level from PreK through 5, special-education students, and English-language-learner students can benefit from a change in the law. The overall implications are that improvements could be made when individuals, communities, and organizations fully supports these teachers. Ultimately,

teachers' attitudes are that changing the TGRG law can affect schools in a positive way, help eradicate cultural biases, and make society a stronger global community.

Moreover, the implications of this study, expressed in terms of tangible improvement, is that the outlook for the local community is a positive one. Third grade reading teachers shared their perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law to help local schools and, in turn, to help their local community. Teachers want to see their students improve in reading. Each teacher who participated in this study has dedicated their life to their profession as educators. They work every day in the communities that service at-risk students. They are aware of the many factors that play a part in poor reading and literacy skills among students. Some factors teachers identified that impede student success are students living in poverty, frequent address changes, students who are excessively tardy or absent from school, mothers without a high school diploma, mistreatment, and students who speak English as a second language. Administrators reduced student-to-teacher ratios in early elementary classes in the highest need schools to 15 to 1 because researchers "showed that many at-risk children fall behind during time away from school (Krueger, 1998)" (Marietta, 2010, p. 7). However, every teacher in this study believed that early childhood services in education must increase in the local schools and community. Teachers believed that once TGRG policymakers recognize this is an early childhood to primary grade issue, improvement in reading would happen much sooner and faster.

Recommendations for Action

By paying attention to the results of this study, stakeholder's can disseminate pertinent information to improve the status of the TGRG law. Committed educators have

shared their perceptions of the TGRG law. Scholar-practitioners and administrators can continue working to create greater positive social change in many areas of society. Through the results of this qualitative study, local and regional teachers, administrators, and stakeholders alike can glean and help define how the TGRG law has influenced the learning community in their school districts. Educators can gain better insight into how to implement and use effective reading interventions, instructions, and learning components in their schools, as it relates to the TGRG law.

It is vital that the educational community continues to learn more about reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law and the implementations of reading interventions, to enhance the success of third grade students' academic acuity. Understanding this phenomenon may assist in providing students the opportunity for a brighter future and ultimately make positive social change in society. Additionally, technology and mass media resources have made it quite possible for researchers to consider further research similar to this study.

Recommendations for Further Study

This Midwest state followed Florida's lead in implementing the TGRG in the 2012–2013 school term. In January, nearly a third of third grade students statewide failed to read at grade level. That is, 40,000 children were at risk of being held back without drastic measures were taken (Hurst, 2013). Students reading below grade level is still a statewide issue. Although the problem of poor reading skills among third grade students exists on a national level, this study's focus was on one state.

Equally important, the primary focus addressed only one school district in the Midwest. Because of this potential limitation, I recommend additional exploration of

third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the state's TGRG law and its influence on third grade students' reading achievement. Use of a larger sampling pool can potentially bring a greater quantity of saturated data.

Concerns that could be potential limitations for further exploration include the availability of time, having the appropriate research team to cover the whole state, the financial funds to support it, and the availability of individuals, especially in larger school districts. Getting permission to collect internal data from each school site will be a challenge. However, future study could be much broader in scope as it focuses specifically on reading test scores from third grade, statewide. Additionally, another challenge would be the timing or schedule of the school year for each participant's availability and the willingness of every public school throughout the state to participate fully in the research, as teachers share their perceptions of the TGRG law.

Reflection of the Researcher's Experience

Emphasis on student achievement in reading inspired me to explore how educators perceived the implementation of the TGRG law in schools. The TGRG law can define its success with third grade students' reading performance and achievement by understanding teachers' perceptions. The role of a scholar was mostly nonexistent in the initial phase of this research study. However, as my knowledge increased from studying, researching, reading, and writing, I began to evolve into a scholar more committed to children, especially urban children, and the field of education.

Possible biases came only once, when I identified myself as one of the participants. I understood the sacrifice a respondent made to her students. However, it is a practiced most dedicated teachers make. Nevertheless, my experience as a researcher

changed greatly over the course of my doctoral studies because of this research. I was able to take something new back to the classroom that helped me improve as an educator, leading from the classroom. My ability to process data, research learning materials, implement intervention programs, teach concepts, and analyze and interpret data improved greatly. The bar was raised even higher as a researcher that it became noticeable among my colleagues, associates, and professional-learning community. I work in the spirit of excellence and closing the achievement gap for all my students.

Summary

"More than ever before, [education needs] intelligent, talented women and men who can lead schools in creating academic environments within which an increasingly diverse student body achieves challenging standards of educational excellence" (Johnson & Uline, 2005, p. 45–46). This is the kind of leadership that researchers exhibit as they help change a school, a student, and the community. Exploring the phenomenon of third grade teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the TGRG law played a key role in what emerged during the process of this research study. More importantly, effective educational leaders create schools with a continuous focus on "ensuring the academic success of every student" (Lein, Johnson, & Ragland, 1997, p. 3).

Reports confirmed that investment in early childhood is important in students' success. Since 2012, the Midwestern state has put millions of federal and state dollars into improving its early education system for children, aged birth through kindergarten entry, who are from economically disadvantage homes (ODE, 2016). Although a very large number of dollars are spent improving early education systems for children, teachers believe policymakers need to review the TGRG law. Teachers were the first line

of contact to experience the TGRG law. They have seen how it has transpired over the last few years in their classroom and in their respective schools. These educators gave their valuable time and shared their insights, attitudes, and perceptions of whether the TGRG is working in their schools.

Teachers gave voice to how the state's TGRG law has affected their students and school communities. They believed that once the law is changed to reflect the real problem in the lower grades, improvement could ensue. The change will affect the lives of students and can help erase cultural labels that assert certain groups of children or people cannot read. More importantly, as states make changes, greater opportunities to help create positive social change throughout the Midwest and its southwestern local learning community may come.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol: Third Grade Reading Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of the TGRG Law
Time of interview:
Date:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of interviewee:
The purpose for this qualitative case study is to explore and understand what third grade reading teachers' perceptions of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law and whether the law has helped to improve reading skills among third grade students. Explain CBAM.

Main Questions:
1. What was your initial perception of the TGRG law when it was first implemented in 2012-2013 school year?
2. What kind of training was provided for you in order for you to be able to understand what the TGRG law entailed in your school?
3. How are you able to describe your level(s) of understanding regarding any changes and or revisions made to the instructional and learning components of the TGRG law in your school?

Interview Protocol: Third Grade Reading Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of the TGRG Law
Date:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:

Follow-up and Probing Questions:
4. How are you able to describe your stages of concern as you were engaged in the process of new reading interventions being implemented in your school?
5. When looking at the seven stages of concerns during the implementation of new reading interventions in your school how many stages of concerns did you adopt? If so, which one(s)?
6. When looking at the eight levels of use during the implementation of new reading interventions in your school how many levels of use did you adopt or used? If so, which one(s)?
7. What kind of ongoing resources and facilitator support have you received since the implementation of new reading interventions in your school?
8. Based upon the training you received and observing how the TGRG law has played out in your school, what is your present day perception of the overall success of the TGRG law in your school?

Interview Protocol: Third Grade Reading Teachers' Perceptions of the Implementation of the TGRG Law
Date:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:

Closing Questions:

9. Looking at the TGRG law today how has the implementation of it been beneficial for students?

10. Lastly, is there anything you would like to add to this interview that may help me to better understand your perception(s) as a teacher of the implementation of the Ohio TGRG law and reading interventions has helped to improve reading skills among third grade students in your school?

Appendix B: Themes

Orton Gillingham Training
Reading Endorsement
Professional Development
Student Retention
Teachers' Knowledge of TGRG
TGRG Challenges and Success
TGRG Misguided