2019

Response to Intervention for English Language Learners

Robin Adele Rivas
Walden University

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Robin A. Rivas

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Evelyn Ogden, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Mike Jazzar, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Karen Hunt, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2019

Abstract

Response to Intervention for English Language Learners

by

Robin A. Rivas

MS, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 2004

BS, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 1984

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

December 2019

Abstract

Researchers in schools have had differing interpretations of effective implementation of response to intervention (RTI) models that have resulted in educators' confusion and misperceptions of the programs, especially with elementary English language learner (ELL) students. The purpose of this case study of 4 schools in an urban school district in the midwest was to explore how teachers used experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based instructional strategies in their classes to meet the needs of ELLs. Additionally, the RTI team process was explored to discover what experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based indicators they considered during the RTI decision making process regarding ELLs referred for Tier 2 intervention in reading. Two conceptual frameworks, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol and World-Class Design and Assessment RTI[2] protocol, operationalized the topic and guided the study. Results were derived from individual semistructured interviews with district instructional coaches and review of referral and recommendation documentation. Data were coded and a thematic analysis was conducted. Findings included the themes of misalignment of Tier 1 core instruction and Tier 2 intervention, inadequate teacher preparation, and limited differentiated support services. A professional learning project for teachers in the district was created based on the findings of this case study. The social change implications for results of the study and the project may be increased capacity building for teachers in inclusive classrooms and a precise and consistent understanding of the RTI model by all stakeholders. The study makes an original contribution to research on RTI implementation with ELLs at the local level and the results can be of value to other districts serving similar populations.

Response to Intervention for English Language Learners

by

Robin A. Rivas

MA, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 2004

BS, University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee, 1984

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

December 2019

Acknowledgments

First, and most of all, it is with immense gratitude that I acknowledge the support and help of my committee chair, Dr. Evelyn Ogden, for her skill, assistance, guidance, and patience through the process of writing this project study. Without your help, this paper would not have been possible. I would also like to thank my committee members Dr. Michael Jazzar and Dr. Karen Hunt. I offer my sincerest appreciation for your expertise and encouragement to continue forward.

And, to my caring and supportive husband, Ingram: my deepest gratitude. I could not have done this without your support and understanding during both the good and challenging moments. It was a great comfort and relief to know that you were willing to take care of our home and family while I completed my work. While we may never get back the minutes, know that with you I share the credit of my work.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my appreciation to those not mentioned in name but who have inspired me throughout this journey.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The problem examined in this case study was the need for greater depth in educators' understanding of how research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies and assessments of English language learners (ELLs) are addressed within a response to intervention (RTI) planning and decision-making process. RTI was founded on the principle that all children can learn when provided individualized, differentiated instruction, and most academic difficulties can be prevented with early identification of need and strategic intervention (Badger, 2017; Brendle, 2015; Echevarría & Hasbrouck, 2009; Hurlbut & Tunks, 2016). At the heart of the RTI model are data-informed decisions based on multiple personalized student indicators. The National Center on Response to Intervention (2010), Fan, Denner, Bocanegra, and Ding (2016), and Ruffini, Lindsay, Miskell, and Proger (2016) described RTI as a systematic process that integrates assessment and evidence-based instructional practices within a multitier framework to maximize targeted instructional and behavioral support. The RTI model is intended to be a deliberate proactive way of addressing student needs early on.

Recently, there has been ongoing conversation in identifying appropriate instruction and assessment practices for ELLs within an RTI approach. However, much of the work in this area has focused on RTI with mainstream students. Determining whether a student's difficulties are due to second language learning, a disability, or both can be challenging for educators. Systematic reviews (Ferlis & Xu, 2016; Thorius & Sullivan, 2013) of existing literature revealed a gap in practice in the application of RTI

for ELLs. Both Bixby (2015) and Folorunsho (2014) reported that there remains a need for greater depth in understanding and research concerning ELLs during the RTI referral process and targeted and intensive interventions. Driver (2014) asserted that there exists a scarcity of evidence guiding appropriate services for ELLs at risk for special education referral as they progress through the RTI tiers. Berg and Huang (2015), Isbell and Szabo (2015), and Bartley (2015) recommended that researchers investigate teacher effectiveness in using an intervention model with linguistically diverse students.

In 2012, 11 out of 33 schools in one school district in the Midwest were ranked among the worst in their state in the academic achievement of low-income student populations, including ELLs, designating them as priority and focus schools by their State Department of Education (Fiori, 2012). The district's solution was to implement an RTI model where students with skill disparities are identified throughout the school year and targeted for intervention to improve academic achievement, including linguistically diverse learners. Even so, despite 4 years of RTI implementation, the district has met few required performance expectations, including ELLs, and has been cited for corrective action with the possibility of sanctions (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017).

In January of 2018, the U.S. Department of Education approved the State Department of Instruction Consolidated State Plan under the newly reauthorized ESSA, referred to as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; P.L. 114-95). Whereas local education agencies were accountable for academic and linguistic growth for ELLs, the new plan proposes that ELL academic and linguistic achievement becomes part of each

school's report card. Meissner (2016) noted, however, that academic performance of students in core instruction does not come from public policy, but from teacher instructional practices in the classroom. According to Sullivan (2016), many educators have difficulty in meeting the needs of ELLs in mainstream classes and do not employ techniques and methods that would augment the learning process during core instruction. Currently, based on the proportion of ELLs in the study site's population, one might expect no more than 10% of ELLs referred for intervention. However, local RTI data indicate that out of 1,554 students referred for RTI intervention in the 2016-17 school year, a disproportionate 20% were ELLs (Study site, 2017).

Furthermore, in the 2017 budget, the State legislature included a provision called the Opportunity Schools Partnership Program. The provision allows for the state Department of Instruction to move failing study site schools under the control of a program administrator appointed by the county executive (Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau, 2017). RTI was the primary strategy adopted by the study site's Board of School Directors in 2012 to improve student achievement of all students, including ELLs. Implementation of RTI is the primary vehicle for support of students who are struggling academically. However, there remains a high number of ELLs not meeting the state threshold in reading, and the study site remains under threat of breakup and takeover, resulting in a loss of administrative control of its schools. Implications resulting from this case study include improving educators' and administrators' understandings and practices leading to social change and ultimately increased student learning for ELLs.

Rationale

According to Yin (2009), a case study is an empirical inquiry investigating a current phenomenon in detail and within context. The purpose of this case study was to explore the understanding of how the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process address learning characteristics of ELLs in the study site. The district under study is vested in RTI as the primary method to improve the academic achievement of low-achieving subgroups, including ELLs. Increased understanding of the RTI process may have implications for future implementation of an RTI decision making process in the study site that is linguistically and culturally responsive to the unique instructional needs of ELLs.

ELLs are a growing population. In 2014-15, the number of public-school students in the United States who were classified as ELLs was approximately 4.6 million students or 9.4% of the K-12 population nationally (The National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). High-quality instruction for English learners mirrors high-quality instruction for monolingual students, but ELLs need instructional accommodations to fully support ELLs linguistically and academically. Instructional models, particularly the research-based Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2000) are designed to prepare educators to teach content efficiently to English learners while developing students' unique language needs. As more ELLs find themselves in U.S. schools, educators need to become skilled in sheltering instruction because they are increasingly likely to have such students in their classrooms.

For ELLs, decisions made during implementation of the RTI framework can have significant implications for instructional services and support (Evans, 2017). It is critical to understand the processes and experiences of educators and staff engaged in the RTI process for linguistically diverse students (Evans, 2017). For this research, a case study design was used to address the problem. Research in this study included an analysis of RTI team recommendations and referral documentation obtained during the ELL RTI decision-making process in conjunction with the transcriptions and coding of four referring teacher's interviews. Collected data on assessment and research-based effective instructional practices can help to develop an understanding of ELLs opportunities to learn during referral, intervention strategy, and placement decision-making.

Definition of Terms

Academic language: Oral, written, auditory, and visual language associated with course content, and the abstract language abilities required to learn efficiently in classrooms or educational programs. It is a complex, conceptual, linguistic ability that includes analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Glossary for Education Reform, 2013).

Accommodation: Change made to instruction or assessment that the student may require to demonstrate learning. Accommodations should not change expectations for performance or alter the construct that is being measured (Center on Response to Intervention at the American Institutes of Research, 2014).

Assessment: The structured process of measuring and reporting student growth, from multiple sources over a period of time; also, a means of acquiring information used

in decision-making about an individual student, targeted groups, curriculum, program, or educational policy (RTI Action Network, 2018a).

Authentic assessment: Defined by O'Malley and Valdez Pierce in Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners: Practical Approaches for Teachers (1996) as multiple forms of assessment that are consistent with classroom goals, curricula, and instruction. An authentic assessment includes a performance task and rubric by which their performance on the work will be evaluated.

Collaborative (Data/RTI) team: Teams of educators, support personnel, and administrators at a school or district who meet on a scheduled or as-need basis to fulfill a specific purpose or function. These teams are responsible for data analysis and decision-making functioning at the level of the district, school, and grade (or content area) as well as across grade levels in the same content area (i.e., vertical teams). They may include school administrators, school psychologists, grade/content area classroom educators, various specialists and other behavioral/mental health personnel (RTI Action Network, 2018a) as members.

Core curriculum: An articulated series or selection of courses in a specific content area, usually required of all students in a school or district. (Glossary for Education Reform, 2013).

Cultural competence: For educators, cultural competence includes a belief that all students will learn. Additionally, educators know the community where the school is located, understand that all people have a unique world view, and use curriculum that is respectful of and relevant to the cultures represented in its student body. Also important

is being alert to the ways that culture affects who we are and placing the locus of responsibility on the professional and the institution. Finally, ongoing examination of systems, structures, policies, and practices for their impact on all students and families and standing up to challenge and ameliorating prejudice and discrimination are evidenced (Liang & Zhang, 2009).

Data-based decision-making: The process of collecting, analyzing, and summarizing student assessment data to guide the design, implementation, and adjustment of instruction. Also called progress monitoring because both require the collection and use of data (Center on Response to Intervention at the American Institutes of Research, 2014).

Differentiated instruction: Process of designing lesson plans and activities that support the strengths and needs of individual learners; includes providing modifications and accommodations to curriculum, teaching, and assessment that recognize students' varying background knowledge, language proficiency and academic abilities (Center on Response to Intervention at the American Institutes of Research, 2014).

Disproportionality: The over- or under-representation of subgroups of students in special education; either a significantly larger or smaller percentage of students from a specific minority background receiving special education services than the rate of that minority in the population generally (Center on Response to Intervention at the American Institutes of Research, 2014).

English language learners (ELLs): Students who are acquiring English as a second or other language. This applies to learners representing differing levels of

proficiency in English. ELLs also referred to as English learners (ELs), non-English speaking (NES), limited-English speaking (LES), and a non-native speaker (NNS) (Glossary for Education Reform, 2013).

Limited English proficient (LEP): Term often used by the federal government as well as state Departments of Education to identify students who are not proficient enough in English to succeed in English only classrooms without linguistic support services (Echevarría, Richards-Tutor, & Vogt, 2015).

Monolingual: Term used to describe students who speak one language, such as native speakers of English (Echevarría et al., 2015).

Native English speaker: A student whose first, primary, or home language is English (Echevarría et al., 2015).

Progress monitoring: In an RTI model, a scientifically based practice of assessing students' academic performance and evaluating the effectiveness of instruction (Echevarría et al., 2015).

Response to intervention (RTI): RTI is the practice of providing scientific, research-based instruction and intervention matched to students' needs. Individual educational decisions during RTI implementation are based on students' levels of performance and learning rates over time (Batsche, 2006).

Scaffolding: Teacher support for learning through instruction, modeling, questioning, feedback, graphic organizers, across multiple lessons. These supports are gradually withdrawn (gradual release of responsibility), transferring autonomy to the child (Echevarría et al., 2000).

Scientific researched-based interventions: Interventions identified from research that involve the use of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid data by employing empirical methods drawing on observation or experiments (National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010).

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP®): A research-based guide for educators to implement practices in the classroom to meet the needs of ELLs while teaching along with non-ELLs (Echevarría et al., 2000). In addition, a rubric has been developed providing indicators to score the implementation of SIOP® practice along with a continuum of performance for multiple features, thus determining how well educators included the essential elements of sheltered instruction in their lessons (Koura & Zahran, 2017).

Significance of the Study

This research study makes an original contribution to research on RTI implementation with ELLs at the local level. Existing research has focused on RTI; however, issues relating to learning characteristics and unique needs of ELLs in the determination of interventions and tier placement need further examination. According to the RTI Action Network (2018b), the goal of the RTI framework is to reduce the number of students referred for special education services by implementing systems to identify students performing below grade level followed by targeted interventions designed to increase grade-level literacy performance. This study supports professional practice for educators in RTI as the outcome of this investigation can aid educators in the study site in avoidance of inappropriate intervention strategies, assessments, and placements that may

negatively affect ELLs. Inappropriate intervention strategies and assessment, placement, and curriculum decisions can adversely affect ELLs who may experience under- or over-labeling as learning disabled, reduced interaction in the classroom with peers, and involving them in inappropriate instructional support services (Evans, 2017). Gaps in practice identified from the study may contribute to the development of an RTI tier placement guidebook for ELLs and an experiential, linguistic, and cultural referral protocol. Additionally, results from this study may also guide the development of aligned professional development and training in alternative processes and procedures in the RTI process for ELLs.

There remains a need for greater depth in analysis and research concerning ELLs during the RTI referral process in the broader professional context. A systematic review of existing literature on RTI for ELLs revealed a critical gap in research of linguistic and culturally responsive considerations during tiered placement and choice of interventions (Bixby, 2015; Hogan & Hathcote, 2013; Thorius & Sullivan, 2013). Gathering and analyzing data from RTI decision-making processes is a way to examine linguistically responsive considerations of RTI teams during their review of multiple criteria when placing ELLs into a tiered system of support (Slaughter, 2016; Torres, 2016). There exists a scarcity of evidence guiding conscious decision making for ELLs as they progress through the RTI tiers (Driver, 2014; Fan et al., 2016; Orosco & Abdulrahim, 2017). Potentially identifying local gaps in practice may also contribute to the gap in research in general.

Locally, the consideration and use of linguistically appropriate methods is a conduit for positive social change in the study site. The study site is a district looking to address disproportionality by seeking answers to gaps in the implementation of the intervention system in place, especially as it pertains to ELLs. Information from this study can inform educators' capacity to make decisions concerning placement and instructional recommendations in a tiered system of support, with the goal of increased academic achievement of ELLs.

Research Questions

A qualitative case study design was used for this research. Case studies are undertaken to make the case understandable (Stake, 1995). Qualitative research integrates more subjective human experiences rather than purely objective external reality. Merriam (2009) provided an overview of qualitative research and how the process is inductive in nature. Merriam stated, "Researchers gather data to build concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than deductively testing hypotheses as in positivist research" (p. 15). Merriam further explained that data collection might focus on observations, interviews, or even reviewing documents. The goal of mining data is the identification of patterns, themes, or hunches that provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Shinde, 2017). The research questions posed are qualitative questions seeking to determine a pattern or suspicion that provides for the further understanding of the referral considerations of instructional practice, interventions proposed and implemented, and monitoring practice during the referral and placement meetings throughout the

implementation of an RTI model. This study has implications for the use of an RTI framework with ELLs.

Data for this case study were collected from both semistructured interviews and existing documents review to examine a phenomenon. Open or apriori coding techniques were used to identify themes and inform the results. During multiple semistructured interviews of referring educators from four classrooms in multiple schools, a pattern of recurring characteristics of understanding of ELLs, or lack of, identified by the educators became apparent. A total of four educators, who remain confidential, who have referred at least two students from the same classroom for Tier 2 intervention were invited to participate. These four educators participated in the local RTI team after initial referral and tiered intervention placement of an ELL and a monolingual upper elementary student whose identities remained confidential. The semistructured interview was used to address instructional practice, the focus of Research Question (RQ)1. In addressing RQ2, a document review using a qualitative content analysis of educators' referrals, the RTI team plan, and monitoring instructions following the RTI meeting was facilitated.

The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1: What research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies do educators identify during the RTI decision making process for ELLs?

RQ2: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI decision making process for ELLs?

A. What research-based assessment indicators and data are considered during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs?

B. Are selected academic interventions and progress monitoring decisions culturally and linguistically appropriate for meeting the needs of ELLs?

Review of the Literature

In this literature review, I comprehensively examined studies that provide an understanding of experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategy considerations during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs. Conceptual frameworks, used for applied studies, provide a context on which to scaffold and develop a research study, operationalizing the topic. The conceptual frameworks of the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP®) and the world-class instructional design and assessment (WIDA) RTI² protocols served to make conceptual distinctions and organize the ideas in this study. The primary purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of the implementation of the RTI process with ELLs. To ensure saturation of current professional literature pertaining to RTI and ELLs, I used the following terms and phrases: *response to intervention, English language learner, culturally responsive, linguistically responsive, ELL teaching strategies, teacher perspective, differentiation, professional learning, scaffolding, second language acquisition,* and *ELL literacy*. I reference work obtained from several scholarly databases, including Walden University's database of scholarly journals, ERIC, Proquest, Google Scholar, and Department of Education and RTI websites between the years of 2015 and January 2018.

The linguistic needs in addition to learning academic content make it challenging for ELLs to compete with their English-proficient peers, often resulting in low academic achievement and high dropout rates (Miller, Mackiewicz, & Correa, 2017). Investigating RTI is a continuing concern among researchers (Duffy, 2018). So far, however, there has been little discussion about the use of RTI with ELLs. In using the SIOP® and WIDA RTI[2] protocols as conceptual frameworks, in this literature review, I drew from resources examining language acquisition, RIT, and teacher knowledge and perception as they relate to ELLs.

Conceptual Frameworks

SIOP®. A protocol defines the scope of a systematic review. During this study, two protocols were used to frame the work. ELLs perform better in academic environments when educators provide sheltered instruction. The instructional model SIOP® was designed to level the academic playing field between English learners and their native-speaking peers. The SIOP® is a codified framework of research-based instructional practices for educators to use within the classroom for meeting linguistic and academic content knowledge needs of ELLs (Echevarría et al., 2000; Polat & Cepik, 2016; Schneider, 2018). The SIOP® was the conceptual framework used to address RQ1 on instructional practices in this study.

The increased growth of the ELL population has outpaced the research on the sheltered instruction. As expressed by Coleman and Goldenberg (2012), "Although formal research to evaluate the effects of various sheltered strategies is ongoing, educators must help lead the way. There is simply no time to wait until researchers

address all of the important issues regarding sheltered instruction" (p. 48). The first version of SIOP® was a protocol drafted in the early 1990s and used as a research and instructional observation rubric. In response to the need for planning and implementing effective sheltered lessons for ELLs, the SIOP® model was developed as an approach for integrating language development with content teaching. SIOP® was grounded in a 7-year research study conducted by the Center for Research and Education, Diversity & Excellence (Crede) and funded by the U.S. Department of Education entitled "The Effects of Sheltered Instruction on the Achievement of Limited English Proficient Students" in 1996. The SIOP® model has been endorsed as a model of instruction that improves the achievement of second language learners (Echevarría, Richards-Tutor, Chinn, & Ratleff, 2011; Echevarría, Short, & Powers, 2006; Short, Fidelman, & Louguit, 2012).

The SIOP® framework consists of eight main components and 30 features that provide a measure for lesson planning and instructional observation. The eight components include lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice & application, lesson delivery, and review & assessment (Echevarría et al., 2000). Each of the components is supported by empirical studies, and the model itself has a growing research base (Short, Echevarría, & Richards-Tutor, 2011). Table 1 shows the SIOP® components.

Table 1

SIOP® Components

Component	Description
Lesson preparation	Lesson preparation begins the lesson planning process and includes content and language objectives, supplementary materials, and meaningful activities
Building background	Building background focuses on making connections with students' background experiences and prior learning and developing their academic vocabulary.
Comprehensible input	Comprehensible input outlines instructional adjustments in speech, modeling of academic tasks, and use multimodal strategies to enhance comprehension.
Strategies	Strategies emphasizes metacognitive teaching strategies, scaffolding, and promoting higher-order thinking skills.
Interaction	Interaction focuses on oralcy development and grouping techniques for language and content development.
Practice and application	Practice and application provide activities for practicing and extending language and content learning.
Lesson delivery	Lesson delivery ensures teachers present a lesson that meets the planned objectives and promotes student engagement.
Review and assessment	The Review and assessment component encourage the review of key language and content concepts, assessment of student learning, and providing feedback to students on their output.

Note. Adapted from "Adapting features from the SIOP® Component: Lesson delivery to English lessons in a Colombian public school," by H. Rativa Murillo, 2013, *Profile: Issues in Teachers´ Professional Development, 15(1),* p. 175. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1053751.pdf

During mainstream instruction, educators need a way to consistently and systematically implement best practices to provide the most favorable learning conditions for English learners. Additionally, for learners whose first language is other than English, educators must provide engaging, relevant lessons sheltered in a way that allows students to participate fully and will ensure that they will be successful in school (Echevarría & Vogt, 2010). The SIOP® model provides a framework that is composed of research-based

features of instruction, (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2008). According to researchers such as Magee (2017) and Echevarría and Vogt (2010), ELLs must be included in rigorous mainstream classrooms that require educators to define both language and content objectives and use sheltered techniques to achieve them. Before ELLs are recommended for intervention, educators need to ensure that students have had enough exposure to academic instruction that supports the unique needs of this population.

The foundation of RTI is established first in the instructional practices in Tier 1, where every child receives high-quality instruction. Effective Tier 1 instruction for ELLs within RTI is outlined in the differentiated instruction as described in the eight components of the SIOP® framework. The SIOP® model identifies essential practices for providing meaningful instruction for students acquiring English. The SIOP® lays the underpinning of instructional considerations that need to be asked of educators referring ELLs for intervention. In this case study, the Interview Questions (see Appendix B) based on SIOP® (Echevarría, Richards-Tutor, & Vogt, 2015) served as a lens to examine instruction and assessment practices of educators during the implementation of the RTI process with upper elementary ELLs in reading.

WIDA RTI². RTI² (WIDA Consortium, 2013) presented a protocol for implementing an RTI model that proactively supports the collecting and interpreting of data used to make instructional and programmatic decisions for ELLs. Sanchez-Lopez and Donnell, lead developers of the WIDA RTI² (2013), described RTI² as a general education initiative designed to be responsive to the unique needs of ELLs. Moreover, to increase the cultural and linguistic responsiveness of a multitiered system is to consider

the sociocultural context for learning (WIDA Consortium, 2013). The RTI^2 is a guide to

proactively gather and analyze descriptive information about ELLs to develop

appropriate placement, interventions, and assessments for ELLs performing below

expectations during core Tier 1 core instruction occurring prior to intervention referral.

The WIDA RTI^2 protocol was the conceptual framework used to address RQ2 on data

collection and assessment in this study.

Along with semistructured interviews of four educators, a document review of

paperwork including the RTI plans, teacher referral, and monitoring documentation

following RTI meetings of ELLs was used to collect data. The WIDA RTI^2 served as an

overlay to understand the cultural and linguistic considerations supporting identified

instruction, intervention, and assessment for ELLs in an RTI process. In addition to

SIOP® that provides research-based instructional practices, WIDA Consortium's RTI^2

(2013) consists of seven essential sociocultural factors that may have an impact on

academic achievement for ELLs. These factors include learning environment factors,

academic achievement and instructional factors, oral language and literacy factors,

personal and family factors, physical and psychological factors, previous schooling

factors, and cross-cultural factors.

In this study, I examined the understanding of the cultural and linguistic

considerations of educators in one school district during the implementation of the RTI

process. During this case study, documents filed after the RTI meetings were examined

against the seven integral factors identified in the WIDA RTI^2 (WIDA Consortium, 2013;

Appendix C) to understand how decisions made during the RTI for ELLs process are

made in an authentic, contextualized, and responsive way. Qualitative content analysis methods were facilitated to systematically determine content categories that represented the seven integral factors outlined in the WIDA RTI^2 protocol. In qualitative content analysis, identified core consistencies and meanings helped to answer RQ2.

Second Language Acquisition

Theories of second language acquisition informing the RTI framework have identified scaffolding strategies for ELLs as a means of working within ELL zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is the difference between what a child can do with assistance and without help (Vygotsky, 1978). Krashen (1981) stressed that content of new material must be made comprehensible through scaffolding, academic language is harder to acquire compared with social language, and second language learners learn more efficaciously in the context of problem-solving than direct study. The comprehension hypothesis argues that ELLs acquire a new language when provided manageable amounts of language exposure, guiding how students might develop language during an intervention, and that comprehension precedes production (Burns et al., 2017; Ittner, 2017; Krashen, 1981). To understand language acquisition, educators must address not only linguistic input but also social interactions in the classroom (Ittner, 2017). This claim suggests that educators are responsible for providing comprehensible input to their students within the ZPD, supporting the need to focus on academic language acquisition during literacy instruction (Collier, Burston, & Rhodes, 2016; Garayta, 2017).

Educators use the instructional strategy of scaffolding to provide support to the learner until tasks can be completed independently. There has been continued debate regarding the best practices and processes of second language acquisition over the years. Howell (2016) remarks an area of frustration often discussed among educators of ELLs is a clear and concise understanding of how English learners acquire a second language in a manner that at the same time facilitates the comprehension of the content material. Nonetheless, there are fundamental concepts that have been proven to provide access to academic content while also building students' language skills (Collier, Burston, & Rhodes, 2016). As a basis of sheltered instruction, it is critically important that scaffolding occurs within the zone of proximal development, especially during the development of academic literacy skills (Collier, Burston, & Rhodes, 2016). There is, therefore, a definite need for a continued study on the relationship between language acquisition and RTI implementation.

More broadly, research is also needed in the identification and placement of ELLs into tiered intervention. In the implementation of an RTI system of support, educators need to be able to justify tiered placement based on evidence. Inaccurate placement not based on appropriate evidence may occur as educators, who make decisions about ELL's needs, are unable to differentiate between language acquisition difficulties and learning disability (Hallett, 2017). Models such as the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2000) are developed to assist educators in recognizing the necessity of both language and content instruction as required element of core instruction in a tiered system of support. When educators lack foundational knowledge of second

language acquisition and methods of assessment for potential learning disabilities, ELLs are often inaccurately diagnosed with LD (Hallett, 2017). Second language acquisition and strategies and materials aiding in the development of the second language are deficit skills not efficiently addressed in current teacher professional learning (Howell, 2016).

It is the responsibility of stakeholders to address this gap in knowledge. Ray (2017) supports the need for additional research stating a research gap exists regarding how educators identify students at-risk for reading deficits. Davis (2017) suggested that a more clear-cut understanding of RTI would benefit not only case law, the legal literature, but also, professional practice. While there is increasing information on RTI found in literature, very little was seen on the use of RTI with ELLs. Since the purpose of this study is to explore the understanding of the factors by which characteristics of ELLs are addressed in current RTI practices, the constructs of experiential, linguistic, and culturally sensitive RTI practices guide the RQs and interview protocols.

Response to Intervention

The term Response to Intervention is used to refer to a process for achieving higher levels of academic success for all students and is the framework for this case study. Further, RTI systems use a multi-level system of support to identify and respond to individual student need. For Davis (2017), RTI was conceptualized to move struggling students through a series of interventions that provide for the identification of areas of weakness. Additionally, RTI is a system of supports for identification and monitoring of student learning needs (Davis). The goal of the K-12 RTI framework is to reduce numbers of students referred for special education services by implementing systems to

identify students performing below grade level followed by targeted interventions designed to increase on grade-level literacy performance (Fuchs and Fuchs, 2017; Garayta, 2017). Core instruction is where initial differentiated instruction takes place for all students. Core instruction is high-quality if the materials and methods are verified using scientific research (Davis). RTI core components include universal screening, progress monitoring, high-quality core instruction, tiered interventions, and support teams.

Historical perspective of RTI. With the reauthorization of NCLB, IDEA, and currently ESSA, the education system in the United States has seen many changes over the last decade. Legislation has begun to focus on providing a quality education for all students, guaranteeing that no child would be left behind. In the 1997 reauthorization process, the concern with discrepancy approaches to learning disability identification reached a peek resulting in the commitment to establish a program for examining and summarizing evidence around LD identification. In preparation for the 2004 IDEA reauthorization, it was determined that there was no evidence that the use of discrepancy formulas was reliable nor valid.

The RTI prereferral program was suggested as a resource in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA as a means of developing better readers through the provision of differentiated instruction based on data from on-going assessments for all students. The RTI-based program replaced the Multileveled Program, a program grounded in the scaffolded learning model espoused by Vygotsky (Garayta, 2017). Confusion about RTI implementation was triggered due to the lack of national guidelines, and the absence of a

precise definition of RTI creating barriers in its successful execution (Davis, 2017).

Subgroups such as ELLs were also targeted for RTI. However, when RTI was introduced

in 2004, there was only a small research base on interventions for ELLs (Ittner, 2017).

Significant complications to RTI implementation included lack of training for educators,

teacher knowledge of RTI, educators' attitudes toward RTI, and the complicated process

of application due to the high volume of record keeping and time associated with RTI

processes (Davis, 2017). While NCLB provisions created and called for awareness of the

use of scientifically based practices, there were no explicit examples or suggestions in the

literature. As noted by Davis, with minimal direction, school personnel were responsible

for finding and choosing scientifically based practices resulting school districts relabeling

their previous general education interventions as RTI instead of incorporating the

research-based interventions defined in the core components of RTI.

RTI is seen as a preventative model, preventing the over or under-identification of

minority students in special education and the practice of waiting for students to fail

before intervening with differentiated targeted support. The RTI framework provides

educators with tools to integrate instructional practices that are authentic, challenging,

and student-centered (Meissner, 2016). The critical components to the implementation of

RTI model include (a) high-quality core instruction matched with the needs of the

student, (b) universal screening and ongoing progress monitoring, (c) tiered levels of

research-based interventions, and (d) data-driven decision making by designated support

teams (Davis, 2017).

To ensure equitable education for all students and decrease the overrepresentation of diverse populations in special education programming, federal policies (IDEA, 2004; NCLB, 2002) are holding states accountable for documenting the processes used to close achievement gaps and improve student outcomes. Therefore, many states and school districts are implementing RTI (Oswald, 2016). In sum, RTI replaces the practice of waiting for a student to fail with strategic intervention and prevention. Because the RTI concept addresses each child's unique needs, personalized instruction lies at the very heart of RTI in that students are evaluated, and appropriate instructional strategies are provided so that all children have opportunities to succeed (Ruffini et al., 2016; Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017).

Multilevel systems of support. There has been increasing interest over the past few years in understanding how RTI can be used efficiently with ELLs. Recently the concept of multi-level systems of support (MLSS) model has increased in elementary schools as a less biased approach to differentiating between disabilities and language differences (Weddle, Spencer, Kajian, & Petersen, 2016). The principles of RTI remain at the core of multi-level systems of support models and operate as a framework aiding in identifying children with emerging difficulties so that personalized, targeted, differentiated instruction is delivered (Weddle et al., 2016). Authentic assessment and evidence-based education are integrated throughout the teaching process (Weddle et al., 2016). Both Fuchs and Fuchs (2017) and Weddle et al. (2016) reported that identification via responsiveness might compensate for limitations in traditional approaches to identifying disabilities and reduce bias related to culture, language, and poverty.

In concept, interventions support educators in the differentiation between students struggling because of instructional choices and those struggling due to disability. Framing the delivery of the response is the gradual release of responsibility (Ittner, 2017). Davis (2017) iterates the necessity of interventions being reliable, organized, research-based, high quality, and implemented with fidelity. Garayta (2017) found that when RTI implementation has focused on instructional responses, even the lowest performing students have developed near-grade-level reading comprehension and word attack skills. Intervention intensity is also a crucial factor in the implementation process of RTI. Garayta described intervention intensity as an increase of time, effort, resources, or use of strategies that are difficult to achieve during core instruction. Given all that has been mentioned, when implemented with fidelity RTI, and more specifically multitier systems of support can work to address both linguistic and academic needs of ELLs.

RTI tiers. Almost every guiding document that has been written on RTI includes a section defining the RTI tiers of intervention. Nationally, RTI is often represented visually with a triangle separated into three distinct parts representing the intensity of the response. In contrast, the Wisconsin visual model for RTI is an outline of the parameters of a high-quality RTI inclusive framework, allowing for district autonomy in building systems at the local educational setting reflected in a Multi-Level System of Support (MLSS). Along with high-quality instruction and balanced assessment, the MLSS is most reflective of a multitiered RTI system. Culturally responsive practices, the centerpiece of the Wisconsin model, accounts for and adapts to the linguistic and cultural diversity in schools. The MLSS is intended to systematically provide differing levels of supports

based on student responsiveness to instruction and intervention (Wisconsin RTI Center, 2018).

The RTI process begins with quality core instruction that successfully meets the needs of most students focusing on increased levels of support with fewer students inclusively in the classroom. The universal level of support, Tier 1, combines high-quality instruction guided by the strategic use of data (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017). Garayta (2017) indicated that a successful RTI program results in 80% of students being taught in core programs, Tier 1, based on results of literacy screenings demonstrated on academic performance. Educators face the challenge of delivering instruction that is differentiated for students for a wide range of needs, abilities, and learning styles during core instruction that is both diverse and inclusive.

Commenting on differentiated instruction (DI), Oswald (2016) iterated that although DI is a critical component of Tier 1 universal instruction, there is some research shows that few educators implement it effectively. Researchers such as Oswald (2016) and Ittner (2017) observed that implementation is difficult and often involves educators taking a problem-solving approach to meet all students' needs. Ittner (2017) also raised a significant question regarding Tier 1 pointing out that the targeted percentage is undoubtedly dependent on the differentiated opportunities to learn for all students including ELLs. Thorius and Sullivan (2013) found that of 13 studies reviewed, 11 address Tier 2 interventions only, indicating that the quality and appropriateness of general education instruction in Tier 1 for emergent bilinguals are mostly unaccounted for in the literature. There seems to be some evidence to indicate that if ELLs are failing

to meet benchmarks in Tier 1, there may not have been enough differentiated learning opportunities to support their progress.

Typically, all students receive differentiated instruction at the universal level (Tier 1). When analyzing systematic assessments of their response to the universal instruction, students with reduced skills are identified for increasing levels of intensity in Tiers 2 and 3 (Weddle et al., 2016). The selected level, or Tier 2, includes support for students whose academic needs extend just beyond the universal. This level is intended to be short-term targeting specific lagging skills. In a sustainable application, 5-15% of students require this level of intervention (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017). While there is some research regarding Tier 2 intervention, there is a general lack of research on specific instructional strategies that educators use during Tier 2 instruction (Ray, 2017).

Historically, RTI teams have focused on students with the most intense needs. The intensive level, or Tier 3, is intended for learners, whose needs extend well beyond the reach of the universal, or Tier 1 level. In application, only 1-5% of learners qualify for this level of support (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017). For learners who well-exceed these benchmarks, collaborative teams may also determine that challenge interventions (e.g., compacting) may most appropriately supplant universal level instruction (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2017).

Initial efforts should be equally focused on instructional strategies in both Tier 1 and Tier 2 to prevent the severe problems experienced by students who are candidates for Tier 3 or formal special education evaluation (Weddle et al., 2016). In a meta-analysis, Burns, Appleton, and Stehouwer (in Weddle et al., 2016) indicated that tiered prevention

services might result in significant, positive effect sizes for student academic growth. Results of their study showed that MLSS reduced the number of students evaluated for special education services with the potential of considerably decreasing overrepresentation of culturally and linguistically diverse children in special education (Weddle et al., 2016).

   RTI implementation and ELLs. ELLs are an increasingly diverse group, representing various countries, cultures, and languages. ELLs vary in socioeconomic levels and educational backgrounds. In 2004, legislators and stakeholders recognized disproportionate representation of and an imbalanced curriculum implementation with specific demographic groups, including English learners, in special education programs (Davis 2017; Garayta, 2017; Stapleton, 2017). To address these issues educators, stakeholders, and policymakers began exploring effective instructional methods to meet the unique needs of the increasing culturally and linguistically diverse student population in the United States (NCLB, 2002; Stapleton, 2017). As evidenced by the current achievement gap as well as the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse children identified for intervention, many ELLs are underachieving (Wisconsin Information System for Educators, n.d.). It has been suggested that more than 50% of the core instruction results of school-age children stem not from public policy but from what the instruction in the classroom (Meissner, 2016). A multi-level system of support can help to address the complex needs of students who are working on building academic knowledge in English, while at the same time acquiring another language.

A responsive framework addressing the needs of ELLs is required to ensure that RTI does not become a biased system. Indicators of a responsive framework include a sensitive process for examining the unique background characteristics of ELLs (i.e., experiential, linguistic, and cultural) that impact ELL academic achievement. Furthermore, a responsive framework includes an examination of differentiated classroom instruction and the classroom environment based on knowledge of individual student factors. Moreover, there is evidence of information gathered through formative and summative assessments and unbiased interpretation of all assessment data (Ruffini et al., 2016).

There has been ongoing research on RTI in recent years. However, current research on the implementation of RTI with ELLs is scarce (Stapleton, 2017). Ittner (2017) on understanding the population validity and its significance to generalizability, expresses a need to determine not just what works, but what works for whom. Multiple studies have shown that students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds were found to be disproportionately represented in special education programs (Ittner, 2017; Stapleton, 2017; Sullivan, 2016). Similarly, researchers have found evidence to suggest the lack of pre-referral intervention often resulted in misidentification of ELLs as learning disabled. (Stapleton, 2017). Inaccurate identification by failing to identify or inappropriately identifying ELLs as learning disabled can have a negative impact on academic growth (Stapleton, 2017). Overall, studies highlight the need for additional research on how ELLs react to RTI, including factors such as language proficiency level, quality of intervention, and opportunities to learn.

Teacher Knowledge and Perception

There is concern that the RTI model is being implemented as a one-size fits all approach. This view conflicts with the preventative purpose of RTI that is to provide research-based targeted differentiated instruction to meet the personalized needs of all students, including ELLs (Stapleton, 2017). As a result, many RTI teams prescribe the same interventions to English learners as dominant English students, ignoring the linguistic needs of ELLs. The ambiguity caused by a lack of culturally and linguistically responsive interventions along with inconsistency in implementation iterates the necessity for examining the effectiveness of RTI decision making for English learners.

Many educators struggle to meet the needs of ELLs and have difficulty implementing strategies and techniques that would enhance the RTI process for this diverse group of learners (Collier, 2010; Davis, 2017; Hallett, 2017; Howell, 2016; Meissner, 2016). Similarly, researchers such as Davis (2017) and Ittner (2017) found that educators were unprepared to take evidence-based interventions and differentiate them to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of their ELL students. During a five-month study of RTI, Orosco and Klinger (2012) identified four common themes that contributed to a deficit based RTI model including misalignment in instruction and assessment, negative schooling culture, inadequate teacher preparation, and limited resources. There exists evidence to indicate the necessity for ongoing professional learning and review of teaching strategies to identify which interventions are most effective with ELLs (Ittner, 2017). Summarily, the correlation between insufficient instruction and weak professional

learning and resources result on students placed in intervention not based on academic

indicators but instructional deficits.

High-quality teaching strategies for ELLs. For ELLs to benefit from a

responsive RTI system, educators need to provide linguistic supports in differentiated

instruction and intervention. Educators also need to be provided with ongoing

professional learning and time to plan authentic instruction differentiated at all level of

intervention (Ittner, 2017; Oswald, 2016). Current research identifies the differentiated

instruction as a critical element and component of the RTI process (Oswald, 2016;

Wisconsin RTI Center, 2018). DI is defined as curriculum and instruction that is

engaging, differentiated, standards and research-based, data-driven and culturally and

linguistically responsive (Wisconsin RTI Center, 2018; Oswald, 2016). Studies have

found that when educators move towards using a differentiated approach to their students

learning, they become increasingly responsive to the students they teach resulting in

positive student outcomes that encourages continued teacher development (Oswald,

2016; Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2012). When commenting on differentiated instruction,

Oswald (2016) stated that while most educators believe that differentiation is necessary to

meet the needs of diverse learners in their classrooms, actualization is difficult.

When an ELL struggles academically, educators must consider whether the

student has received research-based high –quality instruction designed for diverse

learners. Currently, there continues to be inconsistent and insufficient information for

educators working with ELLs (Ittner, 2017). Ray (2017) advocated for the use of

scaffolding, which includes teacher modeling and immediate tailored teacher feedback.

About Vygotsky's ZPD (1978), scaffolding similarly utilizes a release of control, fading, and transfer of responsibility methodology from teacher to student.

The concern to be addressed is whether ELLs are receiving equitable access to the curriculum and whether this is the cause of the gap in achievement. Scaffolding throughout a lesson fosters comprehension of content. Collier et al. (2016) argued the need for scaffolding for ELLs on three levels, curriculum, processes, and interaction. An efficient instructional environment for an ELL is one where the curriculum and instruction engage students by building on their linguistic and cultural capital as opposed to addressing only weaknesses (Roe). Roe referred to these assets as funds of identity. Student's language and culture should not be viewed as a liability but a strength (Roe).

Implications

Existing literature has established a need for educators to develop a cultural understanding of their students. Islam and Park (2015) indicated there is a mismatch between educators and students regarding cultural understanding and a lack of research on high-quality instruction for ELLs. Education that blends culturally and linguistically responsive teaching with evidence-based practices increases reading achievement (Garayta, 2017; Ittner, 2017; Miller et al., 2017). Adding linguistic and cultural considerations to an already complicated RTI system requires further professional learning for educators in understanding not only the differences that diversity brings but also how to adjust instruction accordingly.

Linguistic and culturally responsive practices that complement effective instructional practices for ELLs in a multi-level system of support are integral

components in the Wisconsin model of RTI. Hallett (2017) defined culturally responsive teaching as a framework that incorporates student background, language, values, and learning styles. Student demographic and contextual factors contribute to ELL academic progress and language acquisition and must be considered in a tiered system of support (Stapleton, 2017; WIDA Consortium, 2013). Ittner (2017) emphasized the impact of deficit thinking on student learning difficulties. As educators take in to account linguistically or culturally oriented pedagogy, deficit thinking dissipates reducing the over-identification of ELLs into intervention (Hallett, 2017; Ittner, 2017; Stapleton, 2017). Given the possible findings of this study, projects that might be designed as part of this project study include professional learning materials, implementation plan, and an evaluation plan for educator trainings on linguistic and culturally responsive RTI practices (Appendix A). An RTI model that is culturally and linguistically responsive moves away from remediation and toward early intervention to accurately diagnose and address misrepresentation of ELLs in special education.

Summary

Two conceptual frameworks, SIOP® and WIDA RTI² Protocols, operationalize the topic of RTI and ELLs and guided this literature review. There is a significant and growing body of research in the areas of SIOP® and WIDA. Still, according to Fuchs and Fuchs (2017) years after RTI efforts began, there is still little guidance on whether RTI is a valid means to improve academic outcomes for ELLs. The problem I will examine in this case study is the need for greater depth in understanding how research-based experiential, linguistic and culturally responsive instructional strategies and assessments

of ELLs are addressed in a Response to Intervention (RTI) planning and decision-making process.

More recently, educators are focusing on an improved process to implement a multi-level system of support for students whose first language is not English, especially for ELL students in the study site. The literature iterates the need for professional learning for educators on research-based best practices for ELLs that are culturally and linguistically responsive. Implementation integrity with ELLs is a critical issue for RTI teams and can be attributed to a lack of teacher knowledge on language acquisition and best practices for ELLs (Davis, 2017). Professional learning on the use of RTI that is sensitive to the needs of ELLs is an essential element on the road to an improved system of support.

RTI has the potential to improve adoption of evidence-based best practices and abandonment of an ineffective referral and placement process for ELLs, yet years after implementation, research on its application with ELLs provides minimal support to school districts looking to use a multitiered system of support with English learners. Results from this study could provide a significant contribution to the limited body of qualitative research exploring educators' practices in implementing RTI with ELLs.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The process of determining whether an ELL is progressing in step with true peers or is struggling academically, and in need of instructional and socially appropriate interventions, can be involved. RTI is a model that can be used to address the complexities associated with diagnosing academic struggles of ELLs and prescribing instructional and socially appropriate interventions. The problem is the need for greater depth in the understanding of how research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies and assessments of ELLs are addressed in an RTI planning and decision-making process. Both semistructured interviews and document reviews were used to collect, cluster, and categorize data to examine concepts and themes guided by the conceptual frameworks of SIOP®, RQ1, and WIDA RTI², RQ2. The specific questions addressed in this study are as follows:

RQ1: What research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies do educators identify during the RTI decision making process for ELLs?

RQ2: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI decision making process for ELLs?

A. What research-based assessment indicators and data are considered during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs?

B. Are selected academic interventions and progress monitoring decisions

culturally and linguistically appropriate for meeting the needs of ELLs?

Considerable evidence suggests that approaches consisting of early intervention, ongoing progress monitoring, and differentiated classroom instruction associated with RTI are related to improved outcomes for ELL students in reading (Gersten, Newman-Gonchar, Haymond, & Dimino, 2017; Heinemann, Bolanos, & Griffin, 2017). In implementing an RTI approach with ELLs, educators are challenged with determining students' knowledge and skills in their first language and understanding their struggles in a second language. Further complicating the issue is the consideration as to whether best practices for ELLs are implemented in core instruction before referral into formal RTI intervention. This study may have implications for pedagogical practices in the use of an RTI framework with ELLs.

The purpose of this district case study was to explore how learning characteristics of ELLs were addressed through the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process. Because there was limited information on the RTI referral process for ELLs, I focused on the decision-making process of educators who led school-based RTI team meetings. Understanding the unique linguistic and cultural needs of ELLs during the referral process and how this was reflected in placement determination may provide school districts with a body of information that can assist educators revise and refine their procedures. This chapter includes an elaboration of the research design and methodology used to gain an understanding of how educators use RTI with ELLs. Additionally, this section includes a definition of qualitative research and the thought process for selecting

a case study design. Finally, this section includes descriptions of the population, sources of data, data collection procedures, data analysis results, and conclusions.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

A qualitative case study research design was used in this study. Qualitative research integrates subjective human experiences rather than purely objective external reality. The goal is to identify patterns, themes, or hunches that provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Shinde, 2017). The research questions posed in this case study were qualitative questions seeking to determine a pattern or suspicion that provides for the further understanding of the referral considerations of instructional practice, interventions proposed and implemented, and monitoring practice during the implementation of an RTI model. By conducting semistructured interviews and qualitative content analysis during document reviews, I explored how educators take into consideration knowledge of linguistic and cultural backgrounds of English learners during RTI referral. Data acquired were summarized through written narrative and analyzed to identify common themes.

There are distinct identifiable features that contribute to the character of a qualitative study. Qualitative research is field focused. Researchers go into the schools, classrooms, and school districts to collect data that is nonmanipulative. Qualitative researchers examine phenomena as it is, by perceiving its presence and interpreting its significance (Eisner, 2017). Qualitative research is used to understand not merely a behavior but, more profoundly, the meaning the phenomena has for those who experience it.

Justification for Qualitative Use of a Case Study Tradition

According to Yin (2009), a case study is an empirical inquiry investigating a current phenomenon in detail and within context. The purpose of this case study was to explore how learning characteristics of ELLs were addressed through the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process. Using a qualitative case study may provide possible solutions for an ongoing problem in a school district in the Midwest.

A case study was suitable for this research. The case study is a "common approach that focuses on individuals and small groups by documenting their experiences and collecting information from multiple sources and perspectives" (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010, p. 5). Lodico et al. (2010) further defined qualitative research as an approach that uses data from interviews, observations, and document analysis. This study included both semistructured interviews and document reviews to acquire qualitative data. Conducting individual semistructured interviews allowed for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. Information gathered through semistructured interviews and learning team document collection was used to provide data concentrated on increasing the understanding of how learning characteristics of ELLs were addressed through the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process. The data were summarized through a written narrative and analyzed to identify common themes.

Case studies are undertaken to make the case understandable (Stake, 1995). The researcher does not develop a hypothesis about the phenomena. Nor does the researcher

enter the study as an expert about the events of interest. Instead, it is the researcher's responsibility to clearly describe the case context so that the reader might transfer results to similar settings. This tradition aligns with the problem because of a gap in the practice of RTI implementation with ELLs. The findings were specific to a targeted school district yet could be transferable to other districts with similar ethnicities and size.

Rationale for Not Selecting Other Qualitative Research Traditions

There are a variety of methods for qualitative research. A case study was chosen of these qualitative methods: case study, grounded theory research, ethnography research, and phenomenological research. Each technique of these research methods employs similar data collection techniques (Creswell, 2010) of observation, interviews, and review of documents to identify emergent themes using multiple participants. It is the purpose of each that differentiates one from the other.

Phenomenology is used to portray the essential structure of experience and therefore was not selected. Phenomenological studies describe an activity, event, or phenomenon (Creswell, 2010). Whereas phenomenological studies look to describe an action or event, the grounded theory provides a rationalization or argument behind the events (Oktay, 2012). Lodico et al. (2010) wrote that researchers who use the grounded theory use findings in the development of a theoretical framework. Grounded theory research would have been beneficial for this study as the goal was not to develop a theory behind the event. Ethnography design was also not appropriate for this study. According to Creswell (2010), ethnography is used to immerse the researcher into a target culture to produce a detailed record of their beliefs and behaviors. The case study can be

explanatory, exploratory, or descriptive. Because this research was a description of a process, case study was chosen to obtain information from a variety of perceptions (Lodico et al., 2010). In using a case study research design, I began with a problem and acquired data through semistructured interviews and document reviews to reveal themes and potential solutions.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

The purpose of a case study was to describe in-depth an experience through interaction with subjects. I employed both semistructured interviews and document reviews to collect, cluster, and categorize data to examine concepts and themes guided by the SIOP® and WIDA RTI² protocols. The analysis included a synthesis of the experience, adding to the research base on the implementation of RTI with ELLs. Interpretation was based on a combination of researcher perspective grounded in the conceptual frameworks and data collected.

A two-pronged approach was used to address the research questions in this qualitative district case study. The study site was a public-school district in the Midwest serving approximately 19,890 students in 2018. The population included students from urban, rural, and suburban areas. The study site was linguistically diverse with 12% of the students designated as ELLs (Wisconsin Information System for Educators, n.d.). Three times a year, data teams in the study site review data on each student's performance. The RTI model adopted by this school district is predicated on the notion that all students can make adequate growth and that teachers are using research-based strategies in the classroom to meet the needs of students, such as SIOP®, during core

instruction at Tier 1. Each School Data Team examines core instructional practice, fostering conversations about whether outcome data show that the needs of at least 80% of all students, as well as 80% of identified subpopulations, which include race, ELL, and special education are meeting academic standards. The team then plans prevention/differentiation activities that target areas that data analysis suggests need attention. Activities could include reteaching basic skills and or professional learning for staff.

The intervention teams at the study site are responsible for identifying the lowest 20% of each grade level. Each school has as many intervention teams as they have grade levels or content areas. This case study was based on semistructured interviews of educators who chaired the RTI teams. Each intervention team convenes at least every 4 to 6 weeks to evaluate the progress of each of the lowest 20% of students at each grade level. The team reviews the progress monitoring data for each student and sets goals for expected Tier 2 improvement. After analyzing trends, the following progressions may be recommended by the RTI team:

- Group intervention has been successful, and the student no longer needs intervention; progress monitor for 6 weeks after end of intervention to ensure skills are sustained without supports.

- Group intervention has not been successful. The team may consider a new intervention group strategy as it may be ineffective as implemented.

- The intervention is working for the student and should be continued and monitored.

- The intervention is not working for the student and should be revised or refined.

- The student has not made adequate progress (if progress monitoring data suggests student is falling further behind) during the intervention period (at least 12-14 weeks), and, therefore, the team will proceed to the individualized, intensified intervention, or RTI Tier 3.

Interviews were designed to generate participant perceptions and were the first component of this study. Study participants were Instructional Methods Coaches (IMCs), educators who chaired RTI teams, which included classroom teachers who had identified and recommended at least one ELL and one non-ELL student for possible Tier 2 intervention for reading. Before the interview each selected Team Leader was sent an electronic recruitment letter to solicit interest and permission for participation. After expressing interest in participation, final candidates were sent a consent form. Any questions or concerns were addressed individually with candidates.

I scheduled semistructured interviews following the mid-year intervention team meetings. Semistructured interviews were used to address RQ1: How do educators perceive the use of experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs? To engage participants in a focused conversation, interview questions were based on the SIOP® Protocol (Appendix D) which is composed of 30 research-based features of effective instruction for ELLs, grouped into eight components. I selected a semistructured interview approach to allow the participants the freedom to express their views in their own words in gathering

information. Interviews were taped and transcribed to text for analysis and coding. Table

2 shows the SIOP® Component Features.

Table 2

SIOP® Component Features

The SIOP® protocol features	
Component	Feature
Lesson preparation	• Content objectives clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students • Language objectives clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students • Content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students • Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful • Adaptation of content • Meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking
Building background	• Concepts explicitly linked to students' background experiences • Links explicitly made between past learning and new concepts • Key vocabulary emphasized
Comprehensible input	• Speech appropriate for student's proficiency level • Clear explanation of academic tasks • A variety of techniques used to make content concepts clear
strategies	• Ample opportunities provided students to use learning strategies • Scaffolding techniques consistently used to assist and support student understanding • A variety of questions or tasks that promote higher-order thinking skills
Practice and application	• Hands-on materials and/or manipulatives provided for students to practice using new content knowledge • Activities provided for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom • Activities integrate all language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking)
Lesson delivery	• Content objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery • Language objectives clearly supported by lesson delivery • Students engaged approximately 90% to 100% of the period • Pacing of the lesson appropriate to students' ability level
Review and assessment	• Comprehensive review of key vocabulary • Comprehensive review of key concepts • Regular feedback provided to students on their output • Assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives throughout the lesson

Note. Summarized from Echevarría, et al. (2015). *Response to intervention (RTI) and English learners using the SIOP® model* (2nd ed., pp. 128-129). Boston, MA: Pearson.

A qualitative content analysis of the intervention team meeting documentation was used to collect data to address RQ2: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI decision making process for ELLs? Documents reviewed included each student's RTI Individual Student Plan developed after intervention placement and the district Student Progress Monitoring Spreadsheets which were updated monthly. The goal of this qualitative content analysis was to identify themes or categories identified as units of analysis from the WIDA RTI[2] conceptual framework (Appendix C) within relevant documents and provide a description of the social reality created as they were realized in the RTI decision making process for ELLs. The WIDA RTI[2] conceptual framework provided the preliminary base for RQ2 inquiry. An initial list of coding categories imposed by the WIDA RTI[2] conceptual framework was used as a deductive approach to the qualitative content analysis. Table 3 shows the WIDA Seven Integral Factors

Table 3

WIDA Seven Integral Factors

WIDA Seven Integral Factors	
Integral Factor	Indicators
#1: Learning Environment Factors	Includes aspects such as the curriculum used, materials that are culturally and linguistically diverse, physical facilities, and teachers that are knowledgeable about diverse learners and are presented with opportunities to learn about their unique educational needs
#2: Academic Achievement and Instructional Factors	Includes eight components of SIOP®.
#3: Oral Language and Literacy Factors	Include fist language acquisition, second language acquisition, simultaneous ad sequential bilingualism, conversational fluency and academic language proficiency, evidence of instruction in academic language, reinforcing academic language at home, evidence of appropriate literacy instruction in the home language and English, and literacy in the home

#4: Personal and Family Factors	Includes socioeconomic status, family dynamics, expectations, student interests and motivation, experiential background ad parental engagement
#5: Physical and Psychological Factors	Includes physical and psychological factors, malnutrition and chronic hunger, current psychological stress
#6: Previous Schooling Factors	Includes amount of formal schooling in the first or home language, quality of formal schooling in the home language, amount and quality of formal ESL instruction, and congruence of educational approaches
#7: Cross-Cultural Factors	Includes expectations, values, beliefs towards educational experience, staff knowledge of expectations, home languages, proficiency levels, countries of origin, use of interpreters and translator, funds of knowledge and preferences for times, places of meeting etc.

From "Developing a Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Approach to Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI) for English language Learners," by WIDA Consortium, 2013 (https://www.wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx).

Educators' referrals, RTI team plans, and monitoring instruction documents illustrated a range of meanings of the phenomenon couched in experiential, linguistic and culturally responsive indicators referred to in RQ2. O'Leary (2014) provides an eight-step process when selecting documentation for analysis:

- gather relevant texts,

- develop an organization and management scheme,

- make copies of the originals for annotation,

- assess authenticity of documents,

- explore document's agenda, biases, explore background information (e.g., tone, style, purpose),

- ask questions about document (e.g., Who produced it? Why? When? Type of data?), and

- explore content

All documents were firsthand witness solicited sources. To ensure replicability, all analytical procedures and processes were reported to the study site by the researcher. Decisions and methods used during the coding process were articulated to help maintain

trustworthiness of the study. A priori coding and category construction are based on the

WIDA RTI[2] conceptual framework (Appendix C) to integrate the data. Table 4 shows the

Data Collection Timeline.

Table 4

Data Collection Timeline

When	What	Who
Winter (after district benchmark exams)	Identification and recruitment of potential candidates for interview	District RTI Office Researcher
Winter (prior to scheduled intervention team meetings)	Solicit consent from qualified candidates for participation in the study	Educators (4) who have referred one ELL and one monolingual student for intervention
Winter to Spring (following midyear intervention meetings)	Document review	District RTI coordinator Researcher District Assessment and Accountability Office
Spring (following midyear intervention meetings and intervention period)	First and second round of teacher interviews	Educators (4)

Both interviews and qualitative content analysis were required to explore different

aspects of the phenomenon under study. Documentation of how data were generated and

justification of the decisions that were made were included in the research report.

Analysis of the interviews with one another (teachers to teacher), along with document

analysis rendered a holistic understanding of the phenomenon and converge conclusions.

Participants

Careful sampling is crucial in research. Purposeful sampling is often used in case

study design. According to Creswell (2014), multiple cases are often preferable to single

cases. My goal was to present an in-depth picture across several sites. Using a limited

number of participants and subjects provided an opportunity to gain information from various educators across multiple school sites in a single district.

Instructional Methods Coaches (IMCs) were the main source of data for this study, as they were lead teachers participating as core members of RTI teams who make decisions regarding referrals and interventions. To be representative of the population from which they were drawn, a total of four IMCs representing multiple school sites were identified. Participants were chosen based on their participation in the referral of ELLs for intervention. The number of school sites was determined in the research scope by the number of English learners who were referred for intervention at a school. The participant identification process resulted in interview data concerning initial referral and post plan implementation data from 4 IMCs, 7 teachers, and 14 students (7 ELLs and 7 non-ELLs) representing 4 different schools as shown in figure 1.

Unlike questionnaires, qualitative interviews comprise a semi structured interchange between two or more people (Saunders, 2012). Research as to the number of participants treats each interview as a discrete event involving one or more participants. The number of participants depend on the balance between representativeness and quality of responses (Saunders & Townsend, 2016). The IMCs who were identified for face to face interview were identified for their capacity to provide insight across classrooms and schools responding with enough depth to afford salient information in relation to the research purpose and enough breadth to provide for coverage within the responses.

IMC 1	IMC 2	IMC 3	IMC 4
Teacher A ELL Student Non-ELL Student	Teacher B ELL Student Non-ELL Student	Teacher E ELL Student Non-ELL Student	Teacher G ELL Student Non-ELL Student
	Teacher C ELL Student Non-ELL Student	Teacher F ELL Student Non-ELL Student	
	Teacher D ELL Student Non-ELL Student		

Figure 1. Relational representation. This figure illustrates the relationship between the IMC lead teachers, teachers, and students.

Researcher-Participant Relationship

This case study was a combination of document reviews and participant interviews. Professionalism and working relationship were already established prior to the conducting of research. During the time of the data collection I was an employee of the district in the position of director, but with no supervisory role over the participants of this study. The participants were former colleagues from a department separate from my own who already had an established collegial relationship with me.

In all correspondence with participants, steps were taken to ensure that individuals were not easily identified by their responses (Lodico et al., 2010). Additionally, each participant was given a code known only to me, omitting identifiable information and reiterated to the participants of that they could withdraw at any time (Lodico et al., 2010).

As the data was reported, participants names were removed and letters and numbers were assigned (e.g., student 2BN4 or participant 3) and stayed consistent throughout the case study.

Gaining Access and Ethical Considerations

Permission to conduct research in the targeted district began with the submission of the Research/Survey Proposal Request to the Department of Accountability of the targeted school district. A signed copy of the Appropriate Use of Data Agreement to Protect Privacy/Statement of Non-Disclosure to Release Confidential Information form was submitted to the district along with the Research/Survey Proposal Request. Referencing the district policy 6141.6c adopted April of 1999 and modified December 2016, instructional activities or district scope and sequence could not be interrupted or changed unless there was an apparent sign of improvement of the educational program of the district. A copy of all interview questions along with all results and any interpretation of results as part of the project was filed with the Department of Accountability and provided to the Superintendent of the Schools before any findings or interpretations being made public.

Documentation was collected according to the guidelines of Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). A meeting was set up with the district's RTI director to discuss the scope of the research. Educators who met the selection criteria were contacted by e-mail to notify them about the purpose of the study, their possible role, benefits to them, solicit any questions or concerns and request participation. If they were interested in participating, participants were sent a consent form with detailed

information based on IRB requirements. Because I was employed by the school district, participants' email addresses were accessible. Prior to collecting data, participants were informed in writing what the research was about. Consent forms included information for participants outlining information about the proposed study along with details and contact information about the researcher. Consent in writing was requested. As each of the participants was over 18 years old, they could sign their own consent forms. Once written consent to participate was obtained, acknowledged participants were notified by phone. At that time, interview dates and logistics were set.

Empathy is the ability to sense people's emotions and how we understand what others are experiencing as if we are experiencing it ourselves. Building a research-participant working relationship was developed through an empathetic lens. Participants received an e-mail stating the purpose of the study, their role, and the benefits of participating. Also included was a clarification of my role as the researcher and interviewer. My part in this case study was to intentionally choose, interview, document, and assess data provided by each participant. Creswell (2012) stated that researchers who use purposeful sampling, are intentional in selecting participants in the gathering of knowledge. Participants should not be exposed to risks no greater than or additional to those encountered in their day to day life. Assurances were given to participants that all data gathered during the study would be used to create and provide a final project that may support the district's work in RTI.

I reiterated to the participants that their responses and identity will be kept confidential and emphasize the importance of honest perceptions in gathering credible

data to develop a project. The local issue of low reading achievement of ELLs and the system put in place to address this issue was the foundation for this study. To produce a valid and purposeful study, I set aside personal experiences to view the perceptions of others and create interview questions that were void of any personal biases. Participants were assured that their identities and the data gained from them would be kept anonymous. No names would be used in this project study. Participants were also notified of their right to leave the study at any time if they felt uncomfortable. Finally, participants were informed of their right to withdraw their data at any time.

I worked in the district where this study was conducted. I am committed to this local problem because I support programs that address and are accountable for the instructional practices for ELLs. There has been much written about the benefits and challenges of insider positionality about qualitative research. Each of the interviewees knows the researcher and their connection to the study. Ross (2017) iterates the benefits of insider positioning during an investigation in establishing rapport and in the capacity of empathy. Furthermore, there was expediency of rapport building and possible advantages of examination of data with in-depth knowledge of social context.

Issues related to power can also pose a challenge. During this study, the researcher held no evaluative nor influential control over the participants. The position of the researcher was one that is related to the topic but not to the participants. At the same time, shared understandings of relevant information and expectations, on the part of researcher or participant, may affect explicit discussion or may make discussion of critical topics risky or uncomfortable (Chavez, 2008; Ross, 2017). Before the interviews,

all effort was made to ensure the neutrality of position. Ross (2017) notes that shared

experience may be preferable in qualitative research specifically a perception on the part

of the participant that the researcher shares a desire to rectify a universal concern within

the organization. Insider qualitative research requires the researcher to continually reflect

on how one's position related to the phenomena in the study. During this case study, any

related benefits and challenges of insider positionality will be reflected upon and shared

in the narrative.

In consideration of the ethical protection of participants, an IRB application was

submitted with all requested information and explanation including data collection and

data analysis that would be used during the study. Participants who agreed to participate

in the study, through writing, received details outlining the purpose of the study,

voluntary nature of the study, procedures, as well as any risks and benefits of

participating in the study.

All confidentiality procedures and contact information were personally shared by

the researcher with the participants. Participant names and locations of employment

remained confidential before, during, and after the interviews. Participants were given an

identifying code known only to the researcher. All recognizing factors were kept

confidential. Each participant was asked to sign a consent form prior to participating in

the study. Participants were informed that they may be released from involvement at any

time during the investigation. Benefits and potential risks were reviewed with participants

again before the interview. To the greatest extent possible, I ensured that all information

would be kept confidential and contributors were protected from any privacy harm, sensed force, social or economic loss, or psychological stress.

Data Collection

The function of a research design is to confirm that evidence obtained effectively addressed the research problem. The problem examined in this case study was the phenomenon of how research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies and assessments of ELLs were being addressed within a Response to Intervention (RTI) planning and decision-making process. The case study research design chosen for this study was chosen to accurately describe and assess meaning related to an observable phenomenon as a comprehensive study of a problem. In-depth interviewing, where questions are used to get as many details as possible, is a major type of qualitative case study research. Interviews provide a forum for exploring the phenomena that might be difficult to capture in more structured situations (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell, one-on-one interviews are concrete tools for interviewing which are particularly useful for pursuing in-depth information around a topic. In qualitative research, interviews present the researcher opportunity to obtain information with the intention of acquiring data from the participant's perspective. Researchers cannot see how people feel. Interviews, according to Merriam (2009) allow researchers the ability to discover how a situation is interpreted in participant's minds.

In the target district, following a teacher's referral of a student, an Instructional Methods Coordinator (IMC) leads the facilitation of RTI meetings with all stakeholders and is responsible for developing the intervention prescription, which includes the

intensity of the intervention and procedures for monitoring progress. The primary
methods of data collection in this study was recorded interviews of the IMCs. Audiotapes
were recorded during interviews to provide for more consistent and accurate transcription
(Creswell, 2012). To collect data for RQ1: What research-based experiential, linguistic,
and culturally responsive instructional strategies do educators identify during the RTI
decision making process for ELLs, semistructured interviews were conducted with four
IMCs using a researcher-developed semistructured interview guide. Ten Interview open-
ended questions were asked of the four IMCs within a one-hour time-frame. Questions
for the interview guide were generated from SIOP® Protocol (Echevarría et al., 2000).

After transcribing the interviews, the transcripts were compared for accuracy
against the recorded file for accuracy. Data generated from the interviews were used to
gain general information, insights, attitudes, experiences and subjective perceptions of
the RTI process as it was implemented in specific student cases. According to Creswell
(2014), interview data should be checked for accuracy using member checking and
triangulation. All recorded and transcribed interview data were uploaded into NVivo for
coding. Participants were provided an open invitation at the end of the interview to
discuss the findings and to review the transcripts and will have access to the final
publication upon completion.

Interviews were conducted at the participants' choice of location to provide for a
safe environment and ensure transparency as qualitative research is most effective when
conducted in a natural setting (Lodico et al., 2010). Two interviews were held at a local
coffee house and two were conducted at the District Administration Building. Due to the

scheduling of the initial interviews set after student RTI resolution were made,

participants were asked if they would like to continue to the second set of post placement

questions (Appendix B). Each participant agreed to address the follow-up questions

which addressed the student post intervention period as part of the initial interview.

A qualitative content analysis of the intervention team meeting documentation

was used to collect data to address RQ2: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally

responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during

the RTI decision making process for ELLs? Two sets of documents pertaining to the

seven ELL and seven non-ELL students from seven different teachers identified were

analyzed along with student demographic data. Documents reviewed included each

student's RTI Individual Student Plan developed after intervention placement and the

district Student Progress Monitoring Spreadsheets updated monthly.

Types and Sources of Information or Data

Interviews. Semistructured interviews were conducted with IMCs, who focused

on the actions of specific teachers and associated ELL and Non-ELL students referred for

RTI in reading, during general considerations following RTI referral and placement.

Since all students are considered Tier 1, the focus students of each teacher were students

recommended for Tier 2. Interviews supported the purpose of the study by exploring

which research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional

strategies educators identify during the RTI decision making process for ELLs.

Source of interview questions. The SIOP® Protocol (Echevarríaet al., 2000)

provided the lens through which the interview questions were generated. Questions were

created that dealt directly with the components and features of the SIOP® Protocol. The questions examined teachers' use of cultural and linguistic instructional practices for ELLs. A second part of each interview asked the IMC participant to focus their responses on the implementation of the prescription process and the progress of referred students following the intervention period. I allowed the participants to express their opinions freely during the interview in casual conversation while using follow-up questions for clarification when appropriate. During the interviews, a conversation partnership (Rubin & Rubin, 2012) was encouraged creating a congenial and cooperative experience. Each interviewee was considered distinctive with individual experiences, knowledge, and perspective.

Document review. RTI Student Plans, monitoring instructions, RTI Progress Monitoring Spreadsheets, and student linguistic and demographic data were used to collect data for the document review using a qualitative content analysis addressing RQ2: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI decision making process for ELLs? Documents were requested by email to the local Director of RTI. The RTI Plans, linguistic and demographic data were available on the district data base for each individual student and were downloaded into NVivo. The RTI Progress Monitoring Spreadsheets were provided to the researcher in paper format. They were photographed and uploaded into the researcher's data repository. In this document review, qualitative a priori coding was conducted using indicators from the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) RTI² Protocol (WIDA Consortium, 2013) (Appendix C). A

document review supported the purpose of the study by exploring which research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional considerations educators use during the RTI decision making process for ELLs.

System for Tracking Data

I used both hand-written and electronic methods to record data. Google Docs was used to maintain notes electronically. I used a personal reflective journal to record all provided information while comparing the collected notes to the research questions. Media files of the recordings, transcriptions, Student Intervention Plans and photos of Monitoring Documents were uploaded and maintained on NVivo. Interviews were color-coded using a Google Sheet to easily track data. Summary write-ups for both RQ1 and RQ2 included transcriptions, labels, and codes (Creswell, 2014). The RQ1 eight themes and RQ2 seven themes were combined to three broad categories. According to Creswell (2014) five to seven themes are adequate to discuss the findings of the study.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

</div>

Information regarding the differentiation of prescriptions from RTI between ELLs and non-ELL students in upper elementary grades, implementation of the prescription, and appropriateness of selected strategies were examined. After transcription, the data was imported into the NVivo 7 qualitative analysis software package for transcription analysis. Interview data that is aligned with the conceptual framework was grouped and categorized using coding through NVivo qualitative analysis software. An attribute is a property of a node, case or document. An attribute may have several values. Any node, case, or document may be assigned one value for each attribute. Similarities within or

differences between groups can be identified using attributes. Using a computer-assisted technique improved procedure standardization, potentially increased efficiency, enhanced completeness, and permitted greater flexibility in revising the review process. Documents were reviewed, grouped and categorized using a Google document. The SIOP® conceptual framework in the case of RQ1 and WIDA RTI[2] conceptual framework in the case of RQ2 were used to generate attribute values.

Coding Data

Data analysis was conducted as soon as data collection occurred. Merriam (2009) points out the importance of simultaneous data analysis and selection noting that the task can become not only overwhelming, but it also jeopardizes the potential for more useful data and findings. Data collection and analysis is a process that includes ongoing "organization, reduction, consolidation, comparison and reconfiguration" (Suter, 2012, p. 360). To obtain in-depth information on perceptions, insights, attitudes, experiences, or beliefs, interviews and a document review were used for gathering subjective perceptions on strategies and assessments used with referred ELLs and non-ELLs.

In response to RQ1, all data were analyzed with an inductive approach. I first filed all field notes collected from the interviews and uploaded the interview recordings to NVivo. Using the NVivo transcription service, the interviews were transcribed in their entirety and uploaded into NVivo. The transcriptions were then reviewed, checked for accuracy, and corrected by the researcher against the audio recordings. Descriptive information (e.g., date of interview, school code, teacher code), and units of text each received their own cells in a matrix, enabling comparison and analytic induction as rows

and columns were scanned and later rearranged for query. A priori codes were established based on the conceptual framework and open codes (line by line coding) followed to assist in developing subthemes. Coding is a process of finding and labeling concepts, themes, events and examples in transcript that speak to the research question (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The transcriptions were read and a priori coded based on the eight components of the SIOP® protocol (see Table 1). All interviews were sorted and resorted, comparing the excerpts between different participants and then summarizing the results of each sorting. Each transcript was color-coded to enhance the ease of analysis.

The transcriptions were reviewed several times to assist with increasing the validity of the questions/responses. After weighing different versions, descriptions from different interviewees were integrated to complete a picture. The interview data was organized into a spreadsheet and I remained open to any answers and responses to identify themes as they emerged. Participant responses were used to maintain focus on research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies educators identified during the RTI decision making process for ELLs.

In addressing RQ2, all data was requested, received and collected. Data was uploaded and placed into NVivo. Data sources included student demographic information, the Student Tracking Form and Student Response to Intervention Plans for fourteen students, seven ELLs and seven non-ELLs. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), "the review of existing, relevant and contextual documents is an essential component of data collection and analysis" (p.171). The process of coding mirrored that of RQ1. A priori coding was used based on the conceptual framework, WIDA RTI[2]

protocol (see Table 3). Information contained within the documents were coded multiple times, first to identify concepts followed by a second round of coding to identify more discrete code associations and possible themes.

Qualitative data involves cross-checking multiple data sources and collection procedures to the point of saturation. A significant strength of case study design is the use of various data sources (Yin, 2009) with the goal of corroboration and converging evidence (Suter, 2012). RTI team reports and student linguistic and demographic data were available through the district data and information repository, Infinite Campus. Through an examination of RTI team member documentation as they recorded placement and proposed interventions for referred ELL and non-ELL students, a pattern of recurring characteristics, or lack of, became apparent. Rubin and Rubin (2012) pointed out that qualitative researcher's treat documents in a manner like transcripts. Additionally, documents should not be treated as literal renditions of fact, but rather an interpretation of events. Documents are most useful when combined with interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Interviews along with qualitative document analysis provided comparable data among and between participants as well as between different types of data sources.

Accuracy and Credibility

The goal of this case study was to answer the research questions as articulated. Case studies involve studying a case of contemporary or real-life events (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Case study research may employ multiple data sources including observation, interviews, documents, and artifacts. Both semistructured interviews and a document review were used in this study as the major sources of data collection. The research

questions were based on two conceptual frameworks. All data and information related to the research questions and aligned with the purpose of this study which was to explore how learning characteristics of ELLs are addressed through the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process framework, aiding in identifying children with emerging difficulties so that personalized, targeted differentiated instruction is delivered at the study site. While employing a single strategy does not guarantee accuracy and credibility, there are multiple measures researcher can employ to help support validity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Member checks and dialogic engagement accompanied by data triangulation were used to clarify and ensure accuracy and credibility in my research.

Discrepant Cases

Dependability can be achieved through design features. Reporting of discrepancies were identified through triangulation of data, dialogic engagement, and member checks for interviews (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Suter (2012) likened dependability to the concept of reliability in quantitative research. By following the RTI process over multiple meetings, I identified features that remain constant over time. Also, triangulation of data using various sources, including interviews and multiple document sources from follow up team documentation, enhanced dependability. Prior to use, interview questions were reviewed outside of the study participants to uncover and bring to light any preconceptions and biases. Also, by using the indicators identified in the SIOP® conceptual framework and WIDA RTI² conceptual framework, subjective coding was minimized during data analysis. During the member checks, participants were

offered a copy of the transcriptions to review for the accuracy of their own data. There were no participant requests for transcript reviews. Through ongoing dialogic engagement, the researcher and external source outside of the study met to identify any discrepancies that did not support the themes resulting from data. Information and codes that did not fit a specific theme or category were documented.

Limitations

Criticism of the case study method includes the limited generalizability of what is observed from a single entity across different situations. This district case study included comparisons across multiple units of analysis, including staff and schools, that yielded similar findings that may be transferred across contexts. However, there are identifiable limitations. First is the fact that this case study was conducted in a single school district. While the participating educators were representing multiple schools, they functioned within the same guidelines, policies, and procedures directed by the RTI Office in the study site. Also, I only examined RTI in the context of reading in grades 3, 4, and 5. Findings may not be transferrable across content areas or grade levels. In addition, the results might not be applicable to districts using other RTI models or districts with a different demographic profile.

Interviews are a data collection method that has limitations regarding its ability to reflect accurately the interviewee's perspectives. Although the descriptive and interpretive work gave this study strength, it also prevented it from being free from bias, because all observations and analyses are filtered through one's worldview, values, and perspectives. The teachers' answers to the interview questions might have been biased in

that they were insecure to share their lack of knowledge on implementing the RTI referral process with ELLs or lacked an understanding of best practice with ELLs. The teachers may have felt stress or apprehension when being interviewed due to the necessity to follow district requirements and guidelines.

The objectivity of the researcher in this study was another limitation because she is a member of the school community studied. Rubin and Rubin (2012) asserted interviews can be used to strengthen the validity of the interpretation if they are conducted with various participants. A relationship of trust between the researcher and participants in this case study was already existent. By acknowledging this throughout the duration of this project, an attempt was made to remain neutral in the actual conduct and outcomes of the research so that, as much as possible, personal interests would not become a source of bias when conducting the study or interpreting data.

Data Analysis Results

Findings for this study were based on document reviews and interview data of initial referral and post plan implementation data from 4 IMCs, 7 teachers, and 14 students (7 ELLs and 7 non-ELLs) from 4 different schools. Each teacher was identified because they taught in grades 3-5 and had referred two students for Tier 2 reading intervention, one ELL and one non-ELL, from their classroom. The IMCs were lead teachers who facilitated the RTI referral meetings for the referred students. After participant identification, each IMC was sent an initial email providing general summary of the study and a request for participation to be interviewed and an opportunity to ask questions. The researcher then sent consent forms to each IMC who agreed to be

interviewed. The form again explained the purpose of the interviews and highlighted both risks and benefits of participation. The form also explained the option of ending their participation at any time during the study. Times and locations of the interviews were chosen by the participants. Since the interviews were held after students were placed into intervention, participants were able to choose to continue to the post intervention follow up interview questions at the initial interview or schedule a separate time. The interview protocol included 10 semistructured questions with an additional 4 post intervention follow up questions (see Appendix B). Participants' interviews were recorded using an audio recorder. Recordings and transcriptions were uploaded into the NVivo qualitative analysis software.

After receiving district approval for research, emails were sent to the Director of RTI requesting access to district RTI data related to the fourteen pre identified students. Demographic data was obtained from the district data base system Infinite Campus along with copies of each student's Student RTI Plans. Additionally, hard copies of the district RTI Progress Monitoring Spreadsheets were provided by the RTI Director. All documents were uploaded into the NVivo software for coding. Once all documents were collected, data were recoded into a Google Sheet for coding and analysis.

RQ1: Instructional Practice

RQ1 focused on instructional practices used by teachers for instructing English language learners prior to formal referral for Tier 2 intervention. Four IMCs working with seven teachers and fourteen students completed the interview process. All interviews were conducted face to face and ranged between 1 and 1 ½ hours. The data collected

provided little evidence of teacher knowledge of or use of research-based culturally responsive instructional strategies shown to be effective in addressing the needs of the ELLs in their classrooms prior to formal referral to RTI or during the formal RTI decision making process. Teachers voiced ambivalent attitudes toward the need to or their ability to differentiate instruction based on the needs of ELLs. Patterns, themes, and relationships were analyzed and aligned to the following research question: What research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies do educators identify during the RTI decision making process for ELLs?

The SIOP® Protocol, as a model for instruction, includes eight critical features that must be attended to during instruction preparation and delivery that responds to the unique academic and language needs of ELLs (Echevarría et al., 2013). Interview data were a priori coded using the key components of the SIOP® Model which included: Lesson Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice & Application, Lesson Delivery, and Review & Assessment (Echevarría et al., 2015). According to Echevarría et al., the SIOP® Model of sheltered instruction supports RTI by providing a framework for "purposeful and principled decision making that is based on students' strengths and needs" (p. 63). A successful RTI program is one where teachers create an environment where they can identify and respond to difficulties early on by providing students the type of differentiated instruction, identified in the SIOP® model, that meets all students' needs.

Lesson preparation. Lesson preparation is foundational for delivering targeted grade-level effective lessons for ELLs. Teachers must clearly define content and

language objectives which are defined, displayed and reviewed with the students.

Supplementary materials should be used to a high degree to make the lesson

comprehensible and meaningful. Adaptation and modification of content needs to be

evidenced. Finally, lesson plans must include a variety of activities that integrate content

concepts with language practice in all four domains of language.

None of the teachers included specific SIOP® aligned provisions in their lesson

plans for ELLs, either prior to referral or after the referral. When participants were asked

whether teachers identified any differentiation in Tier 1 instruction prior to referral, the

majority commented that it was not until the actual intervention referral meeting where

the unique needs of ELLs were addressed. As one interviewee said: "little consideration

of the background of the student was considered prior to referral for intervention"

(personal communication, 2019). Additionally, one teacher did not know if the English

learner student she referred to RTI was an ELL. An MCI shared that there were times

when she asked teachers about the language proficiency level of an ELL student that the

teacher responded, "I am not sure" and another responded, "I didn't realize they were an

English language learner" (personal communication, 2019). When talking about lesson

preparation for ELLs, an interviewee said, "Most teachers are coming out of

undergraduate and graduate school not understanding a lot about English language

acquisition and how to support English language learners during instruction" (personal

communication, 2019). According to interview data, all participants agreed that lesson

preparation was not aligned with the SIOP® Model prior to referral.

Building background. The SIOP® Model encourages teachers to begin all new learning by knowing what the students already know and what they can bring to the experience. The goal of building background is to connect the students to both the language and content of the lesson. This linking is bridging is achieved in three ways. First, teachers must link concepts to the student's backgrounds and experiences. Next, new concepts must also be linked to past learning. The final feature of building background is to emphasize key vocabulary for students. Echevarría et al. (2013) believe that by building a student's background knowledge, teachers can effectively move students from where they are to a higher level of understanding. Building background is not only about the students, but also assists teachers in capturing the pulse of what students know and possible connections they may already have.

Each interviewee identified vocabulary as a main deficit for their students who were referred. Participant C shared, "there's a lot of vocabulary support going on right now (in intervention)" (personal communication, 2019), whereas three of the four interviewees questioned whether the vocabulary support provided to students was appropriate given the students' language levels. One interviewee stated, "teachers are not doing any kind of contrastive analysis or looking at different systems, the linguistics of another language" (personal communication, 2019). Further, some interviewees were concerned that students who were identified as having vocabulary deficits are simply in the natural stages of language acquisition. "They know this is a new student to the country learning English, but do they understand what that means? Can their vocabulary development be brought into Tier 1" (personal communication, 2019)? As one

interviewee put it, "there needs to be the building of concepts and vocabulary in Tier 1 prior to referral. Teachers should be including strategies to build vocabulary" (personal communication, 2019). Inadequate undergraduate training was offered as an excuse for lack of knowledge concerning the effects of cultural background on ELLs in learning to read.

   Comprehensible input. If information and lessons are presented in a manner in which they are inaccessible to students, such as reading selections that are too high a level for students with no additional visual or graphic support, or teachers who lecture at a pace that make comprehension difficult, ELLs will be unable to access the content expectations due to their unique language needs not being addressed. ELLs require modifications and adaptations to make content comprehensible and content objectives attainable. Teachers must pay attention to the language they use to consciously make the content and language accessible to students (Echevarría et al., 2013). Comprehensible input includes using speech that is appropriate for the ELL's proficiency level, ensure clear explanation of tasks, and the use of a variety of techniques to make concepts comprehensible.

   Vocabulary and reading comprehension were both identified by all interviewees as student needs, and included in the documents, as the deficit needs of all the ELLs in this case study. Three of four interviewees shared teachers' justification for referral as, "they (ELLs) are reading fluently, but their comprehension is still behind" (personal communication, 2019). That said, teachers understand the need for additional support, "the students do better when there is supporting visual representation with the passages"

(personal communication, 2019). Yet all interviewees felt that modification and sheltering was not happening on a regular basis prior to referral.

During RTI referral meetings, teachers shared the belief that what they were doing for all students was the right thing. One interviewee echoed teachers' sentiments that, "There's a misperception of how to meet kid's needs, to bring in all kid's needs. Because when you're doing it for one, you're doing it for all" (personal communication, 2019). Teacher concerns over equity was shared by two interviewees. For example, one interviewee shared that teachers will say, "If a child is struggling with vocabulary or comprehension, there are other kids in the classroom that are likely struggling with this as well. English learners are considered just another struggling student with reading comprehension and vocabulary. This guides their instruction" (personal communication, 2019). There was also concern expressed regarding the fairness of students getting something different from the rest of the class. All participants agreed that without a change of instructional practice prior to referral, ELLs will continue to be referred for intervention for deficits in comprehension and vocabulary, not as part of an English acquisition program, but as an academic disparity.

Strategies. Learning strategies, scaffolding, and higher order thinking skills are addressed within this SIOP® Model component. Three types of learning strategies that have been identified in the research literature include metacognitive, cognitive, and language learning strategies (Echevarría et al., 2013). Cognitive strategies equip students with the skills they need to access content through self-regulated learning. Metacognitive strategies help students monitor their learning. Language learning strategies help students

increase their language proficiency and, in turn, increase their comprehension. Learning

is most effective when ELL students are provided opportunities to develop learning

strategies that are cognitive, metacognitive, and language based (Echevarría et al., 2013;

De Oliveira, 2019). Features of the strategies' component include ample opportunity

provided for students to use learning strategies, scaffolding techniques, and a variety of

questions or tasks promoting higher-order thinking skills.

Prior to Tier 2 referral, teachers were responsible for understanding and

addressing cultural and linguistic characteristics of ELLs during core instruction and for

using this information to differentiate and individualize instructional delivery for both

language and content. Teachers were also expected to create a learning environment that

would challenge ELLs academically while, at the same time, support their language

development. However, each of the four interviewees shared that the instructional

practices of the classroom did not always reflect a knowledge of the language acquisition

process and ELL pedagogy. One interviewee notably captured the essence of teacher

instruction prior to an ELL referral to RTI, "You have some teachers who didn't even

know the student was flagged LEP. If they don't know they're LEP then there's probably

no sheltering or scaffolding going on in core instruction" (personal communication,

2019).

Interviewees were asked why they felt sheltering techniques were not being used

in core instruction for ELLs to address students' linguistic and cultural needs based on

the student's proficiency levels. Reasons offered for lack of use research-based strategies

for ELLs in core instruction shared by teachers included, "It's not that we have uncaring

teachers. It's one kid out of 30. They have one ELL in their class. You know they'll just

pass them on." Another interviewee said, "You must understand the constraints of a

teacher with 30 kids and you're expecting them to know so much about just one.

(personal communication, 2019).

Additionally, evidence of immersive thinking of ELLs with respect to their

linguistic and cultural needs was shared. Interviewees described how teachers explained

the lack of sheltering prior to Tier 2 referral as, "This is what I see in the classroom

without any kind of consideration. I don't care what their language background is. They're

in an English classroom. The parents have chosen to put them in an English classroom.

They have to perform English academic skills" (personal communication, 2019). Another

interviewee shared this comment from a teacher, "I'm teaching in English. They must

learn English. If they're not learning in English, there must be an academic deficit that

needs to be dealt with in a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention. (personal communication, 2019).

Harklau and Yang (2019) argued that educators of ELLs must assure that ELLs

receive supplemental linguistic support to make instruction accessible and

comprehensible in mainstream classrooms. Several studies highlight the importance of

teachers' knowledge about language acquisition and language learning and highlight their

importance during core instruction for English learners (Johnson, 2019; Ramirez et al.,

2019). What seemed missing was a lack of strategic metacognitive, cognitive or linguistic

strategies during core instruction prior to referral. Evidence pointed to teachers using

strategies and assessment practices that had minimal relevance to the English learners'

culture and language. What resulted from the misalignment of instruction and assessment

was the recommendation of ELL students for RTI Tier 2 support services and progress monitoring.

      Interaction. Opportunities to interact with one another, with the teacher, and with their native language that encourage elaborated responses about lesson concepts are evidence of best practice for ELLs. Researchers have found that ELLs were more engaged academically when working in small groups or with partners (Diaz-Rico, 2012; Lourdunathan & Menon, 2017; Saeed, Khaksari, Eng & Ghani, 2016). Grouping configurations should not be arbitrary and must support both the language and content objectives of the lesson. Wait time and first language clarification are also considered features of the interaction component from the SIOP® model.

      All interviews included the component "interaction" in reference to ESL support services and when ELLs were placed into Tier 2 intervention. Grouping configurations were not identified based on content or language objective, but on skill deficit during intervention. Teachers shared that once the ELLs qualified for Tier 2 intervention, they would split all students, including ELLs, into multiple groups. As two interviewees said, "During intervention, students are split into two (or small) groups and work preferably in partners if working on tasks from the intervention menu" (personal communication, 2019). Support from English as a Second Language specialists at the schools was the only interaction evidenced during Tier 1 instruction, and even that varied from site to site. As one interviewee shared, "Support (ESL) varies from school to school, so students who may typically not receive support services at one school will be identified in another"

(personal communication, 2019). There was no reference to wait time and first language (L1) support was only mentioned as an option for students in bilingual programs.

Practice and application. It is well established that practice and application are essential for student success. It is a time where students are provided meaningful ways to apply the lesson's content and language. According to Echevarría et al. (2013), research on the SIOP® Model found that lessons that are hands-on, visual, and include kinesthetic tasks benefit ELLs as language and content are practiced through multiple modalities. Features of practice and application include hands-on materials or manipulatives and activities applying both content and language by integrating all four language domains.

There was no mention by any teacher during the interviews of the use of hands-on materials and/or manipulatives provided for students to practice using new content knowledge. Additionally, activities provided for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom and activities strategically designed to integrate all language skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) prior to referral to intervention were also not evidenced in any interviews prior to referral. It was only after students were referred and placed into Tier 2 intervention that practice and application were evidenced in the interview data.

Lesson delivery. Lessons for English learners are effective when language and content objectives are met. Lesson delivery refocuses on both content and language objectives with the expectation that teachers deliver instruction that addresses objectives in a manner that is appropriately paced and engaging. The lesson delivery component is an opportunity for self-reflection. If the objectives are not being met, student engagement

is lagging or pacing is inappropriate, the issue may be in the delivery of the instruction. Two interviewees spoke of adjustments to accommodate students. One interviewee stated, "teachers can adjust the computer program, Reading Plus®, to accommodate the needs of students in the areas of comprehension, vocabulary, and /or visual tracking" (personal communication, 2019). A second interviewee verified, "There are work arounds to adjust the program (Reading Plus®)" (personal communication, 2019). There was no reference to effective lesson delivery prior to referral and placement into the Tier 2 intervention, Reading Plus®. With adjustment, two IMCs felt that Reading Plus® was a successful program for ELLs for Tier 2 intervention.

Review and assessment. Even though Review and Assessment is the final component in the SIOP® Model, it is not left as a final step in a lesson. Rather, it is expected that review and assessment in ongoing. Throughout the various steps of the lesson, teachers should be reviewing key vocabulary and key concepts and providing regular feedback to students. In this way, there is a continuous assessment of student comprehension with the opportunity to adjust instruction as needed. According to Echevarría et al. (2015), during summative and formative assessment, multiple and differentiated indicators need to be used for students to demonstrate their understanding of the content and language instruction (p. 63).

During interviews with IMCs, two types of assessment were consistently mentioned by all participants, benchmarking and progress monitoring. To qualifying for referral into Tier 2 intervention, students need to score in the lowest 20% in the Measure of Academic Progress® (MAP®) assessment in the study district. MAP® are computer-

adaptive assessment tests produced by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). MAP® scores are used in the study site to identify students at risk, help individualize instruction, evaluate student progress, and demonstrate adequate academic achievement. Two interviewees stated that schools use MAP® data, "as a starting point" (personal communication, 2019) to the referral process.

In conclusion, the interview data provided little evidence of teacher knowledge of or use of research-based culturally responsive SIOP aligned instructional strategies in addressing the needs of the ELLs in their classrooms prior to formal referral to RTI or during the formal RTI student review process. Some teachers were ambivalent about there being a need to or their ability to differentiate instruction for ELLs or for any students in their classes. The only individualized strategy cited by the teachers for both ELLs and non-Ells was the assignment of the independent computer program Reading Plus®.

RQ2: RTI Decision Making

What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI decision making process for ELLs? The RTI document reviews, along with a second set of interview questions, showed little consideration of cultural or linguistic factors as outlined in the conceptual framework of the WIDA RTI2 Protocol (WIDA Consortium, 2013), during the RTI decision making process for ELLs in considering Tier 2 intervention identification and placement. Both ELLS and non-Ells were assigned the same individual computerized intervention to address reading needs.

Data drawn from the coding from participant interviews, documents from referral

meetings, and plans developed for students during RTI meetings were used to study R2.

Progress and intervention services were recorded in two places in the study site, a

spreadsheet housed in a Google Share Drive, accessible only to the RTI team members,

and the Student RTI Plan accessible on the district database. The individual student

Response to Intervention Plan contained basic demographic information applicable to all

students such as name, address, etc. The Student Response to Intervention Plan is shown

in figure 2.

Plan Information			
Content Area: Reading	Tier: 2	Start Date: 01/26/2018	End Date: 06/01/2018
Plan Description:			
Base Score: 90	Goal Score: 111	Evaluation Method/Tool: AIMS	
Base Score Comments:			
Goal Score Comments:			
Goal Name:		Goal Type:	
Plan Success: Recommend Tier 1			

Student Information			
Student Name:	DOB:		Student Number: 1
Address:			
School of Attendance:	Grade: 04	Gender:	Race (Ethnicity Code): Hispanic/Latino

Parent/Guardian Information				
Parent/Guardian				
Last Name:		First Name:		
Address:	City:		State:	Zip:
Home Phone:	Work Phone:		Cell Phone:	
Email:	Relationship to Student:		Primary Language:	

Intervention					
Intervention Planned	Providers	Minutes	Frequency	Duration	Location
Reading: Research Based Strategy Tier II		30.0	3.0 per week	01/26/2018 - 06/01/2018	

Intervention Deliveries
No intervention delivery data has been entered.

Figure 2. Response to intervention student plan.

RQ2-A. What research-based assessment indicators and data are considered

during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs? Factors outlined in the WIDA RTI[2]

Protocol (WIDA Consortium, 2013) were used for the coding of documents. According to the protocol, as educators create more linguistically and culturally responsive environments for core instruction, teams can additionally consider the assigning of interventions for English learners who need additional supplementary support to access a core curriculum that is sheltered for language. During the solution seeking process, it is important to consider the following factors: Learning Environment, Academic Achievement and Instructional Factors, Oral Language and Literacy Factors, Personal and Family Factors, Physical and Psychological Factors, Previous Schooling Factors, and Cross-Cultural Factors (WIDA). There was little evidence in the document or from the interviews that WIDA factors deemed important were considered during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs.

Learning environment. According to WIDA (2013), the learning environment created for ELLs, "is the most comprehensive of the seven factors" (pg.13). The learning environment addresses aspects that are unique to educating ELLs including equitable learning conditions for all students and should be discussed when seeking solutions for ELL students. Included in the learning environment are curricula, culturally and linguistically responsive resources, and teachers who are trained and licensed to address the unique needs of ELLs, the role of the home language and culture and identification of service delivery models (WIDA, 2013). When coded for learning environment, documents from the study site did not address the role of the home culture. On the district spreadsheet, four of the seven ELL students were identified by language proficiency levels, with no other reference to their ELL status. Reference was made to home language

in the individual student Response to Intervention Plans where the primary language of the parent/guardian was to be filled in. However, of the fourteen student RTI Plans examined, none of the primary language sections were filled in.

Academic achievement and instructional factors. Data examples for the academic achievement and instructional integral factors include longitudinal information including formative and summative assessments, attendance patterns and outcomes over time (WIDA Consortium, 2013). There were two opportunities in documents where teachers were able to input information which might have aligned with Academic Achievement and Instructional Factors pertaining to best practice with English learners. In the deliveries section of the Response to Intervention Plans, staff could write a narrative to address the unique need of ELLs or other students. That said, all fourteen ELL and non-ELL student plans read the same, "No intervention delivery data has been entered" (Response to intervention Plan, 2019). However, on the Response to Intervention Plans, students' progress monitoring data were entered on all student plans including the base scores and goal scores using the Aims assessment tool.

The intervention spreadsheets were more comprehensive in denoting intervention information and assessment data, including ELL (ESL status not proficiency level), special education status, and monthly comments. As there were no dedicated columns, any additional data along the WIDA RTI2 seven integral factors would have needed to have been stated in the monthly comment boxes. In review of the district RTI data spreadsheet, teachers were requested to input monthly comments beginning in September and continuing through April. Review of the student RTI spreadsheet showed

inconsistent notation with 70% of the comments missing. Upon review, teacher entries included general assessment comments such as "Aims probes were higher", and "above target 8 data points", along with general growth statements such as "making progress" or "good progress". Monthly comments from teachers on the progress monitoring spreadsheets for English Learners referred for Tier 2 interventions showed a focus on behavior, many of which could have been reflective of ELLs in the stages of language acquisition. Notations such as "is very quiet and does not participate" and, "they just don't want to participate" were listed. These may have been indicative of a lack of understanding in classroom teachers of the language acquisition process (e.g. affective filter, quiet period) and instructional approaches to support ELLs. Attendance issues were listed as a comment one month for one student.

Oral language and literacy factors. ELLs are best supported when schools and teachers focus on listening and speaking along with the academic language development (WIDA Consortium, 2013). Important for the oral language and literacy factors are the stages of language acquisition. Upon review, the RTI recording documents were not inclusive of information that would proactively gather the important descriptive information about the English learners that were being referred. However, interviewees shared that the RTI referral meetings provided for an authentic context in which to understand ELLs and provide for appropriate referrals for those ELL students who are not responding adequately to core instruction. WIDA suggested the following:

> Central to any effective solution-seeking process is a collaborative, multi-
> perspective team. Teams should include classroom teachers and professionals

from the fields of Bilingual/ESL as well as from special education and related

services (e.g., speech-language clinicians, school psychologists), social workers

reading specialists, administrators, cultural liaisons, and parents, among others.

These teams work more effectively and productively when they share certain

pedagogical and interpersonal principles. (p. 22)

During the referral meetings, IMCs contextualized teacher observations as being

knowledgeable about the process students go through in acquiring a new language. As

one interviewee shared, "When we talk about language with academics, once they

understand that language part of it, they rethink the intervention referral. It's not an

academic piece at this point. So, we put him on a watch list." This again reiterates the

importance of the team decision making process led by IMCs as well the need for

professional learning for the educators whose position requires the referral and

monitoring of English learners in an RTI process, "It's taking that initiative to learn about

the students and where they're coming from and the differences that they're bringing with

them and possibly explaining some of the behaviors and actions and deficits that they're

demonstrating" (personal communication, 2019).

  Personal and family factors. Personal and family factors are much deeper than

demographic information. These factors include such indicators as interests, aspirations

parental engagement and experiential background. There was no evidence from the

interviews or plan documents that personal or family factors were used in developing the

plan.

Physical and psychological factors. For physical and psychological factors, WIDA (2013) highlights the fact that students' physical and psychological well-being are both "foundational and inextricably connected to their learning" (p. 20) and success in school. These factors include health conditions, mental health, social and emotional development, and feelings of safety and security. The only evidence of consideration of physical and psychological factors from the documents provided was the mention of one student's confidence level, "confidence is growing".

Previous schooling factors. Previous schooling including interrupted formal education, variance in terms of philosophy, amount of support or lack of cohesion may influence the academic achievement of ELLs (WIDA Consortium, 2013). There was no evidence of notation for previous schooling factors.

Cross-cultural factors. As students are navigating from one school system to another, and move through a stage of acculturation, systems must in place to create an environment in which multicultural identities are recognized and can flourish (WIDA Consortium, 2013). Biases must be identified and addressed, both cultural and linguistic. "Team members must take students' linguistic and cultural contexts into consideration when examining their performance in school. This process can be supported if teams collaborate closely with cultural liaisons" (WIDA Consortium, p. 22). There was no evidence of notation for cross-cultural factors.

RQ2-B. Are selected academic interventions and progress monitoring decisions culturally and linguistically appropriate for meeting the needs of ELLs? An examination of RTI team member placement and proposed intervention documentation for ELL upper

elementary students revealed a lack of experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies and interventions for ELLs during the RTI placement process. It was only during the team meetings that experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies were minimally included when discussing interventions and progress monitoring decisions appropriate for an ELL.

All participants spoke about Reading Plus®, a computer-based reading intervention that used adaptive technology to provide individualized scaffolded silent reading practice for students in grades three and higher and adopted by the study site for Tier 2 intervention. The goals of Reading Plus® are to improve student silent reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary (Institute of Education Sciences, 2010). The Reading Plus® computer-based program was the study site's most recommended intervention for Tier 2, and all but one student for this case study was assigned to this intervention. Echevarría et al (2013) expressed that while use and exposure are necessary, alone they are not enough in the achievement of higher levels of language proficiency and academic use of language for ELLs. It was the quality of the use and exposure that were of equal, if not greater, importance. ELL students are most successful when experiences are authentic and meaningful (Muhanna, 2019; Echevarría et al. 2013; Hill & Miller, 2013). As learning becomes situated and not abstract, ELLs need to be provided opportunity to experience what they are taught using all four language domains.

The identified service and resource primarily chosen by teachers and recommended by the district was the computer-based intervention program, Reading Plus®. It was shared by all interviewees that while the IMCs have developed a folder of

differentiation strategies and techniques from which staff may choose intervention

strategies for Tier 2 intervention for English learners, teachers chose to use a district

purchased computer program for students, regardless of any other factors that may

warrant differentiation, "So, it seems to be something that works for most students. The

problem is that the ELLs are (linguistically) too low for this program to work. And that

teachers choose the same intervention whether they're ELL or not" (personal

communication, 2019).

ELLs and non-ELLs were provided the same intervention, Reading Plus Tier II.

The program was prescribed for 6 of the ELL and 7 Non-ELL students 3 days a week, 30

minutes per session for 12 weeks (Response to Intervention Plan, 2019), with only one

student having a variance of duration from 3 times a week to 2 times a week. Of the case

study participating students, only one of the fourteen students, who was an ELL, was

prescribed an intervention that was not Reading Plus. The intervention planned for this

student was shown as, "Reading Research Based Strategy Tier II" (Response to

Intervention Plan, 2019).

Additionally, all interviewees shared that in the Tier 2 progress monitoring

process, "Students are progress monitored using AIMSweb®" (personal communication,

2019). AIMSweb® is a data-driven model that provides Curriculum-Based Measurement

(CBM) assessments for benchmarking and progress monitoring. Once placed into Tier 2

intervention, teachers progress monitor students using monthly assessments to evaluate

the effectiveness of instructional changes and short interventions. There was no evidence

or reference of review or formative assessments focused on key concepts or vocabulary

used for the purpose of lesson adjustment or reteaching prior to referral. Evidenced was a "one-size-fits all" approach to intervention services without respect to individual needs and experiences.

Conclusion

The purpose of this case study was to explore how teachers use experiential, linguistic and culturally responsive research-based instructional strategies in their classes to meet the needs of ELLs (RTI Tier 1) and what experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data RTI teams consider during the RTI, decision making process about ELLs referred for Tier 2 intervention in reading**.**

The study was grounded in two conceptual frameworks related to instruction and assessment: (a) the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP); and (b) the WIDA RTI2 Protocol. Semistructured interviews were conducted with four IMCs representing seven teachers, fourteen students (seven ELLs and seven non-ELLs) in four elementary schools. Additionally, document reviews of student RTI data and monitoring forms for referred upper elementary RTI Tier 2 students was conducted.

RQ1: Instructional Practice

RQ1 was as follows: What research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies do educators identify during the RTI decision making process for ELLs? According to the district's RTI model in Tier 1, teachers are responsible for understanding and addressing the cultural and linguistic characteristics of ELLs and for using this information to differentiate and individualize the instructional delivery to meet those needs of all students within their classrooms, including ELLs.

Results from the interviews showed a misalignment in instruction and assessment in the pre-referral classroom stages considered Tier 1, inadequate teacher preparation, and limited use of differentiated support services for ELLs with reading deficiencies. This resulted in an RTI model which was not culturally nor linguistically responsive to the needs of English learners.

There was little data to support that teachers understood their Tier 1 role in the district's RTI Model, particularly as it pertained to ELLs. Teachers lacked knowledge and awareness of research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies appropriate to address the needs of the ELLs. What seemed missing was a lack of strategic sheltering for ELLs during Tier 1 core instruction prior to Tier 2 referral. Evidence pointed to teacher use of instructional strategies that had minimal relevance to the English learners' culture and language. What resulted from the misalignment of instruction was the recommendation of ELLs for RTI Tier 2 support services and progress monitoring.

Each IMC interviewed shared similar concerns regarding classroom teacher knowledge, skills and dispositions regarding teaching ELLs; "Most teachers are coming out of their undergrad work and even graduate work not really understanding a whole lot about English language acquisition, doing any kind of contrastive analysis or looking at different systems of another language" (personal communication, 2019). Participants were asked why they felt sheltering techniques were not being used in core instruction for ELLs to address their linguistic and cultural needs based on each student's proficiency level. Participants reported several factors that they felt contributed to the lack of

sheltering in core instruction, including: large class size, time constraints and lack of knowledge and training in instructional strategies appropriate to meet the needs of ELLs.

Classroom teachers who refer students to the RTI Team for further intervention (Tier 2), participated along with other teachers on the RTI team in the decision-making process and the planning of the intervention. Once finalized, the Tier 2 interventions are carried about and monitoring by the original classroom teacher. While specific strategies may be prescribed by the RTI team, there is little evidence that these strategies are aligned with the experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies addressing the needs of ELLs. Nor is there evidence that when implemented by the classroom teacher they meet the specific needs of ELLs. In fact, it was found ELLs and all but one non-ELL student were prescribed the same Tier 2 independent computer-based commercial reading intervention for a certain number of minutes per week.

Overall, based on the case study analysis, research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies were are not identified to any extent during the RTI process nor are the appropriate ELLs strategies used regularly by educators during the RTI decision making process for ELLs. Key to the improving the district RTI model is the need for teachers to gain the ability to identify needs of and become knowledgeable in the use of instructional strategies appropriate for ELLS. Further attention also needs to be given to teacher voiced concerns concerning the implementation of the district's RTI model. According to the district's RTI model, the lowest achieving 20% of each teacher's class is considered as needing some intervention (Tier 1), students in this group may be ELLs, special education classified, and other

students with lower academic scores. Teachers questioned that with class sizes of 30,

whether it was realistic to expect them to individualize instruction for 20% of the class?

Teachers may need more direct assistance from specialists in planning and implementing

strategies to meet the needs of ELLs as well as other students, if they are going to

effectively execute their defined role in RTI 1. Finally, the negative attitude voiced by

some of the teachers toward modifying instruction for ELLs needs to be addressed.

RQ2: RTI Decision Making

RQ2 was as follows: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive

research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI

decision making process for ELLs? The success of a culturally and linguistically

responsive RTI intervention plan is dependent on the investigative process. As these

processes are overlooked, there remains an ineffective model of support for English

learners due to ineffective instructional practices in Tier 1 and the diagnosis of

interventions which were not responsive to student's unique language and cultural

learning needs. As teachers applied minimal differentiation in sheltering instruction and

were provided inadequate professional learning and resource support, they were referring

students for interventions based not on student needs, but on instructional deficits.

RQ2-A. What research-based assessment indicators and data are considered

during the RTI decision-making process for ELLs? In the study district, once students

were referred for RTI, a date was set for the school RTI team to review referrals.

According to WIDA (2013) central to any effective solution seeking process is a defined

multi-perspective team. These teams included an administrator, IMC, Classroom teacher,

and ESL specialist. The school RTI teams met to discuss whether interventions were prescribed for referred students and, if so, what that intervention would look like.

Ideally, the purpose of RTI team meetings would be for school teams to interpret student outcomes within a broader sociocultural context considering multiple spheres of interest. The WIDA RTI[2] System (2013), designed to be responsive to the unique and individual needs of ELLs, outlined seven key factors that may impact ELLs' academic progress, linguistic development, and response to instruction and intervention. Teams can develop a more accurate profile of students' performance when they review qualitative as well as quantitative information from multiple sources (WIDA Consortium, 2013). In the study site, teachers used the MAP assessment as the main indicator for referral. Students who fell in the bottom 20% qualified for Tier 2 intervention and subsequently referred.

Even though interviewees shared that conversation regarding factors unique to ELLs were considered during the team meetings, site RTI documents, reviewed for this study, were lacking information in not only language acquisition but also outside social/educational information which may have provided additional insights into students' performance, key to understating ELL student performance within an authentic context. According to The Aspen Education & Society Program and the Council of Chief State School Officers (2017) equity means that every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/or family income. Given the lack of documented evidence in the study site, students receiving culturally responsive, appropriate, quality content and language instruction that

was research-based in both Tier 1 and Tier 2 could not be assured.

RQ2-B. Are selected academic interventions and progress monitoring decisions culturally and linguistically appropriate for meeting the needs of ELLs? Foundational to a successful RTI model for ELLs, teachers must provide an intervention and progress monitor the effectiveness of that intervention in a manner that is culturally and linguistically responsive. This requires a knowledge of language acquisition and acquired skills in differentiating and sheltering instruction. Evidenced by this study was a lack of distinction for the language acquisition process and ELL learner pedagogy at the study site. An examination of the data showed that teachers applied generic RTI procedures of assessment (progress monitoring) and interventions that may not have fully met the distinctive needs of their ELLs. All but one student participating in this case study received the same computer-based intervention, regardless of any identified individual circumstances. Furthermore, the fact that students' language along with factors such as those identified in the WIDA RTI[2] Protocol, that have been shown to greatly impact ELL student outcomes and achievement, was unaccounted for. As teachers used mainstream progress monitoring tools and intervention strategies that had little significance to ELL's culture and language during Tier 2 intervention, there was an assumption that students identified as ELLs were a uniform group, and that the prescribed interventions were aligned with best practices in language acquisition as identified in research. There was no evidence that teachers accounted for the language development, experiences, and unique profiles of ELLs.

The context of cultural and linguistic responsiveness for ELLs is an important factor in considering how interventions are chosen and implemented. According to Bianco (2010), when educators have an intentional focus on culture and linguistic needs and strengths, they have a lower risk of misdirecting students within a flawed system. Teachers must be aware of their own abilities to attend to the cultural and linguistic needs of their students. Findings suggested that teachers had limited training of language acquisition and ELL pedagogy. Because these teachers had received inadequate professional learning in the area of RTI and ELLs, they provided an educational environment that did not meet the cultural and linguistic needs of these learners.

Project Justification

The purpose of this case study was to explore how learning characteristics of ELLs are addressed through the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process, aiding in identifying children with emerging difficulties so that personalized, targeted differentiated instruction is delivered at the study site. Within Section 2, I presented the methodology that was utilized for this proposed project study, which was to conduct a case study of educators who have referred both ELLs and monolingual students for intervention, maintaining alignment with the purpose of the project study stated in Section 1. Through teacher interviews, I explored how educators take into consideration knowledge of linguistic and cultural backgrounds of English learners during RTI referral, gleaned information on any professional learning conducted or potentially needed regarding the implementation of RTI with a diverse population of students. After data collection and analysis, findings included the following themes:

•Misalignment of Tier 1 core instruction and Tier 2 intervention,

•Inadequate teacher preparation, and

•Limited differentiated support services.

These themes wound together to form a deficit based RTI referral process for English learners.

Key to the improving the district RTI model is the need for teachers to gain the ability to identify needs of and become knowledgeable in the use of experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies and interventions for ELLs during the RTI decision making process. A professional learning staff development project will be created for teachers and IMCs whose responsibilities include meeting the needs of ELLs based on the SIOP model of instructional strategies and decision-making processes of the district's RTI model.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to explore how learning characteristics and needs of ELLs are addressed through the RTI instructional strategies and assessment decision-making process framework at the study site. Findings from data collected revealed that the following factors had an influence on the implementation of RTI needs with ELLs: administrative support, capacity building for mainstream teachers, increased targeted and relevant RTI resources, and precise and consistent comprehension of the RTI model by all stakeholders.

This project was designed based on study findings presented in Section 2 to address the research problem. Some of the specific RTI content that this 3-day professional development project include are linguistic and culturally relevant teaching techniques and intervention strategies to enhance academic achievement in reading for ELLs and related RTI resources focused on best practices for ELLs. The goal is to deliver these targeted professional development sessions in a collaborative format that promotes dialogue and a sense of a learning community among mainstream teachers working with ELLs. The project is also designed to build capacity for teachers in support of culturally and linguistically responsive RTI implementation with ELLs.

In Section 3, I present the project. This section includes details regarding the description, goals, and rationale of the project. There is also a literature review, which consists of a theoretical framework and research to support the project genre. The implementation of 3 days of professional learning face-to-face sessions are detailed,

including the expansion of resources and existing supports, potential barriers, the proposal for implementation and timetable, and the roles and responsibilities of all instructional leaders. I also outline the project evaluation and implications, including potential social change within the study district.

Goals of the Project

It is generally agreed that the quality and availability of professional learning offerings for teachers are essential to learner success. Using qualitative data techniques, it emerged that professional development would be the best way to increase educator capacity on the topics emerging from the data collection and analysis to ensure that educators' professional needs are met. At the time of this study, no professional learning had been offered directly to teachers addressing ELLs in an RTI framework at the study site. This project is designed to be a 3-day face-to-face series that would solicit immediate participant feedback as well as provide information to central administration on the value of such training.

The goal for this project is threefold: (a) to provide clarity and purpose for ELL education, (b) to become a part of the district professional development plan for ongoing teacher training and development, and (c) to support excellence in teaching ELLs within an RTI framework. The creation of a research-based professional learning series was selected as being the best project genre for using the results of the project study. The project also can provide mainstream teachers with a meaningful professional experience to improve their quality and teaching practice (see De Vries, Van de Grift, & Jansen, 2013).

Review of the Literature

Project Genre

A requisite to be a professional educator is continued growth in the knowledge of best practices, pedagogies, and theories when implementation of research-based models of practice. Findings from this study indicated a gap in the understanding of implementation of an RTI system with ELLs. Also apparent are gaps in teachers' current decision-making processes and procedures when implementing RTI that is culturally and linguistically responsive. This literature review is a justification of how the genre of professional learning is appropriate to address the findings supported by research. In this literature review, I explain how the genre of professional learning is appropriate for submission as the research project. I begin the literature review with a discussion of adult learners and professional development that guided the project development and continue with an evaluation of current peer reviewed publications focused on the research that guided the content of the sessions.

The purpose of this project was to identify and examine the literature relevant to the research study as I focused the research questions regarding the practices of mainstream teachers implementing RTI with a diverse group of learners. In reviewing the literature, I searched peer reviewed articles and publications from Walden University Library's electronic databases, in addition to academic texts. The EBSCO host databases used for this literature review were the Education Research Complete, ERIC, ProQuest Central, Sage, Google Scholar, and Academic Search Premier to find articles related to this project. My key search terms included the following: *SIOP, WIDA RTI², professional*

development, professional learning, ELL and RTI, RTI professional development, RTI interventions, training on RTI interventions, culturally and linguistically responsive RTI, sheltered instruction, MLSS/MTSS, and *the fidelity of implementing RTI*. Using a Boolean search, I narrowed my search to find literature related to the project that was published during the past 5 years, available in full-text format, retrievable, and published as a peer-reviewed article. Most of the studies selected for this review were published between the years 2016 and 2019. Also included are seminal work in the areas of language acquisition, RTI, and SIOP. To ensure the literature supported the objective for professional development training of this study, nearly 40 recent peer-reviewed resources were reviewed and added to this study until saturation was reached. This literature review is focused on the conceptual frameworks and on literature relevant to the adult learning as tool for teaching nontraditional learners. This literature review consists of three main sections: (a) Adult Learning, (b) Standards for Professional Learning, and (c) Guiding Research That Supports the Content of the Project.

Adult Learning

Student learning is strongly influenced by not only what but also how teachers teach. Conditions must be established that are responsive to the way educators learn. Teacher professional development is defined as teachers' learning: how they learn to learn and how they apply their knowledge in practice to support pupils' learning (Postholm, 2012). Piper, Zuilkowski, Dubeck, Jepkemei, and King (2018) identified the following conditions as important for teacher professional development: development of deep factual and conceptual knowledge and promotion of metacognitive and self-

regulatory processes that help to define goals and monitor progress to meeting the goals. What is most important is that any professional development for teachers is associated with positive impact on student achievement and or behavior. Success needs to be defined not on terms of teacher mastery but of the impact that change has on student outcomes. Numerous scholars have noted that teachers who are engaged in ongoing professional development take greater responsibility for learning of all students and are less like to dismiss learning difficulties as a result of external factors such as home or community environments.

Context specific approaches, as opposed to fixed programs, promote teaching practices that are consistent with the principals of effective teaching but also allow for the immediate applicability to the classroom. In order to establish a firm foundation for professional growth, teachers must be able to integrate their knowledge of curriculum and how to teach it. Integration of research and theory is developed alongside applications to practice in effective professional development (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017; Louws., Meirink, van Veen, & van Driel, 2018). Teachers are diverse in their knowledge and practice. When designing professional development, teachers' prior knowledge and how they view existing status quo are important considerations. Consideration is also given to the context to which the teacher practices. This includes the diverse demands that students place on their teaching environment.

Learning is cyclical rather than linear. Teachers need multiple opportunities to understand new information and move it into practice. Such opportunities include activities that challenge their current practice while, at the same time, supporting new

strategies and techniques. Change in practice is equally about emotion as it is skill building (Hasiotis, 2015; Korthagen, 2016). Piper et al. (2018) noted that all learning activities require both trust and challenge. Change takes risk that only happens in an environment where there is support for professional vulnerability. Teachers may reject new ideas that conflict with their existing understanding unless their current ideologies are addressed. Without such engagement, teachers are likely to dismiss new strategies or new content as irrelevant. In discussing new content, there needs to be an understanding of how those ideas differ from the status quo and why they are important (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Sinek, 2009).

Effective professional development must be of a sustained duration. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) noted that teachers need to be provided adequate time to learn, practice, implement, and reflect on the new strategies to facilitate change in their practice. Bates and Morgan (2018) agreed by stating that teaching is a profession that requires ongoing professional development. There is growing concern that the current emphasis is on professional development quantity over quality (Kennedy, 2005; Tooley & Connally, 2016). Teachers must spend a fair amount of time after professional development before they can see effects on student outcomes and change in classroom practice. The professional development modules included as the project study as a result of this case study are written for a 3-day period; time must be provided between sessions to realize any desired affect for change in practice. The key is providing high-quality materials, ensuring that the learning is relevant and actionable and that the learning accelerates teachers' abilities to apply the new content knowledge and skills.

Standards for Professional Learning

The standards guiding the professional learning developed from this case study are standards published by Learning Forward. The vision of Learning Forward is "equity and excellence in teaching and learning" (as cited in Hirsh, 2019). If there is an expectation for positive student outcomes for all students, then schools need to successfully address the challenges associated with poverty, ELLs, special needs, resources, and staffing that includes a deep investment in professional learning (Hirsh, 2019). What commonly was referred to as workshops in the past has now been elevated to "collaborative professionalism" (Campbell, Osmond-Johnson, Faubert, Zeichner, & Hobbs-Johnson, 2017; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016; Hirsh, 2019;). What was once considered professional development is moving to professional learning.

Professional learning and professional development are related by mutual overlap and interaction but are not interchangeable. Professional learning focuses on learning something new that is potentially of value (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016). Professional development, in contrast, refers to personal growth, character, maturity, and morals. After review of multiple studies, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) identified seven shared features of professional learning: content focused, involves active learning, collaborative and job embedded, uses modeling, provides coaching and support, provides for feedback and reflection, and is of a sustained duration. Darling-Hammond et al. established a link between effective professional learning and these seven features. Jensen, Sonnemann, Roberts-Hull, and Hunter (2016) argued that creating effective professional learning

requires incremental steps within a cycle of continuous improvement. Professional learning always starts and ends with student outcomes.

Learning Forward identified seven professional learning standards that work in partnership with one another. The seven standards include professional learning that is often in learning communities; is supported with strong leadership and appropriate resources; is drawn from and measured by data on students, educators, and systems; applies appropriate designs for learning; has substantive implementation support; and focuses on student and educator standards (Learning Forward, 2011). According to Learning Forward and other similar organizations, if professional learning undertaken by educators does not ultimately result in higher levels of student outcomes, then the effort is not successful (O'Brian, 2016; Spangler, 2019). The foundation for achieving student outcomes through professional learning is to connect adult learning to student learning (Borders, 2019). In addition, student learning goals must meet the overall expectation for academic achievement in the district. There is little disagreement that the quality of the professional learning for teachers impacts the quality of instruction.

Guiding Research That Supports the Content of the Project

Planning for sheltered instruction. When implementing an RTI Model that is culturally and linguistically responsive, Tier 1 instruction must be delivered and designed to meet the unique needs of all students. Data analyzed in this case study was coded against the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model (Echevarría et al., 2013). Results from this case study showed a need for increased understanding in the area of sheltering techniques for mainstream teachers of ELLs prior to RTI referral. To fill this

gap in understanding, a professional learning series of three days was developed to increase staff knowledge on foundational information of ELLs, sheltering techniques, and RTI within a multilevel system of support (MLSS) for English learners. According to Rients (2019), citing the US Department of Education, teachers who participated in less than 14 hours of professional learning resulted no impact on student achievement. This series of professional learning sessions will be a total of 21 hours of face to face interactive work around best practice for ELLs within an MLSS framework.

This case study used the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) as the model by which data was coded. In addressing the language gap to make academic content more comprehensible for ELL students, teachers need sustained professional learning opportunities in a specialized pedagogy such as sheltered instruction to improve their students' language and literacy achievement. Sheltered instruction includes certain research-based indicators, instructional best practices, and strategies to help ELLs acquire English language development and achieve academic proficiency. Using a sheltered instruction approach includes the use of a wide range of scaffolding strategies to make content and concepts comprehensible for students (De Jager, 2019; Johnson, 2019). In an empirical study, Gibson (2016) set out to identify the most effective strategies used to develop English language acquisition posing the question, "what best educational strategies are used to develop English language acquisition among English language learners struggling to develop and retain English language proficiency?". His results showed cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, vocabulary building, use of cognates, and computer-based instruction as beneficial to closing the ELL achievement

gap. As noted by Hassell (2019), included as part of SIOP component four, strategies, is metacognitive, cognitive, social, and affective strategies. Strategies is a central component of sheltered instruction.

Multiple researchers agree on the benefits to teachers of ELLs who have been trained in sheltered instruction techniques such as those in the SIOP Model. Koura and Zahran (2017) conducted a study to determine the impact of the SIOP protocol on teachers' teaching skills on twenty-two EFL student teachers. The results showed significant benefits to teachers trained in sheltered instruction, particularly in the areas of providing feedback, providing instruction, praising students, linking instruction to students' backgrounds, and using strategies for application of content and language knowledge. Song (2016) showed the potential of teachers trained in sheltered instruction documenting that they improved their instructional strategies for ELLs and attributed this improvement to SIOP training. Her research also showed the potential of teachers considering their roles for ELLs positively and attributed their attitude change toward ELLs and teaching strategies to professional learning (Song). In other studies, Itwaru (2017) and Song found a desire on the part of teachers for meaningful professional development where sheltered instruction was modeled to address the cultural and linguistic needs of ELLs. A lack of cultural and linguistic responsive professional learning correlate to diverse students' underachievement in classrooms (Lee et al., 2016). It is clear that because of the unique needs that ELLs bring to the classroom, teachers need to increase their awareness of students' varied ways of learning in order to address both their linguistic and academic needs in a culturally responsive manner.

Planning for a multileveled system of support. A goal of professional learning is to move educators to the next level of knowledge based on the foundation skills that they bring to the task. The district in this case study focused on the implementation of a generic three-tiered RTI system of support. This is only part of an established multi-leveled system of support (MLSS). The objective for the professional learning sessions as part of this project is to move towards implementation of the state recognized multi-level system of support. In doing so, instructional practices consistent with a robust Tier 1 framework while differentiating Tier 2 and 3 interventions would improve outcomes for ELLs. The MLSS framework is considered a preventative framework which provides a variety of supports in the areas of not only academics, but also behavior and socio-emotional learning, in support of the whole child.

A multi-level system of support is designed so that educators may provide the appropriate level of instruction and intervention, to meet the needs of students from different backgrounds, language proficiency, and learning styles. More than scores on a single standardized test, educators' decisions need to reflect language acquisition, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competence (Palmer, Henderson, Wall, Zuniga, & Berthelsen, 2016). Recent data on the relative risk of students from diverse backgrounds suggests that more needs to be done to meet these students' individual needs (Skiba, Artiles, Kozleski, Losen, & Harry, 2016; Umansky, Thompson, & Díaz, 2017). There exists criticism as to whether the instruction and assessment practices associated with common three-tiered systems adequately consider the needs of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's

Framework on Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Support (Wisconsin DPI, 2017) places

its core focus on equity conveying an integrated system of collaboration, strategic use of

data, and high-quality instruction to support need-driven decision making. Foundational

to the Wisconsin MLSS system is that all children can learn and achieve when provided

with effective instructional strategies and research-based pedagogy.

Different from the MTSS system which supports the behavioral, social-emotional,

and academic systems, the MLSS also attends to equitable access, opportunity, and

outcomes for all learners. According to Hoover and Soltero- González (2018), the

structure of an equitable MLSS system may benefit ELLs in several ways. First, MLSS

provides a framework for recognizing and valuing diverse qualities and strengths to

improve accessibility to core instruction (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2015).

Furthermore, MLSS informs instructional practice to help distinguish language

acquisition from cognitive difficulties (Hoover et al., 2016). Ultimately, MLSS holds the

promise of reducing misidentification and placement of ELLs in tiered intervention or

special education programs (Cramer, 2015). For an MLSS system to be effective for all

learners, implementation must be equitable using culturally and linguistically responsive

research-based practices that have been proven effective for ELLs receiving the

instruction considering a student's demographic, cultural or linguistic background, or

ability level.

Summary

The literature included as part of this review focused on themes that emerged

from the project of this study. This review set the foundation in addressing the gaps in

practice experienced at the study site. Ongoing professional learning is an important component in providing teachers with training that supports an RTI model that is linguistically and culturally responsive to the needs of ELLs by introducing the robust MLSS framework. The components of RTI such as training on implementation of sheltered instructional practices, and intervention decision making that is grounded in culturally and linguistically responsive practices requires a series of professional learning trainings to increase teachers' understanding of implementation of a culturally and linguistically responsive MLSS system with ELLs. Teachers can use the knowledge they gain through professional learning to modify their RTI implementation and instructional practices to meet the unique needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Project Description

The data derived from mainstream teacher interviews and review of district documents helped me to identify how professional learning may help to improve the teaching practice for ELLs in the core instruction as well as refine the lens by which ELLs are identified for intervention. While study results may not be generalizable from this qualitative case study, there may be benefit for its use in evaluating intervention referral programs. Villegas, Saizde La Mora, Martin, and Mills, (2018) stated in their research review that to be linguistically responsive to ELLs, mainstream educators need an understanding of second language development. This knowledge base becomes the foundation for understanding ELLs and designing instruction for them.

Existing Supports

Implementation of the project would require the district's IMC and mainstream teacher support. Should mainstream teachers see the benefit in participating, they may be given appropriate credit or financial remuneration as decided by the district. His would be dependent on the professional learning approach of the district. The professional learning series would be offered as a resource for the development of mainstream teachers and administrators and could be used in support of the Educator Effectiveness evaluation process for teacher who have identified a need for continued training in this area. Additionally, this series could work as a catalyst for designing additional ongoing professional learning opportunities and teacher support in the topic of ELLs. Technical support would be provided by the district Professional Development Office for logistics and promotion, accessibility to the presentation module, professional learning series handouts, and the evaluation assessments. Additional support will be requested of the Technology Office to publish the modules as an online self-paced study option for educators.

Potential Barriers

Potential barriers preventing the execution or success of the project could be the 3-day, 7-hour timeframe required to complete the professional learning series. Scheduling this series within the school year calendar could be difficult as the securing of substitutes for teacher release time is difficult. It is also possible that professional development topics scheduled during districtwide release days may already be identified. Another concern may be how to include this project as a component of the district initiatives and

professional develop. Finally, due to staff changes in the governance of the ELL program, the incoming language acquisition director, in coordination with the assistant director for teaching and learning, may or may not implement this project as part of their immediate timeline for their respective offices.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

The implementation of the 3-day face-to-face professional learning series would best take place over time, preferably beginning in late August, just before the start of the school year. An overview would be presented to key stakeholders, the Chief Academic Officer, and the newly hired Language Acquisition Director. During a discussion of the project in detail, the findings and purpose for the development of this project would be shared. As part of the presentation regarding the project, the modules would be provided to the district for face-to-face sessions. These professional learning sessions may enhance the availability and accessibility of information in both RTI and best practices with ELLs throughout the year.

Roles and Responsibilities of Researcher and Others

In my position as the researcher, it is my responsibility to present the project in its entirety to the research site's administrators. These individuals include the Chief Academic Officer, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, the Director of the Department of Language Acquisition, and the district office personnel overseeing research proposals. During the presentation, I will share the background research on the study, and provide recommendations regarding the project as an ongoing professional

learning activity. The site administration will be responsible for implementation and follow up procedures.

Project Evaluation Plan

To inform the overall effectiveness of the training, the professional learning project will be evaluated by participants informally at the end of each session, with a final written evaluation for the overall project upon completion of the series. Evaluations will be asked of all attendees. The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1994) defined evaluation as "the systematic investigation of merit or worth" (p. 3). Evaluation as an essential component of professional learning is used to ascertain the effectiveness of the session as it relates to identified growth outcomes. Guskey, (2016) identified five levels in his model of professional learning effectiveness. These levels are a hierarchical arrangement which move from simple to more complex requiring increasing time and resources in the process of gathering of data. The levels of professional learning include participants' reactions, participants' learning, organizational support and change, participants' use of new knowledge or skills, and student learning outcomes.

Exit tickets will be used as a formative evaluation at the end of each day's presentation to provide immediate feedback and help to determine if the identified objectives for the day's presentation have been attained. Following the end of the entire series, summative evaluation forms based on Guskey's (2016) levels of professional learning will be collected from each participant to generate feedback of the series' strengths and weaknesses. In addition, the summative evaluations will be reviewed to

obtain perspective regarding improvements and modifications to the overall professional learning series. The feedback gathered from this final evaluation will be shared with stakeholders. Key stakeholders include The Chief Academic Officer, Executive Director of teaching and Learning, RTI Director and Director of ELL Education.

<div align="center">

Project Implications

</div>

Local Community

The mark of any successful English learner initiative is increased linguistic and academic achievement and raising teachers' awareness of ELL students' needs. The goal of this case study was to examine collected data driven by the research study questions, and then use this data to identify themes and strategies deemed the most productive in assisting educators in the identification and implementation of an RTI system that is linguistically and culturally responsive.

According to Walden University, social change is defined as "a deliberate process of creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to promote the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies. Positive social change results in the improvement of human and social conditions" (Walden University Student handbook, 2019, p. 15). As a result of this research study, the potential exists for students to be serviced by highly qualified teachers responsive to their unique needs and abilities, the creation and promotion of collegial dialogue around students, and promotion of culturally responsive actions at the local level. With the professional learning series developed from the project study administrators will be provided an additional tool to move their RTI system forward in

the quest for adopting a multilevel system of support for their ELLs where the gap in practice currently exists. Students will benefit because they will experience quality learning based on research driven best practices for ELLs. Teachers will increase their knowledge and skills of how diverse students learn and thereby raise the academic and linguistic achievement of their ELL population.

Larger Scale Change

The key to a quality program is the quality of educators who will be implementing it. Ongoing professional development is a critical component in the development of high-quality educators. According to Fischer, Fishman, Dede, Eisenkraft, Frumin, and Foster, et al. (2018), outcomes of teachers' participation in effective professional learning include both advancements in teacher knowledge and changes in their beliefs which may indirectly cause modification of their classroom instruction. Research data also reveals that when teachers improve their skills and dispositions with proper training, there is measurable student achievement (De Monte, 2016).

Walden University has as its core value a commitment to social change. As such, this professional learning series may have implications for change in other districts that extend beyond the local district. One method of dissemination is to share this project with the state RTI center as well as working with Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESA) with a potential of offering this series on a broader level. This project could provide educators across the state a professional development series and accompanying resources to support implementation of an RTI system for a marginalized group of students that recognizes and considers linguistic and cultural diversity.

Conclusion

Section 3 included a description and explanation of the goals of the project as well as a scholarly review of literature related to the specific genre of the project. The project goal is to provide a professional learning series for IMCs and mainstream teachers, to improve and strengthen their understanding of a culturally and linguistically responsive RTI process. As such, teachers may improve ELL student academic and linguistic achievement. In the literature review, I discussed professional learning versus professional development, identified the professional learning standards that will inform the construct of the project, as well as sheltered strategies for ELLs in the classroom. This section also included recommended logistics for project delivery and identification of stakeholders. The project description including needed resources was described with potential obstacles and solutions to barriers noted. Finally, implications for social change were explained. In the final section, Reflections and Conclusions, I will evaluate the project including identification of possible strengths and limitations. Finally, the project's implication for social change will be shared as I reflect on my work as a scholar-practitioner.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

Section 4 includes my reflections and conclusions concerning the implementation of an RTI system's responsiveness to the unique needs of ELLs. The effectiveness RTI that is culturally and linguistically is an area of concern in the professional literature as well as in the local study district. Significant areas of focus in this section include project strengths and limitations, scholarship, project development and evaluation, leadership, and change. I also share my reflections pertaining to personal growth as a scholar-practitioner. The possible impact of the study on social change is also examined, concluding with a look towards future implications, applications, and directions for research.

Project Strengths and Limitations

Project Strengths

The project included as part of this case study was created to provide a professional learning series for mainstream classroom teachers that may positively impact the implementation of a culturally and linguistically responsive RTI process for ELLs. The project emerged from the study findings and literature review, indicating that training in the area of RTI implementation with ELLs may provide a research-based foundation to build a culturally responsive system of support for struggling ELLs (Itwaru, 2017; Song, 2016). Increasing teachers' skills for appropriately addressing the unique needs of ELLs may result in increased academic achievement and language acquisition for students whose first language is other than English (Song, 2016; Piper et al., 2018).

The core strength of the project was in examining a local problem and developing recommendations to assist the local administration. The development of a professional learning series addresses mainstream teachers' primary concerns in meeting the needs of English learners in an RTI system appropriate for students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Teachers want to understand the ELL, and there is an identified urgency for ongoing professional learning in the area of RTI and ELLs. Multiple IMCs confirmed that classroom teachers did not understand how to address the needs of the English learner during Tier 1 instruction. It was not until teachers referred ELL students for intervention that questions regarding culturally and linguistically responsive practice were considered. Teachers require support regarding the fidelity of implementation of sheltered techniques before referral for intervention (De Jager, 2019; Johnson, 2019).

A second strength of the workshop series is research-based foundation. Research on effective RTI systems of support, language acquisition, and the sheltered instruction protocol model were foundational to the creation of the resources and presentation for the project. The project was designed to address the implementation of RTI with ELLs in the local school setting for educators at all levels, content areas, and years of expertise. With the implementation of the research-based methods and strategies shared during each session, teachers may acquire tools necessary to plan and effectively implement an RTI system for ELLs (Koura & Zahran, 2017; Song, 2016).

Project Limitations

The professional learning series developed from this case study has limitations that may affect its effectiveness with participants both in and outside of the study district.

As a researcher disconnected from the district, I can only offer this resource to the current administration in support of continuous improvement in the instructional practices of ELLs. The ultimate decision of whether the contents of the workshops meet the needs and priorities of the district will be theirs alone.

Providers of the workshop will need to be trained as trainers to disseminate the content and resources of the project to ensure fidelity in the presentation of its message to participants (see Koura & Zahran, 2017). In addition to the workshop series, it may be advantageous for district staff to continue to support participants through methods such as coaching or book studies. Continued conversation concerning the needs of ELLs will move change of current practice and perception (Campbell et al., 2017; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2016; Hirsh, 2019). By doing so, this project could serve as an entry point to awareness building regarding servicing the needs of ELLs within a multilevel system of support.

Another limitation involves the interview sample size. Findings for this case study were derived from interviews of instructional methods coordinators representing seven teachers and 14 students, seven ELLs and seven non-ELLs, districtwide. The depth of knowledge of the interviewees provided for an in-depth look at linguistic and culturally responsive considerations in the implementation of RTI for ELLs. Interviews were supplemented by a document review, including both records from both ELL and non-ELL students. That said, the small sample size may have limited the identified needs and use of research-based teaching strategies, whereas a more substantive number of interviews might have yielded additional diverse results (see Yin, 2009).

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

This qualitative project study was designed to examine the culturally and linguistically responsive practices of educators regarding ELLs within an RTI system of support. Teachers are challenged to provide differentiated instruction and interventions to accommodate the unique needs of all learners. To support teachers in meeting this challenge, knowledge of ELL students as well as strategies and techniques that are research-based are a necessity. A 3-day series of professional learning was the resulting project. One alternative to the professional learning series may be the creation of a manual or guide containing the information from the professional learning workshop. This new guide may be included as a supplement in the appendix to the current district RTI manual and updated each year or as a separate document. Teachers would then use these resources for reference during ongoing coaching and RTI meetings when discussing intervention for ELLs.

Another alternative to a face-to-face workshop series may be the creation of a webinar series. This would provide the flexibility needed by individuals and school staff to master the information at a time most convenient for them. They could also watch the webinar at grade level or content level teams as part of a professional learning community to engage follow up discussions of the information with content or grade-level teams. A collaborative process may occur with an ongoing conversation among teachers interested in refining their practice. As teachers implement strategies and techniques, as well as use their newly acquired knowledge to develop lesson plans, they

could be provided a venue to implement best practices in the instruction of ELLs during Tier 1 instruction and recommendation of Tier 2 interventions.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Scholarship

During the completion of this project study, I learned several things about myself as a scholarly researcher. Returning to school many years after receiving my master's degree proved to be challenging. Learning to write in a scholarly manner was a skill I needed to revive and proved to be challenging at first. Academic writing demanded synthesis and concision. During the proposal stage, I was often reminded of the need to reference and justify my words. I learned of anthropomorphism and was shown examples throughout my work.

An additional challenge was being open to comment for revision from multiple reviewers. It was tough to go back into work and revise numerous iterations, from syntax to semantics to discourse. I learned early on to trust in the system, putting aside my fear of others reading my work and adapting to improve to a new level of writing. I needed to move to a level of depth over breadth, being concise in my choices of word. The support I obtained in course work, residencies, and efforts of my committee members and chair provided the foundational skills necessary to complete this project study. During the study and project development, my chair, second chair, University Research Reviewer member, and IRB committee member helped to ensure that high standards of scholarly research were maintained through each stage of the research process.

I also learned that exemplars are essential tools to use as one moves from writer to scholarly-practitioner. Throughout this process, I continually searched for and reviewed hundreds of resources, setting up a method of recording and indexing those that would add to my work. I questioned the reliability and validity of resources until reaching saturation. I also learned that research articles contained references, which provided a roadmap to additional sources. Reviewing reference sections became common practice. I continually searched for the depth of knowledge to add to my research from those scholars that were already published.

Scholarship is about building confidence in oneself. Participating in this process has developed in me the confidence to engage others in scholarly conversation and debate. It has provided credibility and strength in my voice. I am excited to share the information that I have worked hard to acquire. I believe that I can now make a small yet powerful contribution to the education of ELLs.

Project Development and Evaluation

The fact that I was able to develop a project that, in turn, could benefit a local school district and students of whom I am deeply committed was what drew me to facilitate this case study. I entered the research process knowing little about the options that were available to me. It was not until I understood the difference between a dissertation and a project study that my goal became clear. The project study provided the opportunity to examine a local problem and assist in improving educational practice by developing a project that would impact social change. Given my position at the time within school administration, it provided an opportunity for me to pay it forward by

giving back to the students of my district. As the task moved forward, I soon realized the arduous journey on which I was embarking.

Through this process, I have learned a lot of information about RTI for ELLs, and I feel more adept at working with educators on the topic. I anticipate that this newly acquired knowledge will improve the quality of support I can provide districts in the future on an issue that is concerning to many educators. I am hopeful of receiving constructive feedback from the administrators and teachers regarding the workshop series. I am scheduled to present on the topic of MTSS to a district's ELL and RTI team and have a planned 3-day workshop series for consortia members in the coming months and plan to ask participants to provide any suggestions that they may have that will improve my presentation. My experiences in the development of this project study raised my skills needed to create future projects with excellence and expertise.

Leadership and Change Scholarship

Teachers are successful when they have the tools and knowledge to meet the needs of the students they serve. Districts must meet the needs of teachers by offering professional learning (Borders, 2019). I developed this professional learning series on RTI for ELLs to help teachers in the study district meet the unique needs of their ELLs. A vital element of this process is the educational leaders of the target district. Leaders of change create opportunities for collegiality in a risk-free environment. District leadership determines the priorities for professional learning presented throughout the school year. School leadership is crucial to staff involvement and engagement both during the sessions and follow-up after the workshops. If implemented with support and fidelity, the findings

of the study may impact systemic and systematic change for the district, teachers, and students. The impact of this change may result in an adjustment or modification of current RTI processes and procedures with the intent and purpose of improving the instructional practices in the education and support of ELLs.

Reflective Analysis

The project was designed based on the perceptions of teachers and review of documentation for ELLs and non-ELLs in upper elementary grades referred for Tier 2 intervention. Professional learning was a commonly cited need in the interviews of the IMCs, as shown by both coding and theme development from transcription analysis. Developing workshops was not a new endeavor for me. Coming from a curriculum background, I am always in front of teachers and staff. This project was different, however. The professional learning series created from this study was grounded in research and data analysis to directly target the needs of the study district.

Analysis of self as a scholar. A scholar is defined in Merriam-Webster (2013) as a learned person who has done advanced study in a specialized field. A scholar pursues learning at its highest peak. I identify as a lifelong learner who also is dedicated to the education and wellbeing of ELLs. I believe that my academic work over these last years has elevated me from a student to a scholar in the field of RTI as it pertains to ELLs. With the identification of a topic to which I am passionate, I have strategically looked at the research in that area, collected data as an impartial researcher, used the data to identify trends and patterns and developed a project intended to address the needs identified in the findings.

I have grown in my abilities to express myself through scholarly writing and discourse. As a doctoral student, I have filled hours reading and processing relevant peer-reviewed published literature and analyzed if or how the information applied to my research. Not only did I learn to analyze data, but also how to synthesize what was read. I have also learned to structure and organize time to maintain forward momentum in the completion of the work. There was an intrinsic reward obtained as each section was finished and approved. There was external pride in knowing that what I was doing would help support the students of whom I have committed my career in advocacy.

A scholar must be willing not only to seek knowledge but also reflect on the learning, objectively analyze what has already been published, and synthesize the information to inform their study. Satisfaction is obtained when all of the pieces come together to produce a product that will support teachers in their instructional best practice for ELLs.

Analysis of self as a practitioner. During residency, I was consistently asked, "who cares" by the mentors. This question bothered me at first in that I felt that, as a topic close to my heart, I care, and that should have been good enough. After all, it was my dissertation. Yet as I moved into the research, I wanted to be sure that what I was developing would make a difference not only to me but to the field of education.

As an instructional leader in the district, I knew where the district was challenged in servicing the needs of ELLs. At the onset of the study, I identified a local issue in the study district parallel to conversations of districts across the state. After a review of the literature, there was evidence of a gap between the implementation of RTI with ELLs and

culturally and linguistic considerations in the process. I was particularly interested in this because I wanted to understand if there was a way to understand better the unique needs of ELLs and how to meet those needs. The district already had an RTI model of implementation established. Within a continuous improvement mindset, I knew that the RTI process could be amended with focused, linear, incremental improvement to the existing process. As such, I chose to do a project with the intent of providing support and possible resolution to one of the issues affecting ELL students in the district and across the state.

Analysis of self as a project developer. Data collection for this study took me out of my comfort zone, putting me in the position of listening to teachers without judgment. Coming from the teaching field, I have the utmost respect for what teachers do for and with students on a day to day basis, and teachers with ELLs face additional challenges than those who teach only non-ELL students. Too often, teachers are told what to do as opposed to sharing what they feel is happening and suggesting what should be done about it in a non-evaluative environment. I was very excited to learn that teachers wanted to talk with me and that there was a genuine interest in the topic of this study. As I listened to their responses to the interview questions, there was consistent messaging as to what they believed was working and not working in the RTI process for ELLs. As teachers themselves, some of whom were ELL educators, the IMCs were frustrated with the lack of consideration for language and culture during Tier 1 instruction and Tier 2 identification and intervention decision making. The challenge was to determine whom the audience would be for the project. The IMCs were well versed in the topic. If written

correctly, these teachers could be trainers for the sessions. It became clear that the audience was classroom teachers in monolingual schools.

Based on the study findings, a need arose to develop a workshop series that would provide a venue where teachers could express themselves, ask questions in a safe environment, share best practices, reflect, and develop plans for ELL students. The selection of objectives for each session became complex as I progressed in the development of the workshop series. Although I have been training teachers around ELL topics for many years, the expressed knowledge gap of the teachers proved to be a challenge. Once I narrowed down critical information and order of presentation, the scripting became easier. I wanted to ensure that the knowledge built on subsequent sessions, beginning with foundational information on language acquisition through sheltering to assist with Tier 1 instruction ending with RTI for ELLs.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

This work is essential to educational practitioners and stakeholders. Social justice underscores the right of students to be afforded equitable educational opportunities that is sensitive to the diversity they bring with them. Because RTI has limited research on its effectiveness with ELL students, it is imperative for future work to systematically study each part of the RTI, MLSS, and MTSS systems and their relationships to educational outcomes for diverse students.

All students are entitled to high-quality and appropriate instruction, intervention, process monitoring, and evaluation. The qualitative data collected in this study indicated that PL sessions on the implementation of a culturally and linguistically responsive RTI

program could provide mainstream teachers the skills necessary to meet the needs of ELLs. Their lack of understanding of language acquisition and sheltering techniques had moved students into a one size fits all intervention that may not have been appropriate to meet the ELL needs.

The PL modules created as part of this study will provide the teachers with three full days of training may result in an RTI system of support that is culturally and linguistically responsive. As a result of meeting the teachers' needs to implement an RTI system appropriate for diverse students, I believe that ELL student academic achievement on state summative assessments and classroom performance will improve, resulting in the district's overall state rating to improve. In the end, ELL special education disproportionality resulting from inappropriate intervention placement and referral may decrease.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The implications for this project study are the results it may have in improving the implementation of RTI with culturally and linguistically diverse populations of students and the potential to enhance ELL academic achievement as a result of new skills acquired and applied by mainstream classroom teachers. The data showed a gap in the knowledge of teachers' expertise in culturally and linguistically responsive practices within a multi-leveled system of support. The professional learning series will provide teachers with opportunity for growth in their skills needed to implement RTI with ELLs effectively.

Based on the professional learning series, I believe that teachers in the study district may increase the quality of the RTI system for ELLs, which will render an

increase of English learner academic achievement in reading. The purpose of RTI is to help all students meet grade-level expectations, including ELLs. One application is to implement the project beyond the study district into the consortia districts where I currently work. I would also share my work with the State Department of Education RTI Center for review and offer my knowledge base as a resource for further development of the state MLSS system. Finally, I would like to present the study at the state RTI Conference held annually to engage educators from around the state in conversation regarding the implementation of RTI with ELLs.

Directions for future research opportunities could extend the research model to include teachers from other grade levels or districts. While I believe that the practices and processes that identified from the themes of the data are generalizable best practice strategies for the ELLs, further study is required to test that theory. I would also like to interview classroom teachers extensively to see if the perceptions shared by the IMCs matched those of classroom teachers.

The information in this project may add to the body of knowledge that currently exists about teacher understanding of culturally and linguistically responsive RTI implementation. Other school systems might use the design to facilitate a study of implementation of RTI for ELLs in their schools. Further, this study reviewed only Tiers 1 and 2. It would be of the utmost importance for future research to examine students who are moving from Tier 2 to Tier 3 intervention as well. The findings from a study of this nature may have a substantive impact on social change for teachers of students whose first language is other than English.

Conclusion

The problem examined in this case study was the need for greater depth in understanding of how research-based experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive instructional strategies and assessments of ELLs were addressed in the RTI planning and decision-making process. This case study examined the RTI decision making process for ELLs and provided insight into the implementation of RTI for ELLs in the study site. Data was gathered through qualitative means, interviews, and document reviews using qualitative content analysis. Interview questions were framed from the Data Decision Guide based on SIOP® indicators (Echevarría, Richards-Tutor, & Vogt, 2015). Document data were analyzed by coding methods using themes identified in the seven indicators of the WIDA RTI² framework (WIDA Consortium, 2013). Saturation was assumed using multiple data collection measures in various settings. I believe that the results will be transferable. Generalizing is not applicable as the results of this case study cannot represent all similar groups or situations.

Despite decades of attention to ELLs, there remains little research regarding the recently espoused intervention process with this subgroup of students. The number of ELLs identified for intervention is increasing, but we know little about the method used to determine their placement into intervention nor the prescribed interventions themselves. The case study used a narrative lens to examine the RTI process for ELLs in reading. This research involved interviewing staff participating in the RTI teams making decisions regarding intervention placement for ELLs and reviewing the subsequent documentation for linguistic and cultural considerations. This proposed case study has

implications for educators to efficiently use a culturally and linguistically multitiered system of support for ELLs resulting in improved student academic and linguistic success.

References

The Aspen Education & Society Program and the Council of Chief State School Officers.
(2017). *Leading for equity: Opportunities for state education chiefs*. Washington,
D.C. Retrieved from https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2018-
01/Leading%20for%20Equity_011618.pdf

Badger, A. (2017). *Content teachers' perceptions of effective language teaching
strategies.* (Doctoral dissertation, St Cloud University). Retrieved from
http://repository.stcloudstate.edu/engl_etds/104

Bartley, A. J. (2015). *Elementary teachers' decision-making process used within the
response to intervention framework for English language learners* (Doctoral
dissertation, Capella University). Retrieved from
https://search.proquest.com/openview/d0fef503a3536692e87c959d66fc6547/1?pq
-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y

Bates, C. C., & Morgan, D. N. (2018). Seven elements of effective professional
development. *The Reading Teacher*, *71*(5), 623-626. doi:10.1002/trtr.1674

Batsche, G. (2006). *Response to intervention: policy considerations and implementation*.
Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Directors of Special Education.

Berg, M. A., & Huang, J. (2015). Improving in-service teachers' effectiveness: K-12
academic literacy for the linguistically diverse. *Functional Linguistics, 2*(1), 1-
21. doi:10.1186/s40554-015-0017-6

Bianco, M. (2010). Strength-based RTI: Conceptualizing a multitiered system for
developing gifted potential. *Theory Into Practice*, *49*(4), 323–330.

doi:10.1080/00405841.2010.510763

Bixby, B. M. (2015). *An examination of disproportionality in one school district using a response to intervention model* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Denver). Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/1078

Borders, D. G. (2019). With professional learning, priorities matter. *The Learning Professional, 40*(4), 8-12. Retrieved from Proquest Dissertations and Theses. (UMI No. 3730584)

Brendle, J. (2015). A survey of response to intervention team members' effective practices in rural elementary schools. *Rural Special Education Quarterly, 34*(2), 3-8. doi:10.1177/875687051503400202

Burns, M. K., Frederick, A., Helman, L., Pulles, S. M., McComas, J. J., & Aguilar, L. (2017). Relationship between language proficiency and growth during reading interventions. *Journal of Educational Research, 110*(6), 581-588. doi:10.1080/00220671.2016.1158689

Campbell, C., Osmond-Johnson, P., Faubert, B., Zeichner, K., & Hobbs-Johnson, A. (2017). *The state of educators' professional learning in Alberta*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325483416_The_State_of_Educators'_Professional_Learning_in_Canada

Center on Response to Intervention at the American Institutes of Research. (2014). *Response to intervention glossary of terms*. Retrieved from https://www.rti4success.org/sites/default/files/CenterOnRTIGlossary.pdf

Chavez, C. (2008). Conceptualizing from the inside: Advantages, complications, and

　　demands on insider positionality. *Qualitative Report, 13*, 474– 494. Retrieved

　　from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss3/9

Coleman, R., & Goldenberg, C. (2012). The common core challenge for English

　　language learners. *Principal Leadership*, *12*(5), 46-51. Retrieved from

　　https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ975857

Collier, C. (2010). *RTI for diverse learners: More than 200 instructional interventions*.

　　Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Collier, S., Burston, B., & Rhodes, A. (2016). Teaching STEM as a second language:

　　Utilizing SLA to develop equitable learning for all students. *Journal for*

　　Multicultural Education, *10*(3), 257-273. doi:10.1108/jme-01-2016-0013

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2015). *Promises to keep: Transforming educator*

　　preparation to better serve a diverse range of learners. Washington, DC: Author.

Cramer, L. (2015). Inequities of intervention among culturally and linguistically diverse

　　students. *Penn GSE Perspectives on Urban Education, 12*(1). Retrieved

　　from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1056724.pdf

Creswell, J. W. (2010). Mapping the developing landscape of mixed methods

　　research. *SAGE handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*, *2*,

　　45-68. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. Los Angeles,

　　CA: SAGE publications.

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective professional*

development. Research brief. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved

from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-

files/Effective_Teacher_Professional_Development_REPORT.pdf

Davis, K.H. (2017). *Teacher Perceptions of Response to intervention and its Core

components, and its implementation in reading in the primary grades.* (Doctoral

dissertation, Columbus State University). Retrieved from

https://csuepress.columbusstate.edu/theses_dissertations/256/

De Jager, T. (2019). Are principles of the sheltered instruction observation protocol

model promoting ESL teaching and learning? *International Journal of Pedagogy

& Curriculum, 26*(1), 43–58. doi:10.18848/2327-7963/CGP/v26i01/43-58

De Monte, J. (2016). Toward better teacher prep. *Educational Leadership*, *73*(8), 66-71.

Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-

leadership/may16/vol73/num08/Toward-Better-Teacher-Prep.aspx

De Oliveira, L. C. (2019). *Handbook of TESOL in K-12*. New York, NY: John Wiley &

Sons.

De Vries, S., Jansen, E. P., & Van de Grift, W. J. (2013). Profiling teachers' continuing

professional development and the relation with their beliefs about learning and

teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *33*, 78-89.

doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.02.006

Diaz-Rico, L. T. (2012). *A course for teaching English learners* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA:

Pearson.

Driver, M. K. (2014). Response to intervention (RTI) for English language learners:

Exploring the experiences of an RTI team in a culturally and linguistically diverse school. *NYS TESOL Journal 1*(2), 86-104. Retrieved

from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/263565412

Duffy, J. (2018). *Implementation of response to intervention (RTI) and a multitiered system of support (MTSS): A case study examination of one school district in Minnesota* (Doctoral dissertation, St. Cloud State University). Retrieved from https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/

Echevarría, J., & Hasbrouck, J. (2009). Response to intervention and English learners. *Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE) Brief.* Retrieved from www.cal.org/create

Echevarría, J., Richards-Tutor, C., Chinn, V., & Ratleff, P. (2011). Did they get it? The role of fidelity in teaching English learners. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *54*(6), 425–434. doi:10.1598/jaal.54.6.4

Echevarría, J., Richards-Tutor, C., & Vogt, M. E. (2015). *Response to intervention (RTI) and English learners using the SIOP model* (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson

Echevarría, J., Short, D., & Powers, K. (2006). School reform and standards-based education: An instructional model for English language learners. *Journal of Educational Research, 99*(4), 195–210. doi:10.3200/joer.99.4.195-211

Echevarría, J., & Vogt, M. (2010). Using the SIOP model to improve literacy for English learners. *New England Reading Association Journal, 46*(1), 8-15. Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/bfcb/948428f0adabb14ec005f7133c6120b86b65.pdf

Echevarría, J., Vogt, M. E., & Short, D. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Echevarria, J., Short, D. J., & Vogt, M. E. (2013). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: the Siop model*. Boston: Pearson.

Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2008). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP model.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Eisner, E. W. (2017). *The enlightened eye: qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Every Student Succeeds Act. (2015). Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95 § 114 Stat. 1177 (2015-2016).

Evans, A. N. (2017). *Attitudes and perceptions towards response to intervention in a middle school setting* (Doctoral dissertation, Carsen-Newman University). Retrieved from https://www.cn.edu/libraries/tiny_mce/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/Dissertations/Dissertations2017/Adam_Evans.pdf

Fan, C. H., Denner, P. R., Bocanegra, J. O., & Ding, Y. (2016). School psychologists' willingness to implement RTI: The role of philosophical and practical readiness. *Contemporary School Psychology*, *20*(4), 383-391. doi:10.1007/s40688-016-0096-8

Ferlis, E., & Xu, Y. (2016). Prereferral process with Latino English language learners with specific learning disabilities: Perceptions of English-as-a-second-language teachers. *International Journal of Multicultural Education, 18*(3), 22-39.

doi:10.18251/ijme.v18i3.1113.

Fiori, L. (2012, June 16). 11 area schools are low performers, DPI reports. *The Journal Times*. Retrieved from http://journaltimes.com/news/ local/area-schools-are-low-performers-dpi-reports/article_7f632004-b830-11e1-9df9-001a4bcf887a.html

Fischer, C., Fishman, B., Dede, C., Eisenkraft, A., Frumin, K., & Foster, B. et al. (2018). Investigating relationships between school context, teacher professional development, teaching practices, and student achievement in response to a nationwide science reform. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *72*, 107-121. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2018.02.011

Folorunsho, A. (2014). *Instructional models for English language learners as contributors to elementary teachers' effectiveness* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Fuchs, D. D., & Fuchs, L. S. (2017). Critique of the national evaluation of response to intervention: A case for simpler frameworks. *Exceptional Children*, *83*(3), 255-268. doi:10.1177/0014402917693580

Fullan, M., & Hargreaves, A. (2016). Bringing the profession back in: Call to action. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward. Retrieved from https://learningforward.org/docs/default-source/pdf/bringing-the-profession-back-in.pdf

Garayta, C. (2017). Effect of Response to Intervention on Developmental Education Students' Persistence, Retention, and Completion. (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from Scholar Works. Retrieved from

https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4497&context=diss
ertations

Gersten, R., Newman-Gonchar, R. A., Haymond, K. S., & Dimino, J. (2017). *What is the evidence base to support reading interventions for improving student outcomes in grades 1–3?* (REL 2017–271). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southeast. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs

Gibson, C. (2016). Bridging English language learner achievement gaps through effective vocabulary development strategies. English Language Teaching, 9(9), 134-138. doi:10.5539/elt.v9n9p134

Glossary of Education Reform. (2013). *Academic language*. Retrieved from http://edglossary.org/academic-language/

Glossary of Education Reform. (2013). *Benchmark assessments*. Retrieved from http://edglossary.org/interim-assessment/

Glossary of Education Reform. (2013). *Core curriculum*. Retrieved from http://edglossary.org/core-course-of-study/

Glossary of Education Reform. (2013). *English-language learner*. Retrieved from http://edglossary.org/english-language-learner/

Guskey, T. R. (2016). Gauge impact with 5 levels of data. Journal of Staff Development, 37(1), 32-37. Retrieved from https://learningforward.org/publications/jsd/jsd-

blog/jsd/2016/04/11/jsd-february-2016-explore-the-standards-for-professional-

learning#.VzNah4QrLZ4

Hallett, E. (2017). *Teachers' self-efficacy when differentiating between language*

acquisition difficulties or possible learning disabilities in English language

learners. (Doctoral dissertation, University of New England). Retrieved from

http://dune.une.edu/theses/139

Harklau, L., & Yang, A. H. (2019). Educators' construction of mainstreaming policy for

English learners: a decision-making theory perspective. *Language Policy*, 1-24.

doi: 10.1007/s10993-019-09511-6

Hasiotis, D., (2015). The Mirage: Confronting the Hard Truth About Our Quest for

Teacher Development. New York: TNTP. Retrieved from

https://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP-Mirage_2015.pdf

Hassell, T. C. (2019). *Influence of Two Instructional Models on Reading Achievement of*

ESL Middle School Students. (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).

Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Heinemann, K. A., Bolanos, H., & Griffin, J. S. (2017). Specific Learning Disabilities:

Response to Intervention. *Learning Disabilities-An International Perspective.*

InTech. doi:10.5772/intechopen.70862

Hill, J., & Miller, K. (2013). *Classroom instruction that works with English language*

learners. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Hirsh, S. (2019). 4 cornerstones of professional learning: Fundamental principles pave

the way for educators' actions. Oxford, OH: *Learning Forward*. Retrieved from

https://learningforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/4-cornerstones-for-download-1.pdf

Hogan, K., & Hathcote, A. (2013). Issues in curriculum and instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching*, *9*(1), 93-102. doi:10.1515/mlt-2013-0024

Hoover, J. J., Baca, L. M., & Klingner, J. K. (2016). Why do English learners struggle with reading? Distinguishing language acquisition from learning disabilities (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hoover, J. J., & Soltero-González, L. (2018). Educator Preparation for Developing Culturally and Linguistically Responsive MTSS in Rural Community Elementary Schools. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *41*(3), 188–202. doi:10.1177/0888406417753689

Howell, C. J. (2016). *The experiences of grade 3 literacy teachers teaching English language learners* (Order No. 10142102). (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Hurlbut, A. R., & Tunks, J. (2016). Elementary preservice teachers' experiences with response to intervention. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 43*(3), 25-48. Retrieved from https://search-proquest-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1809950123?accountid=14872

Institute of Education Sciences. (2010, September). WWC review of adolescent literacy interventions: Reading Plus®. *WWC Intervention Report.* Retrieved from https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/InterventionReports/wwc_readingplus_091410.

pdf

Isbell, L., & Szabo, S. (2015). Assessment: Teacher efficacy and response to

intervention. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 81*(2), 41-46. Retrieved from

http://search.proquest.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1647368758?accounti

d=14872

Islam, C., & Park, M. (2015). Preparing teachers to promote culturally relevant teaching:

Helping English language learners in the classroom. *Multicultural*

Education, 23(1), 38-44. Retrieved from https://search-proquest-

com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1762829824?accountid=14872

Ittner, A. C. (2017). *Creating a linguistically responsive intervention for developing*

readers: A formative experiment with a teacher study group (Order No.

10286194). (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from

https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Itwaru, P. (2017). Teachers' Understanding of Culturally and Linguistically

Differentiated Instruction for English Language Learners. Scholar Works.

(Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from

https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Jensen, B., Sonnemann, J., Roberts-Hull, K., & Hunter, A. (2016). Beyond PD: Teacher

professional learning in high performing systems. Washington, DC: National

Center on Education and the Economy. Retrieved from http://www.ncee.org/wp-

content/uploads/2015/08/BeyondPDWeb.pdf

Johnson, E. M. (2019). Exemplary reading teachers' use of instructional scaffolds with

emergent bilinguals: How knowledge and context shape their choices. *TESOL Quarterly*, *53*(1), 108-132. doi:10.1002/tesq.471

Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluations. (1994). The program evaluation standards: How to assess evaluations of educational programs. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Kennedy, A. (2005). Models of continuing professional development: A framework for analysis. *Journal of in-service education*, *31*(2), 235-250. doi:10.1080/13674580500200277

Korthagen, F. (2016). Inconvenient truths about teacher learning: Towards professional development 3.0. *Teachers and teaching*, *23*(4), 387-405. doi:10.1080/13540602.2016.1211523

Koura, A. A., & Zahran, F. A. (2017). The Impact of Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model on Student Teachers' Teaching Skills and Self-efficacy. *Journal of Language Teaching & Research*, *8*(4), 704. doi:10.17507/jltr.0804.09

Krashen, S. (1981) *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Learning Forward. (2011). *Standards for Professional Learning*. Oxford, OH: Author

Lee, O., Llosa, L., Jiang, F., Haas, A., O'Connor, C., & Van Booven, C. D. (2016). Elementary teachers' science knowledge and instructional practices: Impact of an intervention focused on English language learners. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*. doi:10.1002/tea.21314

Liang, X., & Zhang, G. (2009). Indicators to evaluate pre-service teachers' cultural

competence. *Evaluation & Research in Education, 22*(1), 17-31.

doi:10.1080/09500790903082354

Lodico, M., Spaulding, D., & Voegtle, K. (2010). *Methods in educational research: From theory to practice, 2nd Edition*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Lourdunathan, J., & Menon, S. (2017). Developing speaking skills through interaction strategy training. *The English Teacher*, 18, 1-18. doi:10.1.1.533.3373

Louws, M. L., Meirink, J. A., van Veen, K., & van Driel, J. H. (2018). Understanding teachers' professional learning goals from their current professional concerns. *Teachers and Teaching*, *24*(1), 63-80. doi:10.1080/13540602.2017.1383237

Magee, Ariana T. (2017). *Sheltered instruction versus mainstream classroom – The impact of classroom placement and other factors on the achievement of English language learners in science: Implications for educational leaders* (Doctoral dissertation, Atlanta University). Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.auctr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1182&context=cauet ds

Meissner, D. (2016). *Response to intervention teachers' perspective of tier 2 intervention fidelity* (Order No. 10182410). (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Miller, R. D., Mackiewicz, S. M., & Correa, V. I. (2017). A multi-modal intervention for

English language learners: Preliminary results. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *40*(2), 209-232. doi:10.1353/etc.2017.0010

Muhanna, B. (2019). Using SIOP Model to Engage Students and Promote Academic Knowledge of English Learners (ELs). In J. Keengwe, & G. Onchwari (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Assessment Practices and Pedagogical Models for Immigrant Students* (pp. 367-395). Hershey, PA: IGI Global. doi:10.4018/978-1-5225-9348-5.ch020

National Association of Special Education Teachers (n.d.). The importance of RTI in the understanding, assessment, diagnosis, and teaching of students with learning disabilities [PDF]. *NASET LD Report #5.* Retrieved from http://www.naset.org/fileadmin/user_upload/LD_Report/Issue__5_LD_Report_Importance_of_RTI.pdf

National Center for Education Statistics, U. S. Department of Education (2017). *Fast facts.* Retrieved from National Center for Education Statistics Web site: https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=96

National Center on Response to Intervention (2010). *Essential components of RTI: A closer look at response to intervention*. National Center on Response to Intervention. Retrieved from http://www.RTI4success.org/images/stories/pdfs/RTIessentialcomponents_0520101.pdf

O'Brian, M. (2016). Big Data in the Service of Educator Learning: What should be done with collected online professional learning information? *Quarterly Review of*

Distance Education, 17(4), 39-48,75-76. Retrieved from

https://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.co

m%2Fdocview%2F1891317841%3Faccoun

Oktay, J. S. (2012). *Grounded Theory*. Oxford Scholarship

Online. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199753697.001.0001

O'Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project* (2nd ed.).

Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

O'Malley, J. M., & Valdez, L. (1996). *Authentic assessment for English language*

learners. Practical approaches for learners. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley

Longman.

Orosco, M. J., & Abdulrahim, N. A., (2017). Culturally responsive evidence-based

practices with English language learners with learning disabilities: A qualitative

case study. *Educational Borderlands (1),* 26-44. Retrieved from

file:///C:/Users/e010865/Downloads/Culturally%20Responsive%20Evidence-

based%20Practices%20with%20English%20Language%20Learners%20with%20

Learning%20Disabilities%20(1).pdf

Oswald, B. A. (2016). *Differentiation for content area literacy: Middle school teachers'*

perceptions and practices (Order No. 10146932). (Doctoral dissertation,

University of Wisconsin La Crosse). Retrieved from

https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Palmer, D., Henderson, K., Wall, D., Zuniga, C. E., & Berthelsen, S. (2016). Team

teaching among mixed messages: Implementing two-way dual language bilingual

education at third grade in Texas. *Language Policy*, *15*(4), 393-413.

doi:10.1007/s10993-015-9361-3

Piper, B., Zuilkowski, S. S., Dubeck, M., Jepkemei, E., & King, S. J. (2018). Identifying

the essential ingredients to literacy and numeracy improvement: Teacher

professional development and coaching, student textbooks, and structured

teachers' guides. *World Development*, *106*, 324-336.

doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2018.01.018

Polat, N., & Cepik, S. (2016). An exploratory factor analysis of the Sheltered Instruction

Observation Protocol as an evaluation tool to measure teaching

effectiveness. *Tesol Quarterly*, *50*(4), 817-843. doi:10.1002/tesq.248

Postholm, M. B. (2012). Teachers' professional development: a theoretical

review, *Educational Research, 54*:4, 405-429.

doi:10.1080/00131881.2012.734725

Ramírez, R., López, L. M., & Ferron, J. (2019). Teacher characteristics that play a role in

the language, literacy and math development of dual language learners. *Early*

Childhood Education Journal, *47*(1), 85-96. doi:10.1007/s10643-018-0907-9

Rativa Murillo, H. (2013). Adapting features from the SIOP component: Lesson delivery

to English lessons in a Colombian public school. *Profile: Issues in Teachers´*

Professional Development, 15(1), 171-193. Retrieved

from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1053751.pdf

Ravitch, S. M., & Carl, N. M. (2016). *Qualitative research: bridging the conceptual,*

theoretical, and methodological. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Ray, J. S. (2017). *Tier 2 interventions for students in grades 1-3 identified as at-risk in reading* (Order No. 10289555). (Doctoral dissertation, Simpson University). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Rients, A. (2019). Capitalizing on PD. *Language Magazine,* [s. l.], v. 18, n. 6, p. 45, 2019. Disponível em: <https://search-ebscohost-com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eue&AN=134723492&site=eds-live&scope=site>. Acesso em: 19 set. 2019.

Roe, K. L. (2016). *Cultural relevance in an English language learners' classroom; A qualitative case study*. (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Ross, L. E. (2017). An account from the inside: Examining the emotional impact of qualitative research through the lens of "insider" research. *Qualitative Psychology, 4*(3), 326-337. doi: 10.1037/qup0000064

RTI Action Network (2018a). Glossary. Retrieved from http://www.rtinetwork.org/glossary

RTI Action Network (2018b). Understanding the modern menu of public education services for struggling learners: RTI programs, section 504, and special education. Retrieved from http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/ld/understanding-the-modern-menu-of-public-education-services-for-struggling-learners-rti-programs-section-504-and-special-education

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. London: Sage Publications.

Ruffini, S. J., Lindsay, J., Miskell, R., & Proger, A. (2016). Stated Briefly: Measuring the implementation fidelity of the Response to Intervention framework in Milwaukee Public Schools. Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest, Institute for Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. https://doi.org/10.13140/rg.2.2.28434.04803

Sanchez-Lopez, C. (2013). *Response to Instruction & Intervention (RTI²) for English Language Learners*. Retrieved from https://www.wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx

Saunders, M., & Townsend, K., (2016). Reporting and justifying the number of interview participants in organization and workplace research, *British Journal of Management (27)*4. 836-852. doi:10.1111/1467-8551.12182

Saunders, M. N. K. (2012). Choosing research participants. In G. Symon and C. Cassell (Eds.), *Qualitative organizational research: core methods and current challenges*, pp. 35-52, London: Sage.

Schneider, M. (2018). The Trouble with SIOP®. *TESOL Quarterly*, *52*(1), 234-236. doi:10.1002/tesq.408

Scholar (2013) in *Merriam-Webster's online dictionary* [online] Retrieved from http://www.merriam-webster.com [16 August 2019].

Saeed, K. M., Khaksari, M., Eng, L. S., & Ghani, A. M. A. (2016). The role of learner-learner interaction in the development of speaking skills. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *6*(2), 235-241. doi:10.17507/tpls.0602.03

Scully, J. E. (2016). The Trouble with SIOP: How a Behaviorist Framework, Flawed Research and Clever Marketing Have Come to Define and Diminish Sheltered

Instruction for English Language Learners. *NYS TESOL Journal, 3* (1). Retrieved

from http://journal.nystesol.org/january2016/NYSTESOLJ-jan2016-57-59.pdf

Shinde, S. (2017). *Case study* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved

from https://www.slideshare.net/ShivajiShinde4/case-study-74871415

Short, D. J., Echevarría, J., & Richards-Tutor, C. (2011). Research on academic literacy

development in sheltered instruction classrooms. *Language Teaching

Research*, *15*(3), 363-380. doi:10.1177/1362168811401155

Short, D., Fidelman, C., & Louguit, M. (2012). Developing academic language in English

language learners through sheltered instruction. *TESOL Quarterly, 46*(2), 333–360.

doi:10.1002/tesq.20

Sinek, S. (2009). Simon Sinek: How great leaders inspire action [TED Talk].

Skiba, R. J., Artiles, A. J., Kozleski, E. B., Losen, D. J., & Harry, E. G. (2016). Risk and

consequences of oversimplifying educational inequities: A response to Morgan et al.

(2015). *Educational Researcher, 45*, 221-225. doi: 10.3102/0013189X16644606

Slaughter, I. M. (2016). *RTI resource for ELL students*. Bethesda: National

Association of School Psychologists. Retrieved from

http://search.proquest.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1832570322?accountid=

14872

Song, K. H. (2016). Systematic Professional Development Training and Its Impact on

Teachers' Attitudes Toward ELLs: SIOP and Guided Coaching. *TESOL

Journal*, *7*(4), 767–799. doi:10.1002/tesj.240

Spangler, D. (2019). Micro Approach, Major Impact. *The Learning Professional, 40*(4),

60-61,63-64. Retrieved from

https://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fsearch.proquest.co

m%2Fdocview%2F2281088927%3Faccountid%3D14872

Stake, R. E. (1995). The art of case study research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Publications, Inc.

Stapleton, D. (2017). *Teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of the response to*

intervention framework with English learners. (Doctoral dissertation, East

Tennessee University). Retrieved from http://dc.etsu.edu/etd/3288

[Study site] (2017). *RTI ad-hoc report 2016-17* (Infinite Campus version). [Study site].

Sullivan, E. C. (2016). *Mainstream teachers' language-related knowledge and*

linguistically responsive teaching practices for English language learners (Order

No. 10189352). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

(1878928883). Retrieved from

https://search.proquest.com/docview/1878928883?accountid=35516

Suter, W. N. (2012). Qualitative data, analysis, and design. (2012). *Introduction to*

educational research: A critical thinking approach (pp. 342-386). Thousand

Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: 10.4135/9781483384443

Thorius, K. K., & Sullivan, A. L. (2013). Interrogating instruction and intervention in

RTI research with students identified as English language learners. *Reading &*

Writing Quarterly, 29(1), 64-88. doi:10.1080/10573569.2013.741953

Tomlinson, C. & Imbeau, M.. (2012). Common sticking points about differentiation.

*School Administrator. 69(*5), 18-22. Retrieved from

https://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=23118

Tooley, M., & Connally, K. (2016). No panacea: Diagnosing what ails teacher professional development before reaching for remedies. Washington, DC: New America. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED570895.pdf

Torres, M. (2016). *Meta-analysis of research-based reading interventions with English language learners* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Denver). Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/docview/1802059684?accountid=14872

Umansky, I. M., Thompson, K. D., & Díaz, G. (2017). Using an ever-English learner framework to examine disproportionality in special education. *Exceptional Children, 84*, 76-96. doi: 10.1177/0014402917707470

Understanding RTI: A Systems View. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/educators/understanding-rti-a-systems-view.html

Van Patten, B., & Williams, J. (2015). *Theories in second language acquisition: an introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Villegas, A. M., Saizde La Mora, K., Martin, A. D., & Mills, T. (2018). Preparing Future Mainstream Teachers to Teach English Language Learners: A Review of the Empirical Literature. *The Educational Forum, 82(*2), 138-55. doi:10.1080/00131725.2018.1420850

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weddle, S. A., Spencer, T. D., Kajian, M., & Petersen, D. B. (2016). An examination of a multitiered system of language support for culturally and linguistically diverse preschoolers: Implications for early and accurate identification. *School Psychology Review, 45*(1), 109-133. doi:10.17105/spr45-1.109-132

WIDA Consortium. (2013). *Developing a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI) for English language learners* [PDF]. Madison, WI: Author. Retrieved from https://www.wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (2014). *Procedural compliance self-assessment – disproportionality standards and directions for assessing compliance* [PDF]. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Retrieved from http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/sa-dispro-stand-dir.pdf

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2017). *District report card detail* [PDF]. Retrieved from https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/reportcards/

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2017). *Wisconsin's framework for equitable multi-level systems of supports* [PDF]. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Retrieved from https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/RTI/pdf/RTI-emlss-framework.pdf

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (n.d.) *Options for required district-wide corrective actions for disproportionality compliance items* [PDF]. Madison: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Retrieved from

https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/sped/pdf/sa-dispro-dist-wide-corr-

   actions.pdf

Wisconsin Information System for Educators. (n.d.), WISEDash for districts:

   Secure home [Dashboard]. Retrieved from https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/secure/home

Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau (2017). *Opportunity Schools and Partnership*

   Program [PDF]. Retrieved from https://legis.wisconsin.gov/lab/media/2644/17-

   13full.pdf

Wisconsin RTI Center (2018). *Understanding RTI: A systems view.* Retrieved from

   https://wisconsinrticenter.org/administrators/understanding-rti.html

Yin, R. (2009). Case study research: design and methods, 4th ed., Thousand Oaks, CA:

   Sage.

Appendix A: Project

There were three themes identified when examining the implementation of culturally and linguistically responsive RTI. The participants requested professional learning to include foundational ELL information, fundamental information on sheltering instruction during Tier 1, and culturally and linguistic considerations for RTI recommendation and placement into Tier 2. A professional learning series was designed to support the needs of the local school district. The project includes a series of three full days of learning about research based instructional practices for ELLs. It will also focus on the state developed multi-level system of support (MLSS) and its use with ELLs.

Proposed Activities

The research findings showed minimal amounts of sheltering and scaffolding for ELLs training with mainstream classroom teachers both at the district and individual school levels. As such, a 3-day series of professional learning will be created to increase educator understanding of best practices with ELLs. To create an appropriate adult learning environment, the series will be presented face-to-face and contains hands on interactive activities to provide for time for collegial conversation and topic exploration. The following items will be required to conduct the training: large space that allows for movement and interaction, computers with internet access, projector or Smart Board, note pads, markers, a timer and resources identified in outline for individual activities.

Session 1 will begin with a foundational review of who are ELLs and what makes them different. Take aways for this day includes understanding proficiency levels of ELLs and what that means for lesson planning. Additional topics include affective filter

and BICS vs CALPS. Finally, participants will experience the nuances of language and why learning academic English can be challenging for students.

Session 2 continues with a deeper dive into SIOP instructional practices of sheltering and scaffolding for ELLs. Participants will examine their own lesson plans and identify way in which supports could be embedded based on language level of students during Tier 1 core instruction.

Session 3 is an introduction to the MLSS system and how it compares to RTI. Participants will understand what questions need to be asked when ELLs are not performing on grade level. They will understand the need to look through a cultural and linguistic lens to determine if intervention is necessary, and what that would look like for a CLD student.

Script

Session 1: What ELLs Can Do

Time Requirements: Day 1 8:00-3:00

Slide	Notes	Manipulatives
1,2	Introduce myself. Have participants make name plates Have them share their info with shoulder partner Round Robin: who you are…. what I should know about your school… one thing you want to know about Els in these next two days.	Blank paper
3,4	Go through Agenda. read mission together. Warm up: Vocabulary Sort Activity. Share out.	Post Its (in Resource cases)
5,6	Define ELL, Explain ladder analogy.	
7	I Feel like EL	Use name plate inside for drawing

8,9,10,11	Look at proficiency levels. Do performance definitions arrangement, examine example partner talk discuss the different responses using terms from Performance Definition	Performance Definition Folders Performance Definition Handout Link: https://www.colorincolorado.org/sites/default/files/WIDA-Performance-Definitions.pdf
12,13, 14,15	Comprehensible Input, Affective filter.	Group list of ways in which you used strategies to make input comprehensible. Record Answers Post.
16,17,	BICS vs CALP Language vs Content	

18, 19, 20	The Mighty Badger Activity	Debrief activity using slide 20 as prompts for group
21-25	Defining Academic Language	
26	BREAK	
27,28	Get to know Students introduction, importance of student individual stories	Activity: select a photo from your phone, share with neighbors the story.
29,30	Story of one student, read through letter to Ms. Robbins. What does this tell you about her story as an EL?	
31,32	What's in a Name	Link to document: Getting it Right Reference Guide https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf

		/REL_2016158.pd f
33,34, 35	Student Linguistic Demographics Case studies, Turn and Talk	Link to Wida Bulletin Differentiation Part 1: https://wida.wisc. edu/resources/diff erentiation-part-1
36, 37	Introduction to WIDA Standards and Can Do Descriptors.	
38, 39, 40	Look at Can Do Key Uses descriptors. Read through Pg 2 and 3 of Handout. Divide into four key uses groups. Identify the Language Functions and Supports. Describe what you see. How might this be useful for working with ELs. Use the name chart to place a student based on ACCESS information. Place one of your own students. Explain Access for Els Student report. Go beyond	Can Do descriptors 9-12 Look at key descriptors… how different?

	composite overall score. Use multiple assessments both formative and summative	Name Chart Link: https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/can-do/descriptors Student Roster handout
41,42, 43, 44	Begin work on differentiation template Will complete Enduring Understanding for all students, demographic information of ELs, and Language Based expectation using Can Do for grade level band.	One template per person
45	LUNCH	
46	Academic Language, Recap morning work… what did you learn? This morning we spoke about the student and the difference between academic and interpersonal language if time Venn diagram of the two	Possible Venn diagram if time permits record and post
47,48	This afternoon's work is focusing on language and why English is so difficult. Show samples. Discuss Whole group	
49,50	Raising CH_____ activity	Use slide to have part fill in blanks.

	Discuss expectations, teacher vs student, intro background knowledge	Reveal on next slide
51,52	Revisit language vs content in a math problem. Over talking for teacher	Split group into 4, how many ways can they say the mathematical process? Discuss GOZINTA as an option
53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58	Scientific Nursery Rhyme: Academic Language	Identify technical language associated with each line with a partner. Share with table group.
59, 60, 61, 62	Set up for Break	
63, 64, 65, 66	Intro to Technical Vocabulary	
67, 68, 69, 70	Activity Set up a flow Map with table to do word sort from general to specific to technical vocabulary	Large chart paper for flow Map

71, 72, 73, 74, 75	Importance of teaching key vocabulary. Focus on Root Words, Affixes, prefixes and suffixes	Work with a partner to figure out vocabulary word on page 75 (longest word in the dictionary)
76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81	Schema and learning English. Teacher expectations	Interactive activities embedded in PPT
82, 83, 84, 85, 86	Translation APPs, positive and negative Possible activities for learning	Demonstrate how to translate a whole Webpage using Google Translate
	END Session 1: Exit Slip	On Google Doc, share one thing that was new to you and one question you still have.

Script

Session 2: Sheltering and Scaffolding

Time Requirements: Day 2 8:00-3:00

<u>Slide</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Manipulatives</u>
89,90	Design a name tag	Blank piece of paper
91	Imagine that Activity	Close your eyes and imagine it is the first day of class. You walk… Video: https://youtu.be/tiadBJYUh_8?t=385
92, 93	Go through Purpose and agenda Read through intentions together	
94, 95	Use template to introduce self. Have participants practice template on inside of nametag and share with a partner	

96, 97	Intro to Scaffolding using video, List all ways that the teacher scaffolded the lesson record on chart paper	Show video hot linked in PPT from IRIS Training Center (Portuguese is the language)
	Play video first without showing video (only Audio) Click on Picture or "First…" to go to part 1 link What did you learn?	
	Go to the "And Now" section to play with the support. What did you learn? What changed?	
98, 99	Is it fair? Read through scenario. Discuss as a group. Decide fair or not 121 Establish topic of scaffolding	Thumbs up or thumbs down
	Share the following scenario: During an end of unit assessment in the seventh-grade math class, students were asked to solve word problems where they were expected to explain how they solved their answers. The assessment was scaffolded for English learners in that the lower proficiency students used sentence frames and word banks and higher-level	

English learners were provided sentence stems to support their thinking.

The following day, the teacher received a call from a parent asking the teacher why some students were provided help and whether this was fair for their child who did not receive any support.

Turn and talk Activity…. Is the parent justified? Was this fair treatment? Move to one side of room, middle of room other side of room. Talk with team to determine response and try to convince others to move to your position.

Finish the story…
The teacher explained to the parent that the assessment was to test student's mathematical thinking and skills and that the supports provided to some students allowed them the language assistance they needed for them to more accurately demonstrate their math knowledge without language interference. As these students were provided support during instruction, it would have been

	a disadvantage to remove the scaffolding during the assessment. The teacher went on to explain that these supports were temporary and are removed as soon as the students can do the work independent of language need. If time play out scenario in partners	
100	Definition of Scaffolding and the three big buckets.	
101-110	Materials and resources. Activities embedded within PPT	Wrap up, divide group into three. Each group gets a different level of reading from Newsela. See slide 110 for directions for each group. Debrief how the work was scaffolded using resources and materials.
123	Break	

111-122	Instructional Practice Activities include modeling of a lesson in Spanish, Teach the Text Backward strategy, and participants working through vocabulary	
124-126	Grouping Strategies Student grouping rationale Read through slide on Student grouping brainstorm in small group then share round robin until no new answers pairs, small groups, stations, whole class, using cooperative structures, conferencing, interviews, discussion, with coach or mentor, expert groups, homogeneous, heterogenous (prof level, interest level, topic etc)	Jigsaw read prep. Select readings on one topic at three different reading levels. Have participants work through the Jigsaw in groups Second activity uses Jellybeans or MMs to group a diverse class of students. Discuss rational
127	Lunch	
128, 129	A quick review	

130	Explore scaffoldings by grouping into buckets Use Go To Strategies document to create a Tree Map three people.	Go to Strategies Link: http://cal.org/what-we-do/projects/project-excell/the-go-to-strategies
131, 132	Review Differentiation Template started in session 1. Use the Go To strategies to fill in final row on differentiation strategies to use with each student. See Example in PPT	Use Differentiation template from Session 1 to complete final row on supports
133-140	Walk through slides if time permits	
141	Read through slide and turn and talk with process partner. What are the implications to the classroom?	
142	Break	
144, 145	Introduce EL Excellence and Essentials	
146, 151	Program Reflection Divide out essentials and work in pairs to answer.	Museum walk one essential per page. Groups walk

	Present to rest of group… add any additional information 10 minutes to think, 10 minutes to present	around to each poster and answer questions based on their environment and situation.
152, 153	Rank elements Go over element sheet. What does this mean? Where does _____ need to continue to work?	Using stickers place three stickers where you feel are most happening Tally stickers and rank elements
154, 155	Wrap up and evaluation: Exit Slip	Ferris Bueller video…. Example of what not to do On shared google Doc, share how the teacher in the video relates to what was learned in session 2 regarding

	instructional practices and ELLs.

	Script **Session 3: MLSS/RTI and ELLs** **Time Requirements: Day 3 8:00-3:00**	
<u>Slide</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Manipulatives</u>
157, 158	Welcome and introductions	Blank paper for name tags
159	Walk through agenda, ask if there needs to be anything added or taken out.	
160- 163	Warm up activity Participants decide if the statement is true or false and move to corresponding side of the room. Debrief each as it is revealed.	Signs on opposite walls True and false

164	Read through the RTI Centers vision and Mission. Turn and talk, what resonates with you. What aligns with your district vision and mission?	
165, 166	Session outcomes and takeaways	
166	Overview of an MLSS system Difference between RTI, MLSS and MTSS	Have participants read through descriptions and fill in bubble map comparing the three ideas.
167, 168, 169	Share out Maps. Define a MLSS and how RTI fits into the model	
170, 171, 172, 173, 174	Describe the three levels of support. Discuss importance of Universal core instruction Tier 1 Have participants share what it looks like and sounds like at each level in their district	Brainstorm answers at table first with a recorder and then share out. Create and overall chart on large post it paper.
175	BREAK	

176, 177, 178	Discuss equity vs Equality Table conversation regarding slide 177	List as many groups as you can think of. Pass the paper. Add to the list. Pass the paper etc. 3 times
179, 180, 181	Discuss cultural and linguistic responsiveness. Share Cultural Competence Wheel. Do a jigsaw read of Guiding Document. Count off by eight. Each person reads their practice and describes what that looks like in their district. Meet in like groups and share. Then move to mixed groups and share.	Handout: https://dpi.wi.gov/ sites/default/files/i mce/statesupt/pdf/ WI_Model_Inform _CRPs_2019.pdf
182, 183	Introduce road map	
184-190	Instruction and Collaboration Share out celebrations and areas in need of improvement	Fill in celebrations and area in need of improvement (see ppt slide 190)
191-194	Assessment	Fill in celebrations and area in need of improvement (see ppt slide 194)

195-196	Revisit Culturally Responsive Practices	Revisit charts and see where there are CRP listed. If there are none, do they need to be added?
197-198	Disproportionality Discuss briefly disproportionality Use graphic on slide 198 to identify possible areas of concern if district cited for dispro chart on paper	
199	LUNCH	
200, 201,	Reflection: This is the time for a district or school to self-examinee their practices using a continuous improvement model. They will look at each of the thee areas and examine them through an equitable lens. System Map for Culturally and Linguistically responsive practices	Roadmap located on WI DPI website
202, 203	Instruction At tables or in a small group, fill in instruction column use guiding questions to support thought process.	
204, 205	Assessment	

	At tables or in a small group, fill in assessment column use guiding questions to support thought process.	
206, 207	Collaboration At tables or in a small group, fill in instruction column use guiding questions to support thought process.	
208	Break	
210- 211	Continuous Improvement Walkthrough with district/school Problem identification and supporting data	Need data from site Need Chart paper to record answers
212 213	Analysis The five whys	Do activity group with chart paper
214, 215	Plan Implementation Student level, systems level	Set Goals as a group Large Chart Paper
217, 218	Plan Evaluation	Goals to results template
219	End Session 3 Homework, continuous improvement means it doesn't end as I leave, it is only the beginning…	

Differentiation Template

Add columns as needed for additional students.

ELP Level (ST Name)	Student 1 (Name)	Student 2 (Name)	Student 3 (Name)	All Students
Language-Based Expectations (from Can Do Descriptors)				
Standards-Based Content or Topic (from the curriculum)				

Scaffolding and Supports				

For example

DESCRIBE:

Comprehensible Input/Affective Filter

Affective Filter

Comprehensible Input

Language vs. Content

Language proficiency involves the *language* associated with the content areas.

Content knowledge reflects the declarative (what) and procedural (how) knowledge associated with the content.

ELP Level 1	Sun peeping, earth guessing
ELP Level 2	The earth is between the sun and you.
ELP Level 3	When the earth is between the sun and you, you can't see the sun. There is shadow and we call the sun penumbra, you can see some of it when you are at the penumbra.
ELP Level 4	This is an eclipse because there are three tiny objects at a time. The shadow behind the earth is called the umbra. The shadow that is partly dark is the penumbra.
ELP Level 5	This is when the sun eclipse. There comes an aspect, the region of shadow cast by the eclipsing body is divided into umbra, where the emission from the sun is completely blocked, and a penumbra, where only a portion of the radiation is blocked.

STUDENT RESPONSE & TEACHER CORRECTION

Don't force students to speak but still ask that they respond (pointing, etc.)

Give extended wait time.

Reduce response materials.

Recognize ELL students to still make mistakes.
- Focus more on meaning than grammar.
- Model the correct grammar without correcting the student.
  - For example: the student says "I eating hamburger."
    - Teacher: you ate a hamburger?
    - Student: Yes, I ate a hamburger.

Language and content learning

What language do you need to know to learn about umbra and penumbra?

What content do you need to know to learn the meaning of the words umbra and penumbra?

What other aspects of language do you need to master besides this vocabulary?

Needs of English Learners

- ELLs must learn content while still learning English.
- Too terms may depend to themes in native language.
- Learners must respect form and appropriate prior learning.
- Learners are trying to catch a moving target.

---

3 Features of Comprehensible Input

Clear explanation of academic tasks

Speech appropriate for students' proficiency level.

Variety of techniques used to make content concepts clear.

Bics vs CALP

BICS

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

Social or Instructional Language

1-3 years

CALP

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

Language needed to succeed in the curriculum

The Mighty…
Work in a group of 4

- Person 1 describes the badger from a poet's perspective.
- Person 2 discusses the badger from an economist's perspective.
- Person 3 describes the badger from a biologist's perspective.
- Person 4 discusses the badger from a historian's perspective.

Defining Academic Language (part 2)

There are two types of parasitic elements. A director is generally shorter than the driven element and is located at the front. A reflector is generally longer than the driven element and is located at the back. The direction of maximum radiation from a parasitic dipole travels from the reflector through the driven element and the director. The term "major lobe" refers to the region of maximum radiation from a directional dipole.

(Bevis, T., 2008 Video Convention)

BOTTOM LINE

For students to achieve academically and demonstrate learning on a larger scale, such as high stakes assessments, they *MUST* master Academic Language.

Language Across the Curriculum

With your group, discuss the essential questions below.

What constitutes Academic Language Proficiency?

What constitutes Academic Content Knowledge?

What is the relationship between Academic Language Proficiency and Academic Content Knowledge?

IMPLICATIONS OF HAM RADIO EXAMPLE:

- The traditional concept divides students into novices and nonexperts or maxiexperts.
- This is how students, because both end and subject appears to this area or interruption to interpreted needs.
- If students do not have prior knowledge, teachers must teach the knowledge, skills and language necessary for understanding.
- Only a teacher steeped in this discourse can model it effectively for students. This example increased teacher's tenacious activities coupled with modeling of and explicit instruction in the language of this "content" area.

(Bevis, 2008)

PAUSE BREAK

Defining Academic Language

In most multiple element dipoles, the additional elements are not directly connected to the feed line. They receive power by mutual coupling from the driven element. Then they reradiate it in the proper phase relationship to achieve gain or directivity over a simple half-wavelength dipole. These elements are called parasitic elements.
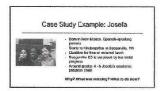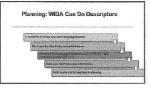
Understanding learning/teaching zones
(adapted from Mariani, 1997; Vermunt and Verloop, 2002)

high challenge

"FRUSTRATION" ZONE	"EXPANSIVE" ZONE (EFD)

low support   high support

"COMFORT" ZONE	"BOREDOM" ZONE

low challenge

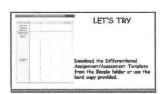**Let's get to know our students!!**

The Can-DO Descriptors provide a clear and basic overview of ELs' ability based on their initial or annual language proficiency test. This powerful document highlights what our ELs CAN do at various stages of the language development and for each language domain as they interact with core content.

The WIDA Can Do Descriptors, Key Uses Edition

- Within each grade-level band, the descriptors are organized by Key Use (Recount, Explain, Argue and Discuss) and within each Key Use there are sample descriptors for WIDA's six levels of language proficiency (ELP Levels 1–6).
- The descriptors in Level 6 represent the language performance of students who have met all the criteria for Level 5. Unlike the descriptors at Levels 1–5 that provide examples of performance at the end of the level, the descriptors at Level 6 are examples of performance within Level 6.
- For three of the Key Uses (Recount, Explain, and Argue) you'll see descriptors for the four language domains (Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing). The descriptors for the Key Use Discuss are only shown for oral language. The Key Use Discuss highlights the importance of oral language development for meaningful participation of all language learners, regardless of their level of language proficiency.

WIDA

LET'S TRY

Download the Differentiated Assignment/Assessment Template from the Google folder or use the hard copy provided.

Language Based Expectations:

Use the WIDA Can Do Descriptors which articulate the possible qualities and assets of ELLs. The Can Do language-based expectations provide a foundation for generating language objectives and authentic assessments, which should be differentiated for ELLs based on their ELP levels and other relevant background factors.

Language Based Expectations:
Standards-Based Content or Topic (from the curriculum):

The standards based content or topic (row 2) is derived from the curriculum and is expressed on the template in terms of big ideas or enduring understandings. These big ideas provide the basis for generating content objectives which are more or less the same for every student in the class, including ELLs.

LUNCH BREAK!

English is difficult!

"Raising Ch_____"

The questions that p_____ face as they raise
ch_____ from in_____ to adult life are not easy to
an.

Both fa_____ and en_____ can become concerned when
health problems such as c_____ arise any time after
the e_____ stage to later life.

Experts recommend that young ch_____ should have plenty
of s_____ and nutritious food for healthy growth.

B_____ and g_____ should not share the same b_____ or
even sleep in the same r_____ They may be afraid of the
_____

How many ways can you say...

+	-	x	÷
add	subtract	multiply	divide
plus	minus	times	quotient
and	less	product	over
together	low	a factor	by
combine	take away	by	

Multiple Meanings

**What subject area might you find these words
used with different meanings?**

Face   Tree   Cone   Plane

**What can the teacher do to help clarify content-
specific vocabulary?**

Raising Chickens

The questions that poultrymen face as they raise
chickens from incubation to adult life are not easy to
answer. Both farmers and merchants can become
concerned when health problems such as coccidiosis
arise any time after the egg stage to later life. Experts
recommend that young chicks should have plenty of
sunshine and nutritious food for healthy growth. Banties
and geese should not share the same barnyard or even
sleep in the same roost. They may be afraid of the dark

A Shared Reading Activity

A prepubescent male situated himself near the intersection
of two supporting structural planes at right angles to each
other. The aforementioned subject was involved in the
ingestion of a saccharine composition prepared in
conjunction with the ritual observance of an annual fixed-
day religious festival. Insertion into the syrupy constituent
of the opposable digit of the forelimb was followed by
removal of a drupe of genus prune. Subsequently, the
subject made a declarative statement regarding the high
quality of his character as a masculine human.

Math or English Problem

4 divided into 2=

4 divided by 2=

Language Proficiency vs Content
Knowledge

How many different
ways can you read
the following
mathematical
expression?

3+2= ?

Does this Help?

Little Jack Horner

Little Jack Horner sat in the corner
Eating his Christmas pie,
He put in his thumb and pulled out a plum
And said "What a good boy am I!"

English language learners can reach the same high content-area standards as all students, but they need different pathways.

This?

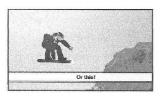**Activity: Drupe of Genus Prune**

1. Look at the two language samples.

1. Work with a partner to identify the technical language associated with each line of the poem.

1. Share with the table.

This?

PAUSE BREAK

Drupe of Genus Prune = Plum

Little Jack Horner
Sat in the corner.
Eating his Christmas pie.
He put in his thumb
And pulled out a plum,
And said
"What a good boy am I!"

Or this!

PERFORMANCE DEFINITIONS

Everyday Word

Live

"We all live in a yellow submarine."

Academic Word

Survive/Survival

"The survival of mankind may well be dependent on our ability to reduce the use of fossil fuels."

Activity

1. Set up a Flow Map as shown on the next slide
2. Use the list of words to fill in your flow chart
3. Compare your answers with your partner
4. Add three more groups to your flow chart specific to your content area

---

Levels of Vocabulary

Standard	General	Specific	Technical
Language of Language Arts	Person	Character	Protagonist
Language of Mathematics	In all	Total	Sum
Language of Science	Know	Kneecap	Patella
Language of Social Studies	People	Population	Demographics

Photosynthesis
Estimation
Westward
Expansion
Industrialism

These types of words are best introduced and taught in content instruction, though they can be reviewed and practiced throughout the day – e.g., in ELD ELA, and reading instruction.

Flow Map

General   Specific   Technical

Teach KEY Vocabulary

- Let students create a Picture Dictionary.
- Post new vocabulary words.
- Make students accountable for
  - vocabulary!!
- Pre-teach, Point Out, Practice, &
  - Perpetuate

Vocabulary Usage
(Specificity of word or phrase choice)

- General, specific & technical language
- Multiple meanings of words & phrases
- Formulaic & idiomatic expressions
- Nuances & shades of meaning
- collocations

Word Sort

Person	Polygon	Sum
In all	Demographics	Protagonist
Men	Speed	Patella
Quadrilateral	Population	Fight
Shape	Home Sapiens	Know
Kneecap	Battle	Character
People	Velocity	Male
Rate	Total	Result

Focus on root words

"The truth is that if borrowing foreign words could destroy a language, English would be dead (borrowed from Old Norse), deceased (from French), defunct (from Latin), and kaput (from German). When it comes to borrowing, English excels (from Latin), surpasses (from French), and eclipses (from Greek) any other tongue, past or present!"

The Effect of Schema on Learning

What are the three types of balls used in Quidditch? Quidditch is the most popular sport in the wizarding world of Harry Potter.

In Summary: It's played between two teams of seven players riding flying broomsticks, using four balls: a Quaffle, two Bludgers, and a Golden Snitch.

Pledge of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the frog of the United States of America. And to the wee puppet for which it stands, One Asian, in the vestibule, with little tea and just rice for all.

Football

Write three sentences about the football game you last watched...

OR

Description: Can you figure out what this word means?

Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis

What did you say?

Sejong is a well known *Dongwang* in Korea. Every Korean school child knows about him.

Henry the VIII is a well known *Dongwang* in England. Every British school child knows about him.

Building Background

Link concepts in students' background experiences

Bridge past learning to new concepts

Emphasize key vocabulary

Slide 1: Introductions and Welcome — "Imagine that"

Slide 3: **Sheltered Instruction** — Purposeful teaching of the *language* necessary for English Learners to understand content.

Slide 4: Agenda — Scaffolding Basics, Scaffold a Lesson, Reflect on our Current Practice

Slide 5: Please Design a Nameplate — On the front... design your name! On the back:

Slide 6: Do this math problem — προσθέστε τους αριθμούς ένα και δύο

Slide 7: By the end of this session we will be able to:

Slide 8: A Science Lesson — First Without Support — And now... Scaffolded for Language

Slide 9: Let's think about this... Is it unfair to the non ELs when English learners receive supports in the classroom?

What is a scaffold?

A scaffold is a temporary support a teacher provides to a student that enables the student to perform a task he or she would not be able to perform alone (Fisher, Frey, & Rothenberg, 2011).

Resources and/or Materials | Instructional Practices

Any success with this?

1.
2.
3.

Create and USE Word Walls

Materials and Resources

Materials and resources are the instructional tools you provide to your students to support them in accessing content and sharing their understanding.

Graphic Organizers | Glossaries/Dictionaries | Academic Stems, Frames and Paragraph Frames | Visuals | Word Banks or Word Walls

Is this easier? Why?

Put it in a public place!

- Share your success with each other
- Create a Multi-Flow Map
  - In groups of 2-3
- 10 min. for sharing & 10 min. for creating

1.
2.
3.

1. How many legs do people have?
2. How many legs do insects have?
3. How do insects use their legs?

Add pictures

Instructional Practice

Defenestrate

Create a scaffold in groups that will support your reading.
Use large post its....

Group 1: Create a graphic organizer that is not a KWL or a Venn diagram.

Group 2: Bilingual Glossary example and Word Family Glossary

Groups 3: Sentence stems/Frames

Restate the following:

The author's book was rather sesquipedalian. Clinching the piece before the end of the conveyance ambuscaded us to say the least.

Echinated

PAUSE BREAK

Answer:

The author's book was full of long words. Finishing the piece before the end of the flight surprised us to say the least.

Purchase

Slide 1:

Restate the following:

When the lights suddenly went out, I purchased the nearest thing; an echinated vine! Such was my distress that I immediately defenestrated the plant.

Slide 2:

The Water Cycle/ El Ciclo del Agua

· Video

Slide 3:

Student Grouping

Slide 4:

Your Turn…

- Identify a content specific technical vocabulary word
- Work with a partner
- Teach your own I using the informed technique

1. I Say
2. You Say
3. I Say
4. You Say
5. I Hear
6. You Hear
7. I Hear
8. You Hear
9. I Say
10. You Show
11. I Say
12. You Show

· Choose one word to teach a term

Slide 5:

The Water Cycle/ El Ciclo Del Agua

· Label Picture

· Answer Questions
  Primera etapa _____
  Segunda etapa _____
  Tercera etapa _____

· Discuss in Pairs

evaporación
condensación
precipitación

Slide 6:

Student Grouping

Purpose
- Synthesize information
- Planning Action
- Engaging in an ongoing process w/ others
- Strengthening listening skills
- Developing communication & collaboration skills
- Cultivating empathy & open mindedness

Jigsaw or Expert Groups
Researching Phase
Presenting Phase
Co-Constructing Phase

Slide 7:

Teaching Text Backward

1. Have students complete an activity, such as watch a video, to become familiar with the content of the chapter.
2. Discuss the material in class by considering the photographs, diagrams, and other graphics within the chapter.
3. Conduct a language focus lesson to explore the content-related vocabulary of the lesson.
4. Go to the end of the chapter, review the summary and answer some of the study questions.
5. Go to the beginning of the chapter, and read the entire chapter. (Shelter this further by providing outline, highlighting and annotating passages, alternate reading, reading in L1)

Slide 8:

The Water Cycle/ El Ciclo Del Agua

Write a Short Summary

Word Bank
evaporación
condensación
precipitación
etapa

Primero   Segundo   tercero

Slide 9:

Student Grouping

Structured Pair Work
Structured Small-Group Work
Teacher-Led Small-Group Work

Teacher Behaviors

Self-Correcting

Avoid:	Focus on:
•Immediately correcting the student	• Wait time

Teacher Behaviors

Imitation

Avoid:	Focus on:
• Silent classrooms	• Listen to the radio
	• Interviews
	• Guest Speakers

Teacher Behaviors

Avoid:	Focus on:
• Only grading for correct answers	• Journals (can be illustrated)
	• KWL Charts
	• Rubrics

Self-Evaluation

Teacher Behaviors

Avoid:	Focus on:
• Assuming students will know how to use their dictionaries and glossaries	• Clarification
	• Teaching students when and how to use these resources

Native Language Resources

Reflection

Teacher Behaviors

Peer Interaction

Avoid:	Focus on:
• Always giving the answer	• 'Phone a friend', 'poll the audience'
	• Pairing higher & lower level ELLs

WARNING!!

EL Excellence Everyday

Essentials
- Value
- Expect
- Engage
- Observe
- Support
- Reflect

Reflective Questions   Our Actions & Evidence

Engage

- How will students demonstrate success?
- What academic talks and active engagement routines will we make central to everyday teaching to realize these priority goals?
- What shared engagement tasks will we use to re-analyze student data (e.g., conversation, writing, assessment results) specific to our priority goals?

Reflective Questions   Our Actions & Evidence

Reflect

- Do our ways to share data, analyze, emphasize truly serving students for ourselves, and/or help the foster consequences or reflection to adapt next instructional approaches?
- Where EL's independent, is our difficult to use reflect and adapt at lesson and unit?
- Do our approaches towards national improvement and classroom observation to open or inhibit a culture of adult learning, risk-taking, and courageous student return?
- Do all adults who serve ELs share ownership and agency to elevate the achievement of ELs in the school?

Reflective Questions   Our Actions & Evidence

Value

- Does every student feel a sense of belonging and connection in our school?
- Does every EL family member feel a strong sense of belonging and have a voice our school community?
- How are we connecting teaching and learning to students' backgrounds/knowledge, home language(s), and experiences?

Reflective Questions   Our Actions & Evidence

Observe

- How do we collaborate to co-analyze student data including expressive language use (i.e., conversations and/or writing) aligned to our priority goals?
- What does this data reveal about students' understanding, strengths, confusion, and language use related to our goal?

Rank: Most-Least Implemented

Essentials
- Value
- Expect
- Engage
- Observe
- Support
- Reflect

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Reflective Questions   Our Actions & Evidence

Expect

- What measurable outcomes do we want to reach, with is it, it is our school this year?
- What are our priority goals for student learning? What aspects of language must students understand and use to excel with those goals?
- Do we have shared clarity about what success looks like for content and language learning aligned to our priority goals? What is our success criteria?

Reflective Questions   Our Actions & Evidence

Support

- How are we using data at individuals, as teams, and as a school to strategically adjust our teaching and supports so all learners build their current understandings to succeed at higher levels with our priority goals?
- What systems do we have to systematically use student data to monitor our progress and determine if our approaches are getting the results we intend?

EL Excellence Everyday

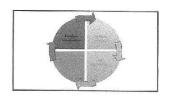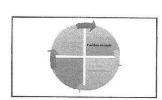**Essentials**
- Value
- Expect
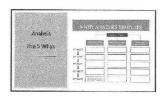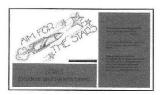- Engage
- Observe
- Support
- Reflect

Project References

Echevarría, J., Vogt, M. E., & Short, D. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

WIDA Consortium. (2013). *Developing a culturally and linguistically responsive approach to Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI) for English language learners* [PDF]. Madison, WI: Author. Retrieved from https://www.wida.us/downloadLibrary.aspx

Wisconsin RTI Center (2018). *Understanding RTI: A systems view.* Retrieved from https://wisconsinrticenter.org/administrators/understanding-rti.html

EXIT SLIP

Session 1:

Share one thing that was new to you and one question you still have.

Session 2:

Share how the teacher in the video relates to what was learned in session 2 regarding

instructional practices and ELLs.

Session 3:

Roadmap Template.

Framework for Equitable MLSS

	High Quality Instruction	Assessments	Collaboration	Leadership and Organizational Structures
Universal Tier 1				
Selected Tier 2				
Intensive Tier 3				

Appendix B: Semistructured Interview Questions

Aligned with SIOP® Protocol

Time of Interview:

Date:

Location:

Interviewer

Interviewee code:

Position of the Interviewee:

Background questions:

What grade level(s) are you licensed to teach?

How many years have you been teaching?

Have you taken any courses or attended any workshops on teaching English learners?

Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about a time when you felt that (English learner) was understanding everything that you were teaching. Can you describe the lesson? What activities were involved? How did you teach it? What are some activities that help (English learner) in your class?

2. How do you differentiate instruction to meet the needs of (English learner) when (s)he has difficulty?

3. How is this different from the instruction provided to (Monolingual student)?

4. How do you accommodate for English language deficiencies with (English learner)?

5. Building background is about providing the link between the past learning and new concepts. How do you activate a student's prior knowledge and building background?

6. In what ways (if any) do you adapt your teaching methods or materials to increase comprehension for (English learner)? Can you give an example?

7. What kinds of activities do you do for students to work together? How is the interaction part of the instruction?

8. What evidence or data did you use to modify instruction when planning your lesson for (English learner)? (Monolingual student)?

9. What were some ways in which you provide constructive and specific academic feedback to (English learner)? (Monolingual student)? How do you assess or monitor their learning?

10. How would you define sheltered instruction? Can you provide examples from a recent lesson you taught?

Closing: Thank you for taking the time to meet and be interviewed regarding your thoughts about the RTI identification process and its implementation with English language learners. Your opinion is valuable to me as a researcher. If you would like, a copy of the transcription may be made available to you by sending an email to

XXXs@waldenu.edu

Semi Structured Interview Questions

Follow-up

Time of Interview:

Date:

Location:

Interviewer

Interviewee code:

Position of the Interviewee:

Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about the recommended interventions for (student). Can you share why you selected that intervention?

2. Were the interventions implemented as prescribed? If not, what modifications did you have to make?

3. How successful do you feel the interventions were in closing the reading gap exhibited by the student? How do you know?

4. What are the next steps regarding (student)?

Closing: Thank you again for taking the time to meet and be interviewed regarding your thoughts about the RTI intervention process and its implementation with English language learners. Your opinion is invaluable to me as a researcher.

Appendix C: WIDA RTI[2] (WIDA Consortium, 2013)

Conceptual Framework for RQ2

Seven Integral Factors	
Integral Factor	Indicators
#1: Learning Environment Factors	Includes aspects such as the curriculum used, materials that are culturally and linguistically diverse, physical facilities, and teachers that are knowledgeable about diverse learners and are presented with opportunities to learn about their unique educational needs
#2: Academic Achievement and Instructional Factors	Includes eight components of SIOP[®.]
#3: Oral Language and Literacy Factors	Include fist language acquisition, second language acquisition, simultaneous ad sequential bilingualism, conversational fluency and academic language proficiency, evidence of instruction in academic language, reinforcing academic language at home, evidence of appropriate literacy instruction in the home language and English, and literacy in the home
#4: Personal and Family Factors	Includes socioeconomic status, family dynamics, expectations, student interests and motivation, experiential background ad parental engagement

Appendix D: SIOP® Protocol

Conceptual Framework for RQ1

The SIOP® is composed of 30 features grouped into eight main components	
Component	Features
Lesson Preparation	• **Content objectives** clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students • **Language objectives** clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students • **Content concepts** appropriate for age and educational background level of students • **Supplementary materials** used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful • **Adaptation of content** • **Meaningful activities** that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking
Building Background	• **Concepts explicitly linked** to students' background experiences • **Links explicitly made** between past learning and new concepts • **Key vocabulary** emphasized

Comprehensible Input	• **Speech** appropriate for student's proficiency level • **Clear explanation** of academic tasks • **A variety of techniques** used to make content concepts clear
Strategies	• Ample opportunities provided students to use l**earning strategies** • **Scaffolding techniques** consistently used to assist and supporting student understanding • A variety of **questions or tasks that promote higher-order thinking skills**
Interaction	• Frequent opportunities for **interaction** and discussion between teacher/student and among students, which encourage elaborated responses about lesson concepts • **Grouping configurations** that support language and content objectives of the lesson • Sufficient **wait time for student** responses consistently provided • Ample opportunities for students to **clarify key concepts in L1** as needed with aide, peer, or L1 text
Practice and Application	• **Hands-on materials and/or manipulatives** provided for students to practice using new content knowledge

	• Activities provided for students to **apply content and language knowledge** in the classroom • Activities integrate all **language skills** (reading, writing, listening, speaking)
Lesson Delivery	• **Content objectives** clearly supported by lesson delivery • **Language objectives** clearly supported by lesson delivery • **Students engaged** approximately 90% to 100% of the period • **Pacing** of the lesson appropriate to students' ability level
Review and Assessment	• Comprehensive **review of key vocabulary** • Comprehensive **review of key concepts** • Regular **feedback** provided to students on their output • **Assessment of student comprehension and learning** of all lesson objectives throughout the lesson

Note: Summarized from Echevarría, Richards-Tutor, and Vogt (2015, pp. 128-129).

#5: Physical and Psychological Factors	Includes physical and psychological factors, malnutrition and chronic hunger, current psychological stress
#6: Previous Schooling Factors	Includes amount of formal schooling in the first or home language, quality of formal schooling in the home language, amount and quality of formal ESL instruction, and congruence of educational approaches
#7: Cross-Cultural Factors	Includes expectations, values, beliefs towards educational experience, staff knowledge of expectations, home languages, proficiency levels, countries of origin, use of interpreters and translator, funds of knowledge and preferences for times, places of meeting etc.

Appendix E: RQ2 Code Alignment

Research Question 2: What experiential, linguistic, and culturally responsive research-based assessment indicators and data do RTI teams consider during the RTI decision making process for ELLs?

    A. What research-based assessment indicators and data are considered during the RTI decision- making process for ELLs?

    B. Are selected academic interventions and progress monitoring decisions culturally and linguistically appropriate for meeting the needs of ELLs?

Theme	Code Description (WIDA RTI² Protocol)	Code
Experiential	Learning Environment	E1
	Academic Achievement	E2
	Instructional Factors	E3
	Previous Schooling	E4
Linguistic	Oral Language Factors	L1
	Literacy Factors	L2
Cultural	Cross Cultural Factors	C1
	Physical Factors	C2

	Psychological Factors	C3
	Personal Factors	C4
	Family Factors	C5

Guiding Questions

- Do educators consider experiential, linguistic, and cultural factors when referring ELLs to intervention?

- Do RTI teams consider experiential, linguistic, and cultural factors when planning interventions for ELLs?

- Are interventions assigned to ELLs culturally, linguistically, and culturally relevant for ELLs? Are they different from interventions assigned to non-ELLs?

- How do RTI teams consider ELL status in RTI decision making?