

Original Paper

English Language Learner Instruction in Middle School Mainstream Classrooms

Lakisha M. Nelson¹, Michelle M. McCraney¹, Ruby Burgess¹, Sunddip Panesar-Aguilar^{2*} & Chris
Cale¹

¹ Riley College of Education, Walden University, Minneapolis, USA

² College of Health Sciences, University of St. Augustine, USA

* Sunddip Panesar-Aguilar, College of Health Sciences, University of St. Augustine, USA

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Abstract

In a southeastern state, Grade 7 and 8 middle school general education teachers were not implementing cultural and individual instructional strategies consistently to support the academic achievement of the growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs). The purpose and key research questions of this qualitative study were designed to (a) identify what cultural relevant instructional strategies Grades 7 and 8 middle school general education teachers implement, (b) identify what individual relevant instructional strategies, and (c) understand what perceptions teachers have regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual instruction to support ELLs. The nine participants were middle school (i.e., Grade 7 and 8) general education teachers from a school district in a southeastern state. Data were gathered through semistructured interviews and the themes included teachers' beliefs in their abilities to provide consistent instruction to support ELLs, use of varied individual instructional strategies to support ELLs, use of varied cultural instructional strategies to support the needs of ELLs, and their want of preparation and relevant professional development to instruct ELLs. The findings have implications for positive social change, including identifying areas where professional development and focused instruction on the cultural and individual needs of ELLs increase teachers' knowledge, skills, consistency, and perceived ability to support ELLs in the local school district.

Keywords

English language learners, middle school instruction, instructional strategies, cultural instruction, professional development, teacher instruction, teacher support, language instruction

1. Introduction

Changes in demographics have increased the number of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. English Language Learners (ELLs), a heterogeneous and complex group of students with diverse educational needs, backgrounds, and abilities, are among the fastest-growing subgroup in U.S. public schools (McFarland et al., 2018; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2019). ELLs represented approximately 9.5% of the K-12 student population in 2015 compared to 8.1% in 2000 (Soto, Hooker, & Batalova, 2015). Projections have indicated that by the year 2025, ELLs will account for 25% of students in public schools (Musu-Gillette et al., 2017). The number of ELLs has exceeded the number of teachers certified to educate the subgroup (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2017), leaving general education teachers responsible for educating ELLs and non-ELLs (González, 2016). Increases in the ELL population have correlated to changes in educational policies on how general education teachers deliver instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Recognizing that there is an increasing number of ELLs, federal administrators mandated policies requiring teachers to accommodate culturally and linguistically diverse learners. ELL students' demographic shifts changed the dynamics of classrooms when public school educators experienced an increase in school accountability pressure under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Spees, Potochnick, & Perreira, 2016). In 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), replacing No Child Left Behind (NCLB). As the nation's primary education law, the ESSA represents a commitment to provide an equal opportunity for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, English proficiency, or income (Darrow, 2016). Within the ESSA is a mandate requiring leaders of school districts to staff each classroom with a teacher suitable to meet the needs of the student population (Fuller, Hollingworth, & Pendola, 2017). However, the extent that teachers have met the needs of ELLs has varied. Schools with a higher concentration of integrating ELLs have been more responsive to the needs of the students (Spees et al., 2016). In contrast, researchers have found that ELLs families settle in rural areas, particularly in the South, and attend integrated schools that may be less responsive to ELLs' needs (Spees et al., 2016). Despite federal efforts to ensure an equitable education for ELLs, results from national testing indicated a risk of literacy achievement for ELLs.

Results from the NAEP assessment have reflected the literacy risk for ELLs. In 2017, only 5% of ELLs in eighth grade scored at or above the proficient level in reading (NAEP, 2017). Comparably, results from the 2015 NAEP assessment indicated that only 4% of ELLs in eighth grade scored at or above the proficient level in reading (NAEP, 2015). In 2011, data from NAEP showed that 1% of eighth-grade ELLs scored at or above the proficient level in reading (NAEP, 2011). The data trends from NAEP (see Figure 1) have piqued concerns when considering ELLs as the fastest growing population in U.S. schools.

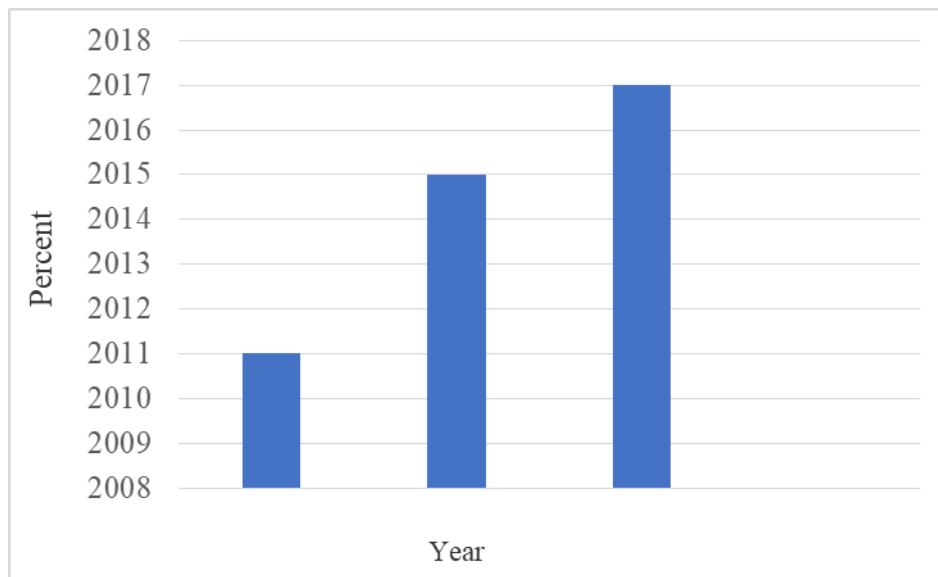


Figure 1. National Assessment of Educational Progress Results: Data Trends of the Percent of English Language Learners in Eighth Grade Scoring at or Above Proficient Level in Reading

The problem was that seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers of ELLs were not consistently implementing cultural and individual instructional strategies to support ELLs academic achievement. When students from various cultural or linguistics groups joined the mainstream classroom, teachers struggled to implement instructional practices to meet the needs of each student. General education teachers are often ill-equipped to teach Common Core State Standards English Language Arts (CCSS ELA) to English learners (Guofang, Hinojosa, Wexler, Bian, & Matinez, 2017). General education teachers in the local setting became worried with their knowledge on how to teach and address the standards to prepare ELLs for mastery of the high-stakes CCSS ELA testing. Notes from a faculty meeting also indicated that three of every four teachers ask how to adjust instructional strategies to meet the need of ELLs. Addressing the concerns teachers of ELLs encountered when providing CCSS ELA instruction is an essential component in ensuring that teachers are preparing ELLs to gain the skills for mastering assessments.

In addition to teachers feeling a need for improvement, recent developments in teaching English have heightened the requirement for investigating the impact of effective instructional tactics on instructing reading to the students. In the past, Louisiana educators relied on the use of the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum (LCC) for instructional practices before the implementation of CCSS ELA. But seventh- and eighth-grade ELLs in the local setting often possessed minimal success in mastering the LCC. District data from the assessments associated with the 2009-2010 implementation of the LCC indicated that less than 45% of ELLs in the local setting met or exceeded English language proficiency requirements. Thus, in 2010, the state department of education for the study district eliminated the LCC and authorized implementation of the CCSS. With the change in the curriculum of the study district came a shift in standards and instructional practices. The CCSS ELA standards were more rigorous

than the LCC objectives (Louisiana Department of Education [LDOE], 2018a). The standards encompassed the citation of textual evidence from the complex text when reading and writing; however, a detailed instructional pedagogy to aid teachers in supporting ELLs was not in the CCSS (Daniel & Pray, 2017). Therefore, teachers struggled to implement culturally consistently and individualized instructional strategies to support ELLs achievement of the standards.

In response to a need for instructional strategies, the LDOE released an ELA document to support educators who taught ELLs to provide strategies for teachers to help students to reach their maximum potential (LDOE, 2018b). Developing deep approaches to instruction is important for ELLs to develop mastery in language requirements and forms of language (i.e., vocabulary, grammar, and content vocabulary). Intended to be a supplement to content standards, the use of ELL document provided support to teachers in the design of instruction based on the students' English proficiency and guidance and knowledge in the progression of language acquisition (LDOE, 2018b). However, the instructional approach local teachers used may contribute to the local problem. Observational data indicated that general education teachers of ELLs made four instructional changes during the 25-minute response to intervention period without examining data to determine the impact on student learning. Minutes from a faculty meeting also indicated that the problem of inconsistent instructional practices occurred at the study site. Based on notes from a faculty meeting, general education teachers retaught the Tier I English vocabulary and structures in the same manner presented during regular instruction. The evidence from the faculty meeting indicated a need to investigate how teachers in the local setting implemented cultural and individual context in instructional practices for ELLs.

Some ELLs have struggled because of limited access to instruction tailored to their needs. For some ELLs, the structure of language at home and school vary, and as a result, ELLs may have a difficult time trying to decipher the variances of the native language and the secondary language causing difficulties in learning vocabulary, comprehension, and written composition of English (Echevarria, Frey, & Fisher, 2015). The challenge with language and literacy has placed ELLs at a disadvantage in meeting the mandates of the CCSS ELA, especially in the study site. In the local setting, ELLs did not meet the academic goals for the 2018 school year. According to the 2018 accountability data, Louisiana Educational Assessments results suggested that approximately 70% of ELLs in the local district did not meet or exceed the requirements for obtaining English language proficiency (LDOE, 2018a). Gaining clarity in understanding how teachers of ELLs in the local setting provided individual and cultural instructional strategies may play a role in helping ELLs meet proficiency requirements of the CCSS ELA.

Teachers who possess clarity in the use of instructional strategies exert more overall effectiveness in developing thinking skills, specifically in meeting the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students (Rizzuto, 2017). Affirming an ELL's native language in the classroom may impact the literacy development for the student. Opportunities can become available for teachers to meet the instructional goals and implement constructs for pedagogical purposes where students can engage in disciplinary

learning and language development (Musu-Gillette et al., 2017). Some research has emphasized that teachers learn of evidence-based interventions to support the needs of ELLs (Dussling, 2018). Further, though access to educational supports has existed for ELLs, there has been a substantial lack of research regarding how general education teachers use cultural and individual instructional strategies at the middle school level to support ELLs in developing academic proficiency of CCSS ELA.

The following research questions (RQs) guided this qualitative case study:

RQ1: What cultural relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs?

RQ2: What individual relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs?

RQ3: What are the perceptions of middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual instructional strategies for ELLs?

2. Method

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers' implementation of cultural and individual instructional strategies to support the academic achievement of ELLs in a southeastern state. The study site had an increasing number of ELLs. A qualitative case study design in which an analysis of real-life events occurring in the natural setting was the basis for this study, as qualitative research occurs in the natural setting to explore themes within the research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A qualitative method was used to research any cultural and individual instructional strategies seventh- and eighth-grade teachers of ELLs use in the general education classroom.

2.1.1 Sampling

At the rural school, general education teachers possessed the responsibility of educating ELLs to the same extent as non-ELLs. One criterion for selecting participants was to choose individuals that have knowledge that related to the purpose of the study (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). A purposeful sample was used to select the participants for the study.

For this study, the participants selected were 10 seventh- and eighth-grade middle school general education teachers who provided instruction to at least ELL. The selection of participants centered around the availability, commitment to the study, and knowledge of the individual about the study topic. The justification for the number of participants related to the consideration of sample size to meaning saturation in which no further insights derive (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017). Generally, by the ninth interview, meaning saturation occurs. The plan was to have 10 individuals who could provide

knowledge about the practices they use to instruct ELLs to increase the likelihood of obtaining the information for the study; however, only nine agreed to participate in the study. Having a relatively low number of participants provided an opportunity to devote more time to the analyzation of data.

The relationship with the participants correlated to the quality and trustworthiness of the study. To increase the likelihood of obtaining valid and reliable output, the researcher must establish a good rapport with the participants (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Conveying the process of the study to participants helped build the trust that encouraged more open interviews (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Additionally, potential participants received information on expectations, including demands of their time, what participation would entail, potential risks, data storing procedures as well as how I will disseminate information and potential benefits to the field of education (Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S., 2012). Expectations were conveyed through the explanation of an informed consent form as well as providing contact information to develop lines of open communication for the participants to state additional concerns and questions. Developing a working relationship can increase the validity and trustworthiness of the research.

2.1.2 Data Collection

Based on the topic, the primary source for this qualitative case study was the use of semistructured interviews of nine general education teachers of ELLs. Semistructured interviews are a standard qualitative, data collection method that allows the researcher to delve into how individuals' experiences and perspectives relate to other study participants and develop holistic descriptions of perspectives (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The use of semistructured interviews allowed for focused exploration of participant perceptions on providing consistent instructional practices that address the cultural and individual needs of ELLs. The source of data collection aided in addressing the data desired for the project study as well as the use of the elements of self-efficacy and sociocultural theories (see Table 1).

Table 1. Alignment of Interview Questions to Research Questions and Elements of Self-Efficacy and Sociocultural Theory

| Interview Question | Research Question or Element |
|---|--|
| 1. What is your experience in working with English Language Learners? | RQ1 (Qualitative): What cultural relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs? "Self-efficacy" (Bandura, 1977) |
| 2. What are your perceptions of working with English Language Learners? | "Self-efficacy" (Bandura, 1977) |
| 3. What instructional strategies have worked well with English Language Learners? | RQ1 (Qualitative): What cultural relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade |

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| | general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs? |
| 4. What cultural relevant instructional strategies do you implement when instructing English Language Learners? | RQ1(Qualitative): What cultural relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs? “Mind in society” (Vygotsky, 1978) |
| 5. Explain the importance of implementing instructional practices the address the cultural needs of ELLs. | RQ1 (Qualitative): What cultural relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs? “Mind in society” (Vygotsky, 1978) |
| 6. What individual relevant instructional strategies do you implement when providing Instruction for English Language Learners? | RQ2(Qualitative): What individual relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs? “Mind in society” (Vygotsky, 1978) |
| 7. Explain the importance of implementing instructional practices the address the individual needs of ELLs. | RQ2(Qualitative): What individual relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs? “Mind in society” (Vygotsky, 1978) |
| 8. What are your perceptions on facilitating consistent implementation of cultural instructional strategies for ELLs? | RQ3(Qualitative): What are the perceptions of middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual instructional strategies for ELLs? “Self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977) |

(table continues)

| Interview Question | Research Question or Element |
|---|---|
| 9. What are your perceptions on facilitating consistent implementation of individual instructional strategies for ELLs? | RQ3 (Qualitative): What are the perceptions of middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual |

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|--|---|
| | instructional strategies for ELLs? “Self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977) |
| 10. What assistance have you had that has been beneficial for implementing consistent instructional practices for English Language Learners? | RQ3(Qualitative): What are the perceptions of middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual instructional strategies for ELLs? “Self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977) |
| 11. Would you like to have more help with implementing consistent instructional practices when working with English Language Learners? | RQ3 (Qualitative): What are the perceptions of middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual instructional strategies for ELLs? “Self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977) |
| 12. What did I not ask that you want to discuss? | “Self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977) |

3. Results

The findings provided an understanding of participants’ perceptions of supporting ELLs and strategies to implement individual and cultural instruction. According to the findings in this study, as teachers received guidance on how to employ varied instructional practices, their level of self-efficacy improved in the learning environment. Provisions from school leaders for successful implementation of individual and culturally relevant instructional strategies will lead to creating strategies that will support the academic needs of ELLs. In this section, a presentation of how the themes align with the RQs is presented.

3.1 Findings for Research Question 1

Research Question 1 pertained to the following question: *What cultural relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs?* Questions 1 through 5 from the interview protocol were used to answer RQ1. The intent of the RQ1 was to elicit responses that linked teacher implementation of cultural instruction to their consistency in supporting ELLs. Cultural instruction allowed teachers to academically prepare all students, including ELLs, with experiencing social constructs that transmit development for culturally organized individuals. Teachers understood that ELLs learn best when instructional strategies match their education needs. ELLs enroll in schools with varied experiences, languages, and cultural needs. To support ELLs, school leaders must assist teachers in adjusting their instruction. Theme 3 aligned with RQ 1 because teachers used varied cultural

instructional strategies to support ELLs.

The participants shared in-depth information about their perceptions of cultural instruction when working with ELLs. The participants believed that supporting ELLs includes having an awareness of the backgrounds of the students and integrating cultural learning into instruction to diversify education. There were two areas that the teachers saw as vital to providing cultural instruction. The teachers were understanding of different nationalities and embedding time into the prescribed curriculum. Many participants stated that the implementation of inclusive cultural instruction could be achieved using various avenues. The participants stated that infusing cultural literature and activities that allow students to learn of other backgrounds will enable ELLs to feel a sense of belonging, which leads to the students wanting to learn despite the difficulties they may encounter. Many participants reported that embedding ELLs' cultural backgrounds into instruction allow them to gain access to integrated instruction in which all students can learn the importance of diversity, and individuals from your diverse background contribute to society.

The data stemming from the participant interview regarding culturally relevant instruction also showed that teachers believe time constraints should be adjusted to allow for embedment of cultural strategies for learning. The participants expressed that non-deviation from the mandated curricula impacts their ability to provide cultural aspects of instruction consistently. This data also aligned with Research Question 3 because the participants note the aspect that hinders their ability to provide consistent cultural instruction.

3.1.1 Findings for Research Question 2

Research Question 2 pertained to the following question: *What individual relevant instructional strategies do middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state implement to support the academic achievement of ELLs?* Questions 6 through 7 from the interview protocol were used to answer RQ2. The intent of the RQ2 was to elicit responses that linked teacher implementation of individualized instruction to their consistency in supporting ELLs. Themes 2 connected with Research Question 2, establishing that teachers use varied individualized instructional strategies to support ELLs' academic needs. Individualized instruction allowed teachers to academically prepare all students, including ELLs, to experience academic success according to their proximal development zones. Teachers expressed that ELLs learn better when classroom instruction was representative of the students' educational needs. ELLs must have an equitable opportunity to gain access to the same general education academic curricula as non-ELLs. Teachers in the general education classrooms used a variety of strategies that were relevant to assisting ELLs with understanding the curriculum standards.

The participants shared in-depth information about their goal to assist the ELLs as best as possible. The participants believed that supporting ELLs includes an awareness of the students' specific academic needs. The participants' areas as vital to providing individualized instruction were teacher experience, individualized assistance from peers, and bilingual resources. The number of years of teaching

experience in educating ELLs was communicated as the main factor for providing individualized instruction. Most participants expressed the use of peer tutors and small group practices to assist ELLs. Participants reported that they either have access to resources located within the curriculum or resources obtained, which impacts their ability to provide consistent individual instruction.

3.1.2 Findings for Research Question 3

Research Question 3 pertained to the following question: *What are the perceptions of middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers in a southern state regarding strategies to facilitate consistent implementation of cultural and individual instructional strategies for ELLs?*

Questions 8 through 11 from the interview protocol were used to answer RQ3. The intent of the RQ3 was to elicit responses that linked teacher perceptions of their ability to provide consistency in supporting ELLs. Themes 1 and 4 aligned with Research Question 3, establishing that teachers want preparation and relevant professional development to support ELLs' academic needs. Preparation assists in providing teachers knowledge of approaches that will inform teachers how to adjust instruction to improve ELLs' academic outcomes. Professional development provides teachers with time to learn of ways that facilitate consistency in teaching methods.

The data gathered from the participants regarding their ability to facilitate consistent cultural and individualized instruction and assistance they have received to support ELLs academically aligned with Research Question 3. The interviews revealed that the participants' ability to facilitate consistent instruction was influenced by their perceptions of assistance received. Most participants expressed that they have not received correspondence or participated in inadequate training from district leaders on how to instruct the ELL population effectively. The participants stressed that there needs to be more directives and professional development on how to help ELLs succeed in the general education classroom.

3.1.3 Relationship of the Results to the Literature

Themes 1 and 4. Rizzuto (2017) asserted that teachers who have clarity in using instructional strategies possess more effectiveness in meeting the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students making the teachers' perceptions on the facilitation of consistent instructional strategies vital for which aligns with Theme 1. The level of self-efficacy plays a role in the teacher's ability to master the task (Korkmaz & Unsal, 2016). In this study, the participants' perception of their level of expertise related to the challenges faced. According to Heineke et al. (2019), teachers face a challenge acquiring competencies and understanding to meet ELLs' cultural and individual needs (Theme 4). The participants in this study believed that there was a need to receive directives and training on specific strategies to meet ELLs' academic needs. According to the participants, receiving guidelines would help general education teachers become knowledgeable about instructional practices that can be used to help students master standards across subject areas. Furthermore, the researchers added that teacher self-confidence in their ability on preparedness for diverse learners impacts how instruction is provided. Wong, Indiatsi, and Wong (2016) stated that teachers who receive guidance in second language

acquisition provide more consistency for students' needs; therefore, it is crucial to ensure appropriate instructional guidance for teachers that support the needs of ELLs.

Themes 2 and 3. Echevarria et al. (2015) asserted the importance of general education teachers providing varied instruction, which makes individual and cultural strategies vital for ELL instruction (Theme 2 and 3). According to Byrd (2016), cultural instruction increases academic growth for ELLs (Theme 3). The participants in this study felt that it was crucial to adjust instruction to provide ELLs with an opportunity of learning that was equivalent to the instruction provided to non-ELLs (Theme 2 and 3). The participants structured their practices to provide students with the individual instructional time, peer learning opportunities, and bilingual assistance (Theme 2 and 3). General education teachers should focus on the developmental levels of the students (Daniel & Pray, 2017). Furthermore, teachers impact ELLs' development with the application of sociocultural strategies (Echevarria et al., 2015). Participants in the study agreed that providing individual and cultural instruction is a meaningful way to reach the anticipated outcome.

The participants used a variety of individual and cultural strategies to assist with academic growth for ELLs. Some of the strategies used included providing individual and cultural instruction during the response to intervention time and small grouping. The findings as they related to Theme 2 and 3 were like the kinds of strategies reported in previous research. Lucas, T., Villegas, A. M., & Freedson-González, M. (2008) and Feryok (2017) stated that making connections between classroom instruction and students' background is a way to assist students in making meaning of content. Brown, D. S. (2017) and Diaz-Rico (2017) noted that teachers must implement specific practices relative to ELLs' cultural and individual needs. During the response to intervention and small grouping instruction, participants in the study acknowledged ELLs' unique academic needs and implemented student-specific strategies to support learning. Above all, researchers emphasized that general education teachers accommodate the diverse educational needs of ELLs.

4. Discussion

4.1 Research Discussion

The participants in this qualitative project study were nine middle school seventh- and eighth-grade seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers of ELLs. The teacher shared their experience, perceptions, and knowledge about implementing individual and culturally relevant instructional strategies to support ELLs in a general education setting. A detailed narrative discussion of the findings delineated themes that resulted from the participants' interviews. Small grouping and peer tutoring were the most used methods of individual instruction. Embedding literature aspects into teaching was most noted for cultural instruction. The participants communicated that there was a need for preparation and training to provide instruction that would improve ELLs' academic performance in the general education setting.

4.1.1 Limitations

Although the research study can benefit school leaders, teachers, and students, there are several limitations. One limitation of this project is the small number of participants. There were 31 Grade 7 and 8 middle school general education teachers invited to participate in this study; however, only nine teachers elected to participate and were interviewed. The limited number of participants is not a large representation of the middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers, which makes the results difficult to generalize in other populations. Because the qualitative study was conducted specifically for the local study site, the results of this research study cannot be generalized on a larger scale.

Finally, since the inception of this research study, the dynamics of the traditional on-campus model to school has completely changed. With the Coronavirus pandemic, social restrictions, such as maintaining 6-feet apart, are in place to minimize the spread of infection (Hickner, 2020). The school leaders of the local study site may not perceive the implementation of professional development as feasible due to the social distancing restrictions mandated by the local, state, and the federal government.

4.1.2 Implications for Future Research

Based on the statements of limitations of this research and interpretations, directions for future research are provided. Future studies could follow a different research design. Rather than qualitative, this study could be extended in search of statistical generalizability. Additionally, a longitudinal study could be conducted later, when the participants have completed instruction based on the recommendations in the position paper. The research can be continued in several years. It would provide longitudinal accounts to reveal how teachers' perceptions change over time and the role guidance and professional development play in middle school general education teachers' ability to instruct ELLs. Future research may include teachers' implementation of cultural and individual instruction for ELLs on the elementary and secondary levels.

4.1.3 Conclusion

Grounded in the sociocultural and self-efficacy theories, a qualitative case study research design was used. Three RQs were used to guide the data collection. Through personal individual, semistructured interviews with middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers, data were collected and analyzed. Data was organized based on the themes derived from coding. Based on the findings, several factors impacted the teachers' ability to facilitate the implementation of cultural and individual instruction consistently as well as the type of strategies used to support the ELLs. The result of the research study was a position paper defining the data retrieved from the study and provisions of recommendations to school leader of the local district in areas regarding providing middle school seventh- and eighth-grade general education teachers with guideline and professional development on implementation consistent cultural and individual instructional strategies to support the academic achievement of ELLs. With the implementation of the recommendations in the position paper,

implications of positive social change are an enhancement in the teachers' knowledge, skills, consistency, and perceived ability in supporting ELLs in the local school district.

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