AN EXPLORATION INTO TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDINGS AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE AND EXPLICIT READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGY INSTRUCTION FOR SECONDARY ENGLISH LEARNERS

by

Elkin Lenis

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Curriculum and Instruction

Charlotte

2019

Approved by:

____
Dr. Adriana Medina

____
Dr. Bruce Taylor

____
Dr. Shawnee Wakeman

____
Dr. Joan Lachance

____
Dr. Kristin Davin

© 2019
Elkin Lenis Sucerquia
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

ABSTRACT

ELKIN LENIS SUCERQUIA. An exploration into teachers' understandings and operationalization of Academic Language and Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction for secondary English learners. (Under the direction of DR. ADRIANA MEDINA)

It has been established that language is at the heart of teaching and learning (Dicerbo et al., 2014), and for English learners, language represents the challenge that determines their access to comprehension of academic texts and eventual learning and success in school. The purpose of this case study was to explore the understandings and operationalization of academic language (AL) and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) for secondary ELs.

AL refers to the language used in school to help students acquire and use knowledge (Dicerbo et al., 2014). ERCSI refers to the explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies that learners use to access content knowledge from the texts they read and interact with (Medina & Pilonieta, 2009). This study was framed on sociocultural theory. Sociocultural theory makes emphasis on a social construction of knowledge, which individuals develop in collaboration and interaction with each other. Founded on a qualitative approach to research, this study used a case study design to explore teachers' understandings and operationalization of Academic Language and Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction for secondary ELs. This study employed teacher instructional observations, interviews and lesson plans. This case study was conducted over a period of seven weeks during the spring of 2018. The study included two participants: One English/ESL certified teacher and one English-only

certified teacher. The study was conducted at an urban high school located in the southeastern region of the United States. A cross-case analysis was used to conduct the data analysis. The main findings from this study indicate: (1) Both participants perceived and operationalized AL instruction through vocabulary instruction in Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes. (2) Both participants displayed significantly different understandings and operationalization of ERCSI as evidenced in theory and practice. (3) Participants' understanding and operationalization of instructional practices in AL and ERCSI was significantly influenced by teacher educational background and professional development on instruction for ELs. (4) Teacher implementation of a gradual release of responsibility approach by one participant contrasts with a directive, whole class instruction approach by the other participant. (5) Both participant's approaches to differentiation and scaffolding were influenced by different pedagogical perspectives and the use of different instructional methods, which placed emphasis on different language skills. This study generated several conclusions and implications for future research that are discussed in the final chapter.

DEDICATION

Undoubtedly, I dedicate this dissertation to Maria for her unwavering commitment to support me to make this endeavor come to fruition. Daniel and Elena, the product of this work is also yours. Infinite thanks to the three of you for sticking by my side through all my struggles as we launched ourselves to this journey of building a life in the U.S. Lastly, infinitas gracias a Salvador y Elvia. Gracias por su incansable compromiso con nuestra educacion.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation process has been a challenging and rewarding learning experience. This endeavor would not have been possible without the personal, academic, and professional support of an excellent group of people who provided undivided support as I navigated the uncharted waters of writing a dissertation.

First off, I am immensely grateful to my committee chair and mentor Dr. Medina, “a true master teacher.” Thank you for your leadership and guidance throughout this dissertation process, for your patience and for pushing me and encouraging me to achieve this goal.

I would also like to thank the participating teachers who graciously allowed me to immerse myself into their daily teaching routines. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and experiences.

I am thankful for my dissertation committee – Dr. Adriana Medina, Dr. Shawnee Wakeman, Dr. Bruce Taylor, Dr. Joan Lachance and Dr. Kristin Davin. Thank you for your support and understanding.

I would like to especially thank Dr. Wakeman for your guidance and patience as I wrote this dissertation. Your attention to details, your patience and guidance will always be appreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES XI

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

Background of the Problem 1

Statement of the Problem 3

Purpose of the Study 5

Significance of the Study 8

Overview of Context and Method 9

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 11

Second Language Acquisition 12

English learners 13

ELs' Academic Language Development 14

Academic Language 15

Reading Comprehension Instruction 20

Gradual Release of Responsibility 22

Modified Guided Reading 23

Theoretical Framework 26

Research on AL and Reading Comprehension Instruction and ELs 28

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY 36

Qualitative Research Methodology 37

Case Study Research 37

Observations 39

In-depth Interviewing 40

Documents 42

Role of the Researcher 43

Research Setting 44

Classroom Setting 45

Data Generation Methods and Procedures 46

Participants 47

Data Preparation 48

Data Collection 49

Teacher Interviews 49

Lesson Plans 50

Teacher Observations 50

Data Analysis 52

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS 55

Research Question One 56

Educational Background 58

Academic Language Instruction 63

Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction 65

Second Language Development 69

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills 71

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency 73

WIDA and ACCESS for ELs 75

Research Question Two 77

Considerations for Planning Academic Language Instruction 78

Considerations for Planning Reading Comprehension Instruction 85

Research Question Three 89

AL and ERCSI 90

Operationalization of Academic Language Instruction 92

Operationalization of ERCSI 96

Teacher reflections instructional practices in AL and ERCSI for ELs 100

Transcending Themes 103

EL Audience 103

Academic Language Instruction 104

Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction 105

Teacher Professional Development for ELs 106

Task Description and Application 107

Summary 109

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH 114

Discussion 115

Conclusions 118

Understanding and Operationalization of AL and ERCSI 119

Differentiation versus Whole-Class Instruction 121

Teacher Preparation and Professional Development 123

Limitations 126

Future Research 128

Summary 132

REFERENCES 135

APPENDIX A 156

APPENDIX B 157

APPENDIX C 158

APPENDIX D 159

APPENDIX E 160

APPENDIX F 167

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Demographic Data of Teacher Participants 45

TABLE 2: Data Generation Sources 46

TABLE 3: AL and ERCSI Instructional Observation Data 47

TABLE 4: Interview Protocol Thematic Data 53

TABLE E1: Categories, Codes, and Example Quotations 152

TABLE F1: Coded Lesson Plan Elements by Teacher per Lesson 155

CHAPTER I:

Background of the Problem

Educational researchers in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) and English learners (ELs) have long recognized and substantiated the need to provide ELs with opportunities to develop communicative skills through interactive and meaningful activities that foster the development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing within culturally inclusive practices (August, & Shanahan, 2006; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2016; Ellis, 2008; Freeman & Freeman, 2002; Scarcella, 2003). Research in this field has also highlighted the importance of developing literacy skills in ELs (Birch, 2008; Bunch, Kibler, & Pimentel, 2014; Medina & Pilonieta, 2009), and established the importance of developing academic language knowledge and reading comprehension for ELs, particularly for those students who arrive in school in the middle and secondary school years (August, & Shanahan, 2006; Bailey, 2007; Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2007; Beck, McKeown, & Kuck, 2008; Lee, Quinn, & Valdes, 2013; Pritchard & O'Hara, 2017; Scarcella, 2003; WIDA Consortium, 2012).

A large body of research in this area has also shown a significant connection between the ability to understand and use academic language and academic achievement (Bailey & Heritage, 2008; Bailey & Butler, 2003; Hakuta, 2000; Haneda, 2014b). However, there are sociocultural, socioeconomic, linguistic, and prior schooling experiences that influence the eventual academic attainment of students classified as ELs (Flores, Batalova, & Fix, 2012; Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2012; Gandara, 2013; Scarcella, 2003; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; WIDA Consortium, 2012); which along

with the academic demands of schooling, make these students vulnerable and at risk of dropping out of school, as these experiences negatively impact their opportunities to academically achieve in mainstream content area subjects (Cummins, 2014; Flores, Batalova, & Fix, 2012; Gandara, 2013; Gee, 2008).

Despite the variability of factors associated with ELs' learning in secondary schools in the United States, a fundamental factor determining a successful transition into schooling is the learning of school academic registers that allow them to access complex content area texts (Achugar, Schleppegrell & Oteiza, 2007; Cummins, 2014; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014; Schleppegrell & O'Hallaron, 2011). Thus, this study focuses on exploring the way teachers understand and operationalize the concepts of academic language and explicit comprehension strategy instruction in reading as they provide instruction for ELs in secondary school settings. The learning of the language registers and comprehension strategies associated with each school subject area ELs are studying is of fundamental significance.

Exposure to language, specifically academic language for secondary ELs, varies significantly in its registerial use. Derewianka and Jones (2012), Halliday (1985) and Martin (2009) contend that academic language within school subject areas varies in the dynamics of the genres it is used and in the formats such language is presented to students, whether oral or written; formal or informal registers. This dynamic variation is evidenced through the formalities and technicalities of language embedded in the content and genres ELs study in school as well as in the interactions between formal academic and everyday conversational forms of language with their teachers and peers (Cummins, 2014; Derewianka & Jones, 2012). It is the complexity of the second language

acquisition process, the pragmatic and contextual learning of discourse patterns associated with academic content, the development of reading comprehension strategy repertoires to access the learning of school subject areas for English language learners that influences the purpose of this study.

Statement of the Problem

English learners (ELs) represent the fastest growing demographic subset in U.S. public schools (Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2012; Kena et al., 2016; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). The percentage of ELs in U.S. public schools was higher in the fall of 2015, at 9.5 percent, than in the fall of 2000, at 8.1% (de Brey et al., 2019). Although this demographic shift has resulted in the increasing need to educate ELs, the student subset in reference continues to trail behind their English monolingual peers as ELs struggle to develop the language, reading and academic proficiency required to successfully function in U.S. public school settings (Carter, Welner, & Ladson-Billings, 2013; Freeman & Freeman, 2002; Gibbons, 2009). This achievement gap is evidenced in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2019) reading measures that situate 12th-grade ELs at a 240-point average score compared to a 289-point average score by their English monolingual peers in 2015, and 8th-grade ELs at a 226-point average score compared to a 289-average score by their English monolingual peers in 2017. On average, 12th-grade ELs, in 2015, scored 49 points below their English monolingual peers, and 8th grade ELs scored 43 points below their English monolingual peers in 2017 (deBrey et al., 2019). This issue becomes even more exacerbated in high schools, where the teaching of academic language and reading comprehension strategy use for this student-age demographic is highly complex and in cases non-existent

(Brooks, 2015; Enright, 2011). Hence, the necessity to explore ways teachers of ELs understand and operationalize instructional practices addressing academic language and explicit comprehension strategy instruction.

Multiple factors account for the academic language disparity and consequent achievement gap between mainstream English-only students and the EL student population. Some are of linguistic nature (i.e. phonetics, lexicon and morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse, differences between L1 and L2). Others stem from sociocultural and socioeconomic influences and access to the mainstream language and culture (i.e. poverty, violence, legal status, parent education level, and school expectations), some others stem from the challenges ELs face as they develop literacy skills and learn complex language and content simultaneously in classrooms with minimum instructional focus on language acquisition or reading comprehension within the genres of the subjects they are expected to learn (Fang, 2004; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Gandara, 2013; Gebhard, 2013; Harmon, Wood, & Medina; 2009; Lemke, 1990; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Altogether, these factors bring to the surface the challenges ELs face accessing school language and content learning and explain the likelihood this student demographic will fail to succeed in accomplishing their academic goals resulting in profound educational implications.

Research in the field of second language acquisition has emphasized the importance of supporting ELs' learning of academic language and reading comprehension (August & Shanahan, 2006; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994, Cisco & Padron, 2012; Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2012; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Lesaux & Kieffer, 2010), and multiple approaches have emerged addressing these issues. Some of these

include the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994), the Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills (CALPS) framework (Cummins, 1979), the Core Academic Language Skills (Uccelli et al., 2014), the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2016), and the Language-based Approach to Content Instruction (De Oliveira, 2016). However, there is not a significant amount of research literature addressing academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction on ELs (Brooks, 2015); less has research been conducted based on the understandings and operationalization of these constructs by teachers with significantly different backgrounds and credentials at the secondary level of instruction, as most secondary school teachers view themselves as of content area specialists (Bintz, 1997; Snow, Lawrence, & White, 2009; Lee & Spratley, 2010; Lesaux, Kieffer, & Faller, 2010). Therefore, the existence of the current models and approaches for ELs and the secondary school content instruction focus indicate that more research is needed to address the educational needs of ELs, particularly of those students entering the U.S. educational system at the secondary school level, where the teaching of language and reading comprehension strategies decrease and instruction is almost exclusively geared towards content mastery.

Purpose of the Study

A fundamental element of concern in this discussion is the notion that ELs lack the academic language skills necessary to succeed in school (Cummins, 1979; De Oliveira, 2016; Francis, Lesaux, Keiffer, & Rivera, 2006; Gebhard, 2010; Gibbons, 2002; Moore, 2013; Ranney, 2012). Research has shown ELs develop fluency in everyday

conversational skills with relative ease yet struggle to cope with the demands prevalent in academic language texts and with communicating through the academic language register, also known, as the language of schooling (Bailey, 2007; Cummins, 1989, 2014; Hakuta, 2000; Haneda, 2014; Schleppegrell, 2001).

Recently, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2012) have recommended that students be engaged in more complex and increasingly rigorous academic language. Therefore, research is needed to explore academic language and explicit comprehension strategy instruction in reading that support academic language acquisition and eventual academic success for ELs in secondary schools. Thus, the researcher's goal with the proposed study was to provide a more in-depth understanding of how teachers of ELs perceived the importance and operationalized the constructs of academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction as applied to secondary school ELs. To achieve this goal, the researcher studied the way teachers articulated the notions of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction for secondary ELs and explored their understandings of how these constructs influence ELs' learning and how teachers' own understandings translate from theory to practice.

One avenue to develop an understanding of how teachers of ELs construe the notions of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction was to establish a line of inquiry into their schema regarding second language acquisition (SLA), English as a second language (ESL) instruction, reading comprehension and academic language in secondary school content area subjects. Another way to understand this topic was to establish a line of inquiry into academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction through the exploration of teachers' background knowledge,

experiences and conceptual understanding variations that influence planning instruction regarding the issues under study. An additional strategy to study this topic was the use of observations of teachers' instructional performance to explore whether there are variations between conceptual understandings and operationalization through instructional practice.

The use of case studies in this qualitative research provides an opportunity to explore academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction through the lens of two English I teachers, with different educational and professional backgrounds, as they explain and apply their knowledge of these constructs in their instructional practice. The study sought to explore whether theory explicitly transferred to practice as these teachers addressed these instructional constructs. This study also provided a window to observe how the understanding and operationalization of these constructs influence learning for secondary school ELs.

Furthermore, while research has documented ELs struggle with the challenges present in reading comprehension and academic language in secondary schools, limited existing literature has sought to describe school academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction for secondary school ELs (Brooks, 2015; Cisco & Padron, 2012; Dicerbo, Anstrom, Baker & Rivera, 2014; Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2012; Scarcella, 2003). Exploring instruction in academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction may provide a frame for understanding the role of language development and reading comprehension play for lesson design and instruction in content areas and for ELs. This exploration may also provide teachers with a lens through which they can understand the difference between the daily conversational

language ELs learn at home and in their communities, and academic school discourses (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Cummins, 1979; Martin & Rose, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this case study was to explore the understanding and operationalization of academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs in secondary school.

Significance of the Study

Studies on SLA, EL language development, academic language, content area learning and reading comprehension have established that, in general, learning language and learning subject area content are processes that occur simultaneously, and consequently present a greater challenge and learning burden for ELs than they do for mainstream English monolingual students (Flores, Batalova, Fix, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2015; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Research on academic language development and reading comprehension in content area classrooms in secondary schools has recently recognized these constructs as fundamental factors in academic achievement (Common Core State Standards [CCSS], 2012; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008). However, few research studies devoted to academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for secondary school ELs are available (August et al., 2014; Fang, 2004; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2010). Existing studies have focused more on vocabulary instruction (August, Carlo, Drexler, & Snow, 2005; Bauman & Graves, 2010; Bienmiller, 2001, Nagy & Townsend, 2014). The purpose of this case study was to explore the understanding and operationalization of academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs in secondary school. Specifically, the study involved two English I teachers – one English/ESL certified teacher and one English-only

certified teacher - and explored how these two teachers understood and operationalized academic language (AL) and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) for secondary English learners (ELs). The study aimed at answering the following overarching question: How can an exploration into teachers' understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI inform the way teachers perceive and shape instructional practices for ELs in secondary school? The study was guided by the following research questions: (1) How do teachers of high school ELs perceive their working theories of the constructs of developing academic language (AL) and the use of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI)?, (2) How are teachers of high school ELs' working theories represented in lesson planning and classroom instructional practice?, (3) How do teachers of high school ELs reflect on and explain their working theories, operationalization, and instructional decision-making of AL and ERCSI?

Overview of Context and Method

The present study used a case study research design. Case study research designs focus on an in-depth and longitudinal examination of data collected through participant observation, in-depth interviewing, document and artifact analysis (Glesne, 2011). Based on this research methodology, the researcher conducted a comprehensive exploration of a bounded system, such as a program, an event, an activity, or a process (Creswell, 2003). Case studies are considered bounded systems because they are framed by time and activity. The system in which this study was situated was an English I class with ELs. During the case study research, information was gathered using a variety of data procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake, 1995). The study data were collected

during the second semester of the 2017-2018 academic school year, from March through May 2018. This data collection process included an initial interview with each of the participants, a weekly observation session of each participant, and post-observation member checks with each participant. In addition, the researcher collected and analyzed teachers' lesson plans for the period the study was conducted. These lesson plans were discussed with the participating teachers in order to understand how teachers' understanding of the constructs under study were articulated in the lesson plans and in instructional practice.

Case study design applied for this study as it sought to explain answers to questions of how or why given phenomena occur or are experienced by the participants as presented in the researcher's narrative description (Stake, 2000). Through the selection of specific data collection procedures, including interviews, lesson plans, and teacher observations, the researcher searched for emerging themes and patterns of information that were classified, subsequently coded, and the data triangulated.

The study was conducted at an urban high school adjacent to a large metropolitan city located in the southeastern region of the United States. The participating school serves an average number of 1,266 students in grades 9 through 12, divided into three specific demographic groups: African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic. Eighty-eight percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. About 95% of the EL student population receives free or reduced-price lunch.

CHAPTER II:

Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to present the overarching theme of the study and to relate previous scholarly work that explored and explained different ways academic language development and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs in secondary school subject areas were addressed. To accomplish this, the researcher sought to establish what pertinent information other studies had revealed about academic language instruction and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs and to find emerging frameworks that explain academic language development and reading comprehension instruction for this student population. The researcher used this research literature as the underpinning for the study.

First, the chapter introduces the overarching theme that drives this study, second language development. At this phase, it addresses relevant theories underlying second language development and their influence on this study. Secondly, a brief description of the subjects and the problem of this study are presented. Third, the researcher provides an overview of instructional models and approaches addressing the construct of academic language and reading comprehension instruction and ELs. In addition, a discussion of the way previous scholarly work has yielded different ways to operationalize the construct of academic language as it relates to ELs is presented. Furthermore, the theoretical framework supporting this study is explained. This chapter will conclude with a summary of research studies that have addressed academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction of ELs.

Second Language Acquisition

Gass, Behney, and Plonsky (2013) explain that second language acquisition (SLA) refers to the learning of a non-native language after the learning of one's native or primary language, with this learning occurring both in a classroom situation as well as in more "natural" exposure situations. Second language acquisition can refer to the study of the following: (1) The study of how second languages are learned, (2) the study of how learners create a new language system in the midst of limited exposure to a second language, (3) the study of what is learned, or not learned, in a second language, (4) the study that attempts to explain why second language learners do not achieve a degree of proficiency similar to that of a native speaker, (5) the study of the extent to which, on the language development continuum, learners demonstrate native-like proficiency levels or lack thereof (Ellis, 2008; Gass, Behney, & Plonsky, 2013).

Studies in the field of SLA research have highlighted the distinction between acquisition and learning (Ellis, 2008; Freeman & Freeman, 2000; Gass, Behney, & Plonsky, 2013; Krashen; 1982). This distinction between acquisition and learning has been hypothesized by Krashen (1982) who contends that acquisition is a subconscious process in which learners use language with the purpose of communicating in authentic contexts for real purposes. Krashen (2011) also explains acquisition and learning through two different lenses; acquisition as the naturally occurring process in which language is acquired through meaningful comprehensible input; learning involves a conscious process, normally occurring in formal contexts, including the learning of rules resulting from direct language instruction and rehearsed tasks. Ellis (2008) also pointed out the distinction between language acquisition and instructed language acquisition. These

perspectives on language development hold significant importance for understanding instruction for ELs, as these students are faced with the challenges of going through the language acquisition process whether through formal, meaningful, contextualized instruction or decontextualized linguistic experiences that frequently result in significant language development gaps. It is not surprising, then, that researchers in this area recognize relevant differences in acquisition, development and learning depending upon the theoretical perspective they adopt.

English Learners

Ross, Kena, Rathbun, KewalRamani, Zhang, Kistapovich, and Manning (2012) state, “Students who are English language learners (ELLs) participate in language assistance programs to help ensure that they attain English proficiency and meet the same academic content and achievement standards that all students are expected to meet”.

The shifting demographics of U.S. public schools continue to suggest the need to reconceptualize the way traditional instructional practices have historically been enacted and the importance of addressing the educational needs of ELs (Flores, Batalova, & Fix, 2012; Gandara, 2013; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007). Data from the U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2018) indicate that 4.85 million English learners were enrolled in public schools in the fall of 2015, representing nearly 10 percent of the total K-12 student population. The state of North Carolina ranked 8th in the country with an EL enrollment of 102,311 or 6.6 percent of the student population in the same school year. While ELs in North Carolina may qualify for language assistance in programs such as English as a second language (ESL), they lack the language support needed to succeed in content area classrooms (Baecher, Artigliere, Patterson, & Spatzer,

2012; Fang, 2012; Kim & Herman, 2012; Rubinstein-Avila & Lee, 2014; Scarcella, 2003; Thomas & Collier, 2003), thus, there is a need to explore teachers' understanding and operationalization of instruction for secondary school ELs on academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction.

ELs Language Development and Academic Challenges

As important as learning the language register that allows ELs to functionally communicate in a second language (L2) and engage in day-to-day interactions, it is learning the language register that affords them access to high quality educational opportunities and eventual school success, that is one focus of this study. While in school, ELs are faced with the cumbersome task of learning a new language while learning school subject areas (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2007; Flores, Batalova, & Fix, 2012). This issue becomes even more exacerbating for ELs enrolling in secondary school since most students, at these developmental stages, are expected to have both linguistic and academic knowledge to function in mainstream classrooms. For instance, at a local high school where the researcher conducted the study, in 2017-2018, the percentage of students for whom English is a second language fluctuates between 50 and 52 percent, with approximately 240 or nearly 19 percent of the student population receiving direct services through English as a second language (ESL) instruction.

An additional issue raised in the studies of second language development and ELs is the distinction between social and academic language development. These two language dimensions were addressed by Cummins (1979). Cummins defined these notions as basic interpersonal communication skills, or BICS; the language that is context-embedded, contextualized, and conversational where meaning is negotiated

through a wide variety of contextual clues; and cognitive academic language proficiency skills, or CALPs; this latter dimension views language as "a complex network of language and cognitive skills and knowledge required across all content areas for eventual successful academic performance" (Collier & Thomas, 1989). Since the introduction of the BICS and CALPS constructs (Cummins, 1979) significant attention has been placed on establishing a difference between English as a second language development and academic language proficiency, and between a variety of registers pertaining to specialized academic and non-academic genres.

As the academic achievement gap between ELs and mainstream English monolingual students has been attributed mainly to the lack of access and exposure to linguistic registers associated with the language of school (Cummins, 2014; Gee, 2014; Haneda, 2014b; Leung, 2014; Schleppegrell, 2009), emphasis on teaching the nature of academic language and how it works to create meaning in complex text is a crucial component of effective instruction for students who are at risk of underachievement (Cummins, 2014).

Academic Language

A review of the literature reveals a significant amount of research on the construct and definition of academic language (Anstrom, Dicerbo, Baker, & Rivera, 2014; Bailey, 2007; Blair, 2016; Cummins, 1979, 2014; De Oliveira, 2015; Gee, 2001, 2004; Gibbons, 2009; Halliday, 1985, 2004; Moore, 2014, Schleppegrell, 2004, Schleppegrell & De Oliveira, 2006; Schulze, 2015). Defining and operationalizing academic language presents challenges because this construct has been approached differently across various disciplines and theoretical and research frameworks (Haneda, 2014a, 2014b). Nagy and

Townsend (2014) have defined academic language as “the specialized language, both oral and written, of academic settings that facilitates communication and thinking about disciplinary content” (p. 92).

Academic language proficiency has also been hypothesized to contribute to academic success (Schleppegrell, 2012; Uccelli, Galloway, Barr, Meneses, & Dobbs, 2015). Developing academic language proficiency is needed because, as research suggests, it supports improvement in reading comprehension and general academic achievement (Bailey & Heritage, 2008; Hakuta, 2000; Uccelli et al., 2014). Multiple definitions of academic language describe features that make such language complex, specifically as it relates to ELs (August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005; August, & Shanahan, 2006; Bailey & Heritage, 2008; Cummins, 2014; Dicerbo et al., 2014; Goldenberg, 2008; Scarcella, 2003). For instance, the world-class instructional design and assessment (WIDA) standards (WIDA Consortium, 2012) has referred to academic language as the language proficiencies that are necessary for learners to perform in academic contexts and as the specialized vocabulary, grammar, language functions, and discourse structures used in each of the curriculum content areas. Similarly, Gee (2001) contends that academic language is a general name for many different varieties of language associated with academic disciplines or with academic content in schools, that is, the styles of language and other symbols associated with chemistry or social science.

Krashen (2011) posits that academic language can be described as a concept with two components: (1) academic language characterized by complex syntax, academic vocabulary, and a complex discourse style and (2) academic content, which refers to the content of the subject areas, such as algebra, history, and literature. Bailey and Butler

(2003) distinguished academic language from social language utilizing three features: (1) the lexical or academic vocabulary level, (2) the grammatical or syntactic level, and (3) the discourse or organizational level. A similar perspective was offered by Scarcella (2003), who identified academic language features beyond the lexical level by including phonology, lexicon, grammar, semantics, and discourse.

Similarly, Dutro, Levy, and Moore (2011) provided a more extensive and in-depth description of the concept of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) and included features such as Finocchiaro and Brumfit's (1983) language functions, and Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman, and Williams' (1999) form, meaning, use, and fluency.

Nagy and Townsend (2014) operationalized academic language, explaining the features that make academic language a complex register that involves knowledge of Latin and Greek etymologies, morphology, specific nouns, adjectives, and prepositions, grammatical metaphor, informational density, and abstractness that comprise this register.

In operationalizing academic language, register variation has been discussed as a predominant feature that helps to explain the difference between academic language and other language registers. It helps explain the position of culture in register development, and the way in which register, and sociocultural practices influence academic language development (Cummins, 2014; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Gee, 2008, 2014; Scarcella, 2003). Register variation takes on such an important meaning because it addresses the ways the language forms we choose vary according to the context in which we use them, thus becoming a significant factor of academic language development (Schleppegrell, 2012).

Register deals with the notion that the language choices we make also vary by culture and language spoken. In distinguishing register variation as it applies to ELs, research has identified features of academic language for ELs in different ways: Bailey and Heritage (2008) developed the concept of school navigational language (SNL), used to communicate school protocols in a general sense, and curriculum content language (CCL), used in the process of teaching and learning content. Bailey and Heritage (2008) also made a distinction between social language, school navigational language, and curriculum content language. This distinction separates their construct from Cummins' (1979) framework, as they establish an additional component that is not exclusively social, cognitive, or academic. Their conceptualization, according to DiCerbo et al. (2014), "captures the range and variety of language acquisition situations and use for all students, native English speakers and ELs, and provides a framework to help educators address the role of language in school settings" (p. 450).

Scarcella (2003) further operationalized academic language using the notions of foundational knowledge of English (FKE) and essential academic language (EAL). Scarcella (2003) noted that these two concepts entail the basic functional aspects of English for communication and subject specific language, respectively. For Scarcella (2003), FKE is not equivalent to everyday social language, and both FKE and EAL require explicit instruction, with the former acting as the prerequisite to the latter, with a strong emphasis on SNL (Bailey & Heritage, 2008). These conceptualizations situate language development within the boundaries of sociocultural theory and functional linguistics, as they establish language development and language functionality as resulting from socially enacted practices developed with specific standards of social

interaction. Although research has suggested that conversational language is learned through direct, contextual interaction, similar practices that provide explicit instruction in both conversational and academic language must also be implemented for ELs.

Although it is evident that academic language possesses a higher level of complexity for all learners, for ELs this complexity increases, as the development of both social and academic language occurs simultaneously (Bailey, 2007; Scarcella, 2003). Nagy and Townsend (2014) stated, “Academic language conveys the abstract, technical, and nuanced ideas and phenomena of the disciplines . . . and it is a tool that promotes a kind of thinking different from that employed in social settings” (p. 93). However, Bailey (2007) cautioned against the idea that social language is less complex than academic language, as for ELs learning a new language involves learning all aspects of language skills, that is, listening, speaking, reading, and writing any given language item.

The levels of abstraction and complexity in academic language also align with what Snow (1983) referred to as decontextualized language. Snow (1983) framed academic language as the language used when meaning is primarily conveyed through linguistic cues that are independent of the immediate communicative context. Whereas Snow (1983) argued for language complexity due to decontextualization, Gee (2014) believes that there is no such thing as decontextualized language. He noted that all language interactions present a certain degree of contextualization. Further, Bailey (2007) stated that differences in the relative frequency of complex grammatical structures, specialized vocabulary, and uncommon language functions all play an important role in both academic and social language development.

Overall, research shows that academic language is a register used to perform distinct academic language functions. It draws on lexical and syntactic resources less common in everyday language, it is carried out in a variety of text structures and genres in different disciplines, and conveys messages about interpersonal aspects of academic interaction (Achugar, Schleppegrell, & Oteiza, 2007; Blair, 2016; Coffin & Donohue, 2012; Gebhard, 2010; Leung, 2014; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014; Schleppegrell, 2012). All of these linguistics features make academic language precise, detached, and dense, which are typical characteristics of academic tasks (Ranney, 2012).

In summary, for the proposed study, academic language is defined as the language register associated with schooling, textbooks, and professional disciplines and materials. Due to the complexity that makes academic language challenging for ELs to assimilate, the fact that access to this language register signifies access to knowledge and social participation, and because in many instances public school teachers are not aware of the language they use for instructional purposes, this language register needs to be intentionally and purposefully articulated to English language learners. In so doing, these students will not be excluded from participation in an educated society (Delpit, 1998; Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

Reading Comprehension Instruction

Research on reading comprehension instruction has been conducted for more than eighty years (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) and it is without a doubt the literacy challenge of the 21st century (LaRusso, et al., 2015). In the mid-1970s, reading comprehension was defined by cognitive science as how language is processed in the mind. While the notion of reading comprehension as "acquiring meaning from written text" was prevalent, later

in the mid-1980s, the emergence of Pearson and Gallagher's (1983) gradual release of responsibility added an important dimension to instruction by developing a protocol that provides a modeling, guided instruction, and independent practice component, and that also includes delivering declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge. In addition, differing frameworks such as schemata (Anderson, 1977), story-grammars (Thorndyke, 1977), and text-analytic schemes (Frederiksen, 1975) emerged during this period.

Reading comprehension is an intricate process that unfolds gradually over time. Afflerbach et al. (2008) suggest that such a process demands from learners the integration of multiple cognitive, metacognitive and sociolinguistic skills and strategies. Moreover, research on reading comprehension suggests that whether learners are reading informational text or some sort of literary work, the eventual goal for reading is meaning making.

While multiple factors affect reading comprehension - access to language, cognitive development, schemata, decoding and encoding, first or second language development – the inclusion of reading comprehension strategies that help facilitate access to and understanding of texts learners read play a relevant role in learners' ultimate success with text comprehension.

Reading comprehension strategies are activities learners carry out to support reading comprehension. When comprehension becomes challenging, these strategies help learners monitor comprehension, overcome comprehension challenges, and focus on the purpose for reading. Duke and Pearson (2002) suggest that reading comprehension strategy instruction should be implemented using a gradual release of responsibility. According to

Duke et al. (2011), reading comprehension strategies include but are not limited to the following:

- Monitoring comprehension – Checking to verify learners understood what they read.
- Predicting – Making a good guess about what will happen next in a given text.
- Clarifying comprehension – Resolving issues when learners do not understand by rereading, looking at pictures, reading ahead and coming back to the text.
- Making connections – Making text-to-self connections, making text-to-text connections, and making text-to-world connections.
- Making inferences – Figuring out what the author means even if it is not explicitly stated in the text.

The inclusion of reading comprehension strategy instruction for secondary school ELs is

relevant in this study because by exploring how teachers of English understand and operationalize this concept may shed light on valuable information regarding the way instruction for ELs at the secondary school level is implemented. Explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) is also relevant because, as the U.S. student population landscape becomes more diverse, it is important to attend to this diversity and to the educational needs of ELs by providing them with strategies to access texts they read in school.

Gradual Release of Responsibility

The relevance of the gradual release of responsibility relies on the intersection of several important theoretical frameworks, including: Cognitive structures and schemata

(Piaget, 1952), the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), and scaffolded instruction (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976). While in the late 1970s a significant body of research frameworks for understanding reading instruction emerged, their novelty had yet to be linked to actual classroom practice (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).

The gradual release of responsibility (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) structure for reading comprehension strategy instruction suggests that strategy instruction is gradually released by the teacher in the form of: (1) providing declarative knowledge – the teacher explicitly explains the strategy, (2) procedural knowledge – the teacher explicitly models how the strategy is used, (3) conditional knowledge – the teacher explains and models when and why the strategy is used. Once this phase is carried out, the teacher and students work on strategy use collaboratively. The following step in the gradual release of responsibility involves the teacher working with small groups in strategy guided practice. This instructional protocol concludes with students working independently on strategy use.

Modified Guided Reading

Multiple approaches and models have been developed to address academic language and reading comprehension instruction. An important approach highlighting instruction of these constructs was developed by Avalos, Plasencia, Chavez, and Rascon (2007) in response to the need to provide ELs with access to academic language and reading comprehension. Avalos et. al (2007) proposed a framework for the modified guided reading approach. Avalos et al. (2007) explain that the modified guided reading approach incorporates consistent exposure to listening, speaking, reading and writing in a socially mediated environment. Avalos et al. (2007) noted that the modified guided

reading approach to language acquisition and literacy development and its theoretical framework stem from the interactive reading model (Rumelhart, 1977). The interactive reading model involves the division of the reading process into two components. First, it considers the learner's reading schema. Second, it considers the learner's cognitive processing strategies. Avalos et al. (2007) followed this approach to include detailed vocabulary instruction and address issues such as second language text structure (e.g., semantics, morphology, syntax), as well as cultural relevance that influences learning and taking into consideration similarities or contrasts in the way participants, in communicative acts, linguistically represent their perception and knowledge of the world viewed from their sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Other research-based instructional frameworks have been developed to address academic language in U.S. schools (Chamot, 1995; Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2009; DiCerbo et al., 2014; Echevarría et al., 2012; Gibbons, 2009). For example, drawing from Cummins' (1979) distinction between BICS and CALPS, Echevarría et al. (2012) developed the sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP) in the 1990s, with the goal of serving the educational needs of ELs. Concurrently, the cognitive academic language learning approach (CALLA), an instructional model that integrates current educational trends in standards, content-based language instruction, learning strategies, and portfolio assessment, was developed in the 1990s (Chamot, 1995; Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). More specifically, CALLA focuses on the acquisition and use of procedural skills that facilitate academic language and content acquisition for ELs (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994).

In addition to SIOP and CALLA, Uccelli, et al. (2014) developed the core academic language skills (CALS) instrument, and De Oliveira (2015) developed the language-based approach to content instruction (LACI). CALS is a theoretically grounded and inclusive protocol that operationalizes academic language proficiency in terms of cross-disciplinary academic language skills, text comprehension, word reading fluency, academic vocabulary knowledge, and students' sociodemographic characteristics (Uccelli et al., 2014). LACI is an approach that places emphasis on using language to teach content, rather than using content to teach language (De Oliveira, 2015). De Oliveira (2015) stated, "The notion of making content accessible is taken here to providing access to the academic language that constructs content knowledge" (p. 2). This model draws from a functional theory of language that asks teachers to focus on the meanings that are made and the language through which such meanings are conveyed (de Oliveira, 2015).

Following a different perspective, Calderón and Minaya-Rowe (2011) developed the expediting comprehension for English language learners (ExC-ELL) observation protocol for English learners, whose purpose is to provide guidance for effective teaching, teacher collaboration, and the integration, through collaborative practices, of effective instruction in literacy, academic language, and content for ELs. Another approach to academic language instruction is word generation, developed by the Strategic Education Research Partnership (SERP) Institute at Harvard University. Word generation is a systematic approach to academic vocabulary instruction for upper elementary and middle grade ELs and struggling readers. Word generation addresses the need to expand the vocabulary of ELs and low-income students who need to learn vocabulary across

grade levels and content areas. It seeks to accomplish this objective through explicit instruction of academic language within content areas in order to help ELs keep up with the academic demands of school (Snow & Uccelli, 2010; Snow, Lawrence, & White, 2009). Although the frameworks described above address academic language and support the notion that there is a pressing need to attend to this instructional issue, there is not a consistent view of how academic language and reading comprehension instruction, particularly for secondary ELs, should be articulated.

While well-grounded frameworks for developing effective practices for reading comprehension have developed (Cisco & Padron, 2012), significant work still needs to be done to attend to the critical need of developing ELs' reading comprehension proficiency. The diversity of this student population, the multifaceted factors associated with their schooling and the reading demands and expectations for learning of secondary school texts makes it a more complex task (Lee & Spratley, 2010; Lesaux & Kieffer, 2010; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008). Therefore, research on instruction in academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs is needed.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study draws on the sociocultural theory of language as theorized primarily by Vygotsky (1978). Sociocultural theory establishes the existence of a dialectic relationship between humans and the world (Lantolf, 2006); a notion of human consciousness associated with the use of semiotic tools that mediate the social and physical world in the social interactions humans enact (Gee, 2001; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006; Wells, 1994), and for which language serves as a semiotic auxiliary tool that mediates social and mental activity.

For Vygotsky (1978), humans possess an organic unity of biologically endowed abilities and culturally created symbolic artifacts and activities that allow them to not only represent experience but to also create with it. Sociocultural theory views the notion of language development as resulting from learners' experiences of situated action in the material and social world. Understanding language development as a socially constructed and situated practice (Gee, 1996, Lave & Wenger, 1991), supports the framing of this study through the lens of language as a mediated and mediating factor in language development and conceptual learning. The role of the teacher is significant in this framework, as the teacher is the mediator that provides the means for students to learn the symbolic artifact of language, the mediated factor, that will be conducive to accessing school curricula. Language is mediated in the sense that teachers, through explicit instruction through modeling and providing context, provide opportunities for ELs to learn language as they deliberately and explicitly expose them to meaningful experiences with language. It is mediating in the sense that, in its development, language allows learners to access school curricula through its understanding and use. Additionally, teachers assume a role that allows them to further learners' zone of proximal development (ZPD) as they are in charge of closing the distance between learners' actual and potential development as determined through problem solving with adult guidance (Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, exploring teachers' conceptualization and operationalization of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction may provide a lens for understanding the way and the extent to which second language development occurs as EL learners develop language and learn concepts while assisted (mediated) by their teachers.

Research in second language development has highlighted that learning is a socially mediated process (Gee, 2008; Lantolf, 2006; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Scarcella, 2003). Vygotsky's (1978) conception of language is explained as language functioning as a semiotic tool that mediates social and mental activity that allows participants to enact activity both physically and intellectually. Lantolf (2006) adds that education, as a leading activity in many cultures, has the goal of helping students develop a coherent, concept-based knowledge of the world. These views support the notion of incorporating practices that emphasize explicit models and linguistic patterns of the culture of the subject areas students learn in school. These types of practices view language and teachers as mediating and as mediators in the process of linguistic development and conceptual understanding, especially for learners who do not share similar sociocultural and linguistic experiences.

Research Studies on Academic Language Instruction and ELs

Multiple studies have been conducted to address the construct of academic language and its impact on ELs' teaching and learning (August et al., 2014; Blair, 2016; Enright, 2011; Fang, 2004; Halliday & Hasan, 1984; Haneda, 2014; Lemke, 1987; Lemke, 1990; Leung, 2014; Moore & Schleppgrell, 2014; Schleppgrell & de Oliveira, 2006; Schulze, 2015). Some studies have focused on the importance of providing explicit instruction in this register; others have provided insight into teacher preparation, professional development, and teacher attitudes. Other studies have focused on ELs from two different perspectives: some have afforded more attention to a deficit model and have addressed the academic needs of these students from the perspective of limited English proficiency (LEP); other research has clearly articulated the significant challenges these

demographics face and the numerous talents they contribute to the educational setting. In the following section, the researcher provides a brief description of studies that illustrate the construct of academic language and its implications for ELs. In addition, the researcher describes some of the studies that have focused on the issues previously illustrated.

Achugar, Schleppegrell, and Oteiza (2007) provide a description of three professional development contexts within the U.S. where teachers have engaged in language analysis based on functional linguistics. In the context of the professional development studies, teachers needed support in developing learners' academic language in a second language. According to the researchers, using systemic functional linguistics metalanguage and analysis, teachers were able to approach texts and recognize the manner in which language constructed the content being learned. By learning how to recognize language patterns in specific content areas, teachers also learned how to assess, critically read, and present the content of their teaching materials.

Brooks (2015) conducted a study addressing the reading comprehension experiences of secondary long-term ELs. In this study, Brooks explored the experiences and ideas of five adolescent Latina long-term ELs had and way these students constructed meaning with academic texts. A significant point to highlight in this study was the difference between instructional and assessment practices. These students experienced learning and assessment in two opposite ways. On the one hand, Brooks (2015) explained, the focal students had access to academic texts through a teacher facilitated activity. On the other hand, students' learning was measured through individual silent reading. The students in this study described their exposure to reading as confusing, and

with assessment that was different from the way they were instructed, they felt that they were lacking in interaction and opportunities to co-construct understanding of texts. This study highlights the view of academic reading as a socially situated activity as well as the dissonance between learning and assessment practices that often preclude ELs from accessing academic content and perpetuates their LEP status, as it is the case of long-term ELs.

Schleppegrell, Greer, and Taylor (2008) conducted a case study highlighting the role of academic language and reading comprehension in teaching and learning history. The study focused on the use of functional metalanguage to engage learners in close reading and discussion of school history texts. This study was framed on the theory of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1994). The study sought to help learners identify the way a speaker's language choices enact meanings. The objective of this study was to teach learners to analyze language patterns as a means of recognizing how information is presented and the author's purpose and interpretation. According to the authors, by understanding linguistic patterns common in history texts, learners become more aware of the validity of sources and learn to read more critically.

Lawrence, Rabinowitz, and Perna (2009) conducted a qualitative study to explore the impact that teachers' instructional choices have on EL students' literacy development in secondary English language arts (ELA). The objective of the study was to understand the culture and practices taking place in the classroom environment. The researchers obtained data through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with nine teachers, as well as the documents and artifacts that participants brought to the interviews to document their classroom practices. Findings from this study indicated that the approaches used by the

secondary ELA teachers in the study incorporated research-based strategies and emphasized metacognitive instruction, leading to the improvement of students' reading skills. Additionally, the findings suggested that when teachers provided time in class for students to read and discuss texts with peers, students were more engaged and able to interact with texts on more meaningful levels.

Enright (2011) conducted a study of three students who, according to the author, represented the “new mainstream” of the 21st-century classroom. The study addressed the use of academic language and literacy in linguistically diverse classrooms and students’ academic proficiency in English. Enright (2011) focused on the participants’ language and literacy histories and the key patterns related to their language use in school. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, as well as document and artifact reviews. This study’s findings indicated that the challenges for the development of academic language in high school ELs lies in the expanding schism between research and practice. Enright (2011) contends that, while policy makers’ need to execute practices leading to efforts to help ELs pass standardized tests, a more urgent issue of concern is the implementation of instructional practices that promote the development of academic language, which will, in the end, support success on standardized measures.

Schall-Leckrone and McQuilllan (2012) conducted an action research study on the influence of embedding language-based strategies into a history methods course to prepare teachers to teach English learners. The focus of the study was the teaching of the academic language of historical analysis. An important implication of this study was the necessity to make the language of history visible. A second relevant implication was the

infusion of language-based strategies to teaching content area, a very important component of a comprehensive approach to teaching ELs. As such, this study used systemic functional linguistics as a tool for learners to understand how language functions in historical texts. The researchers highlight that for ELs "all content classes are de facto language classes" (p. 248); hence the significance of a language-based methods approach for teachers, for whom language teaching takes on a second-hand role and who usually do not realize the challenges associated with the language of history texts for ELs.

The focus on academic language as the vehicle to learn for language minority students has also been highlighted by Leung (2014). Leung (2014) addressed the features that make academic language complex, highlights the importance of assistance to facilitate a transition between BICS and CALPS (Cummins, 1979, 1981), and makes explicit emphasis on the notion of register from both the perspective of the teacher and the learner. Additionally, Leung (2014) addresses instructional issues as important as school expectations for language use, teacher register, teacher language awareness, and metalinguistic resources for instruction. Leung (2014) states that while academic registers are of high importance in learning academic content, informal language is not necessarily easy to understand, particularly when informal language is used to convey content meaning. Therefore, to explain the importance of transitioning from BICS to CALPS, a word of caution is needed to highlight the significance of the meanings created as informal language interacts with academic language to form content meaning.

Humphrey and Macnaught (2015) report on the use of a scaffolding pedagogy (Gibbons, 2009). This instructional tool, called the embedding literacies in the key

learning areas (ELK) project, is informed by systemic functional linguistics and focuses on establishing a shared metalanguage that makes the patterns of language valued for learning a discipline visible. The study highlights the significance of developing students' learning of a metalanguage for discipline-based literacy instruction and seeks to demonstrates whether embedding explicit instruction on metalinguistic strategies contributes to improvement on students' achievement in written assessment tasks. The goal of this study was to contribute to the literature on the importance of developing students' academic achievement through SFL-based metalanguage and on the impact of explicit scaffolded instruction focused on patterns of language known to systemic functional linguistics as discourse semantics (Martin & Rose, 2007). Findings from this study indicated that when learners are provided instruction on the patterns that make up the structure of the language used for learning in academic disciplines, student success on academic tasks and assessments is significantly greater. Additionally, the study suggests that explicit scaffolded instruction provides students the opportunity to understand the language patterns that allowed them to identify the manner in which meanings were created through discourse.

Moore and Schleppegrell (2014) developed a design-based research project focused on the use of grammatical metalanguage from systemic functional linguistics as a vehicle to foster academic language development in language arts. This research included the use of dialogic interaction supported by meaningful curricular activities and scaffolding artifacts. The use of metalinguistic strategies supported the development of academic language and situated contexts of use in which learners established a connection between text meaning and personal experiences. The explicit focus on

language and content learning through dialogic interaction provided opportunities for learners to instantiate actual language use within the context of the subjects they studied.

From a different perspective, Blair (2016) addresses the use of academic language in a case study of emergent bilinguals. While research has argued for the complexity of developing ELs' academic language proficiency (Anstrom et al., 2014; August, Branum-Martin, Cardenas-Hagan, Francis, Powell, More, & Haynes, 2014; Bailey, 2007; Cummins, 2014; Gandara, 2013; Scarcella, 2003), Blair (2016) highlights the dual challenge ELs are faced with while learning the language of instruction and learning content simultaneously. In this study, the research focuses on the ways emergent bilinguals from two different classroom settings use and move between repertoires of English and Spanish, and highlights their implications for examining the language of schooling. The researcher argues for the value of these linguistic acts as learners strategically draw from multilingual repertoires to accomplish academic tasks and communicate for academic purposes. Blair (2016) draws on the Gee's (1996) Discourses and Garcia's (2009) Translanguaging constructs to provide a theoretical framework that expands the notion of the academic language construct as Blair (2016) explains how learners use multilingual repertoires to accomplish academic learning goals.

In summary, these studies articulated and highlighted the various ways research on instruction for ELs is needed. These studies provide a view on instruction addressing the following: (1) understanding the audience (Blair, 2016; Brooks, 2015; Enright, 2011), (2) instructional approaches for teaching ELs (Lawrence et al., 2009; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014; Schleppegrell et al., 2008), (3) methodological considerations by teachers (Achugar et al., 2007; Humphrey & MacNaught, 2015; Schall-Leckrone &

McQuillan, 2012), (4) understanding language development (Blair, 2016; Humphrey & MacNaught, 2015; Leung, 2014), and (5) understanding the role of language in content area learning (Humphrey & MacNaught, 2015; Moore & Schleppegrell, 2014; Schall-Leckrone & MacQuillan, 2012). These elements together provide the researcher with the underpinnings to conduct the present study. This study contributes to the field because it seeks to inform researchers and teachers of the way secondary teachers of ELs understand and operationalize academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

ELs face formidable challenges in secondary school when they encounter complex texts and academic tasks, yet lack the language knowledge and reading comprehension strategies to access the content of such texts and accomplish the academic tasks assigned to them. In addition, teachers of ELs find themselves in a similar quagmire as they feel unprepared to meet the language development and learning needs of this student population. Both students and teachers alike face challenges that need to be explored in order to find ways to meet the learning needs of ELs in secondary school and to increase their opportunities for eventual academic success.

The purpose of this case study was to explore the understanding and operationalization of academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs in secondary school. Specifically, the study involved two English I teachers – one English/ESL certified teacher and one English-only certified teacher - and explored how these two teachers understood and operationalized academic language (AL) and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) for secondary English learners (ELs). The methodology of this study was aimed at answering the following overarching research question: How can an exploration into teachers' understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI inform the way teachers perceive and shape instructional practices for English learners in secondary school? The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How do teachers of high school ELs perceive their working theories of the constructs of developing academic language (AL) and the use of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI)?

2. How are teachers of high school ELs' working theories represented in lesson planning and classroom instructional practice?

3. How do teachers of high school ELs reflect on and explain their working theories, operationalization, and instructional decision-making of AL and ERCSI?

Qualitative Research Methodology

The goal of qualitative research methodology is to achieve a holistic understanding of the social context under study through a multifaceted method that includes researching a natural setting, collecting and analyzing documents, and gathering and reporting views of informants within a given social setting (Creswell, 1998, 2003; Holliday, 2009; Kline, 2009; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Silverman, 2010). Merriam (2003) states, "the key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their worlds" (p.3), and case study design, specifically, seeks to answer questions about the how and why of events in which individuals participate (Yin, 1994). Thus, this researcher's focus was to understand how teachers perceived the constructs of AL and ERCSI for secondary ELs as they described those understandings and operationalized them in their practices.

Case Study Research Method

A case study design was used to explore teachers' theoretical and operational constructs of AL and ERCSI for secondary ELs as these were presented in working theories, planning and instructional practice. Merriam (2009) explains that qualitative research studies are suitable for educational activities and that they "endeavor to present a holistic, in-depth description of the total system or case" (p. 38).

Case study research design is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 1994). It focuses on in-depth and longitudinal examination of data collected through participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and document and artifact analysis (Glesne, 2011). Based on this research methodology, the researcher conducts an in-depth exploration of a bounded system, such as a program, an event, an activity, or a process (Creswell, 2003). Case studies are considered bounded systems because they are framed by time and activity. During the case study research, information gathering occurs using a variety of data procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake, 1995). Some of the procedures used to conduct this type of qualitative research inquiry include: artifacts, participant observations, questionnaires, documents, and interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2003; Glesne, 2006; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Furthermore, the case study research methodology implies discovery and description focused on revealing the meanings of experience enacted and described by the participants (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

A case study research design was the selected method of inquiry because it allowed the researcher to explore a phenomenon within its naturally occurring setting over time. This case study explored teachers' perceived working theories of the constructs of AL and ERCSI for secondary ELs based on the exploration of (1) teachers' understandings of the constructs under study as explained in interviews, (2) teachers' considerations for instruction as described in lesson plans, (3) teachers' operationalization of the constructs under study as demonstrated in their reflections of

their perceived understanding, lesson plans, and instructional delivery. Thus, data were collected through interviews, lesson plans and observations of instructional practice.

Observations

Observations are data collection methods used by individuals to gather first-hand data on events, programs, or individuals being studied. Creswell (2008) explains that observations are a data collection process to collect first-hand information based on the observation of people and places in a research site. Observations allow the researcher the opportunity to record information about events as they occur in a natural setting. The goal of observations is to develop an understanding of the phenomenon under study. Thus, the observer can study a behavior exhibited by an individual or individuals, an event, a setting, a program, or a process. While observations provide opportunities to gather first-hand data as it occurs naturally, they also have the potential to provide inaccurate data because of the possibility for deception by the observed or the sense of being an outsider experienced by the observer (Creswell, 2008; Glesne, 2011).

Creswell (2008) outlines a general process for conducting observations for data collection which includes the following: site selection, familiarization with the site, identification of observational focus (i.e. subject, time frame, length of observation), determination of observer role, designing an observation protocol for data collection protocol, conducting multiple observations over time to capture the best understanding of the site and individuals, recording descriptive and reflective data, and assuming an unobtrusive role.

For this case study, the researcher developed an observation protocol which included a set of open-ended questions intended to look for information on the setting,

events and participants' actions. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) note that when considering what type of information to gather, descriptions of the physical setting, particular events or activities, and personal reactions are relevant pieces of information to elaborate a case. For instance, Creswell (2008) indicates that when observing a classroom, it is important that the researcher record information on activities the teacher and the students carry out, record information on the interactions that occur during the observation, as well as student-to-student conversations.

In-depth Interviewing

This case study research design used an in-depth interview protocol. The researcher interviewed two teachers, selected through purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990). These participants indicated a willingness to share information about their working theories and operationalization of ELs' AL and ERCSI, and about their understandings of how AL and ERCSI may influence Els' learning and teachers' own instructional performance.

To gather data in the first phase, the researcher developed an interview protocol based on Seidman's (2006) in-depth interview protocol (see appendix B). In-depth interview, according to Seidman, involves a face-to-face protocol that results in an intense experience for both parties involved in the process. Such interviewing requires flexibility, interaction, and data generation in which meaning and language are explored in depth (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). Seidman (2006) explained that in-depth interviewing affords the researcher access to the context of people's behavior and facilitates the understanding of such behavior through a contextual meaning-making process. Douglas and Moustakas (1985) viewed in-depth interviewing as a personal

experience between the researcher and the participant, whose interactions become a process of collaboration in which reflection and inquiry are shared. Holliday (2007) states that the use of in-depth interviewing enables the researcher to develop insights into actions and affords richer explanations than could otherwise be obtained.

Accordingly, the first interview focused on establishing the context of the participants' experience. Seidman (2006) states, "the interviewer's task is to put the participant's experience in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible about him or herself in light of the topic up to the present time" (p. 17). Thus, the researcher inquired about the participants' teaching experiences and demographic data, focusing on how their personal and schooling experiences led them to become teachers. In this first interview, the participants shared information about their understanding of their working theories for AL and ERCSI.

The purpose of the second interview was to focus on the concrete details of the participants' present lived experience in the topic area of study (Seidman, 2006). This interview stage addressed contemporary experience, which afforded the participants an opportunity to reconstruct the details of their experience within the context in which it occurred. At this stage, the researcher conducted interviews seeking to understand how the constructs under study appeared in lesson plans.

The third stage of the protocol, reflection on meaning, calls for encouraging the participants to reflect on the meaning they have assigned to their experience, and as Seidman (2006) establishes, it addresses the way experiences shape instructional changes participants may consider as they provide instruction in the areas specified in the study. At this final stage of the study, the researcher sought to understand how, after lesson

writing and instructional implementation, teachers described their understanding and actual operationalization of AL and ERCSI. As participants were immersed in the work with ELs, they might reflect on and reshaped the way they perceived, planned, and operationalized the constructs under study. Seidman (2006) suggests that participants reflect on the meaning of their experience. "The combination of exploring the past to clarify the events that led participants to where they are now and describing the concrete details of their present experience, establishes conditions for reflecting upon what they are doing" (Seidman, 2006, p.19). Answering a question about how participants understood and operationalized AL and ERCSI for secondary ELs might shed light on considerations for changes in instructional planning and instructional practice.

Documents

Creswell (2008) explains that "documents consist of public or private records that qualitative researchers obtain about a site or participants in a study" (p. 230). Yin (1994) adds that "documents can take many forms and should be the object of explicit data collection plans" (p. 81), such as letters, memoranda, proposals, written reports, and plans. Documents are also useful for corroborating and augmenting evidence. For instance, documents can help corroborate data that has been presented in other sources. Therefore, when a researcher finds discrepancies between different sets of data, he or she may further investigate the phenomenon. In addition, documents can be a source to make inferences about a specific topic. For example, as a researcher analyzes documents, additional evidence and questions may emerge about the topic under study. They also provide data that is communicated in the language of the participant (Creswell, 2008),

which, in consequence, allows the researcher to corroborate evidence collected through different data gathering methods.

For this case study, documents provide multiple opportunities to gather data in the form of participants' descriptions, explanations, or narratives of events or situations. They also serve as data corroboration tools, as these can be compared with other data sources to either affirm or create opportunities for inquiry about discrepancies found in the data collected. In this manner, documents also contribute as data elements in triangulation. In this study, the researcher collected lesson plan documents, which were triangulated with interview and instructional observation data. This triangulation of data sources added to the dependability and confirmability of the study. Holliday (2002) notes that documents are useful in that they provide data for interviews, they support or challenge interview data, and they support the construction of thick descriptions, pattern analysis and content analysis, as well as the generation of hunches or hypotheses.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher's role was as follows: First, the researcher is currently employed in the capacity of assistant principal at Peanuts High School (a pseudonym), the site of the study, for the past four and a half years. This position in the research site allows the researcher to have access to the participants and supports the notion among students and faculty that there is no disruption or intrusion. According to Creswell (2003), the researcher's proximity and familiarity to the research site and subjects allows for an intense experience with participants and a closer view of the phenomenon under study. This type of research, that Glesne and Peshkin (1992) call backyard research, allows for convenient and accessible data collection. Because backyard research also poses some

validity threats, the researcher used multiple data collection strategies to eliminate such threats. As a matter of disclosure, the researcher did not professionally evaluate the participants during the academic year during which the study was conducted.

Second, because one of the goals was to explore teachers' current understandings of instruction for ELs on academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction, the researcher assumed the role of participant-observer (Huberman & Miles, 2005), which implied a close relationship with the subjects. As stated earlier, while the facility of access and the role of school administrator allowed the researcher to become immersed in the social and cultural environment of the setting under study, it could present threats of validity. Therefore, it was important to address ethical dilemmas emerging from the data collection process and dissemination of findings (Merriam & Associates, 2002). For instance, the researcher did not provide any opinions on the lesson plan formatting or give the participants any instructional feedback. The purpose of the research study was to explore their understanding and operationalization of the constructs under study. Hence, planning and teaching practices needed to be explored and analyzed based on what occurred in the natural setting.

Research Setting

Data for this research study was collected at an urban general education high school adjacent to a large metropolitan area located in the southeastern region of the United States. The participant school was selected as a convenience sample. The decision to use this research site was of high importance for the researcher and for the goals of this study. There are multiple factors that account for selecting the research setting. The most relevant is that the researcher has been employed in the capacity of teacher and assistant

principal in the middle school and the high school, the current research site, for the past fifteen years, with five years at the latter.

In addition to the professional connection with the school as assistant principal, the researcher has been interested in conducting a study in this location because of the consistently growing immigrant population, most of which are classified as ELs. The school in reference has transitioned from fifteen percent of students speaking English as a second language in 2004 to between 50% and 55% in 2018. The high school research site served on average 1,225 students at the time the research was conducted. These students were divided into four specific demographic groups in grades 9 through 12: African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic. The average representation percentage per ethnic groups was as follows: 33% African-American, 11.5% Caucasian, 51.5% Hispanic and 4.0% of students classified as Other. This school serves free and reduced-priced lunch to about 88%of the student body. Approximately 88% of the students at this school come from low-income backgrounds and 240 of them are receiving direct services in English as a second language (ESL). In fact, 20% of the student body is classified as English learners receiving direct services in ESL and more than 95% of these students receive free or reduced-price lunch.

The Classroom Setting

The physical classroom setting in Ms. Carter's (pseudonym) class was arranged with students sitting in small groups where four students gathered and formed a table-like shape seating arrangement with their individual desks. Students usually worked in a collaborative manner and received support from Ms. Carter as she walked around and monitored their comprehension, scaffolded language production and progress. The

classroom setting was decorated with current events and showcased different forms of student work products and was filled with books on shelves.

The classroom seating arrangement in Ms. Perry's (pseudonym) class was illustrative of her teaching style. Desks were organized in rows, with these located on each side of the room. Ms. Perry dominated the organizational structure of the classroom with limited participation of the co-teacher. The preponderance of the discourse is the teacher's, with some opportunities for interaction. These were limited to students' presentations and assessment of each other's work at the end of each group's presentation. There was little decoration in this classroom due to the fact that Ms. Perry is a floating teacher. Of the four direct services ELs, two sat in the back of the classroom and two sat in the middle section of the classroom. There were three more transitional ELs. These students sat at different places in the classroom.

Data Generation Methods and Procedures

The objective of data collection procedures is to offer an insider's perspective to the individual and shared experiences of the participants (Stake, 2000). In qualitative studies, data collection focuses on setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through interviews and observations, gathering documents and visual materials, and establishing protocols for recording information (Creswell, 2003). The goal of gathering these data is to provide a view of the experiences of the individual as well as the experiences shared by the research participants (Stake, 2000), as the descriptions of participants' understanding and operationalization are the focus of qualitative research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990; Locke et al., 1987; Merriam, 1988, as cited in Creswell, 2003). In this study on exploring how teachers understand and

operationalize AL and ERCSI in classrooms with ELs, the researcher sought to gather and analyze multiple sources of data to provide a comprehensive perspective that would serve to add validity and trustworthiness to the study. The primary sources of data for this study include: teacher demographic data, interviews, observations of teacher instruction, and lesson plans.

At the initial stage of data generation, the researcher interviewed each participant, collected lesson plans weekly and conducted three instructional observations. At this initial stage, the researcher began coding and analyzing the data obtained from the interviews and lesson plans. Once the three observations were conducted, the researcher met with each teacher for an additional interview, which took place half-way through the study time frame. At that stage, after meeting with each participant, the researcher analyzed the second round of interviews, the lesson plans and instructional observations and continued the coding process. Finally, the researcher collected the remainder four weeks' worth of lesson plans, conducted four more instructional observations of each teacher and, after the final observation was conducted, interviewed each participant one last time. Once the data were collected in their entirety, the researcher gathered all the information and continued coding, analyzing and triangulating data. At this stage in the process, the researcher began creating categories stemming from the coded and analyzed data.

Participants

The participants in this study were selected through purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990). According to Creswell (2002), intentionality of the researcher in selecting a given participant or setting increases the likelihood that the researcher will understand the

phenomenon under study. Creswell (1998) and Merriam (2002) state purposeful sampling is a technique in qualitative research that allows the researcher to select the setting and participants that best suit the researcher's inquiry interest. While an earlier reference to backyard research (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) establishes that the proximity with the research site and the participants may pose validity threats, it also provides the opportunity for more in-depth access to the sources of information.

The participants included two English I teachers. The case study was based on the interviews, lesson plans, and observations of the two English teachers assigned to provide instruction to two different sets of ELs in two high school English I classes. These two teachers possess different sets of skills and background experiences. English teacher Ms. Perry (pseudonym) is an African-American, monolingual, secondary school certified English teacher. English teacher Ms. Carter (pseudonym) is a Caucasian, bilingual (Hebrew-English) secondary school English and ESL certified teacher.

Table 1

Demographic Data of Teacher Participants

Pseudonym	Gender	Ethnicity	Grade	Content Area	Years of Experience
Ms. Perry	Female	African American	9th	English I	16
Ms. Carter	Female	Caucasian	9th	English I	13

Data Preparation

All data sources obtained for this study were screened prior to data analysis to eliminate any identifying information linking the data sources and the participants. Sources screened included: teacher interview transcripts, lesson plans, and observation instruments. Transcriptions were also formatted to facilitate access to data, organization, analysis, and to verify all necessary data were collected from the participants. Numerical

and nominal codes were used to classify and protect the data. Data collected were stored in a secured location.

Table 2

Data Generation Sources

Interviews	Frequency	Duration	Number of Participants
Interviews per participant	Initial - prior to lesson plan collection and observations End of third week End of seventh week	30 – 60 minutes	2
Instructional observations	14 total observations Participant 1 – 7 Participant 2 – 7	90 minutes each	2
Lesson plans	7 weekly lesson plans per participant	n/a	2

Data Collection

Data for this qualitative case study were collected using the following data collection instruments:

Teacher Interviews

Teacher interviews were used as a data collection method at three stages during the study. The interviews were based on Seidman's (2006) in-depth interview protocol. One interview was conducted at the beginning of study, one half-way through the study, and one final interview took place after the final observation was conducted and once all lesson plans were collected. This interview protocol was created because it allowed the researcher room for both in-depth and follow-up questions based on teachers' responses to the interview questions. Using this type of interview allowed for flexible use of questions based on the lesson plan and instructional observation data.

Lesson Plans

Lesson plans were collected weekly to gather, code and analyze data about the description of how AL and ERCSI were written for instruction. Lesson plans served as a data source to address the extent to and whether AL and ERCSI were explicitly stated and in what ways they were stated in the planning process. Table F1 (Appendix F) illustrates the data coded from the lesson plans. This table displays the elements teachers took into consideration when planning lessons articulating the constructs under study. These included language and content goals, academic language, instances of reading strategy instruction, and description of tasks.

Teacher Observations

In addition to the interview protocol and lesson plans, the researcher collected data through teacher observations of instructional practice. An observation instrument (Harmon et al., 2009) was developed to use during the observations. The protocol focused on the teachers' operationalization of both their explanations of working theories and the use of lesson plans in application to the constructs under study, AL and ERCSI. The researcher observed the teachers weekly from April through June 2018. The researcher collected data from seven observations of each teacher. This segment of the research was limited by the extent to which teachers covered the units of instruction within the scheduled periods based on the standard course of study. Table 3 below illustrates the codes and categories developed from teacher instructional observations and the frequency with which codes occurred. These codes apply to both AL and ERCSI and the instructional activities that were displayed during instructional observations, such as type of academic language or reading comprehension strategy observed, teacher

instructional strategies, teacher actions, and student actions. They served as data sources that were triangulated with data from interviews and lesson plans to develop the themes that emerged throughout the study.

Table 3

AL and ERCSI Instructional Observation Data

	Academic Language			ERCSI		
		Ms. Carter	Ms. Perry		Ms. Carter	Ms. Perry
Strategies	Lexicon	7	4	Activating Prior Knowledge	3	3
				Analyzing Text	1	1
	Syntax	4	0	Restating	3	0
				Questioning	1	1
				Think-Aloud	1	0
				Making Connections	2	2
	Visual Aids/realia	1	2	Visual Aids/realia	2	0
	Video/Audio	3	4	Video/Audio	1	1
	Sentence Frames	1	0	Sentence Frames	2	0
	Read Aloud	4	1	Read Aloud	5	3
	Graphic Organizer	3	0	Graphic Organizer	1	0
Teacher Actions	Provide directions	7	6	Provide directions	7	5
	Explain	7	6	Explain	7	5
	Provide Examples	7	2	Provide Examples	7	4
	Model Language	4	0	Model Strategy	4	1
	Read Aloud	7	2	Read Aloud	7	1
	Elicit through questioning	6	4	Elicit through questioning	7	6
Student Actions	Note-taking	3	2	Note-taking	3	2
	Answering Written Questions	1	2	Answering Written Questions	2	6
	Graphic Organizer	2	0	Completing Graphic Organizer	3	0
	Copying Definitions	2	1	Oral repetitions	1	0
	Oral repetitions	4	0	Written Products	3	3
	Oral Presentations	0	5	SS read aloud	1	0

Written Products	7	3

Data Analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis begins at the onset of the study, as soon as data are gathered. Merriam (1988) and Marshall and Rossman (1989) contend that data collection and analysis must be a simultaneous process (cited in Creswell, 2003). The processes of data analysis, hypothesis creation, testing and interpretation that occur during the data collection process supports the generation of thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973). In this specific study, data analysis involved a close examination of teacher interview transcripts, teacher observation instruments, and lesson plans. The importance of data analysis is that it transforms data into findings (Patton, 2002). Yin (1994) states that data analysis involves examining, categorizing, tabulating, or testing evidence to produce empirically founded findings.

To answer the interview questions, the researcher used open coding to search for emerging themes and categories as data were broken down and concepts delineated to stand for data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) that were later classified. Creswell (2003) notes that data analysis should begin with a coding process. NVivo 12 Pro, a qualitative data management and data organization software program facilitated coding the interview data and supported the researcher in the creation of themes and categories during the stages of open and axial coding, as it facilitated the creation of nodes and relationships and established the percentage of coverage of codes for each interview.

During the interviews, the codes were grouped into four categories - Learning Tasks and Assessment of Student Learning, Instruction, Teacher Expertise, and Second Language Development. Table E1 (Appendix E) provides the code definitions and

exemplar quotes. These codes and categories were used to identify and explain the ways teachers understood the focal points of this exploration. The learning tasks and assessment category provided information about the ways the two participating teachers designed tasks and assessed student learning of the constructs under study. It also provided information to understand the perceived understandings teachers had on issues related to second language learning and assessment. Additionally, the second language acquisition category provided the researcher information of concepts that are critical and have significant implications for ELs' teaching and learning. Exploring understandings of concepts such as the difference between academic and everyday language and their impact on instruction, or developmental stages, age and time factors associated with second language informed the researcher about how teachers made decisions, designed tasks, and assessed ELs' language development and content knowledge. Similarly, exploring teacher educational background and professional experience yielded valuable information to understand teachers' instructional decisions and actions. Stemming from these categories, the researcher selected a series of themes that emerged from the codes and categories. These themes are displayed in Table E1 (Appendix E).

Based on categories that emerged from open coding, the researcher used axial coding to intensely code single categories and to make connections between blocks of data, as some codes stemmed from broader data categories or from the relationships between concepts. A constant comparative procedure was also used in the data analysis process (Glasser & Strauss, 1967). This step in the process allowed for the comparison of events in which the subjects under study demonstrated patterns or differences in instructional practices, based on each participant perceived understanding in comparison

to each other. The researcher was able to observe and explore whether the two subjects used similar or different instructional strategies, or whether their perceived working theories aligned with their operational practices.

According to Yin (1994), a qualitative case study design provides the opportunity to investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. Additionally, a qualitative case study design is a preferred selection for this research inquiry because it provides answers to what, how, and why issues or events as they occur and unfold over time, “rather than mere frequencies of incidences” (Yin, 1994, p. 6).

In sum, data from the interview transcripts, lesson plans, and teacher instructional observations were analyzed to determine the understanding and operationalization of the constructs under study as these were represented in practice. These data revealed several important findings including detailed differences between the two participants in the study, reflected in their educational and professional experiences, as well as the way these differences influenced their instructional practice. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the findings divided into three categories stemming from the three research questions.

CHAPTER IV

Research Findings

The purpose of this case study was to explore the understanding and operationalization of academic language (AL) and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) for ELs in secondary school. Specifically, the study included two English I teachers and explored how these two teachers understood and operationalized AL and ERCSI for secondary ELs.

The first phase of this chapter addresses the interview protocol and discusses the findings of how the participating teachers construed their notions of AL and ERCSI and explained similarities and differences between the two participating teachers on emerging themes associated with these constructs. Secondly, after coding, categorizing, and analyzing the data to answer question number two, the researcher discusses the intersection or polarization between teachers' understanding and operationalization based on interviews, lesson plans, and instructional observations. Lastly, the researcher uses the coded data from interviews, lesson plans, and instructional observations to examine the two participants' data sets to answer question three, which involves explaining and reflecting on the instructional decision-making process, by the two participating teachers, in relation to the constructs under study.

This case study sought to respond the following overarching question: How can an exploration into teachers' understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI inform the way teachers perceive and shape instructional practices for ELs in secondary school? This study's findings are reported in three sections, each of which focuses on providing an answer to each of the three research questions: (1) How do teachers of high

school ELs perceive their working theories of the constructs of developing academic language (AL) and the use of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI)?, (2) How are teachers of ELs' working theories represented in lesson planning and classroom instructional practice?, (3) How do teachers of high school ELs reflect on and explain their working theories, operationalization, and instructional decision-making of AL and ERCSI? Throughout this chapter the findings are explained and themes that cut across the three research questions are provided and explained.

Research Question #1: How do teachers of ELs perceive their working theories of the constructs of developing ELs' academic language (AL) and the use of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) for ELs in secondary school?

The findings indicated that there were differences between the two teachers. One important difference was displayed in their professional certifications, educational background and teaching experiences. Each teacher brought to the study educational and professional skills that set them apart and showed their differing understandings of AL and ERCSI. Another important observed difference was their understanding of second language development. On this construct, educational experiences exerted a significant influence in the way both teachers understood this concept. In addition, both teachers displayed differences in the way they view instruction and assessment for high school ELs. An analysis of each of the themes (see Table 4) listed below and discussion of findings based on the interview protocol is presented.

Table 4

Interview Protocol Thematic Data

Theme	Ms. Carter (Teacher 1)	Ms. Perry (Teacher 2)

Educational Background	ESL/English Certified Communicates in three languages: Romanian, Hebrew, and English Teaching experience in English and ESL in middle and secondary school Teaching experience in the U.S. and overseas Thirteen years of teaching experience	English Certified Monolingual Earned master's degree in educational supervision Teaching experience teaching English in middle and secondary school Sixteen years of teaching experience
Academic Language	Morphology: prefixes, suffixes, and roots Language needed for academic purposes	Morphology: prefixes, suffixes, and roots High frequency words, grammar, and content-related vocabulary, words with multiple parts
Reading Comprehension Instruction	Teach how to develop a general understanding of text Strategies: find main idea, annotate text, and learn word identification	Teach, model, provide guided strategy to read complex text Strategies: summarize, question text, make predictions, activate prior knowledge
Second Language Development	Development of language proficiency in an L2 that may take up to 7 years Development of 4 language skills in an L2 – listening, speaking, reading, and writing Differences in language development due to educational and age factors	Acquisition of an L2 formally (learned in a class) or informally (learned within a community of speakers)
Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills	Every day conversational skills learners develop for social purposes, both formal and informal (slang)	Teacher indicates she has very little knowledge of the concept
Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills	Development of language related to academic settings. Learning an L2 is contingent upon learner proficiency level and prior educational background	Teacher indicates she has very little knowledge of the concept
World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment	Assessment to measure yearly language proficiency	

(WIDA) & Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (Access for ELs)	Computer-based Assesses 4 language skills Administered in tiers depending of learners' proficiency	Teacher indicates she has very little knowledge of the concept

Educational background.

Teacher educational background emerged as a relevant theme in teaching ELs. The findings in this study indicate more attention should be given to teacher education for ELs and teacher knowledge of multiculturalism and second language development, as these presuppose instructional approaches directed towards ELs and inform teachers' dispositions and considerations teachers need to make with regards to second language instruction and learning.

Additionally, another emerging theme, not a conditional one, is teachers' knowledge and ability to communicate in a second language. Teachers' own experiences with language learning and the processes involved in language learning, or lack thereof, provide insight into ELs' learning and language development. This conceptual knowledge and ability to communicate in a second language allows teachers to amplify their views about teaching and learning for ELs. Therefore, a teacher's ability to communicate in a second language emerges as a positive factor in the way teachers make considerations for instruction as they have experienced what students face, both challenges and opportunities, in language development and academic content learning.

While most middle and secondary school teachers have viewed themselves as content area specialists (Bintz, 1997; Ness, 2009; Lee & Spratley, 2010; Lesaux, Kieffer, & Faller, 2010; Rucker, 2003; Snow, Lawrence, & White, 2009) and traditional organizational teaching structures have been common practice for more than a hundred

years (Vogt, 1989), exploring instructional practices in the context of new demographic student make-ups may shed light on effective ways to address instructional practices conducive to learning and success for secondary ELs. The following descriptions and explanations in this exploratory study reveal important themes that reiterate such historical views of secondary education. They also show how different educational backgrounds and professional experiences influence the way teachers perceive and approach their working theories of the constructs under study.

Ms. Carter is an experienced teacher in the areas of English language arts and English as a Second Language (ESL). Ms. Carter earned a bachelor's degree in education and in English as a second language from a university in a foreign country. She communicates in three languages and has had vast experience learning both foreign and second languages. She has been teaching for thirteen years, five of which she taught overseas. Although she has taught English as a content area in grades 7 through 12, her focus has been mainly in teaching English as a second language.

On the other hand, Ms. Perry is also an experienced, certified in grades 6 through 9, English language arts teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in educational supervision. She has taught a wide range of student levels and diverse demographic groups for the past sixteen years. She has taught English in grades 6 through 8 and English I in secondary school for 16 years. Ms. Perry reported that, while she does not communicate in a language other than English, she has had vast experiences teaching diverse student populations.

While both participating teachers display a significant number of years of teaching experience, the differences in their schooling and professional practices are

evident. These differences are evident in their descriptions of their understanding of the constructs of academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for secondary ELs.

For instance, Ms. Carter (English/ESL certified teacher) shows educational and professional experience providing instruction for ELs, and directly monitors the execution of student placement, learning, and assessment plans for ELs at the school where she currently works. These are substantiated in her interview responses about the constructs of AL and ERCSI for secondary ELs, her descriptions of second and foreign language learning and teaching and her experiences providing instruction in English as a content area and English as a second language. In addition, Ms. Carter displayed a wealth of experience and training on matters related to student placement, instruction, and administration of assessments of student proficiency, ongoing evaluation, and yearly measurement of proficiency through the WIDA ACCESS for ELs. Ms. Carter assessed student learning on the development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing and provided substantial evidence of knowledge and experience in working with ELs.

Ms. Perry's professional background provided important data to illustrate the way she planned her lessons and delivered instruction. Ms. Perry, a monolingual, sixteen-year veteran in teaching students in grades six through nine, has a wealth of knowledge with regards to teaching. However, in the areas of L2 development and EL learners, she has had very little exposure or professional development. She holds a degree in English and a master's degree in educational supervision. While she has taught a diverse student

population, her experiences with teaching ELs and participating in programs that provide professional development in this area are limited.

While Ms. Perry stated she has multiple experiences teaching diverse student populations, her educational background and teaching experience differs from Ms. Carter's as the education of ELs is concerned. For example, Ms. Perry explained that while she taught ELs in many of her classes, her background knowledge and experience is not on teaching ELs or on differentiating instruction for this student population. In fact, although her class was comprised of seven ELs and an average of 15 additional mainstream, monolingual English-speaking students, Ms. Perry explained that she planned her lessons for whole class instruction and then allowed the ESL teacher to provide language support for ELs.

Ms. Perry came to each of the interviews well-prepared to provide the responses to the questions given to her in advance. Ms. Perry established from the beginning that she had not had a great deal of experience teaching ELs. Ms. Perry, a monolingual teacher, had not had to prepare to encounter students who did not speak English as a first language, let alone, not speak English at all. In her initial interview, Ms. Perry stated that she understood, based on the student records, her ELs were at the emergent stage in L2 development and knew she could expect limited responses from them. She also understood that counting on the support of the ESL teacher in the classroom could provide opportunities to help ELs develop their language skills once the lesson was presented to the whole class.

This case study presented several themes that explain the complexity and importance of teachers' education and training for working with ELs and provides

corroborating evidence of the historical views of teaching in secondary education earlier discussed. It also provided relevant insight into the impact teacher training programs and teacher experiences have on ELs. While both teachers interviewed for this study have substantial teaching experiences working with diverse student populations, it is evident that there is a difference between the two in their educational and professional experience with respect to teaching and learning of second languages and their knowledge of English language learners.

A relevant and distinguishable difference in teacher background knowledge is manifested in Ms. Carter's second and third language development experiences, as well as those experiences associated with migration, assimilation, acculturation, and multiculturalism. These elements inherently put in the forefront a similar frame of reference between Ms. Carter and the EL students she teaches. Ms. Carter has experienced migration to two different countries and language development in two different languages. In addition, Ms. Carter has been exposed to similar social experiences as those ELs experience when they arrive in a new social, cultural, and linguistic environment. Knowledge and experiences with these factors provide her with insight into what her students go through as they enter the U.S. educational setting and allows her to show her students she has a similar frame of reference and this facilitates her connection with them. These experiences also allow the teacher to tap into the students' needs and recognize their level of adaptation and progression in the new educational setting.

On the other hand, Ms. Perry's educational experience is displayed through an instructional framework that focuses on delivering the curriculum through a teacher-

centered whole class instructional approach. As part of the discussion, it is important to highlight that while Ms. Perry has had a wealth of teaching experience, these experiences have not been directly related to ELs, but to other diverse student populations. Ms. Perry described her class as being comprised of several ELs, about seven, and the remainder of the class was a mainstream, monolingual group of students.

Ms. Perry came to the interview prepared to answer the questions provided to her in advance. Based on her script, it can be inferred that Ms. Perry did not have teaching experience dealing with ELs. She also stated that for instructional purposes she relied on the support of her ESL co-teacher. Ms. Perry stated she had a notion of where her students were in the language development process and made instructional adjustments to reach those students. Ms. Perry acknowledged her limitations in second language teaching.

Academic language instruction.

While within the descriptions of academic language instruction high frequency terms, content related vocabulary, grammar, and words with multiple parts were explained, there was little evidence about how to develop students' language in general academic or domain specific vocabulary. Vocabulary instruction was mainly explained based on the notion of teaching words related to the day's lesson theme and on words based on Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes. However, two important areas of academic language were not addressed, syntax and discourse within the texts.

The evidence gathered displays a limited scope in the understanding of this construct. In general, academic language was understood within the boundaries of vocabulary instruction, specifically vocabulary related to important concepts in the

lesson, as well as the learning of Greek and Latin roots, and prefixes and suffixes. While there is evidence that academic language was understood similarly by the two participating teachers, and there was a notion of how to teach academic language, teachers' responses indicate that instruction in this area was specific to vocabulary related to each lesson topic. For instance, Ms. Carter explained, "academic language is the language that the students, in this case in the U.S., need to understand and assimilate in order to be successful in different academic tasks" (personal communication, 4/23/18). She added that, "whether it is writing a graduation paper or passing a standardized test, academic language is necessary for functioning in academic settings and comprehend and produce this type of assignments" (personal communication, 4/23/18). Ms. Carter further explained that she teaches her students to find key words they need to understand texts. She also explained that she breaks down words to help students recognize and understand prefixes, suffixes and words with Greek and Latin origins. For example, she explained, "we used the word subsist and broke it down. What is sub? which they knew meant below. What is "ist"? They knew it came from exist, which is to live" (personal communication, 5/18/18). Ms. Carter indicated that from that explanation students were able to combine those two meanings to form the word subsist. Therefore, she explained, "this way is that students learn to identify components such as suffixes and prefixes or roots, which will make it easier to figure out sentences" (personal communication, 5/18/18).

Similarly, Ms. Perry explained that from her instructional perspective, academic language represents the use of high frequency terms, grammar, content-related vocabulary and words with multiple parts. She stated that as students transition from

grade to grade, comprehending academic language poses a great challenge, especially for students classified as ELs. Therefore, she contended, “It is critical that the student becomes familiar with root words, prefixes, suffixes, as well as compound words” (personal communication, 4/27/18). From her perspective and in her role, she believes that teachers need to make use of strategies to increase academic language use, and that this can be achieved by creating semantic maps, graphic organizers, sentence starters, sentence frames, etc. According to Ms. Perry, “It is important for teachers to introduce academic language at the beginning of the term, so that students understand certain functional terms as they go along” (personal communication, 5/18/18).

Therefore, these findings, once again, suggest that professional development in academic language instruction is needed. The difference between Ms. Carter and Ms. Perry indicates that teachers in secondary school continue to practice instruction based on the assumption that classes are homogeneous and that a focus on developing the academic language skills associated with the subjects that they teach may not be relevant. Teachers still seem to assume that students should be able to develop AL skills as they interact with the texts they encounter, and that no direct, explicit instruction is required. Nor do they recognize academic language items necessary for students to learn within their subject areas.

Explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction.

Established in the literature is the notion that reading involves a combination of bottom-up and top-down skills learners develop as they interact with texts they read and incorporate their background knowledge and experiences in the reading comprehension process (Gibbons, 2009). While this applies in mainstream monolingual learning

scenarios, for ELs constructing meaning from texts implies a more difficult task as ELs encounter rapidly increasing numbers of words that are not part of their spoken language and backgrounds. It is because of this challenge that teachers of ELs play an important role as they select the appropriate texts and make the instructional decisions so that instruction in reading comprehension for this student group is conducive to learning.

The two participants in the study displayed a broad knowledge of teaching students reading comprehension strategies, their application, and of the challenges these present to ELs. In their responses, both participants explained their repertoires in reading comprehension strategy instruction. Ms. Carter, on the one hand, presents a narrative that provides descriptions of what she does to link the reading comprehension strategies with the operationalization during instruction for ELs. On the other hand, Ms. Perry provides a general overview of reading comprehension strategies she uses during instruction, details ways in which these strategies ought to be used, yet provides little detail of their application directed to the EL audience. The following narratives and descriptions illustrate the two participating teachers' understanding of reading comprehension instruction for ELs and explain the most salient themes in this section.

While referring to academic language in the previous theme, Ms. Carter reiterated the notion that students can understand a sentence or paragraph without knowing every single word (personal communication, 5/18/18). She again explained this can be accomplished by teaching prefixes or suffixes. An additional strategy she described (a test-taking strategy) was to use small paragraphs containing End-of-Course (EOC) exam type questions and showing them how to eliminate answers.

Ms. Carter explained that when ELs read a text, she gives them a handout so that students

can follow. Ms. Carter said she provides students handouts of texts she wants them to read and uses the strategy "what I understand and how I feel" (personal communication, 5/18/18). She indicated this is done with the purpose of gauging what students understand and whether they can restate the paragraph in their own words (personal communication, 5/18/18). Another strategy she uses is annotation. Ms. Carter said she reads a paragraph of the text with the students and models how she annotates and works on her thinking process aloud. "It is similar to the gradual release of responsibility; it is much like I do, we do, you do" (personal communication, 5/18/18), she states. She adds, "the exception is that I do not go to the "you do part" unless I am sure that they understand how to do it" (personal communication, 5/18/18). Ms. Carter continued to explain that she can do even half of the text with the students and then elicit from them information of what they are doing. "This helps me see what is still difficult for them" (personal communication, 5/18/18).

Ms. Perry, the second participant, maintains that being aware of cultural diversity is important in providing instruction in reading comprehension. She states, "classrooms are full of language diversity. And when there is language diversity there is a significant need to understand how each group and culture comprehend a single language" (personal communication, 5/18/21). She continued by explaining that students should be able to read and comprehend complex text. Ms. Perry added,

> the path to getting there is consistently having students summarize and question the text. If students can summarize and question text in pre-reading, during

> reading, and post-reading, then they can accomplish their goals through formally and informally guided activities, direct instruction, reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers. The challenge is getting students through these levels and to the level of mastery. I find that the best way to increase reading comprehension is to model strategies that we expect our students to know and understand. And you can do this through guided practices. Scaffolding for example is critical, but in the onset, you must have a strong level of support that will empower the student and have them become an independent practitioner. So, to do that I must carefully select text that will help teach the strategy, and then I must show the student how to apply the strategy and most importantly I must show them how to connect these steps to comprehension. The challenging side of this instruction is that making sure that the teachers do not lose the student in the development of the process (personal communication, 5/21/18).

Ms. Perry proceeded to explain that it is important to link text to prior knowledge and guide the students through a framework and encourage them to predict what is going to happen next within a given text. She added that, "anytime you have ELL students you have to keep them actively engaged in the reading process" (personal communication 5/21/18). Ms. Perry posited that even in the event ELs cannot predict or have limited knowledge of the contents of a text, they can at least question as they read, especially through annotation, even by annotating one word. Ms. Perry also included making inferences as a reading strategy that is important in developing ELs' reading comprehension. She explained that one of her favorite activities is to encourage students to dive into reading by engaging them through making inferences as they read and

visualize certain details. Making inferences, according to Ms. Perry, supports student engagement as students learn to figure out next steps in the reading process and discern what the text states as they learn to read between the lines.

Second language development.

The evidence shows a general understanding of second language development as a process of adding a language after one's first and about the settings and ways in which languages are developed. The most notable difference between the two participating teachers with regards to second language development lies in three important aspects: learning and experiencing a second language, training and education in the subject, and teaching experience in the subject area. These three factors separate the understanding the two participants bring to the instructional settings as explained during the interview protocol. In theory, Ms. Perry provided data that displayed important experiences with second language education, which allow her to view the general picture of the construct of second language development. In theory, experience and practice, it is evident that Ms. Carter conveys a more thorough understanding and knowledge of this construct and its implication for instruction. This is demonstrated in her education, professional experience, knowledge of multiple languages and data gathered from the descriptions of her personal and professional connections and knowledge of the subject.

In describing her understanding of second language development, Ms. Carter explained that it takes about seven years to be fully proficient in a second language. This proficiency in second language development deals with the academic language element in second language. Ms. Carter continued to explain her understanding of this process based on her own personal and professional experiences as a learner, teacher and parent.

In the process of second language development, Ms. Carter stated that language skills develop as follows, “Listening skills would be the first to develop, then reading and writing and then the last one would be speaking” (personal communication, 4/23/18). This teacher’s description of the progression of language skill development is not what research has established as a regular sequence of development. However, this is an important point for later discussion, as it highlights how relevant educational and social conditions have implications on the progression of language skill development. The following quote explains the differences in language development Ms. Carter refers to as she describes the process of second language development,

> When a child acquires a language, first he listens, and then, from my own personal experience with my son, as we are bilingual. So, my son didn’t start speaking until after he was two and then he spoke both languages at the same time, English and Hebrew. He absorbed, he listened and then he produced the language. With adults it is pretty much the same thing, when someone knows how to read it and write it, those skills would advance before the speaking. Speaking comes when they are confident enough to try it (personal communication, 4/23/18).

The second participant, Ms. Perry, described second language development as the acquisition of an additional language, whether the process of acquisition takes places through formal exposure, as in a class, or informally, as a member of a community of speakers. While Ms. Perry’s class consists of both first and second language learners, the ELs in her class are mostly newcomer direct services (students receiving direct instruction in English as a second language) students. These students, according to Ms.

Perry, are classified as emergent in their level of English proficiency. She explained that these students can comprehend simple text and basic conversation, answer basic open-ended comprehension questions, and write simple sentences. Ms. Perry further explained that to address their instructional needs, she focuses on increasing their vocabularies and reading comprehension, using visualization strategies such as storyboards, comic strips, and videos. She uses basic text for these students and later incorporates more complex text. When referring to second language development, Ms. Perry stated the following,

> A person can obtain language acquisition by several different means. They can attend a formal class. They could take an informal class such as within their communities. These can be taught in a larger scale or a smaller scale. In my classroom, it is primarily on a smaller scale. Most of my students are at the speech emergence level. This means they have a minimal amount of reading comprehension skills. They can produce simple sentences. They can answer the basic who, what, why, when and where (personal communication, 4/27/18).

Basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS).

Ms. Carter's awareness of the developmental stages that second language learners go through is evidenced in the descriptions of the differences between everyday conversational language and academic language. Additionally, the same awareness of second language development is evidenced in the implementation of interventions to support student learning. For instance, "I didn't see nobody" and then the correct way to say it is: "I didn't see anybody". And I would explain why "nobody" is incorrect and "anybody" is academically correct." Ms. Carter provided evidence of grammatical constructions that require teachers to address with second language learners. On the other

hand, it is evident in Ms. Perry's description of this concept that whether instruction in explicit and deliberate is yet to be determined. Ms. Perry' initial and final statements are indicative of a lack of awareness or knowledge of instructional practices conducive to developing ELs' basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS).

Ms. Carter explained she sees basic interpersonal communication skills as the language students learn to communicate in their daily interactions outside the classroom and sometimes in the classroom. From her experience in watching her students she stated, "they would have that slang component, they would catch-up on that quicker than actual more formal or academic language" (personal communication, 4/23/18). Ms. Carter explained this likely happens because students are surrounded by it with other kids and they need to learn it quicker in order to communicate with them. This happens in contrast to a more formal language they have to learn in schools and academic settings.

Ms. Carter provided examples of what she does to approach this learning from the classroom perspective. She said, "if I get a response that uses slang, I would stop and explain that this is "slang", a form of street talk, but the grammatically correct way to say it could be something as simple as, "I didn't see nobody" and then the correct way to say it is, "I didn't see anybody" (personal communication, 4/23/18).

> When inquired about Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), Ms. Perry stated she had very little knowledge of this construct. Ms. Perry stated,
>
> I know I probably do it in my classroom but know very little about it. I do understand that interpersonal communication represents language skills that are utilized in social skills. Sometimes those things are called day-to-day language or functional or social literacy. Children often learn greatly through interpersonal

> communication with the primary setting in the school. They do it in through their interactions, playing games, books, just pretty much listening to conversations and making connections (personal communication, 4/27/18).

Ms. Perry continued to explain that when she teaches ELs, based on their level, she really works to promote social interaction and accomplishes this goal by placing those students with other diverse learners (personal communication, 4/27/18). Ms. Perry concluded by stating, “I don’t have or can’t speak too much about it now, but I do know that the greatest thing a teacher can do for an ELL student is to ensure a high engaged classroom” (personal communication, 4/27/18).

Cognitive academic language proficiency skills (CALPS).

There is a large amount of research that shows how a teacher’s ability to establish the difference between academic and social language and their impact on ELs’ language development carries significant implications for instructional planning and instruction for ELs (De Oliveira, 2016; Enright, 2011). Since a great proportion of academic language is subject related (Gibbons, 2009), teachers of ELs should be cognizant of the academic language needed to provide ELs with opportunities to succeed in academic settings. The following narratives and descriptions illustrate the two participating teachers’ understanding of CALPS and their influence of ELs’ academic language development.

Ms. Carter believes an approach to teaching CALPS is contingent upon learners’ proficiency level and starting point. She established an interesting differentiation between formal versus interrupted education and their implications for instruction in either BICS or CALPS. She explained, “it’s more challenging to start when I know the student is SIFE (students with interrupted formal education) or limited formal education” (personal

communication 4/23/18). The starting point is relevant because that determines the foundation for development. For instance, she adds "a student that has more of a schooling background, it is kind of picking up where they left off in a way, academically enforcing it, but enforcing it in English" (personal communication 4/23/18). Contrary to this, she explained, when teaching students with interrupted formal education, the teacher must go back to even before language, "it goes to study skills, how to organize your binder, how to sit in the classroom, how to write a full sentence" (personal communication 4/23/18). Ms. Carter concludes, "It all comes from their basic skill set that they come with" (personal communication 4/23/18).

When inquired about BICS and CALPS during the first part of the interview, Ms. Carter spoke about the importance of teaching academic and everyday language and stated that, while she considers these differences and is aware of the way language functions socially and academically, she did not have prior knowledge of these language constructs. She explained that learners develop every day conversational skills for social purposes, both formal and informal (slang), and develop academic language for the purposes of using it in academic settings. Ms. Carter added that learning of the latter as an L2 is contingent upon learner proficiency level and prior educational background.

On the other hand, when Ms. Perry was inquired about the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency construct, she explained she probably incorporated this concept during instruction, but did not have knowledge of the construct. Ms. Perry stated she did not have knowledge of the BICS and CALPS constructs and that for instructional purposes she addressed academic language at the beginning of the term and allowed

students to gradually incorporate academic language in their learning process. Ms. Perry did not further elaborate on these two constructs.

WIDA and ACCESS for ELs.

On WIDA and ACCESS for ELs, the interview questions provided two distinguishable findings as reported in the responses of the two participating teachers. First, the difference between knowledge and experience reflected in the participating teachers' work with ELs. Ms. Carter is trained, plans and administers the yearly proficiency assessment for ELs – ACCESS for ELs. Second, the findings highlighted the implications knowledge of this student subgroup and of issues related to second language teaching and assessment pose on the eventual academic outcomes of ELs. For instance, when reporting on ELs' instruction and assessment, Ms. Perry indicated she had limited knowledge on the subject. It is worth noting that every teacher in the building where the study was conducted receives training and information on accommodations for ELs. When inquired about this assessment specifically, Ms. Perry expressed she had limited knowledge. She explained that ACCESS for ELs was a proficiency assessment and she could not elaborate more than that (personal communication, 4/27/18). Furthermore, she stated she depended mostly on the ESL teacher who supports instruction in her class with ELs.

Ms. Carter explained that ACCESS assesses learners' language proficiency in the four domains of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The test is conducted in tiers. Some newcomers take a Tier A or pre-A, as opposed to students who are more proficient, who might take a Tier B and Tier C. The ACCESS test is computerized, and the teacher

does not have to do anything test-related manually, and based on the listening test, the computer determines what tier the student will be testing and what level.

ACCESS for ELs is an assessment that helps determine ELs' yearly proficiency and growth. At Peanuts High School, Ms. Carter has received training and constant updates, and is charged with planning and with most of the administration of this assessment. Therefore, she is knowledgeable and very familiar with the assessment.

During the interview, Ms. Carter explained that if the test were given at a different point in time, it would be a better tool for her to gauge some information about the students' language proficiency. Her rationale is that there are student behaviors that negatively impact the accuracy of test results. For example, "long-term ELS, those that were born in the United States, but do not speak English in the home, get frustrated during the test and "just click, click, click" (personal communication, 4/23/18), Ms. Carter explained, "and the test results are not very accurate." Secondly, Ms. Carter explained that students who take this assessment do not do a good job because the test has no implications on their promotion. She believes the test would be a great measure of student progress, should students take it seriously. She contends, "If the students were to take it seriously, it would be a great tool for us to assess ok, this is the student's reading level, listening level" (personal communication, 4/23/18).

On the other hand, Ms. Perry stated she has very little knowledge of these concepts. When inquired about the yearly proficiency assessment for ELs, Ms. Perry stated, "I really can't speak much about that. I understand that it is a proficiency test for our ELL students. Beyond that, I really can't speak any more on that" (personal communication, 4/27/18).

In summary, when delving into the thematical categories derived from the evidence, educational background, second language development and knowledge of second languages, understanding instruction for ELs, and assessment of ELs' language proficiency corroborate the importance of professional training and education for secondary school teachers on instruction for this student subset. Particularly, understanding the EL audience and having knowledge of the processes involved in second language development, teaching, and learning emerge as fundamental factors conducive to the implementation of instructional that support EL academic achievement.

Research Question #*2:* How are teachers of ELs' working theories represented in lesson planning and classroom instructional practice?

The second part of the study involved teacher interviews, analysis of teachers' plans and operationalization of AL and ERCSI through instructional practice. To answer the second question, the researcher collected and analyzed teacher lesson plans, observed teachers during instruction, and conducted interviews to gather data. The codes and categories that emerged from the data gathered following the interviews, lesson plans, and teacher instructional observations were used to provide an explanation of the themes that cut across as the researcher triangulated, analyzed the data, and categorized the emerging themes. Examining the lesson plan themes in conjunction with the interview themes highlighted the importance of establishing content and language goals, providing instruction in academic language (mainly academic vocabulary), reading comprehension strategies (mainly finding main idea, restating, making inferences, and making connections), task design and assessment.

The data coded by lesson plan element per teacher provided information to develop two salient themes: Considerations for planning academic language instruction (AL), and considerations for planning explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI). These themes emerged as the researcher analyzed interview, lesson plan, and instructional observation data to answer question number two

Considerations for planning academic language instruction.

This phase of the study addressed the considerations the participating teachers made for instruction, as they aligned lesson plans and the actions that took place in the classroom, which the researcher observed. Once lesson plans and observations were analyzed, the researcher asked the participants questions about the considerations they made for planning and instruction.

The first response Ms. Carter provided was her consideration of her audience and their proficiency level. She stated that for her, knowing what level her students are, whether they are novice, intermediate, or advanced was of great importance, because based on that she built her lessons (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plans weeks #1, 2, 3; instructional observations #1, 2, 3). Ms. Carter explained that her preference is to start from something simple and build up instruction from there. She said, “I always go back to that base lesson. I try to make it a spiral type of thing” (personal communication, 5/18/18). At the initial stage of her lessons, she stated she uses cloze notes. She said she uses this strategy because, on the one hand, it allows her to gauge the amount of density she can release on her students and, on the other, when she introduces a new subject, or new vocabulary, or literary devices, cloze notes help maintain students focus. This way, she said, “students do not worry about copying every single word” (personal

communication, 5/18/18; lesson plans #1, 2; instructional observations #1, 2, 3). Ms. Carter added that this strategy also keeps students attentive to what is on the board as they fill in one word or two words as the cloze notes are based on the students' levels. Ms. Carter provided students with tasks and resources that were in alignment with her descriptions. In fact, during interviewing, Ms. Carter referred to the lessons and made comments such as,

> do you remember when …? Or "I gave the students a one-pager that I wanted students to complete. I showed them how to do mine and then I guided them while they completed theirs. I asked them questions and made multiple repetitions of the examples while they took notes or completed sentences (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plans #2, 3; instructional observations #2, 3).

> Additionally, she explained,

> Tasks vary by proficiency level. If it is a novice group, these students will only have to fill in one word, whereas a more advanced group will have to take notes of more complex sentences or more words, and again, it all depends on the subject and the learners' levels, she concluded (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plans weeks #2, 3, 4).

Ms. Carter highlighted the need not only to understand the audience's background, she also referred to the importance of having students focus on vocabulary and on sentence formation, as academic language involves more than just individualized vocabulary items. This theme was also addressed during the first interview when Ms. Carter spoke about the importance of understanding the audience and of considering

students' proficiency levels when planning and providing instruction (personal communication, 4/27/18; lesson plans #1, 2, 4).

Another source of data for lesson planning, Ms. Carter explained, is the curriculum for the course of study. According to Ms. Carter, being able to extract the most crucial elements of the English I curriculum is fundamental for planning and for the success of students. The curriculum component allows her to build her lessons and to plan for vocabulary instruction and to determine what resources and strategies to use for instruction. For instance, she explained she introduced her students to the ExC-ELL method (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011) and the seven steps of vocabulary acquisition. The 7-Step ExC-ELL method (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011) for vocabulary instruction involves repeating words three times, reading the word in a sentence in the context of use and seeing the complete dictionary definition of it. Once students carry out these three tasks, Ms. Carter shows them how to break down words to a simple definition. After that, Ms. Carter said students are asked to use them, whether students are talking to a partner or choose a word and put it in a sentence (personal communication 5/18/18; lesson plans weeks #2, 3; instructional observations #2, 3). Ms. Carter has found students need to use the words themselves and that is the final part of the 7-step excel vocabulary acquisition method (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011). An additional functional adaptation to the 7-Step Method (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011), Ms. Carter explained she found important and meaningful for her students, was that repeating the words helped with their pronunciation (personal communication 5/18/18; lesson plans #1, 2, 3, 4). During the interview she stated,

I find that many times my Hispanic students will have a hard time pronouncing

> words that begin with an "S". They will always add an "e" to the front of it. For example, with student, the will say "estudent". So, repeating and explaining that the sound "s" is does not come with the "e" in front of that and explain the difference in the languages also helps them acquire the vocabulary (personal communication, 5/18/18).

Next, Ms. Perry's perspective with regards to planning academic language instruction is presented. Ms. Perry explained that for lesson plan design she is guided by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2012) (personal communication, 5/21/18; lesson plans #1, 2, 3). She develops goals and assessments based on concepts aligned with those standards. According to Ms. Perry these standards are reflected in the instructional practices enacted on a regular basis. Ms. Perry explained that academic language instruction does not change. Based on lesson plans, academic language continues to be presented, including explanations of concepts, modeling, examples of use, and expectations for student practice. Ms. Perry indicates that, "what I say to students, they say back to me" (personal communication, 5/21/18).

After conducting analysis of the lesson plan data, the researcher found that Ms. Perry consistently incorporated content and language goals, provided evidence of both academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction, and incorporated a series of learning tasks associated with the content she expected students to learn. These elements were present in her lesson plans, which Ms. Perry developed and shared with students weeks in advance. In addition, during the interviews, Ms. Perry articulated the importance of following the instructional standards established for the course and completion of the assigned tasks as a way for students to demonstrate content mastery.

She stated it was very important for students to learn the standards and to imitate the way she used academic language. In several instances, Ms. Perry provided evidence of AL and ERCSI during instruction. This evidence corroborated some of the descriptions of instruction and learning tasks she used in her classes.

During plans and instructional observations, Ms. Perry displayed evidence of the elements stated above. She consistently incorporated a reading task, which changed with every lesson. This reading task also varied in its genre and register. One day, the reading task was a poem. The next day, it was an informational text. The following lesson, the reading was a short story. Reading comprehension instruction included a comprehension questionnaire that students submitted online. Academic vocabulary instruction involved academic words that emerged from the reading tasks. These reading and vocabulary tasks appeared in a similar fashion written in lesson plans and during instruction. The most salient differences between reading instruction as displayed in lesson plans and actual classroom instruction were that ERCSI was not consistently implemented and academic language was based on the vocabulary that stemmed from the reading tasks as needed.

While during interviews, Ms. Perry posited that instruction on AL and ERCSI was delivered based on the standards, and students were expected to complete tasks as stated in the lesson plans, there is evidence of inconsistent implementation of AL and ERCSI during class time, as per observations. ELs complete assignments and answer questions based on the content of the lesson. They take notes, write answers, and submit their work in the same way the rest of the class does. Interactions between ELs and the teacher are very limited and exclusively determined by information and questions about the text read in class. During the lessons observed and analysis of lesson plans, evidence of interactive

activities between students and teacher were kept to a minimum. During student presentations, ELs had an opportunity to take an active role by explaining their project.

When comparing Ms. Carter and Ms. Perry, there is a salient difference in the descriptions each makes of their thinking and operational process when providing instruction and their focus on instructional activities designed to meet the needs of the EL audience. The former gives evidence of the lessons plans, their operationalization through instruction, and the focus on the audience and on how the audience responds to instruction (personal communication 5/18/18; lesson plans #1, 2, 3, 4; instructional observations #1, 2, 3, 4, 5) . The latter, on the other hand, provides well-developed lesson plans, which include language and content goals, academic tasks, a reading comprehension focus with a variety of texts and genres. However, limited examples of the interaction between teacher, audience, and content are observed during instruction. There are limited examples to illustrate how Ms. Perry describes the work she does with ELs, one-on-one, through individualized instruction, or through instructional scaffolds (personal communication, 5/21/18, lesson plans #1, 2, 3, 4; instructional observations #1, 2, 3, 5, 7)).

The two cases under study provide relevant evidence that illustrates the way the participants operationalized planning and instruction. This was observed in the contextualization of plans and descriptions Ms. Carter makes when compared to Ms. Perry. For instance, in interviews #2 and #3, Ms. Carter included the following themes during lesson planning and instruction: establishing a topic, identifying the audience's needs and levels, frontloading vocabulary, using instructional strategies for both academic language instruction and explicit reading comprehension strategies (i.e. the

ExC-ELL method, Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011; Reading for Understanding, Schoenbach et al., 2012), modeling and interaction, teaching Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes for text and vocabulary comprehension, gradual release of responsibility (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983), instructional scaffolding and a combination of language development skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) through cloze tasks, graphic organizers, sentence frames and sentence starters. Ms. Carter developed and executed her plans as they are stated in her lesson plans. The descriptions provided during interviews #2 and #3 are directly related to the actions that took place in the classroom and are followed by examples of what Ms. Carter has done and continues to do to provide instruction for ELs in this area.

While Ms. Perry provided responses of instructional modifications and actions she takes to support ELs, some of these actions did not match what she wrote in her lesson plans or operationalized during instruction. As previously stated, Ms. Perry's lesson followed a clear pattern of activities from lesson to lesson. She included language and content goals, and descriptions of given task associated with learning goals. Although it is understood ESL is not Ms. Perry's area of expertise, the evidence suggests an emphasis on the co-teacher's role to provide instruction for ELs. Therefore, specific actions conducive to modified instruction devoted directly to ELs or tailored to their academic needs were not clearly evidenced during instruction. ELs received the same assignments the remainder of the class was expected to complete with no accommodations, scaffolding strategies or individualized instruction from the English teacher. Contrary to the other case, evidence of instructional planning and operationalization focused on the audience and their academic and linguistic

developmental levels was limited to basic knowledge of the fact that there were ELs with basic comprehension levels in the class and that the ESL teacher was expected to support those students most of the time. Students generally remained silent during lectures and worked on their own or with a classmate on assignments. There were no visible modifications to texts, questions, interactions, or modeling of vocabulary use. ELs in this class spent a significant amount of time without any type of direct interaction with an adult to support their linguistic development.

Considerations for planning reading comprehension instruction.

This stage of the study illustrates the considerations for reading comprehension strategy instruction the participating teachers made during planning and instructional practice as they aligned lesson plans and the actions that took place in the classroom, which the researcher observed. First off, as stated in the initial interview, Ms. Carter reiterated the notion that students can understand a sentence or paragraph without knowing every single word. She again explained this can be accomplished by teaching prefixes or suffixes (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plan # 1, 2, 7; instructional observation #4).

Making connections (personal communication #2; lesson plan #2; instructional observation #2) is another strategy Ms. Carter has used to help students understand texts. While teaching the Shakespearian sonnet, she indicated she chose the one text that she knew students could relate to. For example, she explained she used the following text during a lesson,

> My Mistresses Eyes are nothing Like the Sun. In this sonnet, Shakespeare describes his mistress. He describes everything you did not want your mistress to

> be. Her face was ugly. Her lips were not red. The kids thought it was funny, but it was easier for them to relate (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plans #4, 5).

Afterwards, Ms. Carter explained that she and her students discussed each paragraph individually, annotated, summarized by paragraph, they paraphrased, and repeated the sonnet in four different ways. In this section Ms. Carter mentioned three different strategies – annotating, making connections, summarizing - she used with her students during one single lesson. She added that she has also worked on visualizing and describing as reading comprehension strategies. These strategies were stated in lesson plans and observed by the researcher during instructional practice (personal communication, 5/18/18, lesson plan week #2, observation # 2).

Ms. Carter continued to explain that as she teaches, she is thinking about how to get her students to practice in multiple ways. For example, she added, "at the end we read the sonnet, we divided it into stanzas, we paraphrased together, and then they got two different handouts, one that they had to define the literary devices and find the quote that it attached to" (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plans #6, 7). Ms. Carter made additional connections with a current form of poetry through the song All of You, by John Legend, that students listened to, read, sang, and worked on reading comprehension. She said,

> that was kind of like a sonnet, it has the literary devices, it has the language, it has the metaphors, it has all the elements we saw in the Shakespearian sonnet. With this connection, students must go back and find the evidence. They must compare

> the John Legend song to the sonnet and they see that the academic language has all been used (personal communication, 5/18/18; lesson plan #5, 6).

The second participant, Ms. Perry, explained that she establishes guidelines to support ELs' access to text. One consideration she makes for reading instruction is to determine text choice. Ms. Perry stated that she focuses on text selection and strategy. First, text and strategy are introduced, modeled, and used for guided instruction and cooperative learning. Ms. Perry used the terms cold and warm text to differentiate instruction in reading or for ELs. She explained the terms cold text, which refers to text students have not read before, which according to her explanation, poses a higher level of difficulty. Warm text, on the other hand, she explained, is the type of text that the students have previously interacted with and are familiar with. The rationale for warm text, according to Ms. Perry, is to provide ELs with an opportunity to interact with new concepts and known text. She added that this strategy allows ELs to focus more on the comprehension of concepts rather than the comprehension of the vocabulary and meanings of text. These instructional considerations, according to Ms. Perry, create conditions for developing plans that help learners to not only develop language, but also comprehend concepts and text.

When lesson plans and instructional observations were analyzed, the researcher found that during instructional observations, text strategy, modeling, and guiding components were not represented the same way. There were five instances in which Ms. Perry explained a strategy; one instance in which she modeled a strategy; and four instances in which Ms. Perry provided examples. Lesson plans displayed a similar trend. Lesson 2 included a description of direct instruction and guided practice. Lesson 6

included a read-aloud and explanation of word choice instructional activity. Lesson 7 included a reading passage that in which Ms. Perry modeled restating and explanations. The remainder of the descriptions did not include references to text type or strategy explanation, modeling, or guidance.

Ms. Perry felt the need to address cultural diversity in the classroom and added that teachers must be culturally responsible for their classroom audience. She stated,

> It is so important for me and other teachers to be culturally responsible to their classroom audience. Classrooms are full of language diversity. And when there is language diversity there is a significant need to understand how each group and culture comprehend a single language (personal communication, 5/21/18).

Ms. Perry proceeded to explain that while there are multiple skills students need to master, students should be able to read close, read complex text, and comprehend complex text. When discussing instruction in reading comprehension strategies, Ms. Perry highlighted the importance of teaching students how to summarize, how to question a text, how to make predictions, and activating prior knowledge. Following this explanation, Ms. Perry further elaborated that these are strategies that need to be taught before, during, and after reading and they should involve modeling, providing guided practice, and using scaffolding techniques so that students increase their reading comprehension. According to Ms. Perry, instructional decisions should be made taking into consideration text selection and connecting text to strategy.

While the previous comments demonstrated an understanding of reading comprehension strategy instruction, the processes involved in operationalizing this construct were not consistently carried out. During planning, strategies were named in

lesson plans (lesson plans #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7), but were not declaratively, procedurally, and conditionally articulated during instruction (instructional observations #3, 5). The steps named above: modeling, providing guided practice, and using scaffolding techniques were limited to asking students to provide responses to comprehension questions with no explicit instruction following the afore mentioned steps.

Research Question #3: How do teachers of high school ELs reflect on and explain their working theories, operationalization, and instructional decision-making of AL and ERCSI?

Each participating teacher was asked how they reflected on their understanding of the constructs under study based on their own planning and instructional practices for ELs and to determine whether they recognized any variations between what they understood of the constructs of AL and ERCSI and their actual operationalization through planning and instruction. As the focus of the study was to explore teachers' understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI for ELs in secondary school, it was important for the participating teachers to delve into their own practice and explore the way they described understandings, wrote plans, and delivered lessons.

The teacher observation protocol was used as one of the data collection methods to answer this question. After coding and analyzing the data, the most salient categories developed from the instructional observations illustrate: (1) the type of academic language used for instruction (i.e. lexical items, or syntactic items) and the type of reading comprehension strategies used for instruction, (2) the way each teacher operationalized academic language, (3) the way each teacher operationalized explicit

reading comprehension strategy instruction, and (4) teachers' reflections on instructional practices in AL and ERCSI for ELs in secondary school.

Academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction.

Ms. Carter's instructional practices revealed the following findings: There were seven times (observations #1 through # 7) that lexical items and four times (observations #1, 2, 3, and 5) that syntactic items were taught as academic language during the course of the observations. Four times (observations #1, 2, 3, 5) these items were declaratively, procedurally, and conditionally articulated, explained, and modeled. Two times (observations #6, 7) these items were declaratively and procedurally articulated, and once, academic language items were used during instruction and practice. However, these items were not declaratively or procedurally articulated.

Ms. Carter drew on several texts for reading comprehension to teach students how to access information. During this process, Ms. Carter used six different reading comprehension strategies that ranged from activating prior knowledge (2 times), restating (6 times), analyzing text structure (1 time), think-aloud (1 time), questioning the text (1 time), to making connections (3 times). However, during the seven observations, Ms. Carter provided declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge in explicit reading comprehension strategies four times (instructional observations #2, 3, 4, 5), named a reading comprehension strategy once (instructional observation #6), and used, but did not name or explain reading comprehension strategies three times (instructional observations #1, 5, 7).

Data from the second case, Ms. Perry, revealed the following: Lexical items were taught as academic language during the instructional observations (instructional

observations #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7). However, syntactic items were not taught during the course of the observations. The academic language items were not explained or modeled, and in some instances, they were not named or explained. For instance, four times academic language items were named and used during instruction (instructional observations #2, 3, 4, 5), and three times academic language items were used yet not named or explained during instruction (instructional observations #1, 6, 7). During the seven observations, the following reading observation strategies were stated: activating prior knowledge (3 times), analyzing text structure (1 time), questioning the text (1 time), using think-alouds (1 time), making connections (2). Restating was used multiple times during the lessons but was not named or explained.

The data yielded evidence of significant instructional differences between the two participants in the study based on what their display of AL and ERCSI in planning and applied during instructional practice. These differences provided the researcher with opportunities to analyze the data from two different angles. On the one hand, the researcher was able to observe how Ms. Carter's area of expertise combined with educational and professional experiences could impact instructional decisions that benefited student learning; as instructional modifications were implemented and attention to developing learners four language skills applied. These modifications, however, are not implemented for a broader audience and many students end up not being provided with opportunities to receive such instructional differentiations. On the other hand, the researcher could observe how both teachers approach to instruction displayed a range of differences depending upon background knowledge, educational and professional experiences, as well as professional development. Both Ms. Carter and Ms. Perry's

instructional repertoires offered a frame for understanding the current state of professional development and training by regular education and ESL teachers alike. There is a lack of cohesion evidenced at the school level, as illustrated by these participating teachers, who provide instruction for ELs in secondary school settings, which usually go in detriment of learners' opportunities to develop language skills necessary to function in academic settings.

Operationalization of academic language instruction.

Ms. Carter used the unit that dealt with poetry to establish a context for her own reflection about her instructional practices. She explained that she chose literary devices that are mainly associated with poetry. At the initial stage of every lesson, Ms. Carter said she introduced the topic and connected it to what she did the previous lesson. For example, if the unit she taught before was about fiction, she asked students, "What is fiction? Is it real or not real?" (personal communication, 6/12/18). She elicited students' responses using simple and short sentences. She reviewed the concepts and retaught when needed. Then, Ms. Carter made a connection with the new concept by saying, "Now we are going to learn about another type or genre" (personal communication, 6/12/18, instructional observation #3). She added that for her it is important to use the same word in two or three different forms, so students are exposed to the same thing, yet differently.

Previously, Ms. Carter explained that one decision she makes is to start from the simple and move to the more complex and build up from a simple foundation. She reiterated this instructional practice here. For instance, during instruction she stated, "I add another type of literature, another kind of literature, another genre of literature"

(personal communication, 6/12/18). And that is poetry. This instructional practice was observed during instruction (instructional observation #3). Ms. Carter has stated repeatedly that it is very important for her to use repetition and use of vocabulary in different forms that convey similar message. Ms. Carter adds that by doing this, students can see the different ways meaning can be communicated and that there are different ways to express the same idea. To exemplify Ms. Carter states,

> I tell them in one short sentence that poetry is a way that we deliver a message in a figurative language. And I have it on the board. What is figurative language? I explain that a word could have dictionary meaning, and it can have a different meaning and that is figurative. And I use slang to explain figurative language (personal communication, 6/12/18).
>
> For example, I use “cool”. What is cool? That is cold. That is the literal definition. What if I say, “Joe, you have such a cool sweater? Do I mean that the sweater is cold, or do I mean it is something else?” (personal communication, 6/12/18).

Ms. Carter believes it is important to use cloze notes and repeat the definitions with examples. She believes this is a way she can teach spoken and written language because there are students who do not have an academic background to see the difference between spoken language and written language, especially in English. Ms. Carter indicated she uses the excel method (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2011) and uses visuals on the board. She continued to talk about the importance of multiple strategies to model the language she wants students to learn. She maintains that she models acting out, using students to demonstrate with them and for them, provides explanations, examples,

highlights meanings in context, pulls sentences from different sources such as *The Cat in the Hat* (Seuss, 1957) or things that are obvious.

For Ms. Carter, using engaging tasks and activities is important, she posits. She explains she uses Cahoots, matching games, videos, and small group projects, because students love these, and because they work on speed and students get into a competitive mode. She also believes using one-pagers are very productive for ELs because they provide structure as students need to follow a specific guideline and helps them focus on specific language skills and goals. “For instance, when we used The Road Not Taken (Frost, 1916) they had to use all the steps of reading, paraphrasing, annotating, identifying all the literary devices” (personal communication 6/12/18). She added that using this type of activity required that students answer comprehension questions, create a one-pager for the poem, choose their favorite stanza and paraphrase it.

Additionally, students had to identify the literary devices and write two personal connections to the poem. Ms. Carter explained that, for her, the one-pagers were useful because she supported and provided structure by scaffolding and supporting their language development with sentence starters such as, “I can connect to the poem when…. Or I had to connect to the poem… And students had to use their own words and illustrations (personal communication, 6/12/18, lesson plan #4, instructional observation #4). Ms. Carter concluded that when she thinks of the product that she got from the kids, she thought it was amazing and that could not make her prouder.

When asked about the language academic language taught, the way knowledge of AL was articulated to the students, the activities that were involved in the lesson and the assessment of student learning regarding academic language, Ms. Perry responded,

the observation that occurred during 1st block was a small ELL population and the class was a predominantly English lesson with a traditional focus. In this case I had a co-teacher in the class with me and her role is to re-enforce the expectations, the language and the goals with the small population of ELL students. The lesson on this day centered around watching students take a claim and support it with evidence. This is pretty much Standard 1 (CCSS, 2012) and it is the most difficult standard.

The students were to present a claim and support it with evidence. One of the reasons why this was so tough was the claims they were given could not be proven. So, their role was to research the database of information I gave them, do their own research on the internet, state their claim and support their evidence. That is why you heard terms such as evidence, claims, central hypothesis, supporting details, counter-claims, etc. One of the reasons why this was so tough was the claims they were given could not be proven. So, their role was to research the database of information I gave them, do their own research on the internet, state their claim and support their evidence (personal communication, 6/7/18).

In contrast to the first case, Ms. Perry explained what happened in the classroom based on what given tasks students were expected to accomplish. The evidence provided in her responses suggests that all students in the class were given an assignment to complete and explain. The latter quote is indicative of the role of the teacher (s) during instruction. In this class, students were given directions to complete a task and were expected to carry out their assignment mostly on their own (lesson plans #2, 3, 4, 7; instructional observations #3, 4, 7).

Operationalization of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction.

In response to reading comprehension strategy instruction, Ms. Carter highlighted two important themes on her implementation of these strategies during instruction: text choice and making connections. She stated, "when I choose my text, I choose text they can relate to and make their own personal connection to" (personal communication 6/12/18). An additional theme related to reading comprehension is ELs' educational background. Ms. Carter explained that EL students have interrupted education, or it is not a major part of their lives. Therefore, she chooses texts that are relevant to the learners, since personal connection provides the opportunity to build interest in learning and focuses their attention (personal communication 6/7/18).

Ms. Carter utilized the following examples to illustrate the way she made connections between texts and students' lives. She said, "in My People, by Langston Hughes (Hughes, 1921), I asked, who are your people? Who are the people from the same culture? And I got different answers" (personal communication 6/12/18; lesson plan #3; instructional observation #3). This teacher's experience as an immigrant and English language learner allows her to see learning through a similar lens as that of her students and, as she quotes, "helps me in my instruction it also helps with the students" (personal communication 6/12/18). Ms. Carter also explained other forms of connections she made with students' lives, such as not having any family in the U.S. other than her husband and son. With that she said she tells students that her people become the friends she makes, her neighbors, and those who she is closest to. With this type of connection, Ms. Carter built a lesson by asking students who their people are. Students provide similar responses such as friends, family, country, etc. Ms. Carter believes this is a positive way to start

reading comprehension, by building a strong background and connecting to personal lives. This approach highlights the notion of guidance through interaction in the context of shared meanings (Rose & Martin, 2012).

Another reading strategy Ms. Carter brings to the conversation is building background. She built background as she made connections to students' backgrounds. With that accomplished, Ms. Carter provided the introduction of Mr. Hughes' people and the African Americans. She explained that they talked about slavery and segregation and did an activity about segregation. Ms. Carter continued to describe the tasks she provided for her students. The following excerpt from the interview (personal communication 6/12/18) shows the way Ms. Carter created a context that helps students make connections and build background knowledge in relation to the text they were reading:

> I told the kids if you are not from this country you stand in that corner. And you if you are from here, go stand in that corner. I took out candy and said, "I like you the most and I am going to give you an A on your test. So, you get all the candy." "You guys, I don't like you because you are from another country". "The kids didn't understand it first. This is an example of segregation; did I get you all together or did I separate you? "You separated us". That is called segregation" (personal communication 6/12/18).

She proceeded to explain the subsequent instructional process which included word repetition, additional examples about segregation, elicitation of students' examples of segregation, poem read-aloud, explanation of the poem and explanations of how the author compared his people. As part of the independent practice, Ms. Carter had her

students write a poem that described their people and reinforced the idea of decision making based on The Road Not Taken (Frost, 1916).

Ms. Carter used herself as an example and showed students how they were their own examples as she spoke to them about their families and friends that had come to the U.S. She said she provided opportunities for students to share information about the decisions that they or their families made that impacted their lives. Ms. Carter concluded by restating that this is how she builds up towards the academic climb to understanding the poem, understanding the literary devices and theme. Ms. Carter indicated that students continue to be scaffolded and given opportunities to express their ideas and to make their own personal connections using the one-pagers and visual representations. “They were shown how to connect to their prior knowledge and everything they had learned to identify their favorite part, to paraphrase, to articulate a connection” (personal communication 6/12/18; lesson plan week #4; instructional observation #4), Ms. Carter concluded.

In response to reading comprehension strategy instruction, Ms. Perry highlighted two important themes on her implementation of these strategies during instruction: warm text and cold text. Ms. Perry indicated again the purpose of using warm text (text students had prior knowledge of) was to support struggling readers and ELs alike, as these students needed to use text they were familiar with. Cold text, she explained, was used for students who were more advanced readers. In addition, Ms. Perry stated that everything was based on common core standards. She reiterated that she teaches the standards up front. Ms. Perry explained that students are expected to document the standards either electronically or on flash cards. They are constantly reading and using

the standards and question them to be sure they understand what is expected (personal communication, 6/7/18). As it relates to the observations and what was expected with student presentations, Ms. Perry explained that each student was given a small database of information (personal communication, 6/7/18). “It was up to the student to read that information in the database. I created that database. I knew the articles in the database” (personal communication, 6/7/18). Ms. Perry continued to explain that there was some pre-work done for the students, but that it was their job to go in and assess their understanding of the reading and gather the information that would support their claim in evidence in the presentation (personal communication, 6/7/18). Ms. Perry again stated,

> all standards are introduced at the beginning of the semester. Standards such as inference, central idea, making connection all of those were a part of the presentation. This is what we have continued to do all semester. I was able to sit back and assess the students as they presented to ensure what they were stating was also online with the reading included in the database.

In operationalizing reading comprehension, Ms. Perry highlighted the importance of text choice and the fact that prior knowledge facilitates access to content for ELs. This was evidenced in her explanation of warm and cold text. However, while consideration of text is important, most of the work, as explained and observed (personal communication 6/7/18; instructional observations #1 through 7), was conducted by the students. References were made to instruction on reading comprehension and the standards at the beginning of the semester. Nonetheless, a clear emphasis was placed on the role of the student in using the reading comprehension strategies on their own as they accessed the readings in the electronic database.

Teacher reflections on instructional practices in AL and ERCSI for ELs.

As she reflected on her instructional practices for ELs, Ms. Carter explained that using one-pagers as a reading response strategy proved to be an effective technique for reading comprehension. She found it effective because they provided a way to tie everything together as she incorporated sentence starters and cloze tasks to scaffold students in developing their responses. She also indicated something she would like to try to do with the EL class was Socratic seminars. She believes Socratic seminars provide opportunities for students to develop communication skills.

Another reading comprehension strategy she believes she can use with this student group comes from reading apprenticeship (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, & Murphy, 2012). With this strategy, students need to think about what they read and use their emotions as a guide. This strategy helps the teacher understand where the difficulty for students is. It also shows students how to be more expressive. In addition to these, Ms. Carter believes that the inclusion of projects, small group activities, and formal, explicit instruction infuses more engagement. Students who speak different languages find ways to engage and use resources such as translators to interact. In closing, Ms. Carter highlighted that modeling what she wants students to accomplish is what she will continue to do along with providing more opportunities for students to use language and comprehend text presented in different formats.

At the last interview session, as she reflected on her instructional practices, Ms. Perry, the second participating teacher, alluded to her expectations of student use of academic language from her assessment of student performance through presentations of research-based topics and articulation of information. She explained that she taught the

standards associated with academic language and reading comprehension at the beginning of the semester and that students should be able to use them and practice them to ensure their understanding (personal communication 4/27/18, 6/7/18). She proceeded by stating that students were responsible for demonstrating they could read the articles assigned to develop their presentations and extract information from such texts (personal communication 6/7/18). The following quote describes the way Ms. Perry views the make-up of her class and the instructional accommodations needed accordingly.

> The observation that you came to see was with my first block class that is 20% ELL. So, the class is primarily an English dominated lesson with traditional instruction. So, paraphrasing was key here because I had to ensure that all the students were gathering the skills that were being taught. So, the co-teacher for this class had to ensure that the group of ELL students fully understood the expectation. So, she often did a separate or minor class of instruction. The lesson that you came to observe was centered around claims and evidence around Standard 1. Students were to present a claim and present it with evidence. Terms such as claim, evidence, supporting detail, counter claims, central idea, conclusion all of these were used in the lesson (personal communication, 6/7/18).

When asked about the way she viewed teaching explicit reading comprehension strategies and ELs, and the texts that she used to ensure that her students were understanding, the researcher asked Ms. Perry whether the lesson plans and delivery match, or if she could have done anything differently, or what activities students were asked to do to demonstrate they were understanding the text they were reading (personal communication 6/7/18).

Ms. Perry reiterated her understanding about teaching the standards at the beginning of the semester (personal communication, 4/27/18, 6/7/18), which was consistent with her explanation of the same topic during the first interview. To the questions above regarding reading comprehension instruction, Ms. Perry indicated,

> As I stated before in another session that we had, everything is based on common core standards. One thing I do is I teach the standards up front. And then as the student documents these standards either electronically or on flash cards they're constantly reading and using the standards and I question them to be sure they understand what is expected. As it relates to the observation and what was expected with their presentations each student was given a small database of information. It was up to the student to read that information in the database. I created that database. I knew the articles in the database. And I knew what the student should get out of that. So, I was able to watch them present the information and not only support a claim but show me that they could read the articles and understand and extract from them what they needed. There was some pre-work done for them, but it was their job to go in and assess their understanding of the reading and gather the information that would support their claim in evidence in the presentation. Again, all standards are introduced at the beginning of the semester. And everything we do is build-on upon those standards (personal communication 4/27/18, 6/7/18).

In her reflection of teaching academic language and reading comprehension strategy, Ms. Perry indicated that she observed student grouping as a factor that influences performance and that she will encourage interactions with others, so that

students do not always work with peers who speak like them, look like them, and act like them (personal communication 6/7/18). Lastly, she stated, "One thing I have noticed is with this assignment that I have done every year, I am not as focused on the academic language as I am the presentation of information" (personal communication 6/7/18).

Transcending Themes

When both cases were compared, the following five themes emerged beyond the individual research questions– EL Audience, Academic Language Instruction, Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction, Teacher Professional Development for ELs, and Task Description and Application. These findings that cut across after analyzing the three data sources are explained in the order they are listed above.

EL Audience

The findings illustrate what happened during planning and in the classroom when teachers articulated their understanding and operationalized instruction in academic language. Ms. Carter's reflection as she articulated academic language instruction for ELs when planning and providing instruction emphasized knowledge of her audience. Secondly, she established the need to align curricular standards and methodology intended to differentiate instruction for students at different proficiency levels as well as to extend learning opportunities by expanding the range of instructional and learning practices. Finally, Ms. Carter explained how she identified areas of alignment between the lesson plans developed, the instructional delivery, and student outcomes in terms of practices conducive to learning opportunities and academic attainment. Ms. Carter 's explanations of instructional decisions, the description of examples addressing instructional decisions, and the integration of curricular standards and methodology

intended to foster learning of content and language provided evidence of training and knowledge of instruction for ELs (Lesson plans #1 through #7; instructional observations #1 through #7).

On the other hand, while Ms. Perry explained she taught the standards associated with academic language and reading comprehension at the beginning of the semester (personal communication 4/23/18 & 6/12/18), the data emerging from her descriptions of academic language during planning and instruction (lesson plans #3, 4, 6, & 7 and instructional observations #2, 3, 4, 7) suggest otherwise. In fact, during the last interview Ms. Perry stated, "One thing I have noticed is with this assignment that I have done every year, I am not as focused on the academic language as I am the presentation of information" (personal communication 6/7/18). When probed about this comment, Ms. Perry indicated that academic language has not been a focal point of instruction, but rather an expectation that is communicated to students at the beginning of the term. Students are made aware of this expectation and it is assumed they are to meet this standard, as it was conveyed, on their own as they read and encounter the academic language necessary to learn the content.

Academic Language Instruction

Both participants understood and operationalized academic language from the perspective of vocabulary instruction as evidenced in interviews, lesson plans and instructional observations. They both addressed the concepts of teaching Greek and Latin roots, prefixes and suffixes and referred to these words as necessary to succeed in any academic setting. In most cases, words were introduced in the context in which they were used and Ms. Carter, more specifically, modeled the way words were used in different

contexts and provided multiple examples and repetitions, and restated meanings. These were instances where academic language was also framed through the use of syntax. During her interview, Ms. Perry addressed the notion of general academic vocabulary and the grammar that students need to know in order to function in academic contexts (personal communication 4/27/18). However, in practice, she did not provide instruction specific to these two forms of academic language (lesson plans #3, 4, 6, 8; instructional observations #2, 3, 4, 7).

An additional characteristic of academic language is lexical density. This notion is relevant in this exploration since, while instruction focused on content densely infused with academic language, modeling, use and exemplification of important lexicon and grammatical forms associated with conveying meaning through this register was not explicitly addressed. Ms. Carter used modeling and contextual examples of terms, and ways of expressing ideas or communicating information and provided instructional scaffolds to support student comprehension and learning (instructional observations # 2, 3, 4, 5, 7). Ms. Perry did not provide ELs any type of scaffolds, nor did she provide explicit instruction on academic language directly to the ELs in her class (instructional observations #1 through 7).

Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction

In a similar fashion, explicit reading comprehension strategies that imply the use of direct explanation including declarative, procedural, and conditional operationalization were not consistently conveyed to students. Modeling and guided practice were a common practice in Ms. Carter’s class, where multiple opportunities for practice and extension of activities using similar texts and concepts were evident. These were not

evident in Ms. Perry's instructional practices. Read-aloud activities and checks for understanding were generally present in the context of whole class instruction where students volunteered to answer questions given to the class. ELs did not receive any prompts, cues, scaffolds, or modified questions or tasks to access reading comprehension. While the observations took place (observations #1 through #7), there was no allusion to LEP plans and accommodations for instruction or assignments from the English teacher or the ESL co-teacher.

Teacher Professional Development for ELs

The two participants in this study were English secondary school certified teachers with varied years of teaching experience and varied numbers of ELs in their current classrooms. These teachers can be classified into two main categories: (1) One having English and ESL certification, ESL training and several years of teaching of experience in ESL, (2) The other teacher was an English certified secondary school teacher with no extensive experience dealing with ELs, ESL certification or training. Findings from interview responses revealed that both teachers recognize the value and importance of engaging in instructional practices that promoted the use of academic language. However, these did not translate directly into consistently implemented instructional practices. A well-planned instructional approach to provide explicit instruction in academic language, which includes declarative, procedural and conditional use was not consistently developed or implemented. A similar finding was noted about explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction.

Despite inconsistent patterns in instructional practices, a notable difference between the two teachers in the way they approached academic language instruction was

observed. Ms. Carter introduced, modeled, and scaffolded students to use academic language and reading comprehension strategies. She encouraged students to read with her, answer questions and complete writing assignments using formulaic expressions, sentence starters, and sentence frames. She worked closely with students individually or in small groups. On the other hand, Ms. Perry provided directions, instruction, and assignments for the whole class. Instructional accommodations for ELs were mostly left to be implemented by the ESL in this class. Once lesson directions and concepts were explained to the class, students were expected to carry out their assignments based on the given directions. There were no visible scaffolding activities by Ms. Perry to support ELs' learning such as modeling, guiding, providing repetitions, sentence starters, or sentence frames. At one point, students were given a graphic organizer, but Ms. Perry only provided directions for students to carry out the task. Modeling on the use of the graphic organizer was not provided or explained.

Task Description and Application

Each teacher's instructional focus and approach varied significantly. While both provided instructional goals and learning standards intended to address academic language and reading comprehension instruction and followed the established curricular goals for English I, each designed and assigned very different tasks and used very different strategies during instruction. Both teachers displayed a consistent pattern in how each implemented tasks, however, these were significantly different by each teacher. For instance, while covering a unit on poetry, Ms. Carter provided instruction and designed tasks that touched upon a wide range of poetry. She used texts including poetry form different times, cultures and types, such as those from Hughes, Frost, Shakespeare, and

even a song from John Legend. She taught students how poetry was presented in different formats and techniques and used strategies to make poetry visible for students. Students were provided with activities that supported the development of the four language skills and were given multiple exposures to the concepts under study through the use of tasks conducive to learning. Ms. Perry also had a predictable pattern of instruction and task implementation. For example, each day she presented a lesson based on a power point slide show that included the goals for the lesson, standards associated with the lesson, links to the texts students were expected to read, and activities students needed to complete and submit online. Most of the work in this class was submitted online. Different from Ms. Carter's, Ms. Perry assigned tasks that she had already posted on the slides and monitored for completion. As Ms. Perry stated, she set the expectation for the ESL teacher in the room to monitor task understanding and completion. Ms. Perry, contrary to Ms. Carter's. used a variety of texts that ranged from poetry to narrative, fiction to informational texts. Students were exposed to different kinds of texts and literary genres during the time the study was conducted. These differences between the two teachers, as it relates to task design and implementation, is evidenced in the way they describe instructional practices during interviews, as well as how they emerge in lesson planning and instructional practice.

In sum, while both teachers engaged in AL and ERCSI to different extents, findings indicate that the teacher with ESL certification and teaching experience operationalized these constructs noticeably more explicitly when compared to the teacher without ESL certification. However, while this approach to instruction is evident through the study, it is also evident that professional development, training, and experience

influence the way Ms. Carter enacts instructional practice. While Ms. Carter did not provide well-constructed responses during the initial interview protocol, when a cross comparison between the two participants' responses was conducted, there was also significant evidence to substantiate the fact that Ms. Carter provided evidence of preparation to teach ELs as operationalized during lesson plans and instruction. Despite the fact that the evidence suggests Ms. Carter does deploy a wider set of skills, there were some areas in which she was not clearly aware of the strategies she was using (i.e. ERCSI). On the other hand, Ms. Perry, the English-only certified teacher, described some of her limitations during the interview protocol. Similarly, these limitations were observed during instruction. Absence of instructional modifications for ELs and a dependency on the ESL teacher support these students precluded Ms. Perry from incorporating instructional strategies to support ELs, specifically in the constructs under study. Both teachers provided evidence of different ways they approach instruction on AL and ERCSI for high school ELs. However, the findings show that both teachers' areas of expertise vary significantly and that both teachers need professional development in the constructs under study and for the student population in reference.

Summary

This chapter presented the results from this case study which sought to answer three research questions. The first question asked – 1 – *How do teachers perceive their working theories of the constructs of developing academic language (AL) and providing explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI) for ELs in secondary school?* Data indicated that teachers' understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCS instruction varied significantly from one participant to the other. While the

interview responses from the ESL/English certified teacher were not as elaborate as those of the regular English teacher, in practice, she deployed a broader range of tools and strategies evidenced in lesson plans and instructional delivery as applied to these two constructs. Note that the ESL/English certified teacher did not prepare the responses for the interview protocol, while the English-only certified teacher did. The latter suggests that this teacher might have been concerned with being well-prepared for the interview, considering the supervisory role of the researcher; an issue related to the researcher's role and addressed in the methods section.

For both teachers, understandings of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction were framed within the boundaries of understanding Latin and Greek roots, prefixes and suffixes for academic language and on restating, making connections, and finding the main idea for reading comprehension strategy instruction. However, explicit instructional practices involving declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge were not consistently implemented.

The second research question asked: *How are teachers' working theories represented in lesson planning and classroom instructional practice?* On the one hand, it was evident from the lesson plans, observations, and second and third interviews that the ESL/English certified teacher had a deeper knowledge with regards to ELs and, consequently, was able to use her repertoire of strategies more effectively and inclusively. This was evidenced both in the structure of lesson plans that included tasks extending from instruction on conceptual knowledge of poetry, to the utilization of songs and videos that provided ELs more opportunities for understanding and practice, to scaffolding through sentence frames and starters and multiple repetitions of language

forms. On the other hand, while the English-only certified teacher provided well-prepared responses to the interview protocol, had well-elaborated lesson plans, which included structured presentations and patterns in her instructional practice and a structured plan for classroom management, as far as instructional practices in AL and ERCS for ELs was concerned, significant limitations were evident, and inclusive practices and differentiation for ELs were limited to what the cooperating ESL teacher was expected to do.

Academic language and reading comprehension strategies were used by both teachers. However, the descriptions of their understanding of these constructs differed significantly from teacher to teacher, and the operationalization of AL and ERCSI through lesson plans and instructional practice also differed significantly from the participating teachers' working theories. In general, teachers' descriptions of their understanding of these concepts were focused mainly on vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension. The ESL/English certified teacher focused on guided reading comprehension with explanations and demonstrations of strategies that appeared at different times during lessons and emerging during guided instruction. For the English-only certified teacher, reading comprehension was mainly approached through read aloud exercises and comprehension questions.

Effective instructional practices for ELs were more evident and consistently implemented in the ESL/English certified teacher's class. This teacher deployed a wide variety of tools and strategies, spoke to students at different rates depending upon proficiency levels, explained and restated frequently, scaffolded instruction, and worked with students individually and in small groups.

The third question focused on an analysis of how the explanations of teachers' working theories, the evidence found in lesson plans, and the operationalization of the constructs under study emerged in teachers' instructional practice as teachers reflected on the unfolding of this case study. In this section the researcher sought to answer the following question: *How do teachers of ELs reflect on their working theories and operationalization of AL and ERCSI for ELs in secondary school as these constructs are represented in their understanding through interviews, lesson planning, and instructional practice and explain their instructional decision-making process they for this student subset?* The researcher's goal was to draw inferences from teachers' understanding and practices founded upon their explanation of their knowledge and decision-making process for teaching secondary ELs as well as on their reflections of their instructional practice during the study. Ms. Carter, the ESL/English certified teacher, consistently referred to how she operationalized what she considered the most significant components of academic language and reading instruction in her lessons. She stated and instantiated the use of vocabulary instruction on morphology based on Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, suffixes, and scaffolding strategies to develop the four language skills. She also demonstrated a similar approach to reading comprehension strategy instruction through modeling, repetition, restating, and questioning.

On the other hand, Ms. Perry displayed a general knowledge base of instructional practices for ELs, as described in interviews. However, during planning and instruction, lessons were written and articulated focusing on whole-class instruction with limited accommodations for ELs. During interviews and observations, there was not any

evidence of use of LEP plans for instructional planning or instruction, nor were there instructional modifications for ELs other than those expected from the ESL co-teacher.

CHAPTER V:

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations for Future Research

Two areas of focus have driven this study: Academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction for secondary ELs. According to August, Carlo, Dressler and Snow (2005), ELs with limited vocabulary development demonstrate lower proficiency when comprehending texts at grade level than their English monolingual peers. In addition to limited vocabulary knowledge, depth and breadth of vocabulary understanding is insufficient among ELs and puts them at risk for academic failure (Becker, 1977). Not surprisingly, the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth (August & Shanahan, 2006) stated that the reading development of adolescents has received scant attention. Research in general supports the notion that teaching vocabulary supports reading comprehension (Nagy, 1988). This study's findings have corroborated the need to address the constructs of AL and ERCSI explicitly in order to foster language development for the secondary EL student population. It additionally echoes the research studies (August & Shanahan, 2006; Nagy, 1988) that highlight the correlation between vocabulary development and reading comprehension.

Research estimates that it takes between four and nine years for ELs to develop academic language competence comparable to that of their native English speaking, monolingual peers (Cummins, 2008; Freeman & Freeman, 2011; Hakuta, 2000). In secondary schools, access to academic language and comprehending texts and school discourses across different content areas are a challenge ELs face as school curricula and policies egregiously disparage them with inconsistent or subtractive approaches to

language development (Freeman & Freeman, 2011). Adding to this challenge, time to develop language proficiency and acquire content knowledge in academic subject areas is limited for ELs, especially in secondary school where graduation deadlines and age limitations reduce opportunities for these students to attain academic and linguistic proficiency.

Likewise, teachers of emergent bilinguals are challenged as they struggle to provide instruction to these students as they are unprepared to scaffold instruction for ELs. It is also an extra effort for teachers to provide opportunities to help ELs move from every day, conversational language to academic language. Teachers often continue to perpetuate practices that either negatively or positively impact this student subgroup.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions: How do teachers of high school ELs perceive their working theories of the constructs of developing academic language (AL) and the use of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction (ERCSI)?, how are teachers' working theories represented in their lesson planning and classroom instructional practice? and, how do teachers of high school ELs reflect on and explain their working theories, operationalization, and instructional decision-making of AL and ERCSI? Because the impetus for this study, like many others on instruction for ELs, was driven by the need to explore ways instruction in academic language and reading comprehension for ELs in secondary school was delivered, the researcher's first analysis focused on how teachers of ELs understood the constructs of academic language and the use of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction. Secondly, in order to corroborate teachers' notional understandings of the constructs under study, the researcher utilized and analyzed two additional data sources - lesson

plans and instructional observations – to explore the way the participating teachers operationalized their understandings as these emerged in lesson planning and instructional practice.

The study findings highlight the importance of teacher training in reading comprehension and academic language instruction for secondary school teachers. While both teachers displayed notional and practical understandings in these constructs, it is evident that there is a distinct difference in their approach to instruction. This difference is also noted in the way each teacher's professional background impacted their practice. This issue draws attention to the importance of developing reading and academic language competencies that arise with the increasing demands of text in secondary school. These demands warrant the execution of educational policies that call for secondary school reading and academic language instruction. Lesaux (2012) operationalizes reading in practice as a developmental dynamic process that depends heavily on knowledge-based reading comprehension. The findings of this research call for the revisiting of well-known principles of reading instruction and suggests a focus towards the incorporation of deep, language and content-based instruction, with a focus on teaching both the specialized vocabulary and the specialized structures of language that are present in academic text (Lesaux, 2012), one that eventually benefits ELs as they navigate through secondary school.

The need to address this educational concern also resides in the need to prepare knowledgeable professionals that incorporate language and content instruction, taking into consideration instructional strategies addressing reading comprehension and academic language. This need was made evident in the way both teachers understood and

operationalized instruction in both AL and ERCSI. For instance, while Ms. Carter displayed a wider set of strategies and practices to address the needs of ELs, her notional knowledge of the constructs under study was mainly the result of exposure based on trainings and workshops for EL teachers. On the other hand, the evidence also showed that while Ms. Perry understood the constructs of AL and ERCSI, these did not emerge in classroom instruction as a general routine, which corroborates the notion that most high school teachers do not see themselves as language teachers but as content experts.

An additional study finding indicated that there is a need to study academic language instruction from a perspective that encompasses lexicon, syntax, and discourse rather that a simplistic approach to vocabulary knowledge focused on fundamental concepts based on base words, prefixes and suffixes. The study findings indicated that teachers' academic language instruction focused mainly on learning vocabulary in the form of learning roots, prefixes and suffixes. The work of scholars such as Bailey (2007), Lemke (1990), and Schleppegrell (2004, 2012, 2015) has highlighted the importance of general academic language instruction for language minority students which involves access to discourses and registers associated with different subject areas students learn in school.

An avenue to address the academic language and reading comprehension instruction problem for ELs in secondary school can be found in the implementation of the WIDA instructional framework. While in this study the focus was the exploration of the constructs of AL and ERCSI for ELs, neither teacher addressed the use of the WIDA framework as an avenue to teach academic language and reading comprehension. In the state of North Carolina, the WIDA standards are used as an instructional framework and

assessment protocol through the ACCESS for ELs. The latter focuses on assessing ELs' yearly language proficiency for students classified as ELs. However, during this study, neither Ms. Carter, nor Ms. Perry used or referred to the WIDA standards as an avenue for understanding and designing instruction for ELs.

Conclusions

The main conclusions of this study highlight the importance of implementing instructional practices conducive to effective differentiated, explicit teaching by teachers of ELs. The study also informs the current state of pedagogical practices by teachers not trained to teach ELs. While throughout the study numerous themes emerged, the findings provided the researcher sufficient information to draw the following main conclusions: First, academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction were understood similarly by the participating teachers but operationalized differently. Academic language was mainly articulated as the teaching of Greek and Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes that are important for reading comprehension. Explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction was delivered more consistently by the ESL/English certified teacher than it was by the English-only certified teacher, with both teachers focused on strategies such as making connections, restating, and finding main idea. The difference in the approach was that Ms. Carter used a gradual release of responsibility approach, which also included additional supports intended to develop the four language skills, not just reading comprehension. Second, explicit instruction both in academic language and content for ELs varied significantly from one teacher to the other. While Ms. Perry focused mainly on content, Ms. Carter applied instructional strategies that promoted the development of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and

writing. In addition, consistent modeling and guidance within a context of shared meanings (Rose & Martin, 2012) were applied in the classroom taught by Ms. Carter. In addition, research has addressed the construct of differentiated instruction for ELs. Instructional differentiation varied significantly in this area. Differentiation varied from forms of engagement, language development focus, to the use of instructional strategies and resources. Ms. Carter provided a wide variety of examples of data driven instructional strategies that she used to tap into each student's individual needs and language proficiency, such as those derived from language proficiency assessments. Furthermore, teacher preparation, background knowledge, and experiences with language development played a significant role in instructional practices for ELs. Ms. Carter's experience with bilingualism and second language education this knowledge and experience reflect in her instructional practices. Ms. Perry's education and experience, on the other hand, displayed a traditional instructional format, which included consistently written lesson plans, teacher-directed instructional practices focused on task completion, and up-to-date resources such as Chromebooks, smartboards, and links to online platforms and resources.

Understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI.

AL and ERCSI were understood similarly but operationalized differently by each participating teacher. An unsurprising finding was a focus on content rather than on language development from Ms. Perry. This was demonstrated through the interview process, lesson plans, and instructional observations. Lessons were developed based on the standards as stated in the standard course of study for the content area. Ms. Perry explained that reading strategies and academic language were introduced at the beginning

of the semester and students were expected to gradually use them. This was also evident in the lesson plans. Standards and reading strategies were present within the lesson plans. However, evidence of explicit instruction on reading strategies was limited to a few practices on restating and finding the main idea. Academic language was addressed within the context of vocabulary words that appeared during reading that had an impact on understanding. Frontloading vocabulary was reduced to vocabulary items and syntax, explaining the way language worked to convey meaning, which was taught mainly through restating text with no explicit indication of the purpose of the language form to convey meaning.

On the other hand, Ms. Carter displayed a more direct approach to language development. Two important themes emerged here. First, while Ms. Carter has experience teaching English as a content area, results from the study seemed to demonstrate her experience teaching ESL has a great influence on her focus on language development. This leads to the second emerging theme. While she followed the standard course of study for the subject area, her awareness of the ELs' language learning process was conducive to a more explicit, extended approach to instruction. Keeping with the same theme, instruction for an extended period of time allowed her to provide more depth and breadth on the concepts and language under study, thus giving students more opportunities to understand and practice with language and content. Ms. Carter is charged with new ELs' intakes, scheduling, accommodation plans, and yearly proficiency assessments. This knowledge of her students and the processes involved in their progress demonstrably increased her ability to understand and provide instruction in the subject and to scaffold and differentiate instruction for these students. Not only did Ms. Carter

have experience with the content-specific preparation, but also extensive knowledge on the protocols for student designation, placement, and assessment. These included course content theory and continuous trainings, understanding of first and second language development, knowledge of current practices for evaluation and placement, and most importantly, knowledge of the students she taught. These factors hold significance importance for teacher preparation and professional development. The literature on second language development has extensively addressed issues of second language development, learner developmental levels, instructional differentiation and assessment for ELs (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994; Cummins, 1979; Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2012; Scarcella, 2003); all of which have important implications for ELs' instruction and learning.

Differentiation vs. whole-class instruction.

Differentiating instruction for ELs in academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction involves a reconceptualization of instructional strategies that moves away from lesson planning and instruction focused on the curriculum, but instead is driven by student differences, interests, and needs (Echeveria, Short, & Vogt, 2008). Differentiated academic language instruction and reading engagement take the form of pedagogical practices that highlight reading and student identity (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Meltzer & Hamann, 2004). The contrast between the two teachers in the study provides a lens through which teachers can visualize differentiation for ELs that involves ongoing assessment of language and academic proficiency, which is conducive to adjusting instruction. Differentiation also means scaffolding; such as in the use of sentence frames and starters, the use of small group

instruction, the interaction between more fluent and emergent bilingual learners, the explicitness of the use and differences of academic and everyday language, and the use of scripts or captions for text that students listen to, in order to expand opportunities for accessibility (Rubinstein-Avila, 2006).

Although both teachers provide students with lessons that include curricular standards, vocabulary instruction, and opportunities to practice, it is the differentiation of instruction, and the development and extension of learning tasks tailored to the audience that set these two participants apart. For instance, a comparison of the two participating teachers' use of explicit instruction in academic language yielded a distinguishable contrast between Ms. Carter and Ms. Perry. The former was more deliberate in her focus on making sure EL students learned new academic vocabulary through multiple modalities and media. She modeled using think-alouds, repetition, examples in context, sentence frames and starters, graphic organizers, visual aids, and realia to illustrate and help students capture the meanings of the words in their contexts of use. On the other hand, Ms. Perry paid more attention to direct, whole-class instruction focused on conveying the meanings of concepts or words through oral explanations or readings of texts with restating, when necessary, for the entire class. In the instances when the ESL teacher participated in providing additional support, she also followed and conveyed messages to the entirety of the class; with no accommodations, individualized instruction or scaffolding techniques for ELs. These differences in pedagogical approaches for ELs calls for the need to provide teachers with professional development opportunities on learning how to differentiate instruction as well as on how to identify linguistic developmental levels in order to adjust instruction targeted to the learning needs of ELs.

Teacher preparation and professional development.

Classrooms highly populated with English learners present a challenge to content area teachers and reading specialists alike, as these students are learning to understand, speak, read and write all the while they learn subject areas in schools (Drucker, 2003; Freeman & Freeman, 2011; Lopez & Iribarren, 2014; Rubinstein-Avila & Lee, 2014). Not surprisingly, Rubinstein-Avila and Lee (2014) contend that, in general, "secondary single-subject teachers receive limited preparation for teaching content to ELs throughout their teacher preparation programs, and as a result, are likely not to use the instructional strategies needed to teach this population effectively" (p. 189). Research has established a lack of uniformity among secondary teaching professionals about the relevance and importance of preparation on instructional strategies for EL instruction. Unfortunately, in many cases, secondary teachers have seldom received professional development or training in working with ELs (Reeves, 2006; Walker et al., 2004; Yoon, 2007). This study revealed that secondary teachers hold a knowledge base that is not aligned with the academic and language development needs of ELs. It also highlighted the contrast between an ESL vs. a non-ESL trained teacher and the implications consistent professional development presents as a fundamental factor for effectively instructing these students. This contrast is reflected in Ms. Perry's lack of awareness of the academic needs of ELs as well as in the Ms. Carter's lack of awareness of concepts she teachers, which stem from practice rather metacognition. Teachers' lack of awareness in these two important areas call for professional development focused on developing teachers' metacognitive and metalinguistic skills. Academic language and reading comprehension instruction have long been considered relevant pedagogical elements informing planning

and instructional practice. However, teachers continue to implement instructional practices that only focus on content expertise and ignore the language and reading comprehension strategies necessary to access content knowledge. Therefore, professional development is needed to equip teachers with these important pedagogical tools and knowledge to allow them to understand the importance of the language of the content areas they teach and the reading comprehension strategies and skills necessary for students to access the texts they read in secondary school. In fact, several programs and models (Derewianka & Jones, 2016; Echeverria, Vogt, & Short, 2016; Schleppegrell & deOliveira, 2006; Ucelli et al., 2014) discussed in this study are designed to develop ELs' academic language and reading comprehension strategy repertoires.

Research on teacher preparation to provide instruction for ELs suggests these findings are not surprising. Freeman and Freeman (2011) contend that teachers with limited understanding of second language development, academic language, and reading comprehension instruction often hold common misconceptions about issues relevant to educating ELs. Such misconceptions often lead to teachers becoming less aware of the importance of developing ELs' academic language and reading comprehension, especially at the secondary school level, where students are expected to know how to read and have a sound command of the written language.

This study highlights the importance of adopting school reform measures to develop policies that address the needs of ELs. An important school reform strategy to advance the education of ELs resides in the certification process. To achieve this goal, the inclusion of dual certification requirements for teachers of ELs is warranted. Several states have already developed certification programs that require teachers of ELs to be

dually certified in their content area and ESL. Unfortunately, that is not the case in the state of North Carolina. While the EL population continues to grow in our state, there are no current educational reform policies with provisions for teachers to be dually certified in a content area and ESL. The current school reform climate focused on curricular restructuring, realignment, and school improvement reforms call for district and school administrations to take on educational reform challenges and execute policy changes focused on teacher education programs and professional development for teachers of ELs. For example, the researcher, in this study, is currently leading two projects that are focused on school improvement and on the instruction of ELs. First, the researcher is working on the implementation of a research-based professional development program to educate teachers on instruction for ELs in the areas of content area reading instruction and academic language development. Second, the researcher is stimulating change in the scheduling of classes for ELs by creating co-taught classes led by a content area and an ESL teacher with the goal of promoting and developing collaborative plans and instructional strategies that foster learning opportunities for ELs.

Collaborative, co-teaching models (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010, 2012) have proven effective practices to enhance instruction for ELs. In addition, they provide opportunities for teachers both ESL and mainstream alike to enhance their teaching expertise in the constructs presented in this research. This study suggests that more research and professional development is needed in academic language and reading comprehension instruction for secondary ELs and teacher preparation and professional development emerge as a pressing need to respond to the growing diversity in U.S. schools. Several programs and approaches to prepare teachers for ELs have been documented (Davin &

Heineke, 2016; Fang, 2016; Kim, Walker, & Manarino-Leggett, 2012; Moore, 2018; Tigert & Madigan-Peercy, 2018). These studies have addressed the pressing need to prepare teachers in co-teaching, instruction, disciplinary knowledge, assessment, and language development for ELs. They also corroborate the findings this study yielded with regards with teachers' understandings and dispositions on teaching and learning for ELs. The researcher's goal is to continue to influence curriculum implementation and professional development that generates opportunities for teachers to learn effective, differentiated teaching practices and for English learners to have a chance to succeed academically by developing a set of skills that allows them to function within the culture of school practices conducive to participation and access in society.

Limitations

The researcher identified five potential limitations within this study. Creswell (2002) indicated, "Limitations are potential weaknesses or problems that are identified by the researcher" (p. 253). From the onset, this study presented a potential limitation with the role of the researcher and the participants. First off, the researcher works in a supervisory capacity in the building where the research was conducted. Although the researcher explained the purpose of the study in detail and highlighted that data gathered from their participation was entirely confidential, the notion that participants may hold concerns about this issue was present. For the researcher in particular, the interview protocol offered some notion of the likelihood of this potential issue, as one of the participants wanted to prepare her interview responses prior to our meetings, while the other spontaneously participated in the interview process without hesitation. To mitigate

this concern, during each interview session, the researcher reminded the participants that the data would remain confidential at all times.

An additional potential limitation of the study could lie in the frequency of instructional observations. While the researcher conducted weekly observations of both participating teachers, the time between observations could have limited the likelihood of gathering more accurate data. For instance, a set of four-to-five weekly consecutive observations could have yielded more accurate data to explain the depth and breadth of instruction of the constructs under study,

Another potential limitation in the study was related to the sampling. Because the researcher sought to explore what instructional practices were enacted for ELs based on the constructs of AL and ERCSI, narrowing the scope of participants to two teachers with two similar classes, yet two different instructional backgrounds, made purposeful sampling the strategy most suitable for this study. The participating teachers were selected because they shared common classes with similar configurations within the same grade level and subject area, following the same standard course of study. In addition, since the data were gathered within one single urban secondary school, the study findings cannot be generalized to other settings. However, it does reiterate what research studies have concluded regarding instruction for secondary ELs and provides additional research data to continue to further its study.

An additional potential limitation of this exploratory study is the sample size. While this is a case study, the fact that responses were collected from two participants within a single subject area and with specific participant characteristics can limit the scope of the study. Additional studies involving more participants with contrasting

professional backgrounds and preparation could shed light on a broader range of descriptions of the understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI.

Finally, time posed a challenge in the data collection process. The study lasted seven weeks. This was a limitation the researcher had to deal with since the data collection process started half-way through the semester and ended two weeks prior to the end of school. Teachers had to prepare students for EOCs and this limited the time available for observation. Ideally, this study would have been conducted during the course of an entire school year.

Implications for Future Research

Two major issues were the foci of this study: Secondary school ELs and AL and ERCSI. Research on the education of ELs at the secondary school level has focused mostly on vocabulary instruction (Bintz, 1997; Lee & Spratley, 2010; Lesaux, Kieffer, & Faller, 2010). However, while there is a notion that ELs lack the academic language skills necessary to succeed in school (Cummins, 1979; DeOliveira, 2016; Moore, 2013), limited attention has been given to developing ELs' academic language and reading comprehension strategies to develop the skills necessary to function in academic school settings (DeOliveira, 2016; Gebhard, 2010; Gibbons, 2002). Thus, the present study, which focused on exploring teachers' understanding and operationalization of AL and ERCSI for ELs in secondary school yielded important implications for future research and instruction, which can be explored both at the school and teacher professional preparation level.

The first question in this study addressed teachers' understanding of the constructs of developing ELs' AL and the use of ERCSI. The purpose of the first

question was to explore teachers' of ELs current understandings of the constructs under study. Second, the study sought to explore teachers' practices based on lesson planning and instructional practices for ELs in secondary school as they planned and provided instruction in the constructs under study. In addition, on this exploration, teachers were asked to reflect on their practices both planning and instructional in order to delve into their own practices and observe whether their understanding and practice were in alignment.

The answers to the questions in this research study yielded important implications on instructional practices for ELs in secondary school. First, the implementation of continuing rigorous standards (CCSS, 2012) expects educators, at all levels and content areas, to provide secondary ELs with the linguistic and academic scaffolds required to achieve academic success (Lesaux, 2012; Rubinstein-Avila & Lee, 2014). Thus, secondary teaching programs and professional development endeavors at the college, school and district levels should incentivize teachers to participate in course offerings such as second language development, reading comprehension instruction, content area literacy and multiculturalism in education.

Therefore, teacher education programs should revisit their current plans of study to incorporate courses on reading comprehension instruction at the secondary level, second language development, differentiated instruction, content area literacy, and multiculturalism. At the school level, school administrators and curriculum specialists should provide teachers with opportunities to participate in professional development programs, instructional coaching, and to utilize the resources at hand to better inform themselves of the audiences they teach.

Second, behavioral changes towards ELs at the school level can provide opportunities for engagement. Teachers can begin by adopting simple behaviors such as developing empathy for EL students, building an understanding of second language development processes, gaining information of students' prior schooling and linguistic experiences, or making connections to concepts being taught (Berg et al., 2012). Teachers can also use human resources and student data available to inform themselves and make the necessary instructional accommodations that provide access to language, comprehension, and content learning.

Teachers' behavioral dispositions can be transformed using professional development on collaborative practices that enhance the way teachers perceive ELs. The study findings serve as evidence to extend previous research on the importance of differentiated instructional models for ELs. For instance, Honigsfeld and Cohan (2008) conducted research on professional development on the implementation of co-teaching models geared towards EL learners' learning by fusing the lesson study and the SIOP models. Similarly, Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) substantiated the need for more teacher collaboration in ESL contexts by documenting seven different types of co-teaching models geared towards improving instruction for ELs. These models, according to Dove and Honigsfeld (2010) not only impacted EL student learning, but also enhanced teacher leadership and ownership. The models described in their study indicate that collaborative practices during planning and instruction yield significantly positive results as teachers perceptions of their roles shift to a team approach to instruction that emphasizes cooperation, improved lesson design and learning tasks, mutual respect for teaching styles, and a focus on ownership of students' needs (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010).

Co-teaching models and professional collaboration initiatives in which teachers engage in lesson study or the implementation of differentiated approaches, or models, to provide instruction that foster the development of academic language and reading comprehension for ELs need to be promoted, as these may significantly influence academic outcomes for this student population. In fact, Dove and Honigsfeld's (2010) study on ESL coteaching and collaboration provided a lens through which instruction for ELs may be seen as an opportunity for teachers to emerge as teacher leaders and for ELs to improve their learning. Teacher collaboration, from their perspective, is important as it also creates opportunities for teachers to change their perceptions of their roles and of their students. Teachers' dispositions, in collaborative roles, change as they find opportunities to solve instructional obstacles as they become equal participants engaged in shared decision-making in search of a common goal.

Co-teaching also implies collaboration towards ownership. As regular education and ESL teachers work together for planning instruction, teaching, or examining student work, they engage in partnerships that enhance the teaching practice and create inclusive environments that welcome their learning communities (their students) and address their most pressing needs. Thus, these co-teaching models promote dispositional changes as the expertise of both cooperating teachers is conjugated to produce a broader view of their students. Teachers learn about their students' cultural, linguistic, and academic challenges as they adjust to a new sociocultural, sociolinguistic system and find ways to help them overcome academic and social challenges, while tapping into their social contributions and culture. Honigsfeld and Dove (2012) put it very succinctly, "collaborative, inclusive, and integrated service-delivery practices are the best way to

serve students who are English language learners". This study provides evidence that corroborates the need for such instructional practices as demonstrated by the two participating teachers.

Finally, as the demographic landscape in U. S. schools continues to transform, researchers in the field of ELs' teaching and learning should develop and execute research studies for these students at the secondary level. While there are many studies on secondary school academic language and reading comprehension instruction, these are less common for ELs in secondary school. Many teachers continue to use the same whole-class traditional instructional practices that do not address the academic and linguistic development needs of their EL students. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative studies on teaching and learning academic language and reading comprehension for secondary ELs should be implemented. This study findings sheds light to the need to examine this topic at a larger scale, either through multiple case studies or using a pre and post professional development study that serves to inform the field on instructional practices in AL and ERCSI prior to and after professional development has been provided.

Summary

Explicit instruction on academic language and reading comprehension strategies are fundamental to support ELs' access to language and content knowledge. Teachers cannot ignore the fact that these students are learning both language and content in their classrooms and they need to do double the work to achieve the same goals monolingual native English-speaking learners do. "English language learners have to gain more language proficiency each year than their native-speaking peers in order to catch up and

close the gap" (Drucker, 2003, p. 23). Therefore, there is a need to provide instruction that provides context and strategies for learning that allows ELs opportunities to catch up and close the gap.

Given the increasing number of students in secondary school with varying academic and language development levels, meeting the educational needs of these students is a cumbersome, yet not impossible task. Therefore, there is a need to provide EL learners with explicit instruction on the linguistic resources required to access school subjects, so that they learn how to develop vast vocabularies, use a wide reading comprehension strategy repertoire and develop linguistic skills to achieve success in school. As Matthiessen (2006) contends, "Learning a new language means learning how to mean in that language – learning the resources for making meaning in context" (p. 35) which in this case, includes learning how to access, mean and process information within school contexts and contents. Thus, as Matthiessen (2006) proceeds, by modeling language in context in comprehensive terms, language teachers can create a map that can be a resource in advanced language education and provide teachers and students with more control over the teaching-learning process.

This qualitative case study adds to the existing literature on academic language instruction, reading comprehension and ELs by documenting the understanding and operationalization that secondary school teachers display of the constructs of AL and ERCSI for secondary school English learners. Exploring teachers' understanding and operationalization of these constructs provides crucial information to drive improvement in reading comprehension and academic language instruction at a level where teachers seem to assume students are already equipped with the skill set necessary for secondary

school settings. This exploration has the potential to drive professional development on strategies that attend to the needs of a fast-growing academically and linguistically diverse EL student population, more than 6.0 percent in North Carolina and approximately 55 percent at the secondary school setting where this case study was conducted. Exposing teachers to ways to better serve this subset of students may translate into a starting point for changing professional practices leading to dramatic paradigm shifts in the treatment of English learners, students who have been historically labeled deficient, and turn schools into spaces where there are opportunities for academic success.

REFERENCES

Achugar, M., Schleppegrell, M. J., Oteiza, T. (2007). Engaging teachers in language analysis: A functional linguistics approach to reflective literacy. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique. 6*(2), 8-24.

Adamson, H. D. (2005). *Language minority students in American schools: An education in English*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Afflerbach, P., Pearson, P., & Paris, S. (2008). Clarifying Differences between Reading Skills and Reading Strategies. *Reading Teacher*, *61*(5), 364–373. https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.61.5.1

Anderson, R. C. (1977). The notion of schemata and the educational enterprise: General discussion of the conference. In R.C. Anderson, R. J. Spiro, & W.E. Montague (eds.) *Schooling and the acquisition of knowledge*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

August, D., Carlo, M., Dressler, C., & Snow, C (2005). The Critical Role of vocabulary development for English language learners. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, *20*(1), 50-57.

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Avalos, M. A., Plasencia, A., Chavez, C., & Rascon, J. (2007). Modified guided reading: Gateway to English as a second language and literacy learning. *The Reading Teacher, 61*(4), 318-329.

Baecher, L., Artigliere, M., Patterson, D. K., & Spatzer, A. (2012). Differentiated instruction for English language learners as “variations on a theme”, *Middle School Journal, 43:3*, 14-21, DOI: 10.1080/00940771.2012.11461807.

Bailey, A., & Huang, B. (2011). Do current English language development/proficiency standards reflect the English needed for success in school? *Language Testing*, 28(3), 343-365.

Bailey, A.L. (2007). *The language demands of school: Putting academic language to the test.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Bailey, A. L., & Butler, F.A. (2003). *An evidentiary framework for operationalizing academic language for broad application to K-12 education: A design document*. Los Angeles, CA: Center for the Study of Evaluation, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, University of California, Los Angeles.

Bailey, A., & Carroll, P.E. (2015). Assessment of English language learners in the era of new academic content standards. *European Journal of Criminology, 12*(2), 253-294.

Bailey, A. L. & Heritage, M. (2008). *Formative assessment for literacy, grades K-6, building reading and academic language skills across the curriculum*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Batalova, J., Fix, M., & Murray, J. (2007). *Measures of change: The demography and literacy of adolescent English language learners – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Washington DC: Migration policy Institute.

Bauman, J.F., & Graves, J.F. (2010). What is academic vocabulary? *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 54*(1), 4-12.

Baye, A., Lake, C., Inns, A., & Slavin, R. E. (2017). Effective reading programs for secondary students. *Empowering Educators with Evidence Proven Programs*. 2-77.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York: Guilford Press.

Beck, I. L., McKeown, M. G., & Kucan, L. (2008). *Creating robust vocabulary: frequently asked questions and extended examples*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Becker, W.C. (1977). Teaching reading and language to the disadvantaged – What we have learned from field research. *Harvard Educational Review, 47,* 518-543.

Biemiller, A. (2001). Vocabulary deveopment and instruction: A prerequisite for school learning. In S. Newman & Dickinson, D. (Eds.). *Handbook of Early Literacy Research (vol 2*), New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Bintz, W.P. (2011). Teaching vocabulary across the curriculum. *Middle School Journal, 42*(4), 44-45.

Birch, B. M. (2008). *English L2 reading: Getting to the bottom (2nd ed.).* Mahwah, NJ: Routledge.

Blair, A. (2016). Academic uses of language re(defined): A case of emergent bilinguals engaging in languages and literacies in and outside the school. *Linguistics and Education, 35*(2016), 109-119.

Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (3rd ed.) Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Brooks, M. (2015). "It's Like a Script": Long-term English learners' experiences with and ideas about academic reading. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *49*(4), 383–406. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1683507474/?pq-origsite=primo

Bunch, G. C., Kibler, A., & Pimentel, S. (2014). *Realizing opportunities for English learners in the Common Core English language arts and disciplinary literacy standards*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University.

Calderon, M,. & Minaya-Rowe, L. (2011). *Preventing longterm Els: Transformig schools to meet core standards.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Carpenter, B. D., Achugar, M., Walter, D., & Earhart, M. (2015). Developing teachers' critical language awareness: A case study of guided participation. *Linguistics and Education. 32* (2015), 82-97.

Carter, P.L., Welner, K. G., & Ladson-Billings, G. (2013). *Closing the opportunity gap: What America must do to give all children an even chance.* Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com/id/10686695

Celce-Murcia, M., Larsen-Freeman, D., & Williams, H. A. (1999). *The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course*. New York, NY: Heinle & Heinle.

Chamot, A. U. (1995). Implementing the cognitive academic language learning approach: CALLA in Arlington, Virginia. Bilingual Research Journal, 19(3-4), 379-394

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1994). *The CALLA handbook: Implementing the cognitive academic language learning approach.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Christie, F., & Derewianka, B. M. (2008). *School discourse: Learning to write across the years of schooling* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Continuum.

Cisco, B. K., & Padron, Y. (2012). Investigating vocabulary and reading strategies with middle grades English language learners: A research sysnthesis. *RMLE Online, 36:4, 123, DOI: 10.1080/19404476.2012.11462097*

Cloud, N., Genesee, F., & Hamayan, E.V. (2009). *Literacy instruction for English language learners: A teacher's guide to research-based practices*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Coffin, C., & Donohue, J.P. (2012). Academic literacies and systemic functional linguistics: How do they relate? *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 11*(1), 64-75.

Collier, V.P., & Thomas, W.P. (1989). How quickly can immigrants become proficient in school English? *Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students, 5*, 26-38

Council of Chief State School Officers. (2012). *Framework for English language proficiency/development standards corresponding to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards*. Washington, DC: Author.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cummins, J. (1979). Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the *optimum age question and some other matters*. Toronto, Canada: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Cummins, J. (2014). Beyond language: Academic communication and student success. *Linguistics and Education*, 26, 145-154. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2014.1.006

Davin, K., Heineke, A. J. (2016). Preparing teachers for language assessment: A practice-based approach. *TESOL Journal, 7*(4), 921-937. *doi:10.1002/tesj.253*

deBrey, C., Musu, L., McFarland, J., Wilkinson-Flicker, S., Diliberti, M., Zhang, A., Branstetter, C., & Wang, X. (2019). Status and Trends in the Education of Racial and Ethnic Groups 2018 (NCES 2019-038). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/ pubsearch/.

Delpit, L. (1998). The politics of teaching literate text. In V. Zamel & R. Spack (Eds.), Negotiating academic literacies across languages and cultures (pp. 207-218). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Delpit, L. (1998). The politics of teaching literate text. In V. Zamel & R. Spack (Eds.), *Negotiating academic literacies across languages and cultures* (pp. 207-218). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

De Oliveira, L.C. (2016). A language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) for English language learners: Examples from two elementary teachers. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 10*(3), 217-231.

De Oliveira, L.C. (2011). *Knowing and writing school history: The language of students' expository writing and teachers' expectations*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing Inc.

Derewianka, B., & Jones, P. (2012). *Teaching language in context.* South Melbourne, Vic: Oxford University Press.

Dicerbo, P.A., Anstrom, K.A., Baker, L.L., & Rivera, C. (2014). A review of the literature on teaching academic English to English language learners. *Review of Educational Research, 84*(3), 446-482.

Douglas, B. G., & Moustakas, C. (1985). Heuristic inquiry: The internal search to know. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 25* (3), 39-55.

Dove, M., & Honigsfeld, A. (2010). ESL coteaching and collaboration: Opportunities to develop teacher leadership and enhance student learning. *TESOL Journal 1*(1) doi:10.5054/*tj*.2010.214879

Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2002). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. In A. E Farstrup & S. J. Samuels (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (3rd ed.), pp. 205-242. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Duke, N. K., Pearson, P. D., Strachan, S. L., & Billman, A. K. (2011). Essential elements of fostering and teaching reading comprehension. In A. E Farstrup & S. J.

Samuels (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (3rd ed.), pp. 51-93. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Dutro, S., Levy, E., & Moore, D.W. (2011). Equipping adolescent English language learners for academic achievement: An interview with Susana Dutro and Ellen Levy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 55*(4), 339-342. Doi:10.1002/JAAL.00041

Echeverria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2016). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition (2nd Ed.).* Oxford, Eng: Oxford University Press.

Enright, K. A. (2011). Language and literacy for a new mainstream. *American Educational Research Journal*, *48*(1), 80–118. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831210368989

Fang, Z. (2016). Teaching close reading with complex texts across content areas. *Research in the Teaching of English 51*(1), 106-116.

Fang, Z. (2004). Scientific literacy: A systemic functional linguistics perspective. *Science Education, 89,* 2, 335-347.

Fang, Z., & Schleppegrell, M.J. (2008). *Reading in secondary content areas: A language-based pedagogy*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Fang, Z., & Schleppegrell, M. J. (2010). Disciplinary literacies across content areas: Supporting secondary reading through functional language analysis. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 53(*7), 587-597.

Finocchiaro, M. B., & Brumfit, C. (1983). *The functional-notional approach: From theory to practice.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Flores, S. M., Batalova, J., & Fix, M. (2012). *The educational trajectories of English language learners in Texas.* Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.

Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for serving adolescent newcomers. *Center on Instruction, U.S. Department of Education*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation.

Frederiksen, C. H. (1975). Representing logical and semantic structure of knowledge acquired from discourse. *Cognitive Psychology, 7*, 371-458.

Freeman, D.E., & Freeman, Y.S. (2011). *Between worlds: Access to second language acquisition.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Freeman, D.E., & Freeman, Y.S. (2002). *Teaching reading in multilingual classrooms.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Gandara, P. (2013). Meeting the needs of language minorities. In P.L. Carter, K.G. Welner, & G. Ladson-Billings (Eds.), *Closing the Opportunity Gap: What America must do to give all children an even chance* (pp. 1-18). doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199982981.003.0011. Retrieved from http://site.ebrary.com/id/10686695

Gass, S. M., Behney, J., & Plonsky, L. (2013). *Second language acquisition: An introductory course* (4th ed.), New York, NY: Routledge.

Gebhard, M. (2010). Teacher education in changing times: A systemic functional linguistics (SFL) perspective. *TESOL Quarterly*, *44*(4) 797-803.

Gee, J.P. (1996*). Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses* (2nd ed.). London, England: Taylor & Francis.

Gee, J. P. (2001). Reading as situated language: A sociocognitive perspective. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 44* (8), 714-725, New York, NY: Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (2004). *Situated language and learning: A critique of traditional schooling*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (2008). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gee, J.P. (2014). Decontextualized language: A problem, not a solution. *International Multilingual Research Journal, 8*(1), 9-23.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc, Publishers.

Gibbons, P. (2009). *English learners, academic literacy, and thinking: Learning in the challenge zone*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Gibbons, P. (2002). *Scaffolding language, scaffolding learning: Teaching second language learners in the mainstream classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann

Glasser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine.

Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. Boston: Pearson.

Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Goldenberg, C. (2008). Teaching English language learners: What the research does—and does not—say. *American Educator, 32*(2), 8–11.

Hakuta, K. (2000). How long does it take English learners to attain proficiency? Retrieved from http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/13w7m06g

Halliday, M.A.K., & Matthiessen, C.M.I.M. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *Language as a social semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning.* London: Edward Arnold.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1983). Ethnography: Principles in practice. New York, NY: Tavistock.

Haneda, M. (2014a). From academic language to academic communication: Building on English learners' resources. *Linguistics and Education, 26,* 126-135. doi:htpp//dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2014.01.004

Haneda, M. (2014b). Why should we care about academic language? *Linguistics and Education, 26*, 88-91. doi:htpp//dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2014.01.007

Harmon, J. M., Wood, K. D., & Medina, A. L. (2009). Vocabulary learning in the content area: research-based practices for middle and secondary school classrooms. in Wood, K. D., & Blanton, W. E. (ed.) *Literacy Instruction for Adolescents: Research-based practices.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Holliday, A. (2002). *Doing and writing qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Honigsfeld, A., & Cohan, A. (2008). The power of two: Lesson study and SIOP help teachers instruct ELLS. *Journal of Staff Development*, *29*(1), 24-28.

Honigsfeld, A., & Dove, M. (2012). Collaborative practices to support all students. *Principal Leadership,* 40-44.

Huberman, M., & Miles, M.B. (2005). *The qualitative researcher's companion*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Humphrey, S., & Sharpe, T. (2015). Peeling the PEEL: Integrating language and literacy in the middle years. *Literacy Learning: The Middle Years, 23* (2), New South Wales, Australia.

Iddings, J., Lan, S., & de Oliveira, L.C. (2014). Writing a dissertation proposal: Genre expectations. In L.C de Oliveira & J. Iddings (Eds.), *Genre pedagogy across the curriculum: Theory and application in U.S. classrooms and contexts* (pp. 140-159). Bristol, CT: Equinox.

Kelley, J. G., Lesaux, N. K., Keiffer, M. J., & Faller, S. E. (2010). Effective vocabulary instruction in the urban middle school. *The Reading Teacher, 64* (1), pp. 5-14, doi: 10.1598/RT.64.1.1

Kena, G., Musu-Gillette, L. Robinson, J., Wang, X., Rathbun, A., Zhang, J., … RTI International. (2016). *The condition of education 2016* (NCES 2016-144). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Khong, T., D., H., & Saito, E. (2014). Challenges confronting teachers of English language learners. *Educational Review. 66*(2), 210-225.

Kim, J., & Herman, J. L. (2012). *Understanding patterns and precursors of ELL success subsequent to reclassification* (CRESST Report 818). Los Angeles, CA: University of California, National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST).

Kim, J. Y., Walker, C., & Manarino-Leggett. (2012). Equipping classroom teachers for English language learners. *TESOL Journal, 3*(4), 722-741. *doi:10.1002/tesj.40*

Kline, R.B. (2009). *Becoming a behavioral science researcher: A guide to producing research that matters.* New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Krashen, S. (2011). Academic proficiency (language and content) and the role of strategies. *TESJ Journal, 28*(1), 381-393.

Lantolf, J.P. (2006). Sociocultural theory and L2: State of the art. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 28*(1), 67-109.

Lantolf, P.J., & Thorne, S.L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development.* Oxford, ENG: Oxford University Press.

LaRusso, M. (2016). Contributions of academic language, perspective taking, and complex reasoning to deep reading comprehension. *Journal of Research in Educational Effectiveness, 9*: 2, 201-222.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (2003). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Lawrence, J. F., Capostoto, L., Branum-Martin, L., White, C., & Snow, C. E., (2012). Language proficiency, home-language status, and English vocabulary development: A longitudinal follow-up of the word generation program. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition, 15*(3), 437-451.

Lawrence, S., Rabinowitz, R., & Perna, H. (2008). Reading Instruction in Secondary English Language Arts Classrooms. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *48*(1), 39–64.

https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070802226279

Lawrence, J. F., White, C., & Snow, C. E. (2010). The words students need. *Educational Leadership, 68*(2), 23-26.

Lee, O., Quinn, H., & Valdes, G. (2013). Science and Language for English Language Learners in Relation to Next Generation Science Standards and with Implications for Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. *Educational Researcher*, *42*(4), 223–233. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X13480524

Lee, C.D., Spratley, A., & Carnegie Corporation. (2010). *Reading in the disciplines: The challenges of adolescent literacy. Final report from Carnegie Corporation of New York's Council of Advancing Adolscent Literacy*. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation.

Legard, R., Keegan, J., & Ward, K. (2003). In-depth interviews. In Richie, J. & Lewis, J. (Eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice*, 139-168, London: SAGE.

Lemke, J. (1990). *Talking science: language, learning, and values*. Norwood, N.J: Ablex Pub. Corp.

Lesaux, N. K. (2012). Reading and reading instruction for children of low-income and non-English speaking households. *The Future of Children, 22*(2), 73-88.

Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Faller, S. E. (2010). Exploring sources of reading comprehension difficulties among language minority learners and their classmates in early adolescence. *American Educational Research Journal*, *47*(3), 596–632. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831209355469

Leung, C. (2014). Researching language and communication in schooling. *Linguistics and Education 26*, 136-144. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2014.01.002

Martin, J. (2009). Genre and language learning: A social semiotic perspective. *Linguistics and Education: An International Research Journal*, *20*(1), 10–21. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2009.01.003

Marzano, R. J. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement: Research on what works in schools.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Matthiessen, M.I.M., C. (2006). Educating for advanced capacities: exploring the meaning-making resources of languages systemic-functionally. In Byrnes, H. (2006). *Advanced language learning: The contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky*. New York, NY: Continuum.

McFarland, J., Hussar, B., Wang, X., Zhang, J., Wang, K., Rathbun, A., Barmer, A., Forrest Cataldi, E., & Bullock Mann, F. (2018). The Condition of Education 2018 (NCES 2018-144). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo. asp?pubid=2018144

Medina, A. L., & Pilonieta, P. (2009). Meeting the needs of English language learners in the middle and secondary classroom. In Wood, K., & Blanton, W. (2009). *Literacy instruction for adolescents: research-based practice*. New York: Guilford Press.

Moore, J. (2018). Discovering linguistic knowledge with English learners and their teachers: Applying systemic functional linguistics concepts through design-based research. *TESOL Quarterly, 52* (4), 1022-1036.

Moore, J., & Schleppegrell, M. (2014). Using a functional linguistics metalanguage to support academic language development in the English language arts. *Linguistics and Education, 26,* 92-105. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.11016/j.linged.2014.01.005

Nagy, W. E, (1988). *Teaching vocabulary to improve reading comprehension*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Nagy, W., & Townsend, D. (2012). Words as tools: Learning academic vocabulary as language acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly, 47*(1), 91-108.

O'Hallaron, C. L., Palincsar, A. S., & Schelpegrell, M. J. (2015). Reading science: Using systemic functional linguistics to support critical language awareness. *Linguistics and Education, 32*(2015) 55-67.

Patton, M.Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications, Inc.

Pearson, P. D., & Gallagher, M. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *8*(3), 317-334.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York, NY: International Universities Press.

Pritchard, R., & O' Hara, S. (2017). Framing the Teaching of Academic Language to English Learners: A Delphi Study of Expert Consensus. *TESOL Quarterly*, *51*(2), 418–428. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.337

RAND Reading Study Group. (2002). Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in *reading comprehension.* Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

Ranney, S. (2012). Defining and teaching academic language: Developments in K-12 ESL. *Language and Linguistics Compass, 6*(9), 560-574.

Rose, D., & Martin, J. R. (2012). *Learning to write, reading to learn: Genre, knowledge, and pedagogy in the Sydney school*. Bristol, CT: Equinox.

Ross, T., Kena, G., Rathbun, A., KeawalRamani, A., Zhang, J., Kristapovich, P., Manning, E. (2012). *Higher education: Gaps in access and persistence study*. U.S. Department of Education Statistics, Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Rubinstein-Avila, E., & Lee, E.H. (2014). Secondary teachers and English language learners (ELLs): Attitudes, preparation, and implications. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and ideas, 87*(5), 187-191.

Scarcella, R. (2003). *Academic English: A conceptual framework*. Irvine, CA: Linguistic Minority Research Institute

Schall-Leckrone, L. (2017). Genre Pedagogy: A framework to prepare history teachers to teach language. *TESOL Quarterly, 51*(2), 358-382.

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2015). Teaching the languages of schooling for equity and quality in education. Anne Arbor, MI: University of Michigan.

Schleppegrell, M. (2001). Linguistic features of the language of schooling. *Linguistics and Education, 12*(4), 431-459.

Schleppegrell, M. (2009). Language in academic subject areas and classroom instruction: What is academic language and how can we teach it? Anne Arbor, MI: University of Michigan.

Schleppegrell, M. J, (2012). Academic language in teaching and learning. *Elementary School Journal, 112*(3), 409-418.

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2013). The role of metalanguage in supporting academic language development. *Language Learning 63*(1), 153-170.

Schleppegrell, M. J., & Colombi, C. (2002). *Developing advanced literacy in first and second languages: Meaning with power*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Schleppegrell, M. J. & de Oliveira, L.C. (2006). An integrated language and content approach for history teachers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes,5*(4), 254-268.

Schleppegrell, M.J., & O'Hallaron, C. L. (2011). Teaching academic language in L2 secondary settings. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics. 3*1, 3-18.

Schoenbach, R., Greenleaf, C., & Murphy, L. (2012). *Reading for understanding: How reading apprenticeship improves disciplinary learning in secondary and college classrooms* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schulze, J. (2015). Academic language, English language learners, and systemic functional linguistics: Connecting theory and practice in teacher education. *The CATESOL Journal, 27*(1), 109-130.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: a guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (4th ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.

Short, D. J., & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for adolescent English language learners – A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Slavin, R. E., Cheung, A., Goff, C., & Lake., C. (2008). Effective reading programs for middle and high schools: A best evidence synthesis. *Reading Research Quarterly, 43*(3), 290-322.

Snow, C. (1983). Literacy and language: Relationships during the preschool years. *Harvard Educational Review, 53*(2), 165-189.

Snow, C. E. (2010). Academic language and the challenge for learning about science. *Science, 328*(5977), 450-452.

Snow, C.E., Lawrence, J. F., & White, C. (2009). Generating knowledge of academic language among urban middle school students. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 2*(4), 325-344.

Snow, C. E., & Ucelli, P. (2010). Academic language and the challenge for learning about science. *Science, 328*(5977), 450-452.

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

Stake, R.E. (2000). *Multiple Case Study Analysis*. New York: Guilford Press.

Thomas, W. P., & Collier, V. P. (2003). The multiple benefits of dual language. *Educational Leadership, 61* (2), 61-64.

Thorndyke, P. W. (1977). Cognitive structures in comprehension and memory of narrative discourse. *Cognitive Psychology, 9*, 77-110.

Tigert, J. M., & Madigan Peercy, M. (2018). Preparing to teach both content and language: Four ESOL teacher candidates' experiences. *TESOL Journal*, *doi:10.1002/tesj. 358*

Uccelli, P., Galloway, E.P., Barr, C. D., Meneses, A., Dobbs, C. L., & Sanchez, E. (2014). Core academic language skills (CALS): An expanded operational

construct and novel instrument to chart school-relevant language proficiency in pre-adolescent and adolescent learners. *Applied Psycholinguistics, 36*(5), 1077-1109.

Uccelli, P., Galloway, E.P., Barr, C. D., Meneses, A., & Dobbs, C. L. (2015). Beyond vocabulary: Exploring cross-disciplinary academic-language proficiency and its association with reading comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly, 50*(3), 337-356.

Vogt, M.E. (1989). *A study of the congruence between pre-service teachers' and cooperating teachers' attitudes and practices towards high and low achievers.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

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

Wells, G. (1994). The complementary contributions of Halliday and Vygotsky to a language-based theory of learning. *Linguistics and Education, 6*(1), 41-90.

WIDA Consortium. (2012). The WIDA standards framework and its theoretical foundations. Madison, WI: Board of Regents of the University of Winsconsin. Retrieve from http://www.wida.us/aboutUs/AcademicLanguage/

Wong-Fillmore, L., Snow, C. E. (2000). What teachers need to know about language. *U.S Department of Education Office of Educaional Research and Improvement.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Wood, D., Bruner, J. S., & Ross, G. (1976). The role of tutoring in problem solving. *Child Psychology & Psychiatry & Allied Discplines, 17*(2), 89-100.

Yin, R., K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods, (2nd ed.).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Zwiers, J. (2006). Integrating academic language, thinking, and content: Learning scaffolds for non-native speakers in the middle grades. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *5* (2006), 317-332.

Zwiers, J., O'Hara, S., & Pritchard, R.H. (2014). *Common core standards in diverse classrooms: Essential practices for developing academic language and disciplinary literacy*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

APPENDIX A:

OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT PROTOCOL

Teacher Observation Protocol

Teacher: ____ Date: __________

Lesson: ____ Time: ________

Lesson Objectives:

____

Academic Language Goals:

____

____

What academic language did the teacher focus on? How did the teacher articulate academic language goals?

____

____

Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Goals:

____

____

What goals did the teacher establish? How did the teacher articulate reading comprehension goals?

____

____

How does the classroom provide information to students about academic language and reading comprehension strategies?

APPENDIX B:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL PHASE I

How can an Exploration into Teachers' Understandings and Operationalization of Academic Language and Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction Inform the Way Teachers Shape Instructional Practices for English Learners in Secondary School?

Interview questions phase I:

1. How did you become an English teacher?

Teachers will share information about their backgrounds, how their prior experiences such as family, school, and work experience led them to become teachers and where they are in their careers. This includes years of teaching experience both in English and ESL, their studies and professional certifications.

2. How do you operationalize and instantiate academic language and reading comprehension strategy teaching in your instructional practice for ELs?
    a. How do you construct the concepts of academic language, second language acquisition, ESL instruction, and explicit comprehension strategy instruction in reading?

Teachers will be asked to share information about their understandings of the concepts named above.

    b. How do you provide and modify instruction for ELs on academic language and explicit reading comprehension strategies?

Teachers will be asked to share information of their professional backgrounds and experiences in teaching and in teaching ELs, and of the considerations they make when making instructional decisions for ESL instruction.

    c. How are academic language and reading comprehension instruction operationalized in actual classroom instructional and learning practices?

Teachers will be asked to explain differences between their theory (as stated in their understandings) and actual classroom practice.

APPENDIX C:
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL PHASE II

How do different perspectives on academic language instruction result in significantly different teaching practices among teachers of ELs? Teachers will be asked to describe the way they help ELs acquire academic language and use reading comprehension strategies.

Interview Questions Phase II:

1. How are English content area teachers' understandings of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction altered because of paradigm shifts experienced during planning and instructional practice?

   a. How are your understandings of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction altered because of paradigm shifts experienced during planning and instructional practice?

Teachers will be asked to reconstruct and provide details about a lesson in which they sought to address academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction for ELs.

   b. What instructional changes do you take into consideration for planning and instruction on academic language and reading comprehension at the intermediate stage of the observation period? Teachers will be asked to discuss how their understandings of instruction for English language learners change as their instructional practices unfold and evolve overtime.

Teachers will also be asked to discuss how their educational and professional backgrounds influence and shape their own instructional decisions.

APPENDIX D:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL PHASE III

Interview Questions Phase III

1. How do teachers' explorations into their own instructional practices contribute to paradigmatic changes with regards to instruction for secondary ELs?

   a. How do you describe the re-shaping of your understandings of instruction for secondary ELs at the end of the study?

   b. What new or variations to current instructional strategies for academic language development and reading comprehension strategy use will you incorporate into your content area instruction?

Teachers will be asked to reflect on their experiences teaching ELs and on the way the concepts under study have been applied in their instructional practices. They will also be asked to describe how the experiences teaching ELs and addressing the concepts of academic language and reading comprehension strategy instruction will influence their future instructional practice.

APPENDIX E

Table E1

Categories, Codes, and Example Quotations

Category	Code (instances)	Description	Example Quotation
Second Language Development	Academic Language	AL including lexicon and syntax.	***Perry:*** *"There are several definitions of academic terms. From my instructional perspective academic language represents terms that are high frequency words …grammar, vocabulary and contextual words, also words with multiple parts".* ***Perry****: "As we progress through the semester the academic language does not change, but the instructional lessons become more rigorous… each lesson contains… presentation listing the academic language and then secondary bullets with examples of the expectation including models.".*
	Academic Language v. Everyday Language	Difference between the use of academic and every day conversational language	***Carter****: "If I get a response that uses slang, I would stop and explain that this is "slang" a form of street talk. It could be something as simple as, "I didn't see nobody" and then the correct way to say it is. "I didn't see anybody". And I would explain why "nobody" is incorrect and "anybody" is academically correct".* ***Perry****: "I do understand that interpersonal communication represents language skills that are utilized in …. Those things are called day-to-day language or functional or social literacy".*
	Second Language Development	ELs' second language development	***Perry****: "Most of my students are at the speech emergence level. They can produce simple sentences. The end goal is to get them headed towards or at the intermediate level where they can answer questions such as... Any question that would get them to a higher-level".*

	BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills.	Carter: *"I would say that, from my experience, in watching my students, they would have that slang, they would catch-up on that quicker than actual more formal or academic language".* ***Perry****: "Children often learn greatly through interpersonal communication with the primary setting in the school. They do it in through their interactions".*
	CALPS	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills.	***Carter****: "I think it depends on their level and their starting point. It's more challenging to start when I know the student is SIFE or limited formal education. It is kind of picking up where they left off in a way, academically enforcing it".*
	WIDA-ACCESS Test	Teacher knowledge of WIDA model and ACCESS for ELs assessment data.	***Carter:*** *"ACCESS actually assesses the language proficiency in the four domains of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The test is being conducted in tiers. Some would be a Tier A or pre-A for as opposed to students who are more proficient might be a Tier B and Tier C".*
Instruction	Reading Comprehension	Reading comprehension instruction.	***Perry****: "To start out, I may begin with a very simple story and then lead up to more complex ones which will include visualization. The end goal is to get them headed towards or at the intermediate level where they can answer questions such as "what would happen if the character…", or "what do you think about when...". Any question that would get them to a higher-level sentence response".*
	ERCSI	Explicit Reading Comprehension Strategy Instruction	***Carter****: "So, when we read a text I will give a handout to the students that will give numbers. What I understand and how I feel. So, this way I can gauge and see what they understood and if they can restate the paragraph in their own words. We also work on annotating skills.*

			We read a paragraph of the text together. And then I will model them as to how I annotate this and what my thinking process is. It is much like I do, we do, you do".
	Instructional Decisions	Teacher instructional choices	***Carter**: "The first thing I think about is my audience, what level my students are. Are they novice, are they intermediate, are they advanced? And based on that I build my lesson. I try to build it to start from something simple and build it up. I always go back to that base lesson".* ***Carter:** "Well when I choose my text, I choose text they can relate to and make their own personal connection to. ELL's students have interrupted education".*
	Instructional Strategy	Instructional strategy used to communicate knowledge	***Perry:** "So, my focus is to increase their vocabulary and comprehension through visualization strategies. This is very important to the ELL learner. This can be through comic strips, story development. Whatever is comfortable for the student*".
	Standards	Standards teachers use for instruction.	***Perry**: "Well, I use the common core standards to develop objectives and assessment questions. These terms such as central idea, inference, theme and etcetera are taught at the beginning of each semester. Students have flash cards with these standards and terms. As we progress through the semester the academic language does not change, but the instructional lessons become more rigorous".*
	Instructional Focus	Teacher instructional focus	***Perry**: "For example, in teaching standard 1 inference this semester, I used cold text Chateau de Shamrock for my ELL students. When teaching standard 2, central idea, I used the same text to teach my ELL students. But I chose a cold text for other population. This is because ELL*

			students often work best with text they have seen before. Because the focus is the language".
	Culturally Responsive Instruction	Teacher adjustments to instruction based on students' background and diversity.	***Perry**: "When selecting text to use to enhance reading comprehension demographics and ethnicities are always considered. For example, the predominance of my class guides my decision in the text that I use. Warm text which is text we have read before in a highly populated ELL class. This means that the student is not having to learn text, and this focuses on the strategy".*
	Lesson Preparation	Teachers' planning choices for content instruction.	***Carter:** "When I needed to introduce vocabulary, I sat with the English department chair and we went over the curriculum for English 1. Based on that I built my lesson and vocabulary instruction. Some students were introduced to the excel method and the seven steps of vocabulary acquisition".*
Learning and Assessment of Student Learning	Learning Tasks	Tasks assigned to students to demonstrate learning.	***Carter**: "So, when we read a text I will give a handout to the students that will have numbers. What I understand and how I feel. So, this way I can gauge and see what they understood and if they can restate the paragraph in their own words. We also work on annotating skills. We read a paragraph of the text together".*
	Assessment of Student Learning	Reference made to the way teachers assess student learning in class.	***Perry**: "The lesson that you came to observe was centered around claims and evidence around Standard 1. Students were to present a claim and present it with evidence. Terms such as claim, evidence, supporting detail, counter claims, central idea, conclusion… So this allowed me to view the classes' understanding of these terms to ensure that they gathered all the attributes and articulate that".*

Lesson Delivery	Reference to the way teachers communicated information and concepts students were to learn.	***Perry:*** *"To start out, I may begin with a very simple story and then lead up to more complex ones which will include visualization. The end goal is to get them headed towards or at the intermediate level where they can answer questions such as "what would happen if the character…", or "what do you think about when...". Any question that would get them to a higher-level sentence response".*
Task Complexity	Level of difficulty of tasks assigned to learners and modifications made to meet the needs of learners.	***Carter:*** *"For instance, when we used The Road Not Taken they had to use all the steps of reading, paraphrasing, annotating, identifying all the literary devices. They had to answer comprehensive questions and their project was to create a one-pager for the poem.... And for that I provided sentence starters: I can connect to the poem when…. Or I had to connect to the poem. They had to use their own words and provide presentation as well".*
Teacher-Student Interactions	Teachers' engagement and interaction with students in learning process.	***Carter****: "I did an activity with segregation… I told the kids if you are not from this country, you stand in that corner. And you if you are from here go stand in that corner." "You guys I don't like you because you are from the other country. "The kids didn't understand the first".* ***Perry****: "So the observation that occurred during 1st block was a small ELL population and the class was a predominantly English lesson with a traditional focus. In this case I had a co-teacher in the class with me and her role is to re-enforce the expectations".*
Teaching Challenges	Reference made to difficulties teachers	***Perry****: "The challenging side of this instruction is making sure that the teachers do not lose the student in the development of the process.*

		encounter when teaching ELs.	*Anytime you have ELL students you have to keep them actively engaged in the reading process”.* ***Perry**: “The challenge becomes when I must co-teach. That means that my co-teacher has a focus on my ELL population and I must trust them to help me ensure that these students are gaining the knowledge”.*
	Student Educational Background	Understanding students’ levels and background for planning.	***Perry:** “Most of my students are at the speech emergence level. This means they have a minimal amount of reading comprehension skills. They can produce simple sentences. They can answer the basic who, what, why, when and where”.*
	Teacher Expectations	Reference made to teachers’ expectations for student learning.	***Carter:** “The unit that you observed dealt with Poetry. And the language that I chose was mainly literary devices that are mainly associated with Poetry. Everything was decided upon when I met with the English Department Chair that would help and support my students with the North Carolina Exams”.*
Teacher Expertise	Operational Theories	Reference to understanding of AL and ERCS for ELs.	***Perry:** “From my instructional perspective, academic language represents those terms that are high frequency words”.* *Perry: “If you want students to hear it, you talk. If you want them to learn it, they talk”.*
	Teacher Reflections on Reading Instruction	Reference to teachers’ comments about teaching reading comprehension.	***Carter**: “I really like using the one-pagers. I liked it because it was a way to tie everything together. What I would like to try to do with them is having a Socratic seminar; just taking it up another level. I have done Socratics in the past and I loved it, and the kids loved it because it was a way for the kids to communicate*”. ***Perry**: “One thing I have noticed is with this assignment that I have done every year, I am not as focused on the academic language as I am the*

		presentation of information. I need to go back and rebuild this presentation, this activity, and ensure that students are assigned a way to use more academic language in their presentation versus focusing on providing supporting detail of claims and information".
Teacher Educational Background	Educational and teaching background.	***Perry:*** *I have taught grades 6-9. I have taught language arts and English 1. I have a degree in in English from UNCC and a master's in degree in education from Strayer University".*
Teacher Knowledge	Reference to teacher content knowledge of subject area.	***Perry:*** *"One of the greatest assets to increasing academic language is to create semantic maps".* ***Carter:*** *"I am trilingual. My first two languages are Hebrew and Romanian".*
Teaching Experience	Teaching experience in grade and subject area.	***Perry: "****I have 16 years of teaching experience". "I have taught language arts and English I".* ***Carter****: "I have 13 years of teaching experience". I have taught grades 7 through 12, mainly ESL".*
Language Development Focus	Understanding L2 and developing students' academic language.	***Perry****: "Most of my students are at the speech emergence level. This means they have a minimal amount of reading comprehension skills. They can produce simple sentences. They can answer the basic who, what, why, when and where".*
Language Diversity	Language diversity, registers or languages to academic language	***Perry:*** *It is so important for teachers to be culturally responsible to their classroom audience".* ***Perry****: "Classrooms are full of language diversity. And when there is language diversity, there is a significant need to understand how each group and culture comprehend a single language".*

APPENDIX F

Table F1

Coded Lesson Plan Elements by Lesson Units per Teacher

Unit	Elements	Carter	Perry
Lesson Unit 1	Focus	• Rhetorical and Literary Devices	• Rhetorical Devices
	Theme	• Nonfiction - Rhetorical Devices	• Modes of Persuasion
	Content Goals	• Determine why an author uses certain rhetorical devices	• Analyze an author's structure of a text, order of events within text, and creation of effects
	Language Goals	• Restate the meaning of the words logos, ethos, and pathos	• Analyze an author's structure of a text, order of events within text, and creation of effects
	Academic Language	• Logos, ethos, pathos, rhetoric, advertisement, allusion, ethical, character, emotional, logical, exalted, symphony	• Plot, setting, point of view, genre, order of events, logos, ethos, pathos, modes of persuasion
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Restating the meaning of words • Restate the events in a given text to demonstrate comprehension	• Making connections and visualizing: Direct instruction and guided practice
	Task Description	• Using sentence frames create an advertisement that illustrates logos, ethos, or pathos.	• Read and answer the questions provided with

		• Use complete sentences to describe why a person is buying or selling something (ethical, emotional, logical)	the link to the text. • Using teacher provided scenario, students will write a persuasive speech using the ethos and pathos strategies
Lesson Unit 2	Lesson Focus	• Poetry	• Short Story: Desiree's Baby
	Theme	• What is Poetry?	• Reading Comprehension
	Content Goals	• Introduce poetry; the concepts of figurative language, simile, metaphor, imagery, and tone	• Make inferences from texts from texts and identify author's point of view
	Language Goals	• Restate meanings from lines in poems explaining what they mean and how they make one feel	• Not stated
	Academic Language	• Simile, metaphor, stanza, narrator, theme, imagery, senses, vivid, tone	• Juxtaposition, obscure, annotation
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Finding main idea of a given text	• Making inferences from context
	Task Description	• Chart Line- What it means- What it makes the reader feel • Use sentence frames and chart to restate meanings from poems	• Based on Desiree's Baby's short story, students will write their own one-page story
Lesson Unit 3	Lesson Focus	• Literary Devices/Poetry	• Poetry
	Theme	• My People (Langston Hughes)	• N/A

	Content Goals	• Understand literary devices as stated in various forms of poetry	• Understand literary devices as they appear in poetry
	Language Goals	• Write and orally provide information about someone's origin and to answer WH questions of the text	• To write a poem including 4 stanzas with 4 lines per stanza.
	Academic Language	• artistic, movement, devices, theme, literary, compare	• Not stated
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Demonstrate comprehension by answering open-ended questions	• Making inferences from given texts Asking inferential questions
	Task Description	• Answer questions about literary devices & explain their application	• Writing: write a poem including 4 stanzas, and 4 lines per stanza
Lesson Unit 4	Lesson Focus	• Fiction	• Reading Informational Text
	Theme	• Poetry	• Reading: Texas Gunman opens Fire at Texas High School
	Content Goals	• Determine the author's purpose in a text and analyze how he uses literary devices to advance purpose	• Identify cause and effect
	Language Goals	• Understand literary devices • Paraphrase text to demonstrate comprehension of literary devices	• Use a KWL chart • Cite specific textual evidence that demonstrates cause and effect

	Academic Language	• paraphrase, connections, self, diverge, narrator, regret, travel, symbolize, sigh, choice, attitude, tone, shifts	• Not stated
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Making connections • Restating • Asking questions (teacher directed)	• Making connections, inferencing, using prior knowledge
	Task Description	• Read the Road Not Taken (R. Frost) • Select favorite stanza • Make connections to self • Choice: questions about students moving to the U.S., what if ... choices	• Use evidence from the text to complete KWL chart
Lesson Unit 5	Lesson Focus	• Poetry	• Reading informational text
	Theme	• Sonnet	• Space Systems: All about Eclipses
	Content Goals	• Understand the concept of sonnet in poetry, its historical origin, and representatives • Read aloud and identify the parts of a sonnet	• Activate prior knowledge by making predictions about the text. Demonstrate text comprehension by answering information questions •
	Language Goals	• Use a cloze task to complete sentences explaining sonnet. Describe a person in 4 sentences	• Use vocabulary terms from the text when answering comprehension questions

	Academic Language	• Sonnet, tragicomedy, romance, playwright, quatrains, couplets, rhyme scheme	• exploration, colonize, massive, consider, potential, habitation, habitable
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Making connections • Restating: Read each line and restate to explain meanings	• Activating prior knowledge by making predictions about the text
	Task Description	• Introduction THINK activity • Use cloze task to explain concept Definition of sonnet • Biography of Shakespeare • Cloze task, read-aloud	• Read text answer comprehension questions
Lesson Unit 6	Lesson Focus	• Literary Devices	• Reading Comprehension Review
	Theme	• Literary terms/definitions: Sonnet	• Not stated
	Content Goals	• Use prior knowledge to understand and interpret meanings of literary devices	• Read and discuss passages, and word choice and its impact comprehension
	Language Goals	• Understand how literary devices are used in poetry (sonnet) • Read and restate author's meanings	• Read and discuss passages, and word choice and its impact comprehension
	Academic Language	• Personification, imagery, symbolism, metaphor, hyperbole	• Not stated
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Restating what the text says in one's own words • Finding the main idea of a text	• Making inferences to figure out meaning from text

	Task Description	• Complete literary device definitions • Song: John Legend's All of Me. Pre-reading, read aloud, sing	• Teacher will read aloud and select segments from texts to explain word choice
Lesson Unit 7	Lesson Focus	• Reading Review	• Tests Preparation Strategies
	Theme	• Test-Taking Practice	• Question Dissection
	Content Goals	• Practice reading test comprehension questions and answer choices assessment	• Reading Comprehension Review: Use reading comprehension strategies
	Language Goals	• Understand prefixes and suffixes and their use in texts.	• Model strategies prior to student cooperative and independent work
	Academic Language	• Prefixes: un, dis; suffixes: ic, ful, ly. Vocabulary: climate, unrealistic, unkind, determine	• Not stated
	Reading Comprehension Strategy	• Not stated	• Activate prior knowledge and paraphrasing (restating)
	Task Description	• Teacher will show students how to understand meanings of questions	• Question dissection: Teacher will model test passage read aloud, question paraphrasing, and explanations