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# A Qualitative Case Study of the Influence of Cognitive Coaching on Elementary International Teachers in a Southeastern School District

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A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE  
COACHING ON ELEMENTARY INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS IN A  
SOUTHEASTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT

By  
Dawn L. Scott

A Dissertation Submitted to the  
Gardner-Webb University College of Education  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University  
2024

## Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Dawn L. Scott under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University College of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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Jeremiah 29:11 says, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” To God, be the glory, for the things he has done for me. First and foremost, I want to thank God for his guidance and strength that he has given me to fulfill this journey. I am forever grateful for the blessings that he has bestowed upon my life. There were many days I wanted to give up, but with his grace and mercy, I prevailed.

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## **Abstract**

A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE COACHING ON ELEMENTARY INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS IN A SOUTHEASTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT: Scott, Dawn L., 2024: Dissertation, Gardner Webb University.

This dissertation presents a qualitative case study investigating the influence of cognitive coaching on elementary international teachers within a southeastern school district. Guided by four research questions, the study delved into the experiences and perceptions of international teachers participating in cognitive coaching sessions, aiming to elucidate the influence of this professional development approach on instructional practices, classroom management, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction. Through in-depth semi-structured interviews, data were collected and analyzed to address the research questions. Findings revealed that cognitive coaching strategies play a pivotal role in enhancing instructional practices, fostering effective classroom management techniques, overcoming communication/language barriers, and refining the delivery of instruction among international teachers. Participants articulated a deepened awareness of their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching, highlighting its role in facilitating reflective teaching practices and empowering them to adapt instructional strategies to meet diverse student needs. Furthermore, the study uncovered both similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and sponsoring agencies, underscoring the importance of tailored professional development approaches to address diverse cultural and educational backgrounds. Additionally, international teachers

identified specific areas where they perceive a need for additional support beyond cognitive coaching, including cultural competency training, language proficiency development, and resources for navigating administrative procedures. Overall, this dissertation contributes to a nuanced understanding of the influence of cognitive coaching on the professional growth and support needs of elementary international teachers.

*Keywords:* cognitive coaching, international teachers, classroom management, communication/language barriers, delivery of instruction

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

International teachers are being hired in increasing numbers to fill teacher vacancies. The Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement conducts a survey on supply and demand in the field of education at the onset of each school year to collect data on educators entering the workforce, individuals deciding to leave their classrooms or careers, and positions that remain unfilled (Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, & Advancement, 2021). In 2021-2022, South Carolina School districts reported that approximately 6,900 teachers from the prior academic year did not return to an instructional post in the same district (Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, & Advancement, 2021). The report indicated a 15.5% increase over the previous year's reported departures. In September-October 2021, approximately 1,060 instructional positions remained unfilled, which is the most sizable number of vacancies identified since the initial supply and demand survey was conducted in 2001.

The teacher shortage situation has existed in the United States (U.S.) for over two decades. Public schools in 48 states and the District of Columbia have recently reported teacher shortages in math, 46 states have reported deficiencies in special education and science, and 41 states have reported shortages in foreign languages since 1990-1991 (De Brey et al., 2021). Despite the fact that every state has documented teacher shortages by the U.S. Department of Education (2017), the situation is more difficult in some states. The severity of the teacher scarcity varies among schools and districts, with some reporting worse shortages than others. The South Carolina Department of Education invests in numerous programs, such as the Program for Alternative Certification of Educators and the Rural Recruitment Initiative, to alleviate educator shortages. Other

states and the U.S. Department of Education are making similar efforts to address this critical situation (Bala, 2021). Unable to resolve the fundamental root causes of the teacher shortage, the nation's public education systems import teachers from abroad (Bala, 2021). International teachers from other nations are being employed to fill vacancies in schools. Visiting international teachers comprised approximately 4% of all recruits, up from 1% in 2020 and 5% a few years prior (Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, & Advancement, 2021). The teachers migrating to the U.S. are highly qualified, experienced, and looking for better prospects than their native nations can supply.

Currently, school districts are confronted with two of the most significant recruiting hurdles: securing highly qualified educators to fill teacher vacancies and expanding staff diversification (Heubeck, 2022). The exchange visitor teacher program, as stated by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, facilitates the participation of international teachers in authorized elementary and secondary educational institutions, thereby fostering the intellectual and cultural advancement of students and the school community (Bala, 2021). The South Carolina Department of Education and a few commercial firms sponsor J-1 visa teachers and deploy them in participating school districts to fill vacancies (South Carolina Department of Education, n.d.-a). Whether international teachers in the U.S. public school system can develop and provide teaching for self-directed learning warrants an investigation and analysis. All school districts in South Carolina must provide beginning teachers with a comprehensive support program (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017). The question of whether the beginning teacher support programs adequately satisfy the needs

of international teachers over a 3- to 5-year cycle also warrants investigation. First, we must seek to understand the unique needs of international teachers and then investigate if current induction programs align with their needs.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Many countries send teachers to the U.S. to work in public schools. The educational possibilities afforded in the U.S. due to the teacher shortage have prompted the U.S. government to implement various programs to encourage school districts to hire overseas educators (García & Weiss, 2020b). Favorable and unfavorable differences exist between these teachers' experiences in their home nations and their current ones (Sutcher et al., 2016). To be effective in the classroom, international teachers must overcome numerous challenges. These challenges include transitioning from a foreign educational system and culture to adjusting to the new classroom and community environments (Bala, 2021). According to Sahling and De Carvalho (2021), international teachers must frequently ruminate on their identities as individuals and professionals (as teachers) to ensure that their skills and self-confidence continue in their growth and development to manage and adjust to changes that could occur in multiple international school systems.

International teachers encounter several professional pressures and obstacles in the U.S. public education system. Professional pressures for international teachers include classroom management, coping with student behavior, interactions with colleagues and parents, and transitioning to U.S. classroom norms (Carroll et al., 2022). Frequently cited as impediments to effective classroom management are cultural differences, difficulties with parents resulting from a lack of awareness of U.S. cultural norms, and difficulties with language (Sarı & Yüce, 2020). Other substantial areas

affecting international teachers include their vision of an ideal classroom environment and the challenging issues they may encounter as they adapt to the complexity of living and working in a foreign nation (Lee, 2015).

Before and after their arrival in the U.S., international teachers must complete comprehensive training and orientation programs. Possessing relevant professional training and mentorship experiences can positively affect their job performance (Xu et al., 2021). Kombe (2017) contested the presumptions of practicability and argued that international teachers might experience difficulties because their classroom practices may not be easily transferable. Despite the increased interest in such research, Bense (2016) stated that there needs to be more evidence to support assumptions regarding international teacher mobility and movement. Failing to tackle the challenges international teachers face has ramifications for efficient classroom management and instruction for student performance, which may have a domino effect on school systems' qualification for varied types of funding, district progress report rating, student enrollment, and educator retention and recruiting (Baker, 2018). International teachers from emerging nations could continue to have difficulty with teaching, classroom management, and student success if these challenges are not addressed (Brown et al., 2019; Debreli & Ishanova, 2019). School districts must be aware of the challenges and ensure that induction programs and teacher support programs are provided to adequately support the unique needs of international teachers.

The current case study was located in a southeastern school district. The school district uses the cognitive coaching model to support new and veteran teachers with their growth as educators in the classroom. This case study sought to understand international

teachers' unique issues and needs by discovering whether the cognitive coaching model supports international teachers' professional responsibilities, personal struggles, and acclimation to the culture and community in a foreign country. Can cognitive coaching support international teachers in becoming self-directed and self-modifying to reflect and grow in their skills in classroom management, dealing with communication and language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to explore the influence of cognitive coaching on elementary international teachers in a southeastern school district. The study investigated the effects of cognitive coaching on international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and self-modify their teaching practices while working in the district. The study explored the role that cognitive coaching strategies have on international teachers' instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

Interviews with a semi-structured format may reveal favorable or unfavorable perceptions and influences of cognitive coaching. The present study aimed to examine the factors that influence the perspectives and attitudes of international teachers with regard to cognitive coaching. Further, the study investigated if cognitive coaching strategies promote and build capacity in international teachers' internal thinking processes, observable behaviors, and enhanced performance. Lastly, the study identified modifications to the current model of support required to satisfy the needs of international teachers in this study site.

## **Significance of the Study**

The study site district has the largest number of international teachers across the state. In this district, schools are in urban, suburban, and rural locations. Many of those sites are classified as Title I schools located in urban and rural areas and have several international teachers teaching in core content areas. The non-Title I schools have minimal numbers of international teachers teaching in the non-core content areas. The dissemination of the research findings has the potential to yield benefits for a wide range of stakeholders. The district officials who arrange professional learning opportunities, as well as school administrators, may gain from the perspectives of international teachers to develop professional learning opportunities that support their needs, such as management and the delivery of instruction. The input of international teachers may offer insight into the resources and support that international teachers require to adequately provide instruction, communicate effectively, and maintain their classrooms. If teachers are better educated and suited to provide instruction, they may enjoy higher levels of student accomplishment and greater fulfillment in their work, potentially having a beneficial effect on international teacher satisfaction and retention (Ryan & Ryan, 2019).

In addition, the data can assist the local school district's planning for the induction of international teachers and may aid in the growth of culturally relevant professional learning opportunities for teachers. Based on the adult learning theory and the cognitive coaching model, international teachers are likely to consider themselves more secure and capable if the study's findings are considered relevant research data (Tomlinson, 2019).

Just knowing what international teachers need will not enhance their teaching efficiency and learning experiences for students, but knowing and providing the

appropriate support international teachers need to perform their job adequately could enhance instructional effectiveness and result in higher student achievement (Eren, 2020). In addition, the study is expected to help international teachers by drawing site and district administrators' attention to the challenges international teachers encounter when transitioning to a new classroom setting. The study emphasizes actual teacher experiences and provides data that can aid in the creation of individualized professional learning to fulfill the demands of international teachers. If educators' needs are met, they are more inclined to feel inspired to do their best, contributing to increased student performance (Carr, 2020).

This research examined the outcomes of coaching rather than mentoring among international teachers. This qualitative case study provided qualitative research about the cognitive coaching model to discover if it may be employed to enhance the instructional methods of international teachers in preparation for the demands of U.S. classrooms. In addition, I hoped to discover if the cognitive coaching model helps international teachers develop self-directed learning to support issues with communication and language barriers, classroom management, and the delivery of instruction.

Finally, this study investigated the social and emotional support needed for international teachers. In addition, this insight may assist school officials in establishing and implementing strategic plans for professional learning initiatives for programs that facilitate the transition, assimilation, and retention of international teachers in the southeastern U.S. Understanding cultural variations in professional lives could aid school and district staff in comprehending and relating to international teachers more effectively (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019).



## **Theoretical Framework**

As the purpose of this study investigated the influence of a cognitive coaching model on international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and modify their teaching practices, it is appropriate to understand the theoretical framework of Knowles's (1984) adult learning theory, or andragogy, and the cognitive coaching process. Cox (2015) presupposed that adult learners have an extensive spectrum of understanding from which they draw and use to create new learning derived from past perceptions. Knowles enumerated these six past assumptions by explaining that adults will have far more life experiences than children and will have formed their preconceived notions. Adults emphasize the process more than the content taught, making the experience an essential factor. The teaching process entails reflection and an ongoing eagerness to improve continually. When teachers are encouraged to develop professionally and conditioned to think analytically, they can lead their improvement through the coaching process (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). The cognitive coaching model may improve teacher effectiveness if the six underlying assumptions are remembered (Taylor & Kroth, 2009).

Andragogy, or the theory of adult learning, is significant to this study because it concentrates on the four fundamental principles of the learning process. These are summed up as follows:

1. Adults must understand why they are learning something.
2. Adults must acquire knowledge through practice.
3. Adults view learning as finding solutions.
4. Adults learn most effectively when the subject matter is of direct significance (Culatta, 2018).

The cognitive coaching process was selected to support the research study. The cognitive coaching process was used to help explain a model of coaching to support services intended to improve instruction (Costa & Gamson, 2016). From the perspective of international teachers, the cognitive coaching process involves coaching strategies, internal thinking processes, observable behaviors, and enhanced performance. This process is accomplished through collaborating, consulting, evaluating, and cognitive coaching between a coach and a teacher.

During the post-conference meetings that integrate cognitive coaching strategies, the cognitive coach assists teachers in setting goals, processing the teaching experience, problem-solving the lesson, and acquiring timely self-reflection techniques, all of which address the four Knowles principles (Garmston et al., 1993). These principles are addressed by cognitive coaching, according to Garmston et al. (1993).

Self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-analysis are the primary objectives of cognitive coaching. During the initial stages of cognitive coaching, the coach must attain these skills from the teacher; however, as the processes advance, the teacher can draw them from within and convey them toward a personal interest (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

### **Research Questions**

This qualitative case study was framed through the following questions:

1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes

associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?

3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?

### **Rationale for the Methodology**

Yin (2018) asserted that qualitative investigations answer significant questions that quantitative statistics cannot explain. Qualitative investigations allow researchers to apply new knowledge and standards of practice to investigate problems formally.

According to Tenny et al. (2022), qualitative research is valuable when combining personal, social, and subjective skills through studying relationship influences. Yin (2018) suggested that scholars who have limited or no authority over the phenomenon should employ qualitative research by responding to questions of how and why, which are pertinent to this study, as it describes how international teachers perceive cognitive coaching.

Yin (2018) added that capturing the perspectives and views of participants is fundamental to a qualitative investigation; thus, researchers investigating theoretical perspectives from participants must engage in qualitative inquiry, as such observations permit the researcher to classify and comment on key discourses through personal constructions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Yin (2018), the goal of a

qualitative study is to offer information on the relationship between one phenomenon (i.e., the influence of cognitive coaching) and another phenomenon (i.e., the extent to which cognitive coaching influences international teachers' self-directedness).

The current study is a qualitative case study using a bound set of participants. This study's descriptive nature gives new knowledge to assist the instructional practice in cognitive coaching as well as the international teacher's capacity to develop and promote self-directed learning in classrooms for general education. Considering that the purpose of a qualitative study is to obtain a thorough comprehension of the perceptions of a population, a qualitative method was chosen for this study, as individual explanations from those most strongly linked with the concept provide an understanding of "how" research questions are answered (Yin, 2018).

This study employed in-depth semi-structured one-on-one interviews with 13 international teachers to provide additional descriptions of how cognitively coached teachers plan and promote teaching for self-directed learning in Grades K-5. This qualitative study intended to be a product rather than a research method, documenting and elucidating how international teachers construct teaching and support self-directed learning opportunities for classroom management, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction in general education classrooms.

### **Definition of Key Terms**

Several words have been established to clarify the scope and objective of the study.

### ***Case Study***

A qualitative research method in which the researcher conducts an in-depth

exploration of a program, event, activities, methodology, or one or more individuals. The cases under consideration are limited in terms of their temporal scope and the activities they encompass. Research prospects pertaining to these cases involve the comprehensive examination of information over an extended duration, employing a variety of methodologies for data gathering (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### ***International/Foreign-Born Teacher***

A person who was reared and educated in another country and moved to the U.S. to teach K-12 students permanently or temporarily (Waite, 2009).

### ***J-1 Visa***

The J-1 non-immigrant visa category, known as the exchange visitor teacher program, is designed for those who have been granted approval to engage in exchange programs that involve both job and study components. The individuals approved to participate are students as well as professionals (teachers, professors, researchers, physicians, and international intellectuals; U.S. Department of State, 2020). The American Immigration Council (2020) asserted that there exists no numerical restriction on the issuance of J-1 visas.

### ***Professional Development***

A highly effective, continuous, comprehensive, and classroom-focused activity aimed at improving teacher skills and expertise in the subject areas they teach to have a lasting and beneficial effect on classroom instruction and teacher quality (Bautista & Ortega-Ruíz, 2015).

### ***South Carolina Department of Education Exchange Visitor Teacher Program***

The J-1 exchange visitor teacher program, governed by the U.S. Department of

State, is sponsored by the South Carolina Department of Education. The J-1 visa is designated for educational and cultural exchange programs that have been officially acknowledged by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs within the U.S.

Department of State. The primary objective of the exchange visitor teacher program is to facilitate and enhance cultural and educational exchanges between the U.S. and various nations. Participating in exchange programs in the U.S. allows foreign nationals to share their experiences with their native communities. As a consequence of the U.S.

Department of State designation, the South Carolina Department of Education is permitted to sponsor foreign instructors to teach in South Carolina under the exchange visitor teacher program (South Carolina Department of Education, n.d.-a).

### ***Coaching***

A continuous provision of support in a classroom setting delivered by a certified and competent professional. A coach serves as a role model by employing research-based tactics and collaboratively engages with teachers in order to enhance these practices, utilizing the unique context of the teacher's own students (Witherspoon et al., 2021).

Coaching helps teachers change their practice by providing the continuous support they need when faced with learning new teaching strategies (Martínez, 2019).

### ***Coachee***

A teacher who is being coached by a coach trained in the cognitive coaching methodology (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

### ***Coaching Cycle***

A sequence of processes included in cognitive coaching, such as the planning conversation, the event, and the reflecting talk (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

***Cognitive Coach***

A professional with training and certification in cognitive coaching. The formal training consists of eight full-day sessions. Administrative, specialized, or instructional positions are available to coaches (Costa et al., 2016).

***Cognitive Coaching***

Refers to a nonjudgmental, developmental, and reflective paradigm based on current brain research, constructivist learning theory, and behaviors that promote learning the most effectively (Costa et al., 2016). It also refers to a form of mentorship to improve an individual's performance. This is accomplished by asking questions and paraphrasing remarks to guide the coach's mental process (coachee). Cognitive coaching develops an individual's capability to self-direct, self-manage, self-monitor, and self-modify (Costa et al., 2016).

***Coach's Strategies***

A range of identifying elements of cognitive coaching. This could include establishing rapport, listening, questioning, creating goals, or developing trust between a cognitive coach and the international teacher (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

***Internal Thinking Processes***

What is going on inside the other person's mind and heart: satisfaction, puzzlement, frustration, processes (metacognition), values, intentions, or decisions (Costa et al., 2016).

***Observable Behaviors***

What the cognitive coach can observe the coachee doing (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

***Enhanced Performance***

Improving mentally to increase one's expertise and skills to show improvement in current work (Costa et al., 2016).

***Self-Directed***

To seek constant progress through self-management, self-observation, and self-modification (Costa et al., 2016).

***Self-Managing***

An approach to complex activities with a strategic strategy based on desired outcomes, essential data or resources, past knowledge, and creative problem-solving solutions (Costa et al., 2016).

***Self-Monitoring***

A process where persons are metacognitively and comprehensively able to examine, review, and adjust strategic learning plans (Costa et al., 2016).

***Self-Modifying***

A process for reflecting, assessing, and generating new meanings based on acquired knowledge; applies to future tasks and obstacles (Costa et al., 2016).

***Educational Partners International, LLC***

A sponsor of the exchange visitor teacher program authorized to place K-12 teachers in public, private, and charter schools located in the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Florida. Educational Partners International, LLC (EPI) places qualified teachers in all subject areas, including elementary, mathematics, science, French, special education, etc., from all over the world. EPI is headquartered in Swannanoa, North Carolina (South Carolina Department of Education, n.d.-b).



### ***Foreign Academic and Cultural Exchange Services***

Foreign Academic and Cultural Exchange Services (FACES) is an agency that recruits qualified educators from around the globe to teach in South Carolina public schools. The subject areas encompassed in the curriculum include special education, foreign languages (namely Spanish, French, and German), mathematics, fundamental studies, and science, among others (South Carolina Department of Education, n.d.-b).

### ***International Teacher Exchange Services***

An agency that offers employment opportunities for educators across several grade levels and subject areas, encompassing disciplines such as mathematics, science, foreign languages, and special education. Educators originate from various countries such as Great Britain, Venezuela, Mexico, and other nations. The headquarters of International Teacher Exchange Services (ITES) is located in Charlotte, North Carolina (South Carolina Department of Education, n.d.-b).

### ***Participate (previously known as VIF)***

An agency that recruits educators from a diverse range of nations, including Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ireland, Jamaica, Mexico, and Venezuela. Educators possess the necessary qualifications to provide instruction in a diverse range of academic disciplines encompassing mathematics, science, foreign languages, and special education. The headquarters of Participate is located in Chapel Hill, North Carolina (South Carolina Department of Education, n.d.-b).

### **Assumptions**

Wargo (2015) stated qualitative research is predicated on hypotheses about the

conditions under which data are gathered to produce valid and reliable results. In the opinion of Leedy and Omrod (2018), preconceptions are essential aspects of a study that make the problem tractable and warrant additional research. Birks and Mills (2022) argued that in the process of self-reflection, it is essential to take into account several factors, such as one's philosophical orientation, preexisting knowledge, and research objectives; and any apprehensions or worries pertaining to the study must be considered. During the semi-structured interviews, it was assumed that international teachers would react truthfully and objectively to questions about their difficulties adapting to instructing in the U.S. and how it might vary from what they are exposed to in their home countries. In addition, it was assumed that international teachers were knowledgeable about the cognitive coaching process in order to provide information. I assumed that international teachers would take a sincere interest in the research to help achieve valid data that would allow for appreciation of their issues. The preconceptions were necessary because I wanted the results to be meaningful, authentic, valid, and helpful for drawing inferences about international teachers' experiences and stimulating additional studies that could aid in identifying strategies or techniques.

### **Limitations**

The constraints of any given study pertain to possible issues frequently outside the control of the researcher are significantly correlated to the specified research design statistical limitations or other issues (Ross & Bibler, 2019). A limitation in this context is an imposed constraint over which the scholar has limited control (Musslick & Cohen, 2021). Nonetheless, it may influence the study's design and findings, which must be noted in the submitted manuscript (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The international

teachers taking part in this study had at least 2 years of teaching experience in the participating district. Although the teachers in this study brought years of teaching experiences from their home country, this study focused on the experiences in the cooperating district. The responses of the international teachers depended on their openness and willingness to engage in the interviews. The perspectives of teachers in the southeast may differ from those of teachers in other regions.

According to Simon and Goes (2013), research limits are inherent faults the researcher cannot control. I have established professional relationships with international teachers in the school system and accepted their responses to the interview questions. In addition, as case situations are morphologically similar, the information obtained from case studies is generally distinct. As the case study's primary emphasis is the participant's words, the researcher must derive logical principles and scientific categorization units from the participant's words (Priya, 2021). There is always a risk of incorrect generalization when no criteria will govern data collection and only a few units are examined (He et al., 2020).

According to Simmons et al. (2011), case data are frequently polluted due to the fact that the subject may write what they perceive the researcher wants, which weakens the validity of the evidence collected from interviews. As a result of the method's reliance on various assumptions that are not always plausible, the use of case data is always suspect. Furthermore, case study approaches can only be applied within a narrow scope and not to a large society (Rashid et al., 2019).

### **Delimitations**

Delimitations are features that result from establishing the research's borders or

parameters, as well as the inclusive and exclusive judgments made throughout the research project (Simon & Goes, 2013). Researchers must make conclusions that establish constraints or delimitations for the intended study. One delimitation in this study constituted a restriction on the study population. A further delimitation was the decision to focus solely on international teachers with at least 2 years of teaching experience, as opposed to those with less than 2 years of experience. Teachers must have been employed with the district for at least 2 full years. In addition, international teachers who had been in this country for more than 5 years and were U.S. citizens were eliminated. Close friends or colleagues were eliminated as participants to alleviate a conflict of personal interest and unconscious biases. Additionally, clients I had previously coached were eliminated to avoid potential researcher bias. Furthermore, the population was restricted to elementary international teachers; therefore, it may not be possible to generalize these findings to secondary international teachers within the district or educational systems. Although elementary international teachers in the school district were urged to participate in the study, there may be differences in their experiences and perspectives between those who did and those who did not. All invited participants were guaranteed complete confidentiality.

According to Yin (2018), outcomes from multiple-case studies with a broader scope are frequently stronger and more persuasive. Case studies involve a small sample size, which can result in limited data and may not be useful to other research sites (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

### **Chapter Summary**

Chapter 1 of the study provided a comprehensive overview of the background,

significance, objectives, and guiding research questions. Furthermore, this chapter provided an in-depth examination of the theoretical framework that served as the guiding principle for the creation of research inquiries and the selection of appropriate methods. Chapter 2 undertakes an analysis of the scholarly literature that establishes the theoretical underpinnings and contextualizes the present study within the existing body of research pertaining to the obstacles faced by international teachers and the practice of cognitive coaching. Chapter 2 integrates the extant literature pertaining to this research, elucidating the way this study was substantiated by preceding research and establishing a basis for subsequent investigation into the acquisition of knowledge regarding cognitive coaching and international teachers.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The constant struggle among international teachers to acclimate to the comprehensive expectations of working in U.S. public schools has necessitated the provision of ongoing professional learning to support the many challenges many of them encounter (Podolsky et al., 2019). Issues are raised regarding the need for culturally relevant, specialized, and customized training to prepare international teachers to effectively instruct American students (Dalal et al., 2021; Sahling & DeCarvalho, 2021). Improving the quality of instruction students receive requires that all teachers, particularly international teachers, participate in professional development; however, previous efforts to improve teacher quality through professional development have been unsuccessful (Kraft et al., 2018). Many school districts have adopted the cognitive coaching model to provide widespread professional development to coach teachers in instructional practices. The objective of this investigation was to examine how the cognitive coaching model influences the capacity of international teachers to develop and deliver instruction. Additionally, the study sought to discover if cognitive coaching influences various challenges international teachers face, including classroom management, communication/language barriers, and unfamiliar curricula.

### **Literature Search Procedures**

With this literature review, the documents included existing journal articles; online journal articles obtained from Gardner-Webb University library databases (ProQuest Education, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, and EBSCOhost); sources from the Education Resources Information Center database and books; and data from the U.S. Department of Education, the South Carolina Department of Education, and the World

Wide Web. Five primary criteria were established for selecting research materials. First, I searched for information on international, immigrant, and international teachers in U.S. schools nationally, internationally, and in South Carolina. Second, I researched the arrival of international teachers in the U.S. and abroad and the issues they face regarding classroom management, communication and language barriers, and instructional delivery. Third, I researched the benefits of international teachers and the influence of teacher effectiveness on student learning. Fourth, I explored professional development and the training for preservice and in-service teachers to become effective educators. Finally, I looked for material regarding coaching support, focusing on cognitive coaching. The cognitive coaching model was first introduced by Costa and Garmston in 1994. Meanwhile, research within the last 5 years was extremely sparse and typically fell between 2013 and 2021.

In order to determine the theoretical underpinnings for this investigation, a review of the literature was conducted. This chapter discusses a shift that international teachers experience once they reach the U.S., describing the many encounters they face, such as classroom management, delivery of instruction, communication and language barriers, lack of student engagement, and the assessment of students. Moreover, this section describes cognitive coaching as a professional development promoting the growth of self-directed practitioners. Additionally, this chapter focuses on the qualities and perceptions of mental coaching and the coaching process. It examines cognitive coaching outcomes for implementation in general and performance in school settings with diverse populations. This study sought to improve the international teacher's ability to develop and provide teaching for self-directed learning by adding to the cognitive coaching

literature.

### **Research Questions**

This qualitative case study explored the following research questions:

1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?

### **Theoretical Framework and the Cognitive Coaching Model**

Andragogy was selected as the theoretical framework for the study. The cognitive coaching model is a process model for adult learning. Knowles's (1984) adult learning theory, or andragogy, presupposed that adult learners have a diverse range of experiences from which they draw and employ to construct new learning based on prior knowledge. Knowles outlined five assumptions of adult learning that assert adults are self-directed, goal-oriented, prefer to be respected, contribute experience, and demand the practicality



of learning. In the post-observation conference between coach and teacher, a good coaching model covers a number of these principles while coaching an adult learner. Knowles enumerated these five presumptions with the expectation that adults will have more life experiences than youngsters and will have developed preconceived notions. Adults place greater emphasis on the process than the substance being taught, making the experience the most significant factor.

The teaching process entails introspection and an ongoing desire to develop and improve. When teachers are encouraged to grow professionally and trained to think critically, they are able to direct their own progress through the evaluation process (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). The cognitive coaching model can improve teacher effectiveness if the six underlying assumptions are remembered (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). Andragogy, or the theory of adult learning, is relevant to this subject since it focuses on the four fundamental principles of the learning process. These are summarized as follows:

1. Adults must understand why they are learning.
2. Adults must acquire knowledge through practice.
3. Adults view learning as finding solutions.
4. Adults learn most effectively when the subject matter is of direct significance (Culatta, 2018).

Post-conference meetings that combine cognitive coaching tactics provide teachers with assistance in setting goals, processing the teaching experience, problem-solving the lesson, and acquiring appropriate self-reflection techniques, all of which address the three principles of Knowles (Garmston et al., 1993). These principles are self-monitoring, self-analysis, and self-evaluation which are necessary for teacher autonomy,

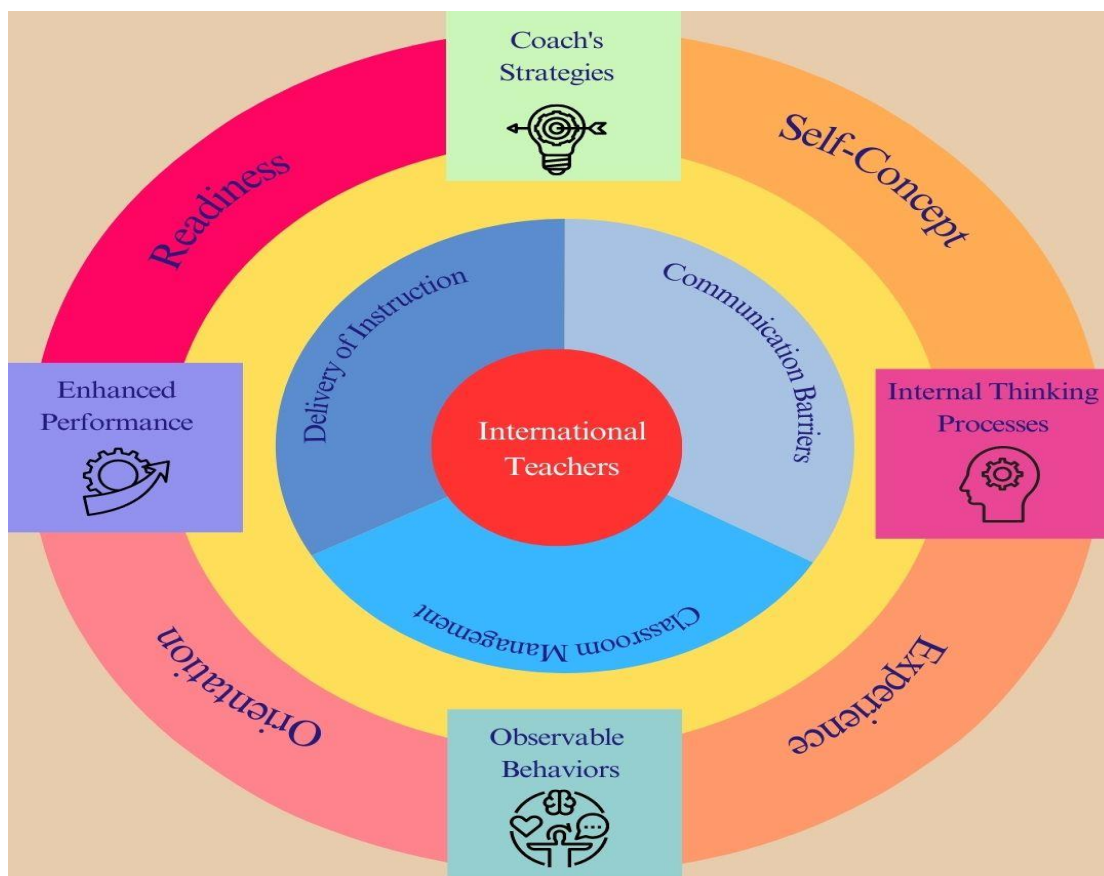
which is the primary objective of cognitive coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2015). In the initial stages of cognitive coaching, the coach must take specific qualities from the teacher, but as the cycle progresses, the teacher is able to draw them from inside and channel them toward a direct interest (Costa & Garmston, 2015). The cognitive coaching process is used to help explain a model for coaching to support services intended to improve instruction (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Based on the viewpoint of international teachers, the cognitive coaching model consists of coaching strategies, internal thought processes, observable behaviors, and enhanced performance. This process is accomplished through collaborating, consulting, evaluating, and cognitive coaching between a coach and a teacher. The cognitive coaching model, developed by Costa and Garmston (1994), is an instructional approach that acknowledges the power of metacognition and its role in fostering independent learning.

Cognitive coaching improves the capabilities for rational self-assessment and self-identity, hence facilitating the attainment of such objectives (Edwards 2016). Cognitive coaching is a simple approach for planning, reflecting, and problem-solving talks and is a style of interaction that allows for self-reflection, the revision and refinement of positions and self-concepts, and the invitation of a colleague to view themselves from a fresh perspective (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Costa and Garmston (2016) further explained cognitive coaching as a thoughtful, nonjudgmental paradigm that combines the psychological orientation of cognitive theorists with the interpersonal connection of humanists. Fundamental to the paradigm is its emphasis on the cognitive development of individuals. The coaching interaction moderates the practitioner's thoughts, perceptions, views, and ideas toward the aims of self-directed learning and greater cognitive

processing complexity. The distinctive aspect of cognitive coaching lies in its capacity to modify the cognitive processes of another individual.

Cognitive coaching is methodical, stringent, and data-driven. Using self-management, self-monitoring, and self-modification, this paradigm aims to improve an individual's potential for self-directed learning. As a result, cognitive coaches are devoted to the cascade effects of strengthening individuals, who, in turn, promote the greatest possible growth in student comprehension of desired goals (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Cognitive coaching is comprised of a set of skills, talents, mental maps, beliefs, values, and commitments. These are all acquired through repeated practice and integration into a person's daily interactions. Consequently, the ideals and ideas of cognitive coaching become a way of life (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

While adult learning theory (andragogy) is the theoretical framework for the study, cognitive coaching is the process. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the interconnectedness of Knowles's (1984) four principles of andragogy, which represents the outer circle of adult learning theory. International teachers represent the center of the infographic. The subsequent circle represents the challenges international teachers face in the U.S. Overlaid on the outer circle are four squares identifying the tenets of cognitive coaching as coach's strategies, internal thinking processes, observable behaviors, and enhanced performance.

**Figure 1***Coaching Support Model for International Teachers*

*Note.* This figure demonstrates the interconnectedness of adult learning theory and the cognitive coaching support model for international teachers.

For this study, the coach's strategies included a variety of cognitive coaching identifiers. This involved establishing rapport, listening, asking questions, setting goals, following a mental map, or building trust between the coach and the international teacher. A cognitive coach also supports the internal thinking processes of others by facilitating their perspectives, thoughts, and judgment processes to facilitate self-directed learning. Observable behaviors, meanwhile, are actions a cognitive coach may watch another individual perform. Cognitive coaching assists educators in analyzing the reasoning

behind their instructional practices. Using techniques such as pausing, paraphrasing, and posing questions, a cognitive coach can facilitate the recognition of unconscious teaching components, thereby improving the thinker's access to resources and overall performance (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

Cognitive coaching is a coaching technique capable of influencing thought processes and establishing a framework for introspective thinking (Ceballos et. al, 2020). Cognitive coaching is indeed a higher cognitive, introspective technique meant to improve teacher self-direction and performance (Costa et al., 2016). Cognitive coaching is based on the development of self-directed teachers with the intellectual capabilities for exceptional individual and collective effectiveness (Costa et al., 2016). In this study site school district for this case study, cognitive coaching is utilized to support international teachers, as well as all other teachers, to be self-directed learners to enhance their delivery of instruction by addressing the barriers they face in American classrooms, such as language and communication barriers, classroom management, and delivery of instruction.

Cognitive coaching improves teacher self-directedness, as well as the opportunity to directly self-modify and self-monitor (Costa et al., 2016; Edwards, 2018a, 2018b). Consequently, teachers who are highly self-assured can acquire high levels of self-direction and subsequently enhance their capacity for higher cognitive and critical thinking while fostering teacher independence (Costa et al., 2016; Edwards, 2018a, 2018b). In addition, teachers exhibiting high self-efficacy, consciousness, independence, self-monitoring, and self-modifying capacities surpass their colleagues, work harder, achieve difficult goals, and experience overall job fulfillment (Bandura, 1994; Costa et

al., 2016; Edwards, 2018a, 2018b). Cognitive coaching has proven successful in generating educators who have the capacity to self-direct, self-manage, self-monitor, and self-modify (Costa et al., 2016; Edwards, 2018a, 2018b). Consequently, this case study intended to explore how international teachers develop and provide teaching for self-directed learning utilizing the cognitive coaching model. Perceived effectiveness from the execution of cognitive coaching indicates that teacher identity and consciousness revealed a clear correlation between teacher and student learning; however, very little research has been conducted on how cognitively coached teachers foster and promote self-directed learning in the classroom (Costa et al., 2016; Edwards, 2018a, 2018b).

According to studies, cognitive coaching has a substantial effect on the lesson planning and self-directed metacognitive practices of teachers (Akyildiz & Semerci, 2016; Bair, 2017). Cognitive coaching boosts teacher self-efficacy by fostering a cohesive, trusting environment that encourages critical reflection (Edwards, 2018a, 2018b). Scholars did not know how intellectually supported teachers plan and encourage self-directed learning by providing students with occasions to self-manage, self-modify, and self-monitor their learning; thus, a void in the literature was found (Costa et al., 2016; Edwards, 2018a, 2018b; Levine, 2016). Levine (2016) believed that extensive empirical investigations are required to explain how cognitively coached teachers increase self-directed learning in actual classroom settings. Furthermore, cognitive coaching depends on a teacher's capacity to create and promote self-directed, self-monitoring, and self-modification instructional practice within a standards-based general education classroom environment (Edwards, 2018a, 2018b; Lee, 2017). In addition, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how international teachers use the cognitive

coaching model to develop and promote self-directed learning in general education classrooms in a southeastern South Carolina school district.

### **Cognitive Coach's Strategies**

For the sake of this study, a coach's strategies incorporated a range of cognitive coaching indicators. This may require creating rapport, listening, asking questions, setting goals, following a mental map, or gaining the international teacher's trust. Establishing rapport with the coachee is the first step a coach must take (Costa & Garmston, 2015). The coachee must feel at ease with the coach to be receptive to current ideas (Costa et al., 2016). Prior to the conversation, there needs to be a certain degree of assurance between the parties (Costa et al., 2016). It is crucial for the coach to mirror the coachee's posture and tone of voice during the conversation (Costa et al., 2016). As the coach detects the coachee's mental state, questions are posed and directed to improve the coachee's mental condition (Costa & Garmston, 2015).

According to research conducted by Edwards (2016), tenured secondary educators reported that their teaching had been transformed by cognitive coaching. These educators asserted that coaching strategies helped them to establish physically peaceful classrooms, interaction, and collaboration with their students and generated a deeper feeling of teacher-student problem-solving ownership. Further, participants believed that cognitive coaching favorably affected student behavior, thought processes, and classroom climate (Edwards, 2016).

In another study, DeMasters (2018) conducted an analysis to explore the correlation between teacher effectiveness and their utilization of cognitive coaching strategies in the classroom, including wait time, halting, paraphrasing, and asking

meditative questions. Participating were 44 educators who had completed a foundational cognitive coaching course. DeMasters utilized the student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management subscales of the Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale. A moderately positive association was observed between the extent of cognitive coaching approaches implemented and the overall efficacy of teachers. Furthermore, a moderately positive association was discovered between the subscales of student involvement, instructional methods, and classroom management, and the utilization of cognitive coaching tools by teachers.

Moreover, DeMasters (2018) discovered a moderately favorable association between wait time and student engagement and classroom management and a strongly positive connection between wait time and instructional tactics. Furthermore, DeMasters found a weak positive association between the level of paraphrasing and classroom management. DeMasters discovered a moderately favorable link between the level of execution of mediated questions and each of the three subscales, which include student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. DeMasters's study provided relevance to teachers' effective use of cognitive coaching methods and how they may contribute to international teachers' communication/language barriers, classroom management, and delivery of instruction.

In a study conducted by Guerci (2018), she implemented cognitive coaching model techniques with her students to increase classroom collaboration. Guerci, concentrating on literature circle dialogues, employed questioning techniques that gave wait time and empathy. Students were able to collaboratively exchange ideas using well-crafted questions during reading circles. Additionally, cognitive coaching tactics



supported student participation in collaborative talks by providing scaffolding. According to Guerci's research, cognitive coaching tactics are advantageous for fostering student collaboration.

A study by Alea (2019) supported the implementation of student-centered discourse strategies by two middle school teachers in high-poverty schools. Alea led two remote coaching sessions and realized she needed to adapt her coaching method and focus on establishing relationships with the teachers. The teachers respected the teacher-centered coaching architecture of cognitive coaching and desired more coaching cycles. As a result of the coaching, the teachers reported they "became more student-centered" (Alea, 2019, p. 93), "grew as practitioners" (Alea, 2019, p. 93), and "felt more confident in their discourse teaching skills" (Alea, 2019, p. 93).

According to these studies, if international teachers rely on cognitive coaching strategies, they may see improvement in their self-directedness and performance, which may enhance their classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction with students. Each of these cognitive coaching strategies could provide opportunities to transform their instructional practices, by asserting strategies that supported student behaviors and interactions through collaboration, along with their thought processes. In addition, teacher overall effectiveness could lead to positive interactions and relationships with students.

### **Internal Thinking Processes**

Costa and Garmston (2016) argued that the core objective of cognitive coaching is to alter the thought processes of teachers to thereby alter the teacher's classroom conduct. The cognitive processes of teachers have a significant impact on student learning.

Cognitive coaching emphasizes the mental process underlying instruction. The coach must concentrate on the teacher's mental processes. The objective is to cultivate teachers' skills as facilitators of thought, not as analytical people. Coaches develop teachers' potential to be self-directed learners. Teachers are expected to self-mediate their internal thoughts. There are five types of mental resources. These are the five states of mind: (a) effectiveness, (b) adaptability, (c) consciousness, (d) interdependence, and (e) skill (Costa & Garmston, 2016).

Costa and Garmston's (2016) cognitive coaching model influenced several studies about internal thinking processes. One such study conducted by Göker (2020) examined the effects of cognitive coaching on a group of 13 primary-level student teachers. The study also included a control group of 13 student teachers who did not receive cognitive coaching. Over the course of the 10-week study, the participants engaged in three coaching cycles, each consisting of a conversation about planning, an observation, and a reflective dialogue. According to the student teachers, the intervention facilitated their development of a more reflective mindset. Prior to and following the implementation of the intervention, the researcher administered the Teachers' Feeling of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) to both experimental and control groups. The study observed a notable increase in student teacher performance within the treatment group across all three dimensions of the scale (student interaction, teaching methods, and classroom management), in contrast to the control group. Conversely, the effectiveness of teachers in the group serving as a comparison exhibited a substantial decline from the pretest to the posttest. Meanwhile, the conceptual question-answering proficiency of first-year educators who received cognitive coaching increased

substantially (Costa et al., 2016). They shifted from a black-and-white mindset to one with more gray nuances in their reasoning.

According to the findings of a qualitative study, data gathered from the National Board certification indicated that participants' interpretive practices were enhanced through cognitive coaching (Grochocki, 2018). This improvement in interpretive practices resulted in an increased ability to effectively engage with the expectations of the National Board questions and to demonstrate clear and consistent written clarity. Consequently, this development in interpretive practices and written clarity contributed to an overall increase in participant self-efficacy (Grochocki, 2018). Moreover, individuals who were provided with cognitive coaching showed a higher propensity for demonstrating the critical reflective thinking abilities necessary for successfully undertaking the National Board certification process, in comparison to those who did not receive cognitive coaching support (Grochocki, 2018).

In a similar study related to teacher thinking processes, González Del Castillo (2015) provided cognitive coaching to three general education elementary school teachers who were instructing youngsters from varied language backgrounds. The researcher collected information through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and cognitive coaching sessions. Participants noted growth in their reflective routine usage. As a result of their participation in the cognitive coaching cycles, they also felt empowered to utilize existing abilities and practices and to examine, alter, and apply them in novel ways. They liked the opportunity to engage in discourse with their coach and felt supported by others as they used the new tactics for working with their students. More importantly, the participants saw that engaging in pre-lesson discussions regarding

their planning process was advantageous. This practice enabled them to visualize their lesson, identify areas requiring modification, and ascertain any supplementary planning that was necessary.

In a separate investigation carried out by Jaede et al. (2014), it was observed that mentor teachers at junior high and secondary schools within an urban setting underwent a transformation in their cognitive processes pertaining to the acquisition of knowledge by students. More importantly, the participants saw that engaging in pre-lesson discussions regarding their planning process was advantageous. This practice enabled them to visualize their lesson, identify areas requiring modification, and ascertain any supplementary planning that was necessary.

Each of these studies investigated the application of cognitive coaching in a distinct educational context. The studies focused on internal thinking processes, how these processes attributed to the perspectives of teachers, and how their thinking changed as a result of partaking in cognitive coaching; therefore, if international teachers rely on the internal thinking processes of cognitive coaching, a shift may occur in how they apply classroom management skills, effectively communicate, and deliver effective instructional practices.

### **Observable Behaviors**

Another tenet of cognitive coaching is observable behaviors. Observable behaviors are actions that a cognitive coach may observe another individual executing (Costa & Garmston, 2016). Cognitive coaching aids instructors in understanding the logic underlying their educational techniques. Rich (2013) conducted a study wherein she investigated the experiences of two beginner, alternatively licensed reading teachers who

were assigned to two schools characterized by persistent underachievement and high poverty levels. One teacher received cognitive coaching, but the other teacher did not receive such coaching. Rich collected information through interview appointments, observations, and four coaching cycles, which included planning and reflecting discussions. It was concluded that cognitive coaching had a notable influence on the teacher's capacity to engage in self-monitoring and self-modification of her instructional practices.

Further, the teacher receiving cognitive coaching grew increasingly effective, as evidenced by her mounted ability to formulate advised instructional judgments, resulting in enhanced student learning outcomes (Rich, 2013). When she committed errors, she exhibited an internal locus of control. In addition, she became more adaptable, as indicated by the fact that she altered her instruction after discovering that her students would learn more. She improved progressively, as indicated by her ongoing efforts to improve her teaching technique. She enhanced her question-asking and ability to differentiate lessons. Consequently, student abilities to engage in critical thinking and exhibit advanced cognitive skills were enhanced. Furthermore, there was an observable increase in her level of self-awareness, as seen by the alterations in the teacher's decision-making processes and subsequent behaviors. According to the findings of Rich (2013), it was determined that the four states of mind exerted a notable influence on the participant's capacity to enact modifications in her professional activity. Nevertheless, had the participant neglected to engage in introspection and develop a conscious understanding of her instructional choices and behaviors, she would have been unable to affect the modifications observed in the study. Accordingly, Rich proposed that

awareness is the mental state that motivates and influences other mental states.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Chang et al. (2014) examined a sample of 117 elementary and secondary teachers who experienced a 3-day cognitive coaching training program. These teachers subsequently implemented the acquired techniques in their respective schools for a duration of 1 year. In contrast, the comparison group consisted of 117 teachers who did not receive any cognitive coaching training. In terms of communicating, understanding teaching methods, and dynamically applying teaching techniques, they discovered that teachers who utilized cognitive coaching enhanced their teaching efficacy substantially more than the control group. A similar pattern of outcomes was observed in a study involving 28 middle and high school mentor teachers, as reported by Jaede et al. (2014). The results suggested that mentor teachers assumed new roles and viewed themselves as teacher educators in a collaborative learning environment. In addition, the mentors were able to observe their interns becoming more independent and helped them to increase their own viewpoint about educating and to establish their individual characteristics as teachers (Jaede et al., 2014).

Similar results were found in a study that examined the impact of cognitive coaching on six primary school teachers participating in a writing workshop (Donahue-Barrett, 2014). Donahue-Barrett (2014) discovered that after four to six coaching cycles, teacher expertise in writing instruction and instructional strategies improved. In addition, Donahue-Barrett found that the planning conferences, demo lessons, and co-teaching lessons were the most helpful in enhancing the instructors' knowledge and instructional techniques. The educators stated that they would have liked additional time with their coach.

As cognitive coaching seeks to facilitate critical mental shifts, the cognitive coach must observe teacher behaviors to help them self-monitor and modify their instructional practices. Furthermore, if international teachers are able to align their behaviors with their values, reflect on their practices, and continue to strive for continuous improvement, they may realize the effectiveness of the cognitive coaching approach.

### **Enhanced Performance**

By increasing knowledge and skills, a teacher's performance is enhanced (Paolini, 2018). In the current study, enhanced performance is defined as using techniques such as paraphrasing, and posing questions (Costa & Garmston, 2016). These techniques are designed to promote self-awareness. In cognitive coaching, individuals self-reflect and self-modify to improve their instruction.

Bair (2017) conducted a study in which a group of 12 teacher educators participated in critical reflection on their teaching practices, employing the cognitive coaching approach. The duration of the study was 2 years, and 10 participants fulfilled all requirements. The participants detected focus areas and selected a colleague to coach them. Bair posited that educator engagement fostered professional inclusivity and continuous personal and instructional growth, showing that cognitive coaching has the potential to function as a successful capacity-building technique. In addition, the educators developed trust among themselves, enjoyed the element of employing constructive presuppositions, and understood the significance of listening. The instructional encounters also aided them in being more effective as classroom teachers.

The cognitive coaching model has multiple tiers, and it is a prudent investment to have qualified leaders who can implement the tactics to enhance the cognitive capabilities

of instructors, which can lead to improved intellectual pursuit in students (Costa & Garmston, 2015). In a recent study conducted by Freeman-Mack (2020), 16 teachers were surveyed who engaged in the cognitive coaching cycle. Of those 16 teachers, 75% recounted that the coaching meetings had a significant influence on their teaching ability and inspired them to explore new instructional practices. Meanwhile, Kho et al. (2020) studied the coaching cycle between teachers and instructional coaching partners. Kho et al. cited numerous frameworks coaches utilize as a resource when collaborating with teachers to enhance their teaching ability, including cognitive coaching. According to this study's findings, arranging coaching conversations was a crucial part of providing coaching support for teachers (Kho et al., 2020).

These studies suggested providing a context of how cognitive coaching enhances teacher effectiveness. Meanwhile, if international teachers engage in the work of cognitive coaching, they must be receptive to change and acquire the necessary knowledge and abilities to reform. Precisely, as new techniques emerge, international teachers must comprehend their current practices and understand how change occurs to enhance their performance.

### **Cognitive Coach Roles, Beliefs, and Skills**

In cognitive coaching, the objective of the coach is to promote self-directed learning in others by enhancing their cognitive ability for self-management, self-modification, and self-monitoring (Costa et al., 2016). The coachee must develop the ability to generate metacognition and enhance their own learning (Costa et al., 2016). Consequently, self-awareness is essential for developing teacher cognition (Costa et al., 2003; Pellegrino, 2017). Cognitive coaching is comprised of skills, abilities, mental



maps, beliefs, values, and commitments that are exercised, assessed, and assimilated through time, according to Costa and Garmston (2015), who outlined the components of cognitive coaching. In addition, they are infused into the identity of the coach as a promoter of self-directed learning. In the end, the essential values and ideas of cognitive coaching become a way of life. This kind of coaching entails a commitment on the part of the coach to have a passion for learning and to continue personal and professional growth throughout their professions.

According to Costa and Garmston (2016), while coaching, the cognitive coach maintains unique flexibility. Cognitive coaches must be adept at formulating and posing questions to stimulate and influence thought. Self-directed learning is essential to cognitive coaches. They must believe in supporting others to become more self-governing, self-monitoring, and self-modifying. Cognitive coaches must believe that an individual's thoughts influence all behavior and that a change in perception and thinking is required for a behavior change. Moreover, they believe that humans create their meaning through reflection on experience and interaction with others. They believe that all humans are capable of intellectual development throughout their lives. Cognitive coaches must strive to be lifelong learners and they must consistently avoid complacency and admit there is more to learn with humility and pride.

A cognitive coach helps another individual act quickly toward their goals while also assisting them in developing competence in planning, reflecting, problem-solving, and decision-making (Costa & Garmston, 2015). Cognitive coaching distinguishes four types of teacher development-supporting functions: evaluating, collaborating, consulting, and coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2015). Coaching, cooperation, and consultation all

contribute to the enhancement of instructional practice. This form of coaching was designed to inspire teachers to become their most effective instructional selves.

As the embodiment of a self-directed learner, Costa and Garmston's (2016) cognitive coaching approach to professional development aimed to enhance cognitive development, which includes thinking, beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions of instruction (Costa et al., 2016; Costa et al., 2003). The theory behind cognitive coaching is based on the following tenets: thinking and understanding form the basis of all behaviors; knowledge and new learning necessitate a continuous decision-making process; adaptability and collaboration are essential components in developing new perspectives and opinions for further learning; and individuals learn new information when they are cognitively engaged (Costa & Garmston, 1994, 2002; Costa et al., 2016).

The needed skills of cognitive coaches include the ability to pose questions to induce a cognitive shift through nonverbal and physical rapport-building actions (Costa & Garmston, 2015). Coaches can recognize their intentions, listen, and respond correctly due to their talents as they navigate mental maps (Costa & Garmston, 2015). These mental maps are learned and rehearsed throughout training and are memorized as conversational guides. These conversations include a planning conversation, a reflecting conversation, a problem-solving conversation, and a calibrating conversation (Costa & Garmston, 2015).

### **Implementing Cognitive Coaching in the Study Site District**

Many research studies have investigated the impact of employing a cognitive coaching method while coaching with teachers (Costa et al., 2016; Edwards, 2016). The majority of these studies indicated that teachers who have worked with this model are

more likely to retain their professional progress and have a greater sense of student accomplishment and aspiration, and the school community is stronger due to the employment of this model with school leadership. The study site school district adopted an instructional coaching model, cognitive coaching, to improve student success through strengthening or enhancing instructional practices and teacher behavior adjustments. The district provided instructional coaches with initial training in the cognitive coaching process in the summer of 2016, and the process has been ongoing throughout the years. When collaborating with teachers to modify and adjust their instructional delivery to meet the needs of their students, the instructional coach utilizes cognitive coaching as a critical tool.

The primary responsibility of the instructional coach within the study site district is to enhance the professional capabilities of teachers and foster their comprehension of effective methods for instruction. Induction contracts are granted to teachers who are in their initial year of teaching and possess a valid South Carolina pre-professional educator certification, which may include certificates obtained through foreign programs, work-based training, or alternate routes. Before undergoing a summative evaluation, teachers receive formative support and feedback from the instructional coach during their induction year(s) to facilitate their professional growth. Districts are mandated by the South Carolina Department of Education to provide mentors for Induction 1 teachers. State funding partially supports this requirement. Districts are encouraged to provide support, assistance, and feedback to all educators, including those in Inductions 2 and 3 (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017). A teacher may be placed on an induction contract for up to 3 years at the district's discretion. This encompasses

educators in Inductions 2 and 3 who demonstrated improvement in their professional development as instructors, although may not have fully met the criteria for the summative evaluation procedures; therefore, the study site district also provides a coach to Induction 2 and 3 teachers who have not reached annual contract status.

In order to enhance their abilities and deepen their comprehension of pedagogical methodologies, individuals are encouraged to develop their capacity and knowledge of instructional activities. Instructional coaches facilitate the process of reflection; offer guidance and establish a framework when necessary; and prioritize strengths, partnerships, and concerns that are common.

Instructional coaches utilize the cognitive coaching model as the primary teacher support mechanism in the study site district. These support functions include coaching and collaboration. This includes both individual and group coaching discussions. As in a professional learning community (PLC), problem-solving, brainstorming, and investigation among coworkers are structured differently when they are conducted collaboratively. This involves aiding and modeling PLCs. The coach's ultimate objective is to positively influence student learning. The path to this objective depends on the present knowledge of the instructor or leader (Gao & Yang, 2022). Teacher expertise is dependent on the school learning community in which the teacher performs their craft (OECD, 2019), and the school learning community is dependent on the knowledge and abilities of its leader (Alkrdem, 2020). In other words, coaching increases the capacity of all school instructors to positively influence student learning.

The preponderance of research in the literature points to the effectiveness of cognitive coaching for improving teacher capacity and therefore student learning;

however, this study focused on the effectiveness of cognitive coaching for improving teacher capacity for international teachers and therefore student learning.

### **The Need for International Teachers**

Managing teacher shortages with experienced teachers and increasing staff diversity are currently two of the greatest recruitment difficulties facing schools (Heubeck, 2022). To satisfy these complex staffing needs, a rising number of school districts have turned to international teacher recruitment in recent years. Between 2015 and 2021, the U.S. State Department monitored the number of overseas teachers given J-1 visas. J-1 visas, also known as cultural exchange visas, allow qualified international teachers to teach in U.S. K-12 schools for up to 5 years. With the exception of 2020, when the pandemic caused a major decline, the number of international teachers hired by U.S. schools climbed by 69%, from 2,517 in 2015 to 4,271 in 2021 (Heubeck, 2022). As of the 2021-2022 school year, the study site district employed 178 international teachers in Grades K-12. This is the largest number of international teachers employed by a school district in the state.

### **International Teacher Recruitment**

The nationwide demand for qualified educators to be employed is influenced by a multitude of factors. The factors contributing to this situation encompass a range of challenges such as rising enrollments of students, inadequate teacher compensation, wage disparities, high student-teacher ratios, teacher turnover, a scarcity of teaching staff, and the general public's impression of the teaching profession (Kissau et al., 2019; Sutchter et al., 2019). Such factors account for the teacher scarcity referred to by Kissau et al. (2019).

International teachers are able to effectively navigate intricate procedures as well as political and social barriers, such as the acquisition of a work visa, by utilizing the services of recruitment agencies. In the context of international teaching prospects and educational institutions, recruiting agencies are retained to act as intermediaries. In order to assist international teachers as they establish themselves in the recruiting districts in the U.S., these organizations facilitate connections and arrange mentorships (Kimmel et al., 2021). We should ascertain the type of assistance required for these educators to persevere, achieve success, and maintain motivation while working overseas. Also, we should recognize the contributions international teachers make to American students.

### **International Teacher Contributions in American Classrooms**

Improving student learning requires the equitable recruitment and deployment of qualified teaching candidates. Student academic performance may be significantly influenced by the presence of highly qualified teachers within the school environment (Bruns et al., 2019; OECD, 2018). In American classrooms, the presence of international teachers provides numerous advantages. International teachers fulfill empty positions, impart knowledge of their home countries through practical language exercises, contribute to cultural knowledge and wealth exchange, and offer practical language instruction informed by their native languages (Ospina & Medina, 2020). Furthermore, school districts derive advantages from the wide range of cultures international teachers introduce to classrooms in the U.S., as these educators develop interpersonal skills, establish connections, and foster a feeling of inclusion (Yan et al., 2021).

### **Challenges International Teachers Face**

International teachers are attracted to the U.S. primarily by the ability to

experience living on the U.S. mainland and earn a much better wage than they might in their native country (Heubeck, 2022). Only teachers with at least 2 years of teaching or comparable professional experience are eligible to apply for a J-1 visa; however, this does not equip them to reside and work in the U.S. (Heubeck, 2022). In addition to mastering instrumental skills, such as the ever-changing curriculum in the U.S., immigrant teachers must adapt to the new school culture and student-teacher relationships. They must also contend with stereotypes from some American teachers who may appear frightened by the influx of immigrants entering the U.S. (Lambert, 2017). Several international teachers from poor origins find their way to the U.S. via perseverance and hard work. They confront several obstacles, including visa issues, language hurdles, and access to health care; however, when communicating their positions in American educational settings and in relation to expectations regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion, they face a myriad of challenges (Budiman, 2020).

Some foreign-born individuals who live in the U.S. are in possession of H-1B visas, which are granted to exceptionally brilliant individuals in specialized fields, such as academics, where there is a shortage of qualified American workers. These licenses place workers in a vulnerable position because their legal status is related to that of their company sponsor (Bound et al., 2019); hence, H-1B visa holders are liable to deportation if they lose their employment, which could limit their careers, require them to accept less-than-desirable employment conditions, and cause continual anxiety over their income and residency status being jeopardized (Jacobs, 2019).

For some international teachers, coming to America is a voyage fraught with many hurdles. International teachers expressed significant worries about cultural

differences, such as their relationships with students, feelings of isolation, and difficulty gaining permanent residency rights. Despite their experience and skills, international teachers from developing nations encounter hurdles such as migration policy, credential concerns, completing their studies, and naturalization (Baker, 2020; Caulder, 2018; Furuya et al., 2019). These teachers are confronted with cultural issues, language obstacles in their interactions with native speakers, classroom management issues, and a lack of administrative support (Parmigiani, 2018; Sierra & Lopera, 2020).

Microaggressions, which are brief, intermittent, and repetitive insulting remarks made during daily work interactions, may also be directed at professionals of foreign origin (Interiano-Shiverdecker et al., 2022). Microaggression is characterized by sarcasm, stereotyping, and cynicism. As an illustration, making fun of a person's accent is a form of sarcasm that may reveal prejudices against specific cultures and doubts about a person's talents. Accent- and appearance-based microaggressions happen in the job market, the classroom, during teaching evaluations, in workplace conversations, and during controlled immigration checks for international teachers (Chen & Lawless, 2018; Nicolson, 2023; Yeo et al., 2019).

In addition, there can be significant cultural differences between international teachers and how they are perceived by parents in their native country compared to the U.S. In many cases, international teachers may bring diverse teaching methods, perspectives, and approaches to the classroom (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019). This can be a valuable asset, as it exposes students to different ways of learning and thinking; however, it can also lead to misunderstandings or differing expectations among parents (Mahali & Sevigny, 2022).



More recently, in a study conducted by Liao et al. (2017), a number of Chinese immersion educators encountered challenges when attempting to communicate with American colleagues and parents. Chen (2019) demonstrated that Chinese immersion teachers required a specific amount of time to communicate with American parents and assist the parents in comprehending the teachers' curriculum perspectives due to the fact that American parents and Chinese immersion teachers had distinct learning expectations. For instance, American parents exhibited greater regard for their children's self-promotion, critical thinking, and creativity, and as a result, they granted them greater autonomy (Brummelman, & Sedikides, 2020). Conversely, Chinese educators exhibited a proclivity for challenging pupils in order to foster their academic success (Pan et al., 2019). According to the findings of Ren (2017), a dearth of teacher training regarding preparation for culture shock and cross-cultural working has led parents of Chinese immersion programs to express concern regarding cross-cultural communication issues between parents and teachers.

In the teacher's native country, some parents feel that they are representative of a different educational system, which can be both intriguing and sometimes challenging. Parents may appreciate the unique cultural insights the teacher brings, but they may also have concerns about how these methods align with their own cultural and educational values. In the U.S., parents also appreciate the diversity and global perspective an international teacher offers; however, there could be additional considerations related to language proficiency and communication. Some parents worry about potential language barriers, even if the teacher is fluent in English (Jacobs & Haberlin, 2022). Overall, effective communication and mutual understanding are key to bridging any cultural gaps

between international teachers and parents, regardless of the country. This involves open dialogue, clear expectations, and a willingness to learn from one another (Dooly & Vallejo Rubinstein, 2018).

Moreover, international teachers must also adjust to new workplace professional conventions (Ospina & Medina, 2020). In addition, international teachers may struggle with the terminology assigned to them by U.S. immigration law, such as *alien*, which defines them as an *other* who does not fully belong (Biegen, 2018). Furthermore, the separation of families has also been cited as an obstacle to the adaptation of international teachers in the U.S. (Banda, 2018; Nagro et al., 2018; Ospina & Medina, 2020).

Ospina and Medina (2020) conducted a study that examined the individual encounters of 22 visiting professors who taught in American public institutions. First and foremost, it examined how the benefits of the instructional experience resulted from the intercultural competencies of the instructors and the difficulties they encountered adjusting to the host learning community. Ospina and Medina collected data from all participants via questionnaires, written reports, and semi-structured interviews, employing a qualitative case study methodology with an interpretive approach. The conclusions were based on three domains: intercultural issues, professional issues, and personal concerns.

First, the educators enhanced their intercultural awareness and multicultural adaptability (Ospina & Medina, 2020). In addition, this idea of exchanging knowledge provided instructors with opportunities for ongoing professional growth and venues for reflecting on and modifying their instructional strategies. Third, participants claimed that their English proficiency increased throughout their learning experience and that they

became more independent and self-assured, more self-aware, and more tolerant of cultural diversity; however, many instructors encountered challenges, including transitioning to their new environments and integrating into the educational system. Some teachers felt abandoned or lacked confidence in the school community, whereas others were required to develop strategies for managing disruptive students in the classroom. Ospina and Medina (2020) indicated that instructors participating in exchange programs should receive training in classroom management, parent conferences, and comprehension of evaluation standards. Moreover, training tailored to the requirements of international educators could equip them with the skills necessary to overcome intercultural differences in their environment.

Modesto (2020) conducted a study examining the interpretations held by Filipino immigrants who are South Texas public school teachers. Using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven Filipino immigrant teachers from several disciplines and grade levels. This qualitative method has proven useful for grasping subjective experiences and getting insight into the actions and motivations of individuals. Participants were selected using the snowball sampling technique. Individuals were interviewed at their respective times and locations to collect data. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic and to foster conversation between the interviewee and interviewer. The question given was, "What does it mean to be a Filipino immigrant teacher at a public school in South Texas?" After a comprehensive inductive analysis of the collected data, it became clear that the participants viewed their interactions as an opportunity, a challenge, and a method of personal growth. All participants viewed their status as Filipino

immigrant teachers as favorable, while the teachers' initial reactions to working in the U.S. ranged from anxiety to fear to eagerness to intrigue. They all felt that obtaining a teaching position gave them financial and professional advancement chances. The participants also mentioned a shift in the lack of inspiration, effectiveness, and conduct of students as additional obstacles. Moreover, the Filipino teachers believed that meeting the expectations of difficult exams given to children, adapting to novel instructional methods, and passing educator certification examinations were among the many obstacles they faced. Obtaining citizenship as permanent residents to continue their teaching careers was also cited as a significant factor. Meanwhile, they disclosed receiving derision for their accents and working for an unsupportive supervisor. Furthermore, another obstacle involved how teachers perceived themselves in terms of success and growth.

Modesto (2020) added to the limited corpus of prior research on the perspectives of Filipino teachers regarding their professional experiences and identities. The findings indicated that Filipino teachers have accepted their responsibilities as beneficial contributions to the communities in which their schools are located. The outcomes cannot be extrapolated to the entire community of Filipino educators working in the U.S.; however, the voices of the participants were heard, documented, and evaluated in order to highlight their unique identities.

### **Communication and Language Barriers**

English is universally acknowledged as a global language and widely adopted by speakers of various languages (Abrar et al., 2018). Grigoryeva and Zakirova (2022) asserted that English was used as a medium of communication among people of diverse cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds in every corner of the world. In addition to the basic

English abilities required to negotiate the U.S. labor market, many fields, such as healthcare, require highly precise technical terminology for passing exams, practicing the trade, or both. This vocabulary is rarely included in a regular language class (McHugh & Morawski, 2017). Historically, language limitations have been seen as the most significant impediment international teachers must overcome (Utami & Suharyadi, 2021).

Sometimes, it can be problematic for international teachers to communicate with students and colleagues in the U.S. due to their accents, which frequently have different intonations and British spellings, creating issues for their students. Students may become distracted and confused by unfamiliar accents, resulting in a hindrance to teaching and learning (Bala, 2021). In the U.S., English competence is generally required for teaching positions (American Federation of Teachers, 2009). Even if international teachers spoke English effectively, they were required to learn the local vernacular. International teachers' linguistic difficulties illuminated the intricacies of expressing a universal language in a distinct cultural environment. This can frequently result in misinterpretation among colleagues and students (Bala, 2021). A number of investigations have indicated that prejudices against individuals with foreign accents stem from the social classification of in-groups and out-groups, but it is unknown whether this is true. Despite the fact that their accents adversely impact how individuals evaluate them in the majority of communities, foreign speakers are not inherently viewed as less credible (Foucart et al., 2020).

Some international teachers believe that American teachers view them as incompetent, particularly when speaking English, and that it is difficult to communicate with students and parents (Craft, 2018). Complaints from students may differ based on

variables such as the accent of the teacher, the nature of the class, and teacher quality. It is common for students to complain about having to take a foreign teacher's class or to plan to leave the class (Dixon, 2020). Often, when students cannot understand a foreign teacher, they abandon the class and resume it when it is taught by a native teacher (Subtirelu, 2015). According to Heblich et al. (2015), student lack of cross-cultural exposure contributes to their inability to understand people with foreign accents.

According to Hennessy et al. (2023), in instances where there is a lack of effective conversation between students and teachers, students tend to disregard their teachers' instructions and instead explore alternative avenues to address their concerns. Moreover, a significant number of students refrained from articulating these communication challenges with their teachers due to concerns that engaging in such discussions might be interpreted as unfriendly and condescending. Hennessy et al. stated that their unfamiliarity with accents reinforced students' unfavorable opinions of non-native professors. According to Ballard and Winke (2018), the foreign accents of college professors hindered the education of American students. Despite these challenges, students expected teachers to modify their teaching methods and create conducive learning environments (Bélanger et al., 2019).

In a subsequent qualitative study, Kim and Choi (2019) investigated the viewpoints as well as experiences of 15 Korean preservice social studies teachers who participated in an international student teaching experience in the U.S. Despite difficulties in speaking a new language and assimilating to a new culture, participants gained self-confidence and self-esteem through interactions with students and active participation in the teaching and learning process. Eleven of the 15 interviewees reported

having difficulty adapting to a new way of life and community, in addition to a language barrier. Many participants had never been exposed to other countries or students who had traveled internationally. Kim and Choi also noted that unlike shorter trips, the international teaching internship was challenging because they were required to live in a foreign country and interact directly with American students and teachers. Even though the participants had problems transitioning to an English-speaking environment outside of Korea, they viewed acquiring another language and culture as an opportunity for personal growth. Through unstructured and informal interactions, they gained valuable insights about a new language, unfamiliar cultural contexts, and local relationships, thereby bolstering their confidence and independence.

A number of research studies have concluded that communication/language barriers are frequently one of the most prevalent and evident obstacles international teachers face (Ahmad, 2019; Squires et al., 2020). Lee (2015) posited that the difficulties posed by the language barrier can be linked to the recognition of only American English as an admissible language in authoritative discourses within U.S. institutions. The exposure of U.S. mainstream students to diverse pronunciations and language accents of English spoken elsewhere is of utmost importance for international teachers. English is widely utilized as a global medium for communicating in the contemporary day, with individuals hailing from various regions across the globe engaging in its usage (Kawasaki, 2020). Consequently, they speak English with accents that reflect their native languages. In this regard, international teachers can better prepare native English-speaking students in the U.S. for globalization by introducing them to different forms of English. In addition, this allows international teachers to recognize the significance of

their contribution to the global education of students in U.S. schools (Lee, 2015).

### **Classroom Management**

It is challenging for some international scholars to connect to American students, who are earnest and ambitious but simply exhibit different behavioral patterns triggered by their cultural identities and backgrounds (Jawaharlal, 2022). Multiple studies have examined the classroom management practices of international teachers and discovered that classroom management norms in the U.S. are substantially different than those in developing nations (Brown et al., 2019; Little et al., 2019; Nagro et al., 2018).

International teachers tend to depend on gentle methods such as close proximity mentoring and rational thought (Brown et al., 2019).

Scholars discovered that international teachers recognized what creates an efficient classroom setting but believed that having a cheerful outlook and applying emotional processes such as closeness and individualized mentorships with their students did not function as well as prescribed classroom management measures due to the unfamiliarity of the approach with the students (Hepburn et al., 2020; Nagro et al., 2018). Debreli and Ishanova (2019) conducted research on South American teachers of foreign languages in the U.S. Debreli and Ishanova established that international teachers with a global background exhibit a preference for employing responsive classroom management strategies, specifically those involving nonverbal communication and physical proximity. The researchers concluded that the gentle classroom management strategy was ineffective in U.S. classrooms because the lack of foreign teachers to execute punishments and sanctions frequently led to disruptive behavior among students used to more structured discipline procedures (Debreli & Ishanova, 2019).



Liu and Babchuk (2018) conducted a case study to examine the process by which a preservice teacher from China acquired skills in classroom management during the apprenticeship and student teaching phases. The study also examined the diverse obstacles encountered by the teacher and the strategies employed, or lack thereof, to tackle them. The ongoing investigation employed a combination of semi-structured interviews, observational classroom notes, teaching reflections, and documents as data collection methods. Through the process of constant comparison analysis, several themes emerged from the participants' responses, which were characterized as obstacles. These issues encompassed various aspects, including pedagogical difficulties, methods of coping, cultural disparities, language-related frustrations, classroom management concerns, dispositions and emotions, and opportunities for growth. In addition, the researchers proposed the idea of partnering international preservice teachers with American counterparts in order to provide classroom management support. This collaborative approach allows for mutual assistance and the development of cross-cultural competencies.

Chen (2019) conducted an independent investigation to examine the variations in cultural differences and challenges faced by Chinese immersion teachers, as well as the strategies employed by Chinese immersion teachers to address these cultural disparities inside the immersion classroom. Chen (2019) utilized a qualitative case study methodology. The participant was an inexperienced kindergarten immersion teacher from a Chinese-speaking country. There were 13 students from different cultural backgrounds in the classroom. Interviews and observations served as the primary data sources. The phases of data acquisition and analysis were conducted concurrently. To analyze the data,

Chen (2019) employed thematic analysis. The outcomes of this study indicated that the beginning Chinese immersion teacher confronted a number of obstacles due to cultural differences between China and the U.S. (Chen, 2019). These obstacles included the differences in learning expectations, teacher position, classroom management, instructional approaches, and learning techniques. In addition, Chen (2019) revealed that the Chinese immersion teacher grappled with these variations and was unable to perform her duties without substantial guidance and assistance. The investigation yielded recommendations for enhancing cultural awareness, managerial understanding of differences in culture, and Chinese immersion teacher training.

In another study conducted by Chen (2022), she further investigated the emerging research on Chinese immersion programs in the U.S. It has been demonstrated that Chinese immersion programs have positive effects on student language proficiency, academic achievement, and cognitive growth; however, difficulties with curriculum and instruction, behavioral management, and intercultural interactions have hampered the effectiveness of Chinese language immersion programs. As a result of their unfamiliarity with U.S. culture and their high participant expectations, Chinese immersion teachers in the U.S. tend to struggle with managing classroom discipline and fostering a student-centered learning environment. The management of classroom misbehavior posed a notable issue and difficulty for Chinese immersion teachers in student-oriented educational settings, as evidenced by the studies conducted by Chen (2019) and Liao et al. (2017). The findings of Chen (2022) suggested that to tackle these barriers, it is imperative to ensure that Chinese immersion teachers are equipped with comprehensive preparation and support in terms of their expertise pertaining to their instructional

responsibilities, developing integrated instruction in the Chinese language, implementing instructional techniques in immersion environments, support with classroom management, and developing cross-cultural competence; moreover, teachers must modify their teaching methods and classroom management styles in accordance with culturally responsive pedagogy (Ahmed, 2019).

In many developing nations, the clash between American culture and the culture of education exacerbates the difficulty of establishing meaningful relationships with students (Mabe, 2020). Teachers from abroad must be truly prepared to adapt to their students' and instructional expectations. The teachers need training in global proficiency since behavior management issues are frequently the result of difficulty adjusting to a foreign system with a mandated curriculum (Carter, 2020; Nagro et al., 2018; Shehi, 2017). According to studies, efficient classroom management enhances instruction, and inversely (Hepburn et al., 2020; Nagro et al., 2018). With the exception of the studies by Cross et al. (2011), Kombe (2017), and Brown et al. (2019), the corpus of research purported the difficulty international teachers have in controlling their classrooms and gaining respect from students. Cross et al. found that Jamaican teachers encountered challenges in establishing authority and gaining the respect of American students while having little authority difficulties in their respective home nations.

One of the factors that may contribute to the difficulties of gaining respect is creating relationships between ethnicities (Siwatu et al., 2017). The conclusion of Kombe's (2017) study was that the abilities of international teachers in their own nations may not be applicable in other cultural settings. Furthermore, Debreli and Ishanova (2019) indicated that additional research is necessary to comprehend why teachers'

philosophical beliefs regarding what constitutes efficient classroom management were not evident in their practice. By incorporating cross-cultural methodologies into professional development training, international teachers from poor nations may be more receptive to acquiring innovative ideas and methods for satisfying the varied requirements of their students (Hepburn et al., 2020; McEvoy & Salvador, 2020).

### **Delivery of Instruction**

It has been established that the learning environments in the U.S. and many developing countries are dissimilar and that international teachers are likely to have trouble adjusting (Baker, 2020; Dalal et al., 2021; Furuya et al., 2019; Sahling & Decarvalho, 2021). According to Brown et al. (2019) and Kombe (2017), the disparities between the two educational environments are an instructional misalignment that hinders the transferability of practices. Nonetheless, international teachers coming to the U.S. are bound by the same rules as their American colleagues and must provide evidence of student accomplishment (Baker, 2020).

The growing diversity observed in American institutions can be attributed to two key factors: the migration of international teachers to address staffing gaps and the evolving characteristics of the student body (Baker, 2020). Diversity in education is characterized by differences in sexual orientation, racial background, beliefs, social and economic status, and disabilities (Ozturgut, 2017; Petts, 2020). A diversified classroom consists of students who come from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, reading levels, learning styles, technological proficiency, and orientations regarding sexuality and religious outlooks, as well as additional variations that are present in our interconnected, digital society. For demographically diverse classrooms to be inclusive, instructional

design and delivery must encourage innovative approaches (Cardona-Multó et al., 2018; Little et al., 2019; McEvoy & Salvador, 2020; Ozturgut, 2017; Petts, 2020).

Researchers believed that effective professional development in unfamiliar instructional practices could assist teachers in adapting to their newfound type of learning environment (Dalal et al., 2021; Suter & Camilli, 2019). Obregon and Pletcher (2019) argued that methods of teaching must be aligned with changing demographic characteristics and stated that classroom management and instructional strategies should take into account languages, cultural diversity, and the multiple identities that are depicted in the population of today. According to the findings of Dalal et al. (2021), studies determined there is a need to strengthen international teacher awareness of instructional and educational techniques that facilitate the success of all students. This perspective was supported by Baker (2020), who developed a report for the study project on the historical evolution of education. Baker noted how changing standards continue to impact the hiring and retention of teachers in the southern state.

While the necessity for training in instructional practices was acknowledged by a number of scholars, a need for technology training was not. Although most international teachers come from developing nations, Baker (2020) and Dalal et al. (2021) posited that there is little pressing need for technological training for teachers in these countries. The results of Dalal et al.'s mixed methods study demonstrated that international teachers possess technological capabilities and are acclimated to using online technologies for lesson planning and instructional delivery. It would be challenging to describe the strategies each international teacher would need, as instructional strategies and approaches are likely incorporated in all teacher training programs (Dalal et al., 2021).

The attitudes of teachers toward training will have an impact on how well they apply any approach they will use in education, regardless of whether the training is specifically designed for international teachers or American citizens (Baker, 2020; Joeng, 2021). According to several researchers (Dalal et al., 2021; Little et al., 2019; McEvoy & Salvador, 2020), diversity training is essential for preparing teachers for the racial and ethnic makeup of educational institutions around the globe. Cardona-Multó et al. (2018) conducted a comparative study to investigate student-teacher perspectives on learning in diverse, inclusive classrooms in Spain and the U.S. The perspectives of teachers were assessed based on (a) the opportunity to acquire concepts and techniques, (b) the chance to acquire comprehensive teaching methods, and (c) the chance to observe and evaluate practical demonstrations of responsive teaching in a variety of contexts. The findings of this study suggested that there is a necessity for heightened focus on the instruction of diversity within teacher preparation programs. The suggested implications for continuous development of initial teacher preparation pertain to strengthening the diversity training of educators and student teachers. Furthermore, it is imperative to provide Spanish and U.S. educators with the chance to witness and critically assess the practical facets of teaching diversity.

In addition to training in cultural awareness and methods to support inclusiveness, educators must also be able to manage and instruct in a multicultural setting (Culham, 2019; Dion, 2020; Nagro et al., 2018; Ozturgut, 2017; Petts, 2020). Hinner (2020) suggested that any curriculum aimed at combating the hostility that accompanies diversification would encourage teachers to engage in meta-cognition in order to assess their own levels of self-awareness before implementing strategies to promote equality.

The notion of meta-cognition, as explored in Hinner's research, exhibits a correlation with Robison's (2020) proposition of cultivating mindfulness to effectively navigate the complexities arising from varied cultural backgrounds. Additionally, Culham's (2019) examination of biases that may impact the choice of literature for literacy teaching aligns with this line of inquiry.

### **Chapter Summary**

This literature review sought to highlight the importance of cognitive coaching as a coaching style that can influence thought processes and give a framework for introspective thought (Ceballos et al., 2020). The overall mission, objectives, and instruments of cognitive coaching were examined in the literature review. Furthermore, the chapter included an analysis of comparable research on the effectiveness of cognitive coaching and the challenges faced by international teachers that had been conducted previously. This chapter also analyzed Knowles's (1984) theory of andragogy.

Moreover, the current study examined the perspectives of international teachers on coaching to improve instructional methods through the coach's strategies, internal thought processes, observable actions, and enhanced teacher performance. This qualitative case study was conducted to examine the effects of the cognitive coaching process on international teachers and the role of cognitive coaching in teacher development and growth. This study examined the utilization of cognitive coaching and the role cognitive coaching plays in supporting international teachers with communication barriers, classroom management, and instruction delivery. This study provided interview data to explore teacher perspectives on the effectiveness of cognitive coaching.

In Chapter 3, the methodology is presented. The problem statement is reformulated, and the research questions are developed to guide the inquiry. The subsequent section of Chapter 3 delves into the exploration of research methodology, the research design, the process of demographic and sample selection for the study, sources of data, and the assessment of study validity and reliability. In addition, Chapter 3 provides data collection techniques, ethical concerns for the investigation, constraints, delimitations, and a summary of the chapter.



### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The purpose of this case study was to examine how cognitive coaching may influence international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and self-modify their classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction while teaching in the participating district. Cognitive coaching and its capacity to support teachers with classroom management, language and communication barriers, and delivery of instruction to facilitate opportunities for self-direction, self-management, self-modification, and self-monitoring in the classroom comprised the central phenomenon of this study. This case study explored and described the experiences of participants in their natural surroundings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participating international teachers contributed their experiences to aid in the awareness, explanation, and design of instructional practices and how these activities foster self-direction in general education classes. Using a qualitative case study design, this research focused on examining the challenges of international teachers, and how cognitive coaching may or may not support their instructional practices and acclimation to the culture and community.

Chapter 3 begins with an overview of the methodology adopted for this study, followed by a discussion of the issue statement to help the reader comprehend the importance of research. The investigation was guided by the research questions that help the reader understand the findings. An explanation of qualitative research enables the reader's comprehension of the study's structure. In addition to an explanation of data sources, the population for this study is discussed. Validity and reliability are discussed to ensure the viability of this research investigation. Data collection processes are described, along with essential steps for data analysis to ensure replication. The concluding portions

of this chapter discuss the ethical considerations made to guarantee that the participants were protected within the constraints of this research project. Finally, to summarize the chapter, a succinct and concise synopsis is provided.

### **Research Design**

A research design is a framework for gathering information, analysis, and assessment. A research design concentrates, in a coherent and logical manner, on the strategy for integrating the various components of the study. In turn, the design effectively contributes to the solution of the research problem (Jovancic, 2020). A case study was chosen to examine the influence of cognitive coaching on elementary international teachers in a school district in the southeastern U.S.

### **Case Study**

Case studies provide the researcher with real-life experiences as specific data are gathered and analyzed (Merriam, 2002). Case study research has provided insight into a vast array of domains, academic disciplines, and career paths, and it includes safeguards against validity risks and examination of competing explanations (Yin, 2014). The use of case studies is common in the field of education because it allows the researcher to focus on logistical issues, such as group and organizational behavior (Crowe et al., 2011). I chose a case study that was a qualitative design because it provided a comprehensive analysis of a particular research issue. Moreover, case studies aid in narrowing a broad research field into easily researchable examples (Yin, 2014). Through a thorough contextual analysis, this case study facilitated comprehension of a complex idea (Yin, 2014). Given that case studies are descriptive and focus on the investigation of a specific population, individual, or event, this method assisted in comprehending the experiences,

and motivations of international teachers.

Various data collection techniques are typically employed in case study research (Priya, 2021). This qualitative case study focused on in-depth semi-structured interviews with 13 elementary international teachers to provide descriptions of how cognitive coaching influences their instructional practices, classroom management skills, language/communication barriers, and delivery of instruction while working in K-5 classrooms. Further, during the interviews, participants were asked to describe how cognitive coaching enhanced their internal thinking processes and their ability to self-modify and self-regulate. I sought the involvement of 15 general primary international teachers. This sample fulfills Yin's (2018) recommendation of 12 to 15 individuals to achieve data saturation; therefore, I obtained rich, detailed descriptions of the phenomena addressing the "how" research questions.

A qualitative methodology was most applicable for examining how cognitive coaching influences teaching practices, classroom management skills, effective communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction of international teachers while teaching in the participating district. Creswell and Creswell (2018) described qualitative research as essential for determining the "how and in what ways" (p. 95) a phenomenon occurs. This qualitative study used a descriptive qualitative design to examine the influence of cognitive coaching on international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and modify their teaching methods while working in a southeastern school district. Yin (2018) asserted that the descriptive research approach provides explicit data related to research questions that quantitative data cannot explain. Qualitative descriptive research is appropriate when connecting interpersonal and subjective skills through

investigating relationship influences (Alase, 2017). Yin (2018) suggested that researchers with little or no control over the phenomenon should use qualitative research to illuminate questions of how and why.

According to Goldstein (2017), qualitative research methodologies allow an in-depth examination of explicit information about organizations, events, or individuals. Qualitative research aims to investigate an idea through open-ended questioning as an inquiry to make sense of an occurrence. The descriptive nature of this qualitative study provided supportive insight into which cognitive coaching strategies would be appropriate for influencing international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and modify instructional practices and classroom management techniques, communicate effectively with students and families, and deliver instruction.

This case study became a product instead of a method of research, describing and understanding how international teachers facilitate opportunities for self-monitoring, modify instructional practices and management strategies, and improve communication. I conducted in-depth one-on-one semi-structured interviews, which provided rich data that supported the research questions and revealed whether cognitive coaching influences the personal and professional needs of international teachers. Based on the cognitive coaching model, this study adopted the case study technique to explain the perspectives of international teachers and what they feel are the most significant dilemmas they experience in the cooperating district's classrooms.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions lay forth the methodology, study design, and implementation of the research procedure (Butin, 2010). The following are the questions

that directed this study:

1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?

The purpose of the Research Question Alignment Table is to provide a visual representation of the elements of this case study (see Table 1). The research questions were developed with the cognitive coaching process in mind and the strategies that may influence international teachers' abilities to affect their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

**Table 1***Research Question Alignment Table*

Research Question	Type of data to collect	Method of data collection	Information source	Analysis procedures	Interpretation procedures and criteria
1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?	Qualitative	Semi-structured one-on-one interviews	Teachers	Thematic analysis	Data were analyzed using thematic coding to identify and classify themes.
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practice, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?	Qualitative	Semi-structured one-on-one interviews	Teachers	Thematic analysis	Data were analyzed using thematic coding to identify and classify themes.
3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?	Qualitative	Semi-structured one-on-one interviews	Teachers	Thematic analysis	Data were analyzed using thematic coding to identify and classify themes
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?	Qualitative	Semi-structured one-on-one interviews	Teachers	Thematic analysis	Data were analyzed using thematic coding to develop and categorize themes

## Setting

The investigation took place in a southeastern school district during the fall 2023 semester. As suggested by Cohen et al. (2007), the study site was selected because of its accessibility and convenience. Additionally, this study site district was selected as it has the highest number of international teachers in the state. I chose to use elementary

international teachers because I serve as a district-level elementary instructional coach and I only work with elementary teachers. The study site school district has approximately 1,901 teachers. There are 178 international teachers, which accounts for 9.4% of the teaching population in the study site district. Of those 178 international teachers, 68 are elementary teachers.

### **Context of the Study**

The study site district is comprised of 28 elementary schools with four district-level instructional coaches trained in cognitive coaching who are supporting seven of the elementary sites. This coaching model is the main teacher support program in each site. Historically, in this study site district, the coach and coachee share a partnership that is collaborative, with the goal of enhancing instructional practice. This enhancement occurs once the coachee replies to coach inquiries in a manner that prioritizes, transitions, or strengthens a set of beliefs aligned with decisions that positively contribute to the performance of students (Costa & Garmston, 2016). This research focused on a coaching protocol designed for district-level instructional coaches to apply with the classroom teacher. There have been questions about the effectiveness of this coaching model for international teachers, and the results from this study will be shared with district personnel for staff development and with the chief of teaching and learning as additional information for future professional learning opportunities.

### **Ethical Considerations**

For a qualitative study to be ethical, participants must be informed and provide consent voluntarily. To safeguard confidentiality, the names of international teachers were not used in the study, and there was little to no risk of harm to the participants.

This qualitative descriptive study used safe data storage methods, eliminating identifiable traits and employing pseudonyms to protect personal information (Kahn et al., 2018). All artifacts and documentation, particularly manuscripts and voice recordings, were kept on my password-protected computer. In accordance with record-keeping regulations, all papers and scripts for this study will be saved in a secure locked filing cabinet in my personal residence for 3 years. When the 3-year retention term expires, all papers will be destroyed by shredding. Each participant gave their informed consent prior to any collection of data and was reminded that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without penalty.

Once the purposeful sample of participants was identified, I contacted the district Office of Accountability, Assessment, Research, and Evaluation as they had to make contact with principals before I could contact the principals. Upon approval, I sent the principals a site permission research request to conduct interviews with international teachers in their buildings (see Appendix A). Once principals agreed to allow research to be conducted, I sent an invitation to prospective participants to gauge their interest and to describe the study's objective and the plan for protecting confidentiality (see Appendix B). Once international teachers agreed to participate, the participant selection process occurred. Once the participant selection process occurred, the informed consent form was distributed for signatures (see Appendix C). Upon receiving consent to participate, I scheduled individual interviews.

As a prerequisite for participating in the research project, all participants were required to provide a voluntary, signed informed consent letter (see Appendix C). Sanjari et al. (2014) and Kahn et al. (2018) found that informed consent is crucial to the



consenting process to protect all participants from physical or emotional harm. Consent was obtained by informing individuals of the goal and purpose of the study, potential risks, methodology used in this study, and any prospective advantages and disadvantages of participating (Kahn et al., 2018). Informed consent enables participants to make an informed choice regarding participation in the study and the ability to withdraw at any time. The continuing informed consent procedure allows individuals to withdraw at any moment (Kahn et al., 2018). The following information was supplied to participants: the length of research, contact details, the declaration of willingness to participate, and the statement of confidentiality, along with the choice to discontinue participation in the study at any time (Kahn et al., 2018; Sanjari et al., 2014).

To ensure the investigation was ethically sound, I explored how participants may be affected by any aspect of the research to ensure that no one was harmed. I reduced the potential for risk by verifying and double-checking the study design, offering encouragement to participants throughout and after the data collection process, and preserving confidentiality in both data collection and reporting. Ultimately, I ensured the safeguarding or elimination of identification of personal data when they were being retained for subsequent analysis. The objective was to protect the confidentiality of the participants and their potentially delicate international teacher stories. To guarantee a highly ethical investigation, the following measures were implemented in every aspect of the research. Together with the assignment of pseudonyms, the confidentiality of all participants involved in the study was safeguarded. The opinions and perspectives of the participants as practitioners were acknowledged. I made it clear that the information acquired from them would aid in the identification of explanations to challenges that

many international teachers face. This approach aimed to motivate participants to be open and discuss their experiences and dispositions in depth.

There are clear rules outlining ethical implications for qualitative studies focused on the relationship between participants and researchers and defining the role of the researcher (Sanjari et al., 2014). While qualitative studies lack statistical data, I played a crucial role in analyzing information from interviews. To achieve an ethical and dependable information extraction, I conducted interviews objectively under the direct guidance of privacy, confidentiality, and informed consent to assure truthful reporting (Kahn et al., 2018). In addition, interviews were recorded so that recollection or misinterpretation were not factors in the transcription (Sanjari et al., 2014). Member checking was utilized to allow participants to check for accuracy of their responses. To strengthen reliability, international teachers were given a digital version of their encoded interview and asked to verify its accuracy, explain any inconsistencies, and expound on the questions. After completing the interviews, I inquired about the best way to contact the participants to submit the interview transcription. Participants had the opportunity to review the transcript to correct any discrepancies and verify the authenticity of their words. Respondent names were coded using pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. This was to ensure anonymity. The recordings were deleted following the transcription of interviews. Following the research, interview transcripts will be stored for 3 years in a locked cabinet before being shredded.

### **Role of the Researcher**

During the research process, a qualitative researcher undertakes numerous duties and functions. The responsibilities include selecting participants, developing research

questions, conducting interviews, collecting and examining data, authenticating information, and presenting findings (Saldaña, 2016). Since I am a district-level instructional coach in the study site district and implement the cognitive coaching model with teachers, I took measures to reduce the likelihood of researcher bias. Teachers I have previously worked with were not considered for the study. My previous experiences of working with international teachers may have influenced how I approached, organized, and interpreted the data. Furthermore, to eliminate the possibility of obtaining biased information, I chose participants I did not know.

Roger et al. (2018) recognized the researcher-participant relationship. The researcher is responsible for maintaining their own views, putting their presumptions aside while conducting the study, and maintaining a sense of objectivity throughout the research. Given that the researcher's role in a qualitative investigation is to articulate why people have the opinions and emotions they do or function as they do, the researcher must try to obtain accessibility to the individual ideas and emotions of the participants (Sutton & Austin, 2015). To obtain accessibility to the individual emotions and ideas of the participants, I established an atmosphere of confidence and security (Sutton & Austin, 2015).

In this study, I conducted private, one-on-one interviews with elementary international teachers who have certification in education with at least 2 years of teaching experience. As a district-level instructional coach who collaborates with elementary teachers, it was important to keep respective predispositions and beliefs out of the interviews. I did not allow individual beliefs about why international teachers face challenges in the classroom to influence questioning.

To gain access to the unique perspectives of others, I took full responsibility for asking focused questions, respecting divergent viewpoints, and keeping individual prejudices away from the discussion so as not to influence the participant's responses. I remained impartial throughout the procedure. The specific responsibilities encompassed various tasks such as executing the study, formulating interview questions, choosing participants, conducting interviews, transcribing the interviews, analyzing the interviews for recurring patterns and themes, and ultimately relating the data to andragogy/adult learning theory and the cognitive coaching model.

### **Participant Selection**

Moser and Kortjens (2018) suggested establishing criteria for participants in the study. Educators who did not fulfill the established requirements in any way were excluded from this study. The selection of participants was contingent upon the following criteria:

- current international teachers teaching in an elementary school in the study site school district
- international teachers from abroad who are currently certified or licensed in Grades K-5.
- international teachers with at least 2 or more years of experience in kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms
- elementary international teachers from the top four countries of origin
- international teachers who were available and willing to partake in virtual or in-person interviews
- international teachers I did not know or with whom I had ever worked

The recruitment process prioritized persons who possess a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience in their country of origin, as well as a minimum of 2 years of teaching experience specifically within the public elementary schools of South Carolina. The degree of expertise is crucial because these individuals currently possess a solid awareness of their home country's educational system before making a drastic transition to teaching in American schools. Another criterion for participant selection was the number of international teachers recruited from the top four countries of origin by the study site district. I chose not to select middle and high school teachers since I am only certified to work with teachers in Grades K-5.

While there are 178 international teachers in the study district, Table 2 illustrates the number of elementary international teachers who met all criteria to be included in the study. This table also provides information on teachers from the top four countries that are represented in the cooperating district, as well as the certification levels of the participants and the recruitment agencies that recruited the participants to teach in the southeastern U.S.

**Table 2**

*Potential Participants (Fall 2023)*

Number of participants	Country of origin	Certification	Sponsoring agency			
			EPI	FACES	ITES	Participate
39	Jamaica	Elementary	21	18		
24	Philippines	Elementary	13	11		
8	Colombia	Elementary/ESOL		8		
9	India	Special Education K-12		3	5	1

Note. The private programs for exchange visiting teachers include the following sponsors: Educational Partners International, LLC (EPI), Foreign Academic and Cultural Exchange Services (FACES), International Teacher Exchange Services (ITES), and Participate (previously

known as VIF).

Purposeful sampling entails deliberately utilizing a group of participants who can adequately enlighten the researcher regarding the problem under investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study employed purposeful sampling, which enabled me to select participants based on their relevant expertise, countries of origin, and sponsoring agencies. I selected 20 to 25 teachers to receive the Invitation to Participate (see Appendix B). Of these 20 to 25 teachers, I tried to replicate, as closely as possible, the percentage of teachers from the top four countries and sponsoring agencies as are in the total potential participant pool. Once the results of the Invitation to Participate were returned, I checked to make sure I had representative numbers from the top four countries of origin and sponsoring agencies. I hoped to have 12-15 potential participants who were willing to participate in the study. I emailed other international teachers from the potential participant list and followed the same procedures.

Renwick (2019) noted that when the number of participants in a qualitative study is smaller, there is a greater opportunity to develop interpersonal connections, have more fluid discussions, and thus capture more accurate data. Nevertheless, Renwick recommended that researchers with little expertise use a larger sample size to assure accuracy and validity, so this study included 13 international teachers. In addition, Moser and Kortjens (2018) underscored the importance of gathering information until saturation is reached. Saturation of data occurs when newly gathered data no longer generate unique outcomes or the most current information. Renwick emphasized that when the saturation point is attained, the optimal number of participants can be determined.

Due to the relatively small sample sizes that may accompany case study research, this stage is basic in its execution (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The participants in this

study included approximately one tenth of certified international teachers from developing countries on a J-1 visa in the targeted district. While there are several countries representing the international teachers working in the district, I only selected participants from the top four countries of origin because they met the criteria needed to participate in the study. It will be meaningful information for the district to explore if there are any similarities or differences in the cognitive coaching needs of teachers from different countries and different sponsoring agencies. While there are international teachers representing four countries, 75% of the district's educators were recruited from Jamaica, the Philippines, Colombia, and India.

### **Data Collection**

Qualitative data for this study were gathered through 30- to 45-minute semi-structured interviews with elementary international teachers employed in a school district in the southeastern U.S. The instrument investigated elementary international teachers' experiences with cognitive coaching strategies and how they may support their instructional practices, classroom management skills, language/communication barriers, and instruction delivery.

Moser and Korstjens (2018) claimed that an interview is a reciprocal interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer, wherein the discussion centers around previous experiences, the current situation, or personal matters. In addition, Moser and Kortjens proposed that the interviewer should commence the conversation broadly before narrowing it down. The interview included a semi-structured format with a laser-like focus, allowing participants to candidly share their own experiences, sentiments, and viewpoints (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Additionally, researchers offer broad guidelines

regarding how to conduct successful research interviews. They consist of the researcher making a conscious effort to recognize individual prejudices, developing and testing questions for usefulness and clarity, and being dedicated to developing rapport with the participants. In addition, the application of listening techniques, adaptability, precise recording and reviewing of responses, and impartial analysis of the responses is part of the process (McGrath et al., 2018). Following these guidelines, I used intentional reflection for any potential researcher biases.

The interviews took place in a discrete, distraction-free setting where the international teachers were comfortable sharing their experiences. Participants were notified and offered choices for a location where they would feel safe, encouraged, and motivated to speak freely. During the interview, the conversation began with open-ended inquiries and probing questions (see Appendix D) for the interview protocol/questions. Additionally, I extended and elicited additional information from participants by asking clarifying or probing questions. Interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes. I met with 11 teachers face-to-face to conduct the interviews and two teachers via Microsoft Teams virtually.

I recorded and transcribed the interviews verbatim using the software product Otter.ai. Otter is an AI-based utility for recording and transcription. The Otter.ai platform was used to import audio files and generate transcripts. In addition to its standard capabilities, Otter.ai generates keywords, identifies speakers, and enables users to collaborate on the transcript. This instrument permits the researcher to utilize thematic coding to detect prevalent themes associated with the viewpoints and experiences of international teachers.



In addition, I took notes during the interview to identify any notable facial expressions and body language that were valuable. Furthermore, I gave the participants my undivided, focused attention. Other follow-up correspondence was member checking, which allows the participant to verify the transcription of what they said (see Appendix E). After completing the interviews and transcriptions, I reviewed and analyzed the data to search for emerging themes. Depending on the participant responses, follow-up queries or interviews were developed. Table 3 indicates the congruence of the research questions with the semi-structured interview questions.

**Table 3**

*Research and Interview Questions Alignment Table*

Research questions	Interview questions/data collection instrument
1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction?	Interview Questions 1, 2, 3, 4
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction?	Interview Questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10
3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?	Interview Questions 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?	Interview Questions 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

## **Data Analysis**

Following the accumulation of data, audio recordings were transcribed and included transcription member checking. The Otter.ai platform aided in transcribing the interviews. Additionally, Otter.ai generated keywords. Data were then categorically coded and organized by emerging themes (Creswell, 2014). I began my analysis by correcting any transcription errors that occurred. I then reviewed each transcript to determine its overall significance. The interviews were coded for phrases, keywords, and patterns that were repeated. Significant ideas were extracted from the single-word responses for similarities and patterns.

The encoding of data occurred in multiple phases. Initial coding consisted of an indefinite number of category identifiers (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During this phase, I generated an inventory of concepts, constructed correlations and representations, and sought out the participants' key terms to emphasize the most significant themes. The second stage relied on focus coding, which involved eliminating, merging, or disassembling the coding categories designated in the first phase. The subsequent phase consisted of evaluating repeated concepts and identifying more prevalent themes associated with the codes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). After analyzing the interview data for themes, data from the interviews were triangulated to pinpoint final themes and provide complete answers to the research questions.

## **Methods to Address Validity or Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness refers to the specific steps used in research methods to bolster confidence and quality inside the study (Cypress, 2017). Reliability is the method by which researchers construct objective narratives devoid of bias and personal biases

(Cypress, 2017; Gill et al., 2018; Olivia, 2017). Cornelissen (2017) and Cavalcanti (2017) defined transferability as the degree to which the theoretical outcomes of a qualitative investigation may be applied to various situations. Trustworthiness focuses on the dependability of the documented investigation technique (Gill et al., 2018). Last, confirmability is ensuring that substantial evidence exists to back evolving assumptions and interpretations (Gill et al., 2018). These methods together ensure credibility and involve taking measures to demonstrate that the study is rigorous, accurately reflects the sample's experiences, and is consequently free from interviewer bias (Cypress, 2017; Noble & Smith, 2015). This qualitative investigation's accuracy and validity were enhanced through the inclusion of the four criteria of trustworthiness, which served to ethically represent me (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), research validity is a measure of the accuracy of the investigation's presented outcomes. To ensure the accuracy of this study's findings, validity was based on the use of field-tested interview protocols, comprehensive transcribing bolstered by utilizing a taped recording of every conversation, and member checking as an additional method for validating participant responses. The use of member checking necessitates the researcher's openness in sharing transcribed interview responses with each participant and soliciting their feedback on the authenticity of the results obtained. Marshall and Rossman (2014) identified member verification as a procedure whereby participants evaluate and offer feedback on the overall meaning of the collected data. Participants were requested to evaluate the transcripts to verify that their primary goals were reflected in the document. Participants were given the chance to modify or elucidate any statements that did not accurately reflect their intended message. I

addressed any inaccuracies in the transcriptions before analyzing the data.

This study's reliability was supported by the systematic yet adaptive application of the established interview technique. Even though semi-structured interviews can be informal and conversational, with questions delivered in a variety of sequences, experts warn that the trustworthiness of the data is compromised when questions vary among participants. To accomplish this, the comprehensive interview transcripts and coding protocol were preserved as artifacts and made available for peer review as necessary (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### **Summary**

This chapter contained information regarding the study's general approach and specific descriptions of the research process and protocols. Additionally, the chapter outlined how the data collection and analysis processes were conducted. The method of data collection included interviews with elementary international teachers who were employed in a southeastern school district. Also, the research questions were examined, and the procedures for participant selection were described. The procedure of data collection and analysis was also described in detail in the chapter. Finally, the role of the researcher and the procedures for authenticating the data were described. In Chapter 4, I analyze the data gathered from the interviews, including the experiences of international teachers and the influence cognitive coaching had on their instructional practices during the interview process.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to provide insight into elementary international teachers' experiences with cognitive coaching strategies to improve their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. The 13 teachers who participated in the study all had at least 2 or more years of teaching experience in the U.S. The targeted population was certified elementary K-5 teachers in the study site district. All participants were located in the same southeastern school district across seven schools. Using semi-structured interviews, I was able to interview 13 international teachers from various countries and sponsoring agencies including Jamaica, the Philippines, Colombia, and India. The sponsoring agencies included FACES, EPI, and ITES.

In response to semi-structured interviews and member verification, teachers articulated their viewpoints through the use of explanations, descriptions, and beliefs (Basckin et al., 2021). During the interviews, I was able to ask teachers 21 questions that related to four research questions about their experiences with cognitive coaching and how it could support their abilities to self-monitor and self-modify their instructional practices. As a result of the interviews, I was able to collect participant responses via Otter. ai, a transcription software program, and handwritten notes. The data from the interviews were analyzed for codes and emerging themes.

### Research Questions

This qualitative case study was framed through the following questions:

1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching

strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?

2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?
3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?

The cognitive coaching process and strategies that might impact international teachers' abilities to modify their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction were taken into consideration when developing the research questions.

### **Study Participants**

There were 13 international teachers who participated in this study. Participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms in this study. All 13 of the teachers in the study were females. There were six international teachers from Jamaica, four from the Philippines, two from Colombia, and one from India. Seven of the 13 international teachers work in two of the same elementary schools. Eight of the teachers work in urban elementary schools, and five of them work in rural schools in the study site district.

Seven of the international teachers are employed in Title I schools, and six work in non-Title I schools. I conducted 11 in-person interviews and two virtual interviews. To ensure participant convenience, I scheduled the interviews at times that were most convenient for each individual. The participants could choose interview time discretions, either during their instructional planning time or after school, at a location of their preference. Each interview was conducted outside of regular academic hours. The demographics of the participants are detailed in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Participant Demographics Table*

Pseudonyms	Home country	Grade level	Sponsoring agency	Style of interview
Dena	Jamaica	2	EPI	Face-to-face
Kera	Jamaica	4	EPI	Face-to-face
Mae	Jamaica	4	FACES	Face-to-face
Alen	Jamaica	4	FACES	Video (Microsoft teams)
Laya	Jamaica	2	FACES	Face-to-face
Vreen	Jamaica	3	EPI	Face-to-face
Ren	Colombia	K-2 SPED	FACES	Face-to-face
Glo	Columbia	K-5 ESOL	FACES	Face-to-face
Emo	Philippines	3	FACES	Face-to-face
Lou	Philippines	2	EPI	Face-to-face
Sloan	Philippines	1	EPI	Face-to-face
Deb	Philippines	2	FACES	Video (Microsoft teams)
Rey	India	2	ITES	Face-to-face

### **Evidence of Quality**

A semi-structured interview approach was used to collect data, and participants' demographic information was gathered. Data analysis involved the utilization of content analysis and coding techniques. As the researcher, I transcribed all the interviews. To begin the process of analysis, I reviewed the transcribed data obtained from the Otter.ai transcripts. I verified the transcriptions for veracity, and I listened to the recordings

separately. First, I coded the transcripts, then I categorized the codes, and then I categorized the themes. To ensure that the translation application was accurate, I reviewed each transcription multiple times while simultaneously listening to the audio recording. The dataset is comprised of both favorable and unfavorable experiences. I compared the notes and generated the data-recognized categories and subcategories.

To mitigate the potential for researcher bias, educators I have had prior partnerships with were excluded from the study. The potential impact of my prior collaborations with international teachers on my methodology, data organization, and interpretation was considered. I also selected participants I was unfamiliar with to eradicate the possibility of acquiring biased information. I bear the responsibility of setting aside personal biases and presumptions during the study and maintaining an impartial stance throughout. Member checking was utilized to allow participants to check for accuracy of their responses. No interview inaccuracies were noticed by any of the participants. To faithfully convey the participants' statements, actual excerpts from the interviews are incorporated into the analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis commenced with an examination of the data in relation to ideas, themes, and interpretations. Each research question was substantiated with data obtained from semi-structured interviews and member checking, as elaborated in Chapter 3. I applied Saldaña's (2016) approach to thematic analysis in order to systematically code, categorize, and theme the information gathered from semi-structured interviews. A four-step thematic analysis procedure was employed to carry out the data analysis. By applying the four-step method for thematic analysis, I was able to effectively and



succinctly identify themes that supported the research questions by comparing data obtained from the semi-structured interviews and member verification. By categorizing, coding, and thematically classifying the 13 interview transcripts. I compiled transcribed data that addressed each theme in accordance with the research question. The themes are elaborately discussed by the research questions in the section of this chapter devoted to the findings.

The purpose of the Research Questions and Interview Questions Alignment Table was to provide representation between the research questions and the interview questions (see Table 5). The research questions were developed with the cognitive coaching process in mind and the strategies that may influence international teachers' abilities to affect their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

**Table 5***Research Questions and Interview Questions Alignment Table*

Research question	Related interview questions
1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?	<p>1. What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on your classroom management techniques? What variables in your opinion influence classroom management in the United States?</p> <p>2. How is classroom management in the United States comparable to or different from classroom management in your own country?</p> <p>3. What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on communication/language barriers?</p> <p>4. What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on the delivery of instruction?</p>
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?	<p>5. What changes in your values and beliefs about teaching have occurred? What instructional experiences in the United States have caused this?</p> <p>6. What, if any, changes have there been in the way you address relationships with students, administrators, etc.?</p> <p>7. What, if any, changes in your students were noticed? If not, why? How would you describe relationships with your students? How do you feel the students would respond to your teaching?</p> <p>8. Tell me about some examples of suggestions made during cognitive coaching feedback sessions that you have implemented. Tell me about some suggestions that you have not implemented.</p> <p>9. What, if any, strategies did you learn from your coach to improve classroom management, communication and language barriers with students, and delivery of instruction?</p>

(continued)

Research question	Related interview questions
3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?	<p>10. What is your country of origin?</p> <p>11. What recruitment firm recruited you to teach in the United States?</p> <p>12. How is classroom management in the United States similar or different from classroom management in your country of origin?</p> <p>13. How are communication/language barriers similar or different from your country of origin?</p> <p>14. How is the delivery of instruction similar or different from your country of origin?</p> <p>15. Which of these challenges do you find most apparent in the United States? How does it compare to your native country, and how does it differ?</p>
4. In what areas, if any might international teachers identify as needing additional support?	<p>16. What changes do you believe, if any, are needed to further optimize cognitive coaching in your school or district?</p> <p>17. How are your teaching experiences similar or different when working with a coach?</p> <p>18. In what other ways can your coach support you in your professional development?</p> <p>19. What other suggestions might you offer to international teachers based on your experience?</p> <p>20. What professional learning opportunity assisted you in transitioning to the United States?</p> <p>21. If you could change just a single aspect regarding the way school administrators prepare international teachers for their work in the United States, what would it be?</p>

Qualitative case studies necessitate that the investigator delve into comprehensive events while developing an understanding of the accumulated data. A four-step methodology was designed to code and analyze each teacher's interview transcript to their

viewpoints. Each teacher's interview was read and coded separately. The coding process involved deductive and inductive coding.

***Step 1: Initial Read***

I reviewed, interacted with, and conceptualized the data during this initial phase. To gain an understanding of the data, several evaluations of the transcribed semi-structured interviews generated by the Otter.ai software were conducted. A PDF document containing the transcribed participant interviews was produced. While listening to the audio recordings, I diligently followed the word transcriptions. I read and reread both data sources while referencing collective statements in the margins of each source to familiarize myself with the information. To ensure that each word transcript corresponded to the research questions, I coded it.

By repeatedly reviewing the transcripts in Word format, I identified collective descriptions, words, and phrases. To mitigate potential technical issues that may have arisen during the one-on-one semi-structured interviews, I utilized two recording devices: Otter.ai transcription software on my cellphone and handwritten notes. The confidentiality of the participants was upheld by employing pseudonyms. The data pertaining to each research question were gathered through individual interviews.

***Step 2: Reading Line-by-Line***

In conjunction with the interview questions, a line-by-line review of the interview transcripts was conducted. When codes emerged during each rereading of the data, they were implemented. Codes were assigned to segments of the transcripts containing similar or unexpected remarks made by international teachers from various countries and agencies, as well as phrases and paragraphs that were repeated. A term was assigned to

each wording, phrase, or paragraph that corresponded with the subject matter of the statements, responses, or paragraphs.

### ***Step 3: Code Deduction***

Overarching categories were generated from coded segments of the transcripts that reflected comparable understandings. In a distinct Microsoft Word document classified by category, the coded segments of the participants' statements were duplicated. Comparing, contrasting, and establishing connections among the concepts derived from the codes constituted the last stage. An effort was made to eliminate redundant codes to discern themes that emerged from the data during this period through a meticulous and accurate assessment of the dataset classification by code.

### ***Step 4: Specific Codes to Themes***

Organizing, minimizing, and integrating codes to form themes comprised the subsequent phase. The themes elucidated the fundamental aspects of the participants' experiences as revealed through the interview questions and were consistent with the research question. At this juncture, themes were formed by combining patterns among codes. After the categorization of themes according to their interrelationships, they were rearranged to establish the framework for overarching themes. Superordinate themes are higher-level concepts linked to collections of other themes known as secondary themes. They originate from emergent themes. Secondary themes are less important and establish a significant link with the preceding themes. I reviewed the transcripts and analyzed the emergent themes and categories to ensure they were consistent with the research questions. Based on participants' responses there were 13 themes identified.

## **Findings**

The results of this research provided the viewpoints of elementary international teachers regarding cognitive coaching and its impact on various aspects of their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication and language barriers, and delivery of instruction. To convey these findings, I chose to employ a question-and-answer structure, as elucidated by Yin (2018). The participant responses to an identical set of inquiries were documented in the form of question-and-answer sessions (Yin, 2018). I presented a narrative of the data in accordance with the research questions as I interpreted each participant interview. Furthermore, I disseminated any recurring themes that surfaced throughout the phase of data analysis. Through the process of hand-coding the transcribed interview notes, themes were formulated. In pursuit of identifying recurring themes, I adopted an interpretivist perspective and reported the responses of participants to the interview inquiries pertaining to their perceived beliefs and perspectives concerning educational equity. The purpose of the 21 questions was to encourage participants to openly share their thoughts and views regarding the ways in which cognitive coaching could assist with classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

The sequencing of the research questions is purposeful, aiming to facilitate a systematic exploration of the influence of cognitive coaching strategies on elementary international teachers. While Research Questions 1, 2, and 4 focus on understanding the direct influence of cognitive coaching strategies on instructional practices, internal thinking processes, and identified support needs respectively, Research Question 3 is strategically positioned to investigate broader comparative aspects. By examining the

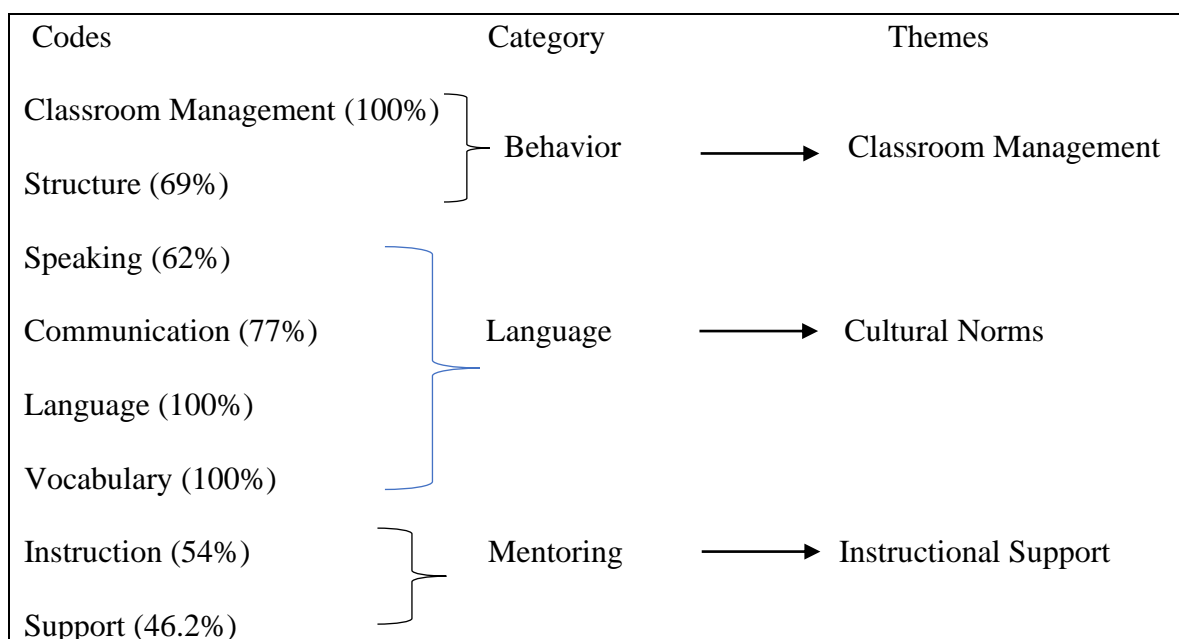
similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and sponsoring agencies, this question necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the effects of cognitive coaching before delving into cross-cultural comparisons; thus, the organization of the research questions reflects a logical progression of inquiry, ensuring that each question contributes meaningfully to the overarching aim of the study.

### ***Research Question 1***

The interview questions were designed to solicit information on how cognitive coaching strategies could improve international teachers' instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. From the codes, I categorized them, developed themes, and arrived at a consensus regarding distinctive patterns within the data. The responses to the open-ended questions yielded data concerning the viewpoints of international teachers concerning cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction (see Figure 2). The data are graphically represented in Figure 2, which comprises the codes with percentages, categories, and then themes gathered from the interview dataset.

**Figure 2**

*Codes, Categories, and Themes for Research Question 1*



The first research question was intended to describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies on international teachers and how they may improve their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. There were three themes that derived from the data analysis pertaining to this research question: classroom management, cultural norms, and instructional support. The codes, categories, and themes are depicted in Figure 2 and are analyzed by each theme.

**Theme 1: Classroom Management.** The initial and preponderating theme to emerge for Research Question 1 was classroom management. The thematic analysis of the data led to the discovery that international teachers describe their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction as challenges they faced when entering the U.S.; however, their coach



provided much-needed support to lessen the many challenges they faced. During the interviews, evidence surfaced that all 13 (100%) participants expressed that managing behavior was one of the biggest challenges they faced in the U.S. The teachers felt that the challenges made it difficult for them to manage their classrooms because of the disruptive behavior of students. Mae stated,

The large class sizes tend to be more challenging in terms of managing disruptive behavior. When I first started teaching here in the United States, I had a culture shock when I entered the classroom. The students displayed various disruptive behaviors and responses.

Sloan voiced a similar concern by saying, “During the first few months of my teaching as an international teacher here in the US, I struggled with classroom management as managing the behavior of students here and in the Philippines are totally different.”

Even though the teachers expressed difficulty with classroom management skills and managing student behavior, they also highlighted that their coach provided support and feedback during their coaching sessions on managing student behavior. Vreen stated,

Well coaching/the coach has supported me to see ways in which I can improve how I communicate with students about their behavior and how I can help them self-correct their actions and be reflective. Coaching allowed me to teach more in-depth, with confidence, and be more competent than working in the classroom alone. These coaching sessions also opens capacity to reflect on my teaching and the impact it has on students’ learning.

Teachers also highlighted that their coach reminded them often to set clear expectations

for their students. Laya stated,

Coaching, based on my experience is valuable in promoting effective classroom management. Through coaching I was able to learn how to establish clear expectations for my students as well as creating a system on how to address positive and negative behavior. Through coaching I was able to build positive relationship with my students. This in turn had a positive effect on the attitudes and behaviors. I was able to be proactive and reflective. This practice influenced even the organization of my class. This coaching also provided me with the ongoing support I needed to be a more effective classroom manager.

In addition, international teachers expressed that routines and organization also affected managing the behavior of students. Dena stated,

Classroom management techniques really help me a lot in dealing with student behavior here in the United States. The daily routines and the organization of my classrooms are great factors that can also affect the behavior of the students. In my first month of teaching here in the United States, it was a big struggle for me since I was not actually exposed to the behavior of the students, which I did not expect that much.

Alen further stated, “I find that classroom administration techniques in the United States are of great assistance when it comes to addressing student behavior. The organization and daily routines of my classrooms are significant determinants that can influence the students' conduct.”

Furthermore, many of the teachers reported that their coach provided them with classroom management strategies and relationship-building strategies. Glo shared,

“Coaching has been essential for me throughout my career. Learning different teaching and behavior strategies has helped me improve my relationships with students.” Kera stated, “Coaching has helped me to improve my classroom management strategies, as I was allowed to observe teachers modeling effective strategies, and I was provided with immediate feedback from supervisors who observed my implementation of similar strategies.” Rey added,

Classroom management in the United States can be influenced by various variables such as teacher-student relationships, teaching methods, class size, cultural diversity, and school policies. Each of these factors plays a role in shaping the overall learning environment and student behavior.

Ren stated,

In my opinion, some of the variables that influence classroom management in the United States are the teacher-student relationship, socioeconomic status, parental involvement, class size, and many others. In my opinion, the most important is the teacher-student relationship. The quality of relationships between teachers and students significantly influences classroom dynamics. My coach has shared ways to establish those relationships including giving praise, and incentives.

**Theme 2: Cultural Norms.** The second prevailing theme to arise for Research Question 1 was cultural norms. There were various views on the influence of cognitive coaching and how cultural norms influenced their experiences in classroom management skills and communication/ language barriers. Teachers from various countries provided insight into how classroom management was comparable to or different from their home countries and the U.S. While some international teachers referenced cultural norms as the

influencing factor in their classroom management strategies, others attributed the difficulty of communicating and overcoming language barriers due to cultural norms.

Mae stated,

Classroom management in the United States share some commonalities with those in Jamaica, but they also differ in terms of the cultural norms, the educational system, and some strategies. In the United States, the classroom management strategies are employed based on students' diverse background, and must adhere to specific policies and regulations, as education is governed by federal, state, and local laws. Emphasis is placed on student engagement and active participation, and teachers are provided with ongoing professional development training to improve classroom behavior management skills. On the other hand, Jamaican classrooms tend to reflect the cultural values and norms of the society. The level of respect for authority and the societal values influence student behavior, and how these are managed.

Ren added,

In the United States, you have to take into consideration student diversity, technology integration, behavioral strategies, and take in account inclusive practices. In my country of Colombia, I have experienced just a few moments when I had to implement some behavioral strategies.

Emo further added,

Classroom management in the United States and the Philippines may exhibit both similarities and differences. Commonalities include the importance of fostering positive student-teacher relationships, creating an inclusive environment, and

adhering to educational policies. However, differences may arise due to cultural nuances, educational systems, and societal expectations. In the U.S., the emphasis on student participation, critical thinking, and individualized learning might influence management approaches. In the Philippines, cultural respect for authority and collectivist values could shape disciplinary strategies.

Deb also added,

Classroom management in my home country differs very much from the US. One example is calling parents whenever a child misbehaves. It is not a practice in the Philippines, and we also do not call admin nor ISS. The children in the Philippines are "taught" that they should always show respect to adults and always behave appropriately in school.

In many cases, international teachers reported how communication/language barriers provided another obstacle for them; however, when the coach provided support and guidance and actively listened to international teachers, it enhanced their level of comfort. Vreen communicated,

Coaching helps to address communication/ language barriers. When I first started teaching here, students had difficulty understanding me during instructions. I helped my students by teaching them some of our Jamaican pronunciations to their words, and vice-versa. They took turns to teach me how they pronounced certain words during the lessons. I have discovered that language styles differ from state to state, or region. As a result, I adapted my communication styles and included more visual aids to ensure that my students are able to understand me. Through coaching, I have become more aware of potential misunderstandings that

may arise, and how best to help approach such challenges. I have improved my communication skills and have also learned how to help my students from different linguistic backgrounds.

Rey added,

Coaching can significantly impact communication and language barriers by providing individuals with tailored guidance and support. Through coaching, individuals can develop effective communication skills, overcome language barriers, and enhance their ability to convey ideas clearly. This personalized guidance helps build confidence, adapt communication styles, and fosters better understanding, ultimately contributing to improved interactions across diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Dena stated, "Coaching has helped in bridging the communication/ language barrier for me. Pronunciations differ from one geographical location to the next so it is good to have someone that can provide some amount of guidance in this area." Deb agreed,

Coaching can play a transformative role in addressing communication and language barriers by focusing on enhancing the coach's and coachee's communication skills. Through targeted coaching sessions, educators can develop strategies to overcome language-related challenges, improve clarity in their instructions, and foster effective communication with students, colleagues, and parents.

Furthermore, the participants shared that cognitive coaches influenced their communication/language barriers by actively listening to them. Laya stated,

Coaching has a great influence on communication/language barriers. Through coaching, teachers are able to learn strategies that can help them to address these areas. I have taught MLLs with little or no knowledge of the English language, through coaching I was able to use my body language and gestures to support these students. It also helps teachers to be more active listeners. These teachers make more connections with students.

Sloan argued,

I firmly believe that language and communication play a big role in teaching. I admit, it was a challenge at first teaching and communicating with my US students. Even though English is widely used in the Philippines and it's the medium of instruction in most subjects at schools there, it is not my first language. So when I communicate in English, I may use a different English word that Americans barely use, or I may explain some things differently, or I would have a difficulty understanding my American students at times because of the accent or the "common/slang words" that I am not familiar with. These instances actually gave me doubts and took away my confidence when I got here August 2019, I was thinking that I could never be a good teacher that my students need. But because my school, mentor, and colleagues have been so supportive and understanding my background, it helped me to overcome this challenge. Also, I had to do something about this, so I did and still doing my best to learn how Americans communicate as I am convinced that for me to be an effective classroom manager, I have to communicate effectively.

Emo shared, "By emphasizing active listening, feedback, and language proficiency

development, coaching can empower educators to bridge language gaps, create inclusive learning environments, and strengthen their overall effectiveness in diverse linguistic contexts.”

**Theme 3: Instructional Support.** The final theme to emerge for Research Question 1 was instructional support. When participants were asked Interview Question 4, “What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on the delivery of instruction,” Alen stated,

Coaching has helped me to adjust my teaching strategies to address students' diverse learning needs. I have benefitted from the various instructional support opportunities that include professional development trainings on effective instructional practices, and these have better prepared me to implement effective instructional strategies and impact positively on student outcome.

Ren added, “Coaching can positively influence the delivery of instruction by providing educators with targeted feedback, strategies, and instructional support. Effective coaching helps teachers refine their instructional techniques, adapt to diverse learning styles, and implement innovative approaches.”

In addition, cognitive coaching also influences the delivery of instruction through presenting instructional content. This is profoundly related to the instructional support that the coach provided. For example, Vreen stated, “The coach helps me with planning the lessons for my class and gathering the resources for presenting my instructional content and lessons.” Dena added, “Having experienced a few coaching cycles myself, I can truly say the influence on the delivery of instruction has been positive; it has helped me a great deal with the presentation of my content.”



The findings derived from the interviews with participants overwhelmingly indicated that cognitive coaching strategies influence international teachers' classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. The findings from these themes suggest that international teachers utilize cognitive coaching strategies to self-modify and self-monitor their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. There were no divergent or opposing views from the data gathered in Research Question 1.

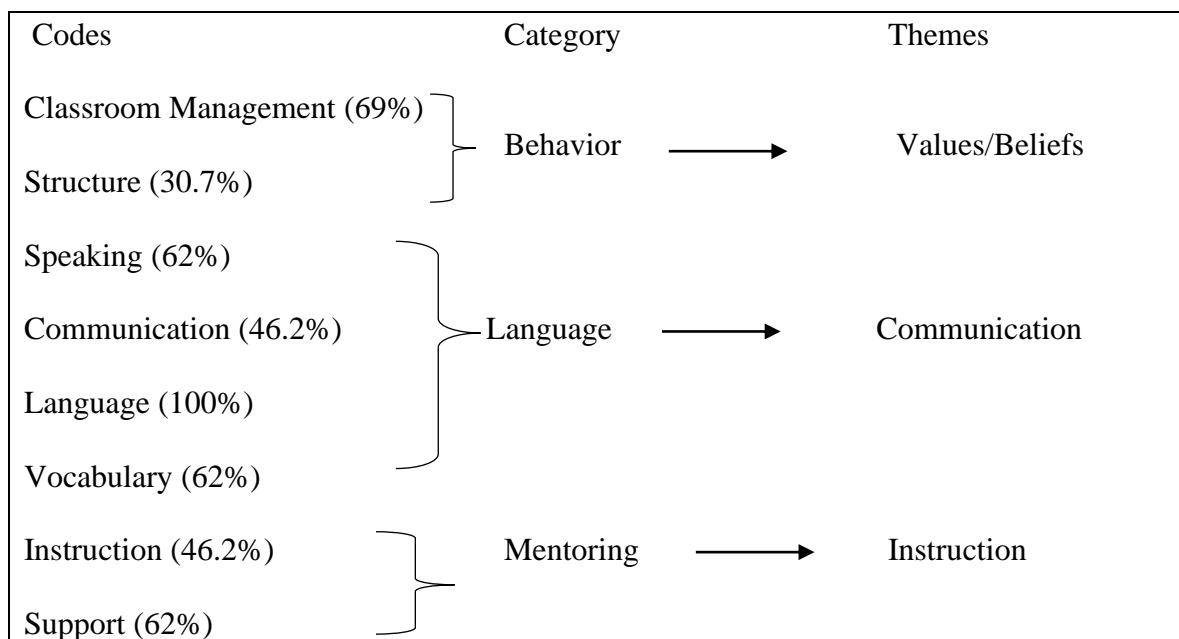
### ***Research Question 2***

The second research question focused on how international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. To answer this question, the participants responded to five interview questions during the semi-structured interviews.

From the codes, I categorized them, developed the theme, and reached a consensus concerning discernible patterns presented in the data. There were three themes that derived from the data analysis pertaining to this research question: values/beliefs, communication, and instruction. The information obtained from the interview dataset is visually depicted in Figure 3, which comprises the codes with percentages, categories, and themes gathered from the interview dataset.

**Figure 3**

*Codes, Categories, and Themes for Research Question 2*



**Theme 1: Values/Beliefs.** The first and most predominant theme to emerge for Research Question 2 was values and beliefs. Through an in-depth examination of the data, it was determined that international teachers' internal thinking processes in American classrooms were influenced by their values and beliefs regarding classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. There were nine (69%) participants who reported a change in their values and beliefs about classroom management. Furthermore, there were four (30.7%) participants who mentioned their values and beliefs shifted upon arrival in the U.S. about structure in American classrooms, student behavior, and the delivery of instruction. For example, Deb stated, "Teaching here in the United States teaches me the value of having more patience in dealing with students' behavior. Classroom management is the first factor that you will consider for effective teaching." Sloan reported,

Teaching here in the US taught me the value that classroom management is very important to deliver your instruction effectively. And I am glad I learned it. I listened very well how my mentor, my instructional assistant (she is the best!!!) and other teachers communicate with students, how they manage the class, how they use certain words. I will never forget that you need to be specific when you communicate with your students.

Furthermore, Emo reported,

Experiencing the U.S. education system has led to transformative changes in my values and beliefs about teaching. I have come to value the importance of fostering critical thinking, encouraging active student participation, and embracing inclusivity in the classroom. In addition, my values about communication/language barriers has allowed me to emphasize active listening, feedback, and language proficiency development to create inclusive learning environments.

Another value and belief that international teachers reported about was the delivery of instruction. For example, Ren reported,

My values and beliefs have shifted completely since I came to the United States. When I moved here, I did not know about social-emotional learning. After a few months in the classroom, I realized that I had to change my teaching strategies and offer more student-centered instruction and more differentiated instruction in my delivery.

**Theme 2: Communication.** The second theme to emerge for Research Question 2 was communication. The findings from the broader analysis of the data revealed that

international teachers felt communication affected their classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. All 13 participants (100%) underscored the significance of effective communication and developing relationships when interacting with administrators and students. Additionally, eight (62%) participants shared that both speaking and vocabulary were also influenced by management and the delivery of instruction in American classrooms. For example, Sloan reported, “With acquiring better communication skills, that equipped my effective classroom management, my students respond to me better. And by relating to them, with their culture most importantly, I was able to build a good relationship with them.” Further, Laya stated,

I noticed that my students felt better talking to me and expressing their needs.

Sometimes they just needed to talk to somebody or calm down and needed space.

I also noticed my students with behavioral problems tried to please me by doing the best they could. Granted they still gave me trouble, but I could see and appreciate their efforts.

**Theme 3: Instruction.** The final theme to emerge for Research Question 2 was instruction. There were eight (62%) participants who felt that coaching support was important to instruction. The thematic analysis of the data led to the discovery that international teachers believed that classroom management, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction all impacted instruction. Furthermore, international teachers agreed that their coach supported them with cognitive coaching strategies that reflected their internal thinking processes such as paraphrasing and self-reflection. All of these strategies

supported the delivery of instruction. Deb reported,

Instructional delivery strategies that I learned from coaching includes differentiated instruction to meet diverse learning needs, integrating technology for enhanced engagement, and implementing active learning approaches to make lessons more dynamic and accessible. These strategies honed me through collaborative coaching experiences. These helped me empower to create inclusive and effective learning environments tailored to the needs of my students.

Glo stated, “I have improved my instruction a lot. I am a better teacher now. Being in the classroom, getting PD, reading research, taking grad classes, and being supported by my coach have helped me learned a lot.” Alen reported,

I have implemented various strategies that were suggested during cognitive coaching feedback sessions. These include small group instructions, integration of district resources to meet learning needs, active engagement including questioning techniques, time management, and progress monitoring. To be honest, I have not ignored any suggested activities, and I continue to look forward to other suggestions that can enhance my professional growth and development and delivery of instruction.

Rey stated,

In cognitive coaching, I received suggestions such as adjusting teaching strategies, incorporating more student-centered activities, or utilizing technology for enhanced learning experiences. I have implemented the new suggestions depending on my assessment of their appropriateness for my teaching style and the needs of my students.

Meanwhile, Ren stated, “I have implemented differentiation strategies, social-emotional learning, collaborative teaching, and student-centered learning.”

The analysis of the interview data from the participants revealed that international teachers agreed that cognitive coaching supports their internal thinking processes with the help of a coach who supports their instructional practices. This support allows international teachers to change their perceptions, attitudes, and reflections on their personal growth to improve their classroom management skills, communication and language barriers, and delivery of instruction. Furthermore, international teachers stated that this process enables them to gain insight and develop their capabilities while capitalizing on their preexisting strengths. There were no divergent or opposing views from the data gathered in Research Question 2.

#### ***Research Question 4***

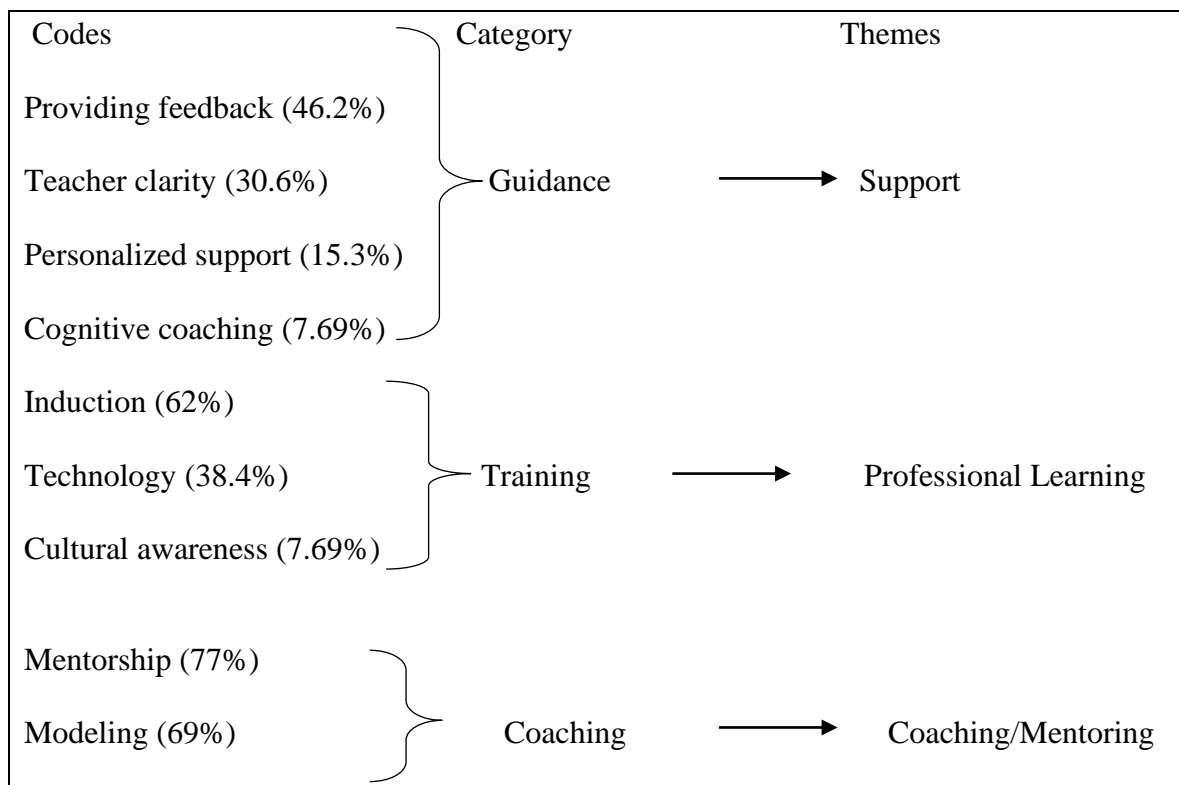
I chose to report the findings of Research Question 4 before reporting the results of Research Question 3, as the findings in Research Question 3 essentially disaggregate data reported in Research Questions 1, 2, and 4 by the four countries of origin and the sponsoring agencies. The fourth research question was intended to describe in what ways, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support. There were three themes that derived from the data analysis pertaining to this research question: support, professional learning, and coaching/mentorship.

To begin the process, I formulated codes, categorized them, and arrived at a consensus regarding observable patterns within the data. The insights into potential areas of need for additional support identified by international instructors were derived from the data collected from the interview dataset as visually depicted in Figure 4, which

comprises the codes with percentages, categories, and themes gathered from the interview dataset.

**Figure 4**

*Codes, Categories, and Themes for Research Question 4*



**Theme 1: Support.** The predominant and initial theme to emerge for Research Question 4 was support. The international teachers reached an understanding that their interactions with a coach constituted a form of structured support and teacher clarity. There were 10 (77%) participants who recounted how the support from their coach provided opportunities for continuous improvement when it related to classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

Glo stated, “Other ways that my coach can support me in my professional development would be continuous support in instruction and delivery and behavior

management skills.” Kera reported,

Maybe having more coaching support on a regular basis if possible. Because even though we are already here we still need ongoing support. It can’t ever be too much. My coach can support me modeling teaching, giving me feedback about my classroom management or teaching, benefitting me from her/ his teaching experience.

Mae reported,

For me, I have received excellent cognitive coaching support. Through conversations with other international colleagues, it would be beneficial if each school provides support in classroom management and adjusting to the American culture. Acclimating can be frustrating at times, and this can influence teacher performance. Our recruiting company has assigned experienced teachers as mentors to new recruits, but it would be helpful if these teachers are provided with this same level of support at his/her institution.

**Theme 2: Professional Learning.** Concerning Research Question 4, the second dominant theme to emerge was professional learning. Furthermore, six (46.2%) of the international teachers transitioning to teach in the U.S. often find professional learning opportunities focused on cultural competency, understanding the U.S. education system, and language development to be highly beneficial. Additionally, international teachers expressed a desire for continuous support in classroom management and providing feedback to improve their pedagogical approaches. There were eight (62%) participants who advised those aspiring to teach in the U.S. in the future to have an open mind and an awareness of the culture, six (46.2%) participants suggested finding a good mentor, and



four (31%) participants recommended having an awareness of technology.

Dena reported, “When I first arrived in the United States, I had a 1-week training in introduction to the American culture and teaching. At my school, I also had a mentor who was always available to answer my questions.” Deb reported, “Training sessions given by the district, PLCs with my mentor and grade level teachers with the administrators every Monday afternoon helped me in transitioning to the United States.”

Vreen reported,

Professional learning that addressed classroom management and curriculum dive was helpful. I also benefited greatly from PDs that addressed trauma and its effect and manifestation because it helped me to be more empathetic towards my students and it helped me to not take their behavior personally and be completely stressed out. All the PDs that explain the frameworks used and provided best practices were super helpful in providing clarity. It also helped me to learn the terms used here so I was not lost in conversations.

Ren stated,

Of the professional learning opportunities that were provided, I cannot say that there was one specific session that assisted in my transition to teach in the United States. All of the PDs provided by the district was helpful. Most of it was learning and adapting as I went along as well as getting suggestions (ideas) from colleagues particular those from my home country.

Furthermore, international teachers agreed that professional learning opportunities, including induction and mentoring, PLCs, and curriculum professional developments, had a significant impact on their adjustment to the teaching profession in

the U.S.; however, there is consensus among all parties regarding a modification to the way in which administrators assist international teachers prior to their arrival in the U.S. This modification would involve the implementation of effective classroom management strategies, ongoing mentorships, and instructional modeling for preservice preparation.

**Theme 3: Coaching/Mentorship.** In response to interview questions regarding additional support needed, international teachers emphasized coaching and mentoring as opportunities that significantly impacted their classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. The majority of the teachers deliberated on the advantages of observation, highlighting how the feedback provided them with knowledge and fostered a sense of support. For example, Emo reported,

I think the coach should provide coaching support through regular classroom observations and constructive feedback which provides insights into instructional practices, while collaborative planning and curriculum development ensure alignment with educational goals. Cultivating a culture of continuous improvement, allows the coach to provide that additional support.

Sloan reported, “I think my school/district should look at the specific needs of teachers to determine how cognitive coaching support can be provided on an individual basis and how it can align to the teacher's individual professional development growth.”

Laya reported,

I believe international teachers should be able to just observe an expert teacher in action for at least a week. This way they can see and hear what is expected. They can witness the expectations and procedures and observe how the teachers

handles situation and deliver lessons. I believe the PDs that can help give the teacher clarity and guidance, comes too late in the year. Many teachers are left fumbling and trying to figure things out. I wish I had the opportunity to observe a teacher when I came because I felt so lost. I was constantly wondering if I was doing what was expected. I felt good about my teaching and confident prior to coming. After a few months, I lost my confidence and it took time, many observations, and coaching for me to feel confident again. I think this change will allow international teachers to be better prepared to start the year stronger. I know it may be difficult to give teachers on whole week to observe but at least having someone come in to model can be very helpful.

Glo reported, “Assign a mentor for the second and third year as well. International teachers and new teachers in general need mentors for more than 1 year.” Further, Lou reported,

I had the best mentor/team leader who guided me throughout my first-year teaching in the U.S. She helped me to adjust and overcome challenges and I know for a fact that without her guidance, my first year of teaching here might not be as successful as it was. That’s why I think having a mentor is so important.

Ren reported,

Instructional delivery [mentoring], although mentoring is provided in the first few weeks, the expectations of the international teacher especially as it relates to instructional delivery needs more attention. I think the mentor should provide more support on instructional delivery.

The analysis of the participant interview data indicated that international teachers

have identified certain domains in which they require additional support. An agreement was reached among teachers that their engagements with coaches constituted systematic assistance and teacher clarity. Furthermore, international teachers conveyed a need for ongoing assistance with classroom management and providing feedback in order to enhance their pedagogical approaches. In addition, international teachers reported that they wanted more cognitive coaching support through additional coaching cycles.

### ***Research Question 3***

The third research question was intended to describe the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from the various countries and sponsoring agencies. I chose to report this question last, as the analysis for this question essentially disaggregates data reported in Research Questions 1, 2, and 4 by the four countries of origin and the sponsoring agencies. There were four countries represented in the research study site. The four countries included Jamaica with six (46%) participants, the Philippines with four (31%) participants, Colombia with two (15%) participants, and India (.08%) with one participant (see Table 6). The participant sponsoring agencies included seven (54%) participants from FACES, five (38%) participants from EPI, and one (.08%) participant from ITES. Table 7 provides a breakdown of the sponsoring agencies.

**Table 6***Participants' Countries of Origin*

Pseudonyms	Home Country
Dena	Jamaica
Kera	Jamaica
Vreen	Jamaica
Mae	Jamaica
Alen	Jamaica
Laya	Jamaica
Emo	Philippines
Deb	Philippines
Lou	Philippines
Sloan	Philippines
Ren	Colombia
Glo	Colombia
Rey	India

**Table 7***Participants' Sponsoring Agency*

Pseudonyms	Sponsoring agency
Mae	FACES
Alen	FACES
Laya	FACES
Ren	FACES
Glo	FACES
Emo	FACES
Deb	FACES
Dena	EPI
Kera	EPI
Vreen	EPI
Lou	EPI
Sloan	EPI
Rey	ITES

To analyze data by countries of origin and sponsoring agencies, I took the themes generated in Research Questions 1, 2, and 4 and disaggregated by countries of origin and sponsoring agencies.

**Classroom Management, Values, and Beliefs.** In analyzing the classroom

management data from Research Questions 1 and 2, all participants from all countries of origin and all sponsoring agencies agreed that cognitive coaching supported them in developing classroom management techniques. From the interviews conducted, there were 13 (100%) participants who reported managing student behavior as a variable that influences the overall classroom environment in the U.S. For example, Mae (Jamaica/FACES) mentioned, “Students display various disruptive behavior. Some students show little to no regards for admins and adults.” Sloan (Philippines/EPI) mentioned, “I do believe the culture, language barrier, and managing students’ behavior affect the classroom management in the U.S.,” while Rey (India/ITES) stated, “Student behavior shapes the overall learning environment. This a variable that affects management in the United States.”

Moreover, when international teachers come to the U.S., they encounter cultural differences in classroom behavior expectations between their home country and the U.S. For example, Deb (EPI/Philippines) stated,

Classroom management in my home country differs very much from the US. One example is calling parents whenever a child misbehaves. It is not a practice in the Philippines, and we also do not call admin nor ISS. The children in the Philippines are "taught" that they should always show respect to adults and always behave appropriately in school.

Understanding cultural norms related to student-teacher interactions, discipline, and communication styles is crucial for effective classroom management. In addition, international teachers face challenges in communicating effectively with students, especially if English is not their first language. Language proficiency affects their ability

to give instructions, manage conflicts, and build rapport with students. For instance, Emo (FACES/Philippines) reported,

Communication and language barriers in the United States and the Philippines share similarities in their multicultural contexts, emphasizing the need for clear communication in educational settings. However, differences exist, with English being the primary language of instruction in the U.S., while the Philippines adopts a bilingual approach with English and Filipino. The U.S. has formal bilingual education policies to support English language learners, a feature that may vary in other countries. Cultural nuances, communication styles, and educational system structures also contribute to differences in addressing language barriers.

Effectively navigating these distinctions requires international teachers like myself to be culturally aware, adaptable, and equipped with strategies that promote inclusive communication across diverse linguistic environments.

Additionally, all participants, regardless of their countries of origin or sponsoring agencies, agreed that classroom management support was needed, and the cognitive coaching program supported them in this need.

It was difficult to analyze the reported data about classroom management without considering the international teachers' values and beliefs. There were nine (69%) participants who reported a change in their values and beliefs about classroom management. Upon examining the sponsoring agencies of these nine participants, there were four (44%) teachers from Jamaica, three (33%) teachers from the Philippines, and two (22%) teachers from Colombia. Of those nine participants, five (55%) represented the sponsoring agency FACES, and four (44%) represented EPI. Since these percentages

mirrored the overall percentage of the participant population, I concluded that there are no discernable differences between sponsoring agencies or countries of origin and the similarities they reported in their values or beliefs and classroom management. For example, Alen (Jamaica/FACES) stated, “Teaching here in the United States teaches me the value of having more patience in dealing with students behavior. Classroom management is the first factor that you will consider for effective teaching.” Ren (Colombia/FACES) stated,

My values and beliefs have shifted completely since I came to the United States. When I moved here, I did not know about social-emotional learning. After a few months in the classroom, I realized that I had to change my teaching strategies and offer more student-centered instruction and more differentiated instruction to support students’ behavior and instructional needs.

Rey (India/ITES) stated,

I can share that evolving trends in education, such as a shift toward personalized learning, emphasis on technology integration, and recognition of diverse learning styles, have influenced teaching practices in the United States. These changes reflect a broader understanding of the varied needs of students and the importance of adapting instructional methods to better support their learning journeys as well as their behavior.

In summary, regardless of the sponsoring agencies, every participant reached the consensus that classroom management support is essential. Nevertheless, participants hailing from Jamaica, the Philippines, Colombia, and India hold different values and beliefs regarding classroom management between the U.S. and their country of origin.



Moreover, the cognitive coaching program supported these participants in their varying needs from various countries and various agencies.

**Communication and Cultural Norms.** In analyzing data for the theme cultural norms (Research Question 1) and values and beliefs (Research Question 2), the thematic analysis of the data led to the discovery that 13 (100%) participants shared similarities with communication/language barriers in their country of origin and the U.S. All participants from all countries of origin and sponsoring agencies shared that pronunciation and vocabulary were at the forefront of their challenges in the school district's classrooms. For instance, Sloan (Philippines/ FACES) stated,

I continue to struggle with English, primarily with vocabulary and pronunciation. I also noticed that there are some English words that are pronounced differently. We know the meaning but the sound, intonation, and stress in the word is in different placement. For example, the sound of short vowel /e/ might sound like a short vowel /i/ when a Filipino speaks an English word [ex: pin = peen]. I practiced this very well and I find myself doing good about it.

Ren (Columbia/FACES) reported,

In addition to my restricted vocabulary, I also struggle with the art of pronouncing words. I am genuinely uncertain as to whether my pronunciation is correct or incorrect. Because the written and phonetic systems of the English language are so different.

Additionally, in the context of language barriers, another obstacle preventing international teachers from communicating effectively and accurately was vocabulary. Participants acknowledged that their vocabulary was limited and that they were

occasionally uncertain as to which terms were suitable to use in the classroom. Furthermore, Alen (Jamacia/FACES) expressed, "Vocabulary is the most formidable factor that hinders my speaking abilities. I encounter difficulty due to my restricted English vocabulary." Similarly, Lou (Philippines/EPI) expressed, "I consider my vocabulary to be my sole weakness due to my limited selection and occasional difficulty in selecting the proper words." Similar sentiments were expressed by other participants with respect to their limited vocabulary.

In analyzing communication from Research Questions 1 and 2, all participants from all countries of origin and all sponsoring agencies shared it was evident that restricted vocabulary impeded them in some way from engaging in active and proficient English discourse in the U.S., which hindered their communication skills.

Meanwhile, cultural norms significantly impact communication in various ways, influencing how international teachers perceive, interpret, and convey messages. Cultural norms dictate appropriate language use including vocabulary as stated by many of the participants. Overall, cultural norms play a fundamental role in shaping communication behaviors, requiring international teachers to recognize, respect, and adapt to cultural differences to facilitate effective interpersonal interactions in diverse contexts. Regardless of the country of origin or sponsoring agency, all participants agreed that support is needed in communication and cultural norms, and the cognitive coaching program supported them in these needs.

**Instructional Support.** In analyzing data for the theme instructional support for Research Questions 1 and 2, the analysis of the data led to the discovery that nine (69%) participants described the similarities of differentiated instruction as being the same or

somewhat the same as the delivery of instruction is structured in the U.S. and the participants' countries. Of those nine participants, five (55%) represented the sponsoring agency FACES, three (33%) represented EPI, and one (11%) represented ITES. Since these percentages mirrored the overall percentage of the participant population, I concluded that there are no discernable differences between sponsoring agencies and the similarities they reported in the delivery of instruction and the instructional support they needed. When examining the sponsoring agencies of these nine participants, there were three teachers (33%) from Jamaica, three teachers (33%) from the Philippines, two teachers (22%) from Colombia, and one teacher (11%) from India. There were no discernable differences between countries of origin and sponsoring agencies.

Furthermore, eight (62%) participants agreed that technology integration was a major difference in how they delivered instruction in their countries of origin versus the U.S. Of those eight participants, five (62%) represented the sponsoring agency FACES, two represented (25%) EPI, and one (12.5%) represented ITES. For example, Laya (Jamaica/FACES) reported,

In the United States, there are way more resources available to support instruction and learning. Due to limited resources in Jamaica, teachers have to be more resourceful. The delivery of instruction in the United States is more structured and scripted. Teachers in my country have more autonomy in how they structure/ deliver their lessons. I love the balance literacy approach to reading in the United States. Teachers are more prepared to teach reading. I believe teaching in the US is more student-centered. The curriculum for both countries outline what needs to be taught. The content taught at each grade level is similar. Both countries address

differentiated instruction and administer diagnostic tests to determine what students know and need to learn. Assessments are done as well with the exception that in Jamaica it's mostly printed copies and not computerized.

Deb (Philippines/FACES) reported,

The delivery of instruction in the United States shares commonalities and distinctions with the Philippines and other countries. Both emphasize student-centered learning and differentiated instruction. However, differences emerge in educational philosophies, assessment practices, curricular structures, the language of instruction, and approaches to teacher training and professional development. While the U.S. prioritizes English as the primary language of instruction, the Philippines employs a bilingual approach with English and Filipino. Navigating these variations requires educators to be adaptable, culturally aware, and equipped with strategies that align with the specific instructional contexts and goals of each country, fostering effective teaching and learning experience.

Rey (India/ITES) stated,

Instructional delivery in the United States is often characterized by a diverse range of teaching methodologies, technological integration, and an emphasis on student engagement. The education system places importance on interactive learning, critical thinking, and adapting to various learning styles. Comparatively, instructional approaches in India where I was teaching differ based on educational philosophies, cultural values, and the structure of the education system. Overseas, I was using more traditional approaches, while in U.S.A., I prioritize innovative teaching methods. In both cases, the effectiveness of instructional delivery

depends on the alignment with educational goals, cultural contexts, and the needs of students.

In contrast to their home countries, eight (69%) participants stated that the use of technology to deliver instruction was a significant difference. In a number of their respective nations, face-to-face interaction is emphasized in traditional teaching approaches and may exhibit a reduced pace of embracing technology-driven instructional methods. The U.S., on the other hand, places a more significant emphasis on the integration of technology in order to enrich the educational process.

Overall, the similarities and differences are more prominent when examining participants from Jamaica, the Philippines, Colombia, and India, but no significant similarities or differences could be found among sponsoring agencies (FACES, EPI, and ITES).

### **Summary**

The qualitative data from this qualitative case study examined the influence of cognitive coaching with 13 elementary international teachers employed in a school district in the southeastern region of the U.S. The 13 participants in this study, who were all identified by pseudonyms, recounted experiences of difficulties and demonstrated signs of perseverance while assimilating and acculturating to the teaching profession in a school district located in the southeastern region. They disclosed that their language/communication barriers (e.g., accent), inadequate classroom management skills, and delivery of instruction were among some of the many challenges they faced while pursuing a teacher career in the U.S. Of those challenges, international teachers reported classroom management as being the most significant challenge. Cognitive coaching

assisted all participants, representing all sponsoring agencies and countries of origin, in the development of effective classroom management strategies. In addition, they also identified communication/language barriers and the delivery of instruction as areas in which cognitive coaching provided support.

In response to the second research question, teachers were requested to provide their perspectives on how cognitive coaching influences their internal thinking processes regarding the enhancement of their classroom management skills, communication and language barriers, and instructional delivery. Values/beliefs, communication, and instruction were among the recurring themes identified by the participants during this process. Understanding the internal thinking processes of international teachers engaging in cognitive coaching provided valuable insights into their efforts to improve instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. International teachers engage in reflective thinking to critically evaluate their teaching methods, lesson plans, and instructional strategies. Overall, international teachers undergoing cognitive coaching internalize a process of reflection, skill development, and adaptation to enhance their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication abilities, and delivery of instruction.

In addition, when engaging with administrators and students, international teachers emphasized the criticality of establishing rapport and utilizing effective communication strategies. Cognitive coaching feedback sessions were attended by international teachers who identified self-reflection and paraphrasing as strategies to improve their varied instructional practices.

The third research question investigated the similarities and differences between

the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers affiliated with various sponsoring agencies and countries. A majority of educators from different nations expressed shared characteristics, such as cultural differences, relationships, and societal expectations. Furthermore, there was unanimous agreement among the international teachers representing all agencies and countries that deficiencies in communication and instruction significantly impacted the difficulties they encountered with respect to classroom management, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

In addition, international teachers from all countries and sponsoring agencies agreed that classroom management was the most challenging. Moreover, the vast majority of participants shared that classroom management in their home country differs from the U.S. The differences included cultural differences, expectations, and relationships.

Furthermore, language barriers posed a challenge for international teachers from all four countries (Jamaica, the Philippines, Colombia, and India) and sponsoring agencies (FACES, EPI, and ITES) particularly teaching in a language that is not their native tongue. Participants agreed that effective communication is essential for building rapport with students, explaining concepts clearly, and addressing students' questions and concerns. International teachers from all four countries and agencies agreed that they needed to modify their instructional methods, incorporate culturally relevant examples and materials, and employ a variety of instructional techniques to engage students and promote learning. Moreover, there were no discernible similarities and differences among sponsoring agencies of international teachers as it related to classroom management skills, communication and language barriers, and delivery of instruction; however, there

were notable differences among countries of origin.

For example, in Jamaica, classroom management is easier compared to the U.S. Participants reported the majority of the children in Jamaica respond better to figures of authority than in the U.S. In the U.S., the classroom management strategies are employed based on students' diverse backgrounds and must adhere to specific policies and regulations, as education is governed by federal, state, and local laws. Emphasis is placed on student engagement and active participation, and teachers are provided with ongoing professional development training to improve classroom behavior management skills. On the other hand, Jamaican classrooms tend to reflect the cultural values and norms of the society. The level of respect for authority and societal values influence student behavior and how these are managed.

In the Philippines, participants reported that classroom management in the Philippines has many differences. In the Philippines, students adjust to the teacher, but in the U.S., the teachers adjust to the students in terms of their behavior. In the U.S., the emphasis on student participation, critical thinking, and individualized learning influence management approaches. Participants reported that cultural respect for authority and collectivist values shape disciplinary strategies. Additionally, factors such as class size, teacher training, and the role of technology differ according to what participants reported.

Participants from India reported that classroom management in the U.S. and India exhibit differences. In India, classroom interactions tend to be more teacher-centered, with students expected to listen attentively and follow instructions without much discussion, but in the U.S., students are encouraged to express their opinions and ideas freely. Teachers typically employ student-centered approaches, fostering collaboration.



Meanwhile, in India, discipline can be more traditional, with strict rules and consequences. In the U.S., there is a strong emphasis on positive reinforcement and building relationships with students to manage behavior. Teachers often use strategies such as praise, rewards, and consequences to address disciplinary issues.

In Jamaica, participants reported that in general, although English is the official language of both Jamaica and the U.S., disparities in the ability to communicate, cultural context, and economic status may give rise to unique obstacles to communication and language in each nation. While English is the language of both countries, there are differences when it comes to word pronunciation and vocabulary.

Moreover, participants from the Philippines reported there are differences that exist, with English being the primary language of instruction in the U.S., while the Philippines adopts a bilingual approach with English and Filipino. The U.S. has formal bilingual education policies to support English language learners, a feature that may vary in other countries. Cultural nuances, communication styles, and educational system structures also contribute to differences in addressing language barriers.

The participant from India reported communicating in India can be complicated by class distinctions, cultural norms, and linguistic differences. Communication tends to be more direct, assertive, and task-oriented in the U.S.; social interactions place less emphasis on structure. Differences in dialects and accents also contribute to challenges in communication.

The participants from Jamaica reported that in the U.S., there are more resources readily available to support instruction and learning. Due to limited resources in Jamaica, teachers have to be more resourceful. The delivery of instruction in the U.S. is more

structured and scripted, while teachers in Jamaica have more autonomy in how they structure/deliver their lessons.

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, the participants reported the delivery of instruction in the U.S. shares commonalities and distinctions with the Philippines and other countries; however, differences emerge in educational philosophies, assessment practices, curricular structures, the language of instruction, and approaches to teacher training and professional development.

In addition, participants from Colombia stated that the delivery of instruction differs from the U.S. when it comes to educational policies, cultural context, curriculum of instruction, teacher training, and of course the language of instruction. All of these areas affect how the instruction is delivered.

Furthermore, the participant from India reported instructional delivery in the U.S. is often characterized by a diverse range of teaching methodologies, technological integration, and an emphasis on student engagement; however, in India, teachers utilize more of the traditional approach such as lecture-based.

The final research question posed which areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support. The participants agreed that they would like more professional development, coaching support, and mentoring through additional coaching cycles from a coach who could offer guidance on matters such as classroom management, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. Furthermore, while the U.S. may lead in terms of the extent of technology integration in education, eight (69%) participants reported that technology integration is a challenge.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the study's limitations, the relationship between

the data and the model proposed by Costa and Garmston (1994), as well as its implications and interpretation of the research. Finally, suggestions for further research endeavors and the findings of the study are provided.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to examine the influence of cognitive coaching on elementary international teachers in a southeastern school district. Using the theoretical framework of adult learning theory (andragogy) and the cognitive coaching process, I investigated international teachers' viewpoints and their challenges with classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction while teaching in a southeastern school district. This research sought to understand how cognitive coaching could support international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and modify their teaching practices. Semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted with 13 international teachers to collect data. This chapter presents my interpretations from the participant-provided data and elucidates the ways in which the discoveries contribute to or reinforce the existing body of literature concerning cognitive coaching and international teachers. The implications of the study and suggestions for future research comprise the conclusion of this chapter.

The following research questions guided this investigation and aided in the comprehension of international teachers and their challenges:

1. How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction?
2. How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional

practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction?

3. What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?
4. In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?

During the interview process, international teachers' responses were pertinent to my research topic and were summarized during the interviews. I found that the perspectives of 13 participants regarding cognitive coaching support in elementary schools were consistently representative of those of international teachers.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

Knowles's (1984) andragogy (adult learning theory) served as the theoretical framework, and cognitive coaching served as the process model for this study. Knowles et al.'s (2005) adult learning theory (andragogy), which examines how adults learn and how to instruct or facilitate learning for adults, was also closely aligned with the cognitive coaching process that was presented in the study. With active engagement procedures for teaching and learning, Knowles et al. argued that adult education should be pertinent, interesting, and learner-centric. Knowles et al. proposed the following claims regarding adult learners: (a) They are inquisitive regarding the means, content, and motivation of learning; (b) they thrive when self-directed; (c) they participate in challenging intellectual endeavors when they exhibit knowledge derived from prior experience; (d) they demonstrate readiness to acquire knowledge in consideration of their

changing communal position and duties; (e) they adopt a problem-oriented approach; and (f) they are motivated by their own desires.

By analyzing the data from the 13 semi-structured interviews, the interpretation of the results of this qualitative case study was ascertained. The findings revealed that international teachers from developing countries face difficulties with classroom management, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. These challenges created barriers to teachers' abilities to meet the needs of students. The interpretations of the findings were organized in accordance with the interconnections between the research questions and the international teachers' perspectives throughout the interview process.

The first research question delved into how international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. The themes that emerged among participating teachers in the southeastern study site district indicated that international teachers need support with classroom management, cultural norms, and instructional delivery and that cognitive coaching supported them in these areas.

Every participant agreed that they encounter numerous obstacles in regard to instructional practices, classroom management skills, and delivery of instruction. Classroom management was the area in which every participant expressed the necessity for assistance. They reported that classroom management emerged as a pivotal aspect, presenting a considerable challenge in adapting to a new environment. An overwhelming number of participants indicated that student demographics, class size, school culture,

parental involvement, teacher leadership, and support are some of the leading variables that lead to classroom management challenges. Additionally, participants concurred that cultural differences were the primary variable that influenced classroom management in the U.S.

While participants in the current study may be effective managers of student behavior in their home country, when they reach the U.S., they encounter many challenges with managing disruptive behavior from students, the students lack respect for authority, and the many cultural norms and differences they are confronted with upon their arrival.

These international teachers reported that when transitioning to teach in the U.S., they need professional learning that focuses on cultural competency, understanding the U.S. education system, and language development. These professional development opportunities would address the specific needs and challenges faced by international teachers in the U.S., contribute to a smoother transition, and enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. In addition, these types of professional development would also include training on effective cross-cultural communication, understanding expectations around student-teacher relationships, and addressing potential cultural biases in the educational environment. By placing a strong emphasis on cultural competence, international teachers would be better prepared to navigate the complexities of diverse classrooms in the U.S. educational landscape and foster a more inclusive and supportive teaching environment.

Education-related research has, in fact, identified a number of shared obstacles that international teachers encounter when attempting to manage classrooms. The findings of the current study are consistent with prior research in the field, which has

identified comparable trends concerning the challenges faced by international teachers operating in a culturally and linguistically diverse environment. For example, according to Brown et al. (2019), international teachers are cognizant of the characteristics of effective classroom management; however, since the teachers are operating in a completely foreign cultural setting, they might not possess the ability to apply comparable instructional strategies and manage classes efficiently. To bridge the divide caused by the fact that teachers' skills are not transferable, cross-cultural training is required (Hamdan & Coloma, 2022).

According to Bradshaw et al. (2018), coaching improves instructional practices and the quality of implementation of evidence-based practices and interventions (Kraft et al., 2018). In addition to reducing disciplinary referrals of African American students (Bradshaw et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2016), Bradshaw et al. posited that coaching has been found to positively impact outcomes for students, such as decreased disruptive behavior among students and enhanced student performance (Kraft et al., 2018). This information aligns with the findings of the current study. The participants reported that the implementation of effective classroom management is a critical factor, posing a significant obstacle for international teachers as they acclimate to their new surroundings. Acknowledging the necessity for direction in maneuvering through these disparities and refining efficacious approaches to managing contextual discrepancies among students, the participants proactively pursued the assistance and perspectives provided via coaching. The international teachers expressed that through coaching, they acquired valuable strategies to enhance classroom management. They emphasized the establishment of clear expectations, positive reinforcement techniques, and proactive



approaches to prevent disruptions. These strategies helped international teachers through collaborative coaching experiences. Coaches also helped to create inclusive and effective learning environments tailored to the needs of students.

Nevertheless, these opportunities facilitate collaborative professional growth among international teachers and experienced coaches when accompanied by coaching support. Kwok et al. (2021) asserted that the integration of coaching and mentoring follows professional development, with the aim of bolstering the personalized successes of educators and, consequently, strengthening the program's effectiveness. With regard to the findings of Templeton et al. (2021), ongoing coaching enhances the effectiveness, responsibility, flexibility, and consistency of educators in relation to their pedagogical approaches. International teachers in the current study revealed recognizing the need for guidance in navigating these differences and honing effective strategies for handling individual variations in student behavior, and they actively sought the support and insights offered through coaching. The mentorship and shared expertise not only facilitated international teachers' adjustments to the distinct educational landscape but also provided invaluable assistance in refining their approach to classroom management, ensuring more successful and inclusive teaching experiences.

The participants in the current study reported that cultural norms presented a difficulty, resulting in cultural shock that was completely opposed to their educational experiences in their home country. Previous studies echo this sentiment and have found that adjusting to the norms of their new institutions and overcoming culture shock are formidable challenges for international teachers (Stroud-Stasel, 2018).

Additionally, the findings reflected in the current study disclosed that

international teachers felt that cultural nuances, communication styles, and educational system structures contributed to differences in addressing language barriers. Cultural factors also play a significant role, influencing communication styles and expectations. Understanding these nuances and employing strategies like clear communication, language support services, and cultural sensitivity is essential in addressing language barriers in any context. Hossain (2024) corroborated these findings in a previous study that examined the influence of culture on the acquisition of the English language and identified the obstacles and prospects that teachers encountered when integrating culture into their instructional approaches.

Similarly, in the current study, international teachers reported coaching could empower educators to bridge language gaps, create inclusive learning environments, and strengthen their overall effectiveness in diverse linguistic contexts. These findings align with a previous study conducted by Romijn et al. (2021), which reported an integrated and contextualized method of professional development, which guides reflection and encourages enactment, is most likely to increase teachers' intercultural competencies.

Participants in the current study also advocated for the implementation of visual aids, the development of culturally responsive communication strategies, and the promotion of student participation as a means to bridge linguistic and cultural disparities. Similarly, Samuels (2018) asserted that to foster culturally responsive pedagogical and learning methodologies, it is advantageous to provide environments where educators can engage and explore approaches and pedagogical instruments for fostering equitable and inclusive classrooms. Furthermore, according to the participants in the current study, migrating and adapting are contemporary ideologies, and in order to adapt to their new

society, international teachers must abandon their conventional ways of living. This finding was also reflected in the perspective of Montgomery et al. (2021), which stated international teachers undergo a variety of transformations as they adapt, develop, and survive in their new surroundings.

The second research question considered how international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. The themes that emerged from the interviews surrounding this research question indicated that through the cognitive coaching process, international teachers became more aware of their thinking processes. International teachers agreed that their internal thinking processes were associated with their values/beliefs, communication and classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction.

Self-directed educators, according to Choi and Mao (2021), have elevated levels of self-esteem and are capable of engaging in reflective practices to enhance their methods of teaching. Moreover, it has been found that individuals who are provided with cognitive coaching support are more inclined to exhibit the reflective thinking abilities that are essential for achieving success (Grochocki, 2018). The findings of the current study align with the perspectives of Choi and Mao and Grochocki (2018), revealing that international teachers' internal thinking processes led them to changes in their values and beliefs about being more reflective as educators and also a greater need to ensure that their classrooms are inclusive and equitable learning environments. These changes reflect a broader understanding of the varied needs of students and the importance of adapting

instructional methods to better support their learning journeys. In addition, some international teachers realized they needed to change their teaching strategies and offer more student-centered instruction and more differentiated instruction.

In the current study, participants reported that experiencing the U.S. education system has led to transformative changes in their values and beliefs about teaching. Exposure to student-centered learning, individualized instruction, and cultural diversity has shifted international teachers' pedagogical philosophies. Collaborative interactions with colleagues and engagement in professional development opportunities have broadened their understanding of effective teaching practices. Furthermore, fostering critical thinking, encouraging active student participation, and embracing inclusivity in the classrooms further support a shift in international teachers' thinking processes. Exposure to innovative methodologies such as student-centered learning and technology integration has influenced how they adapt their instructional strategies. Overall, cognitive coaching has influenced international teachers' instructional experiences in the U.S. and has supported them in shaping a more holistic and student-centric approach to education, leading to a reevaluation and evolution of their values and beliefs as educators and their internal thinking processes.

The fourth research question examined the areas that international teachers might identify as needing additional support. The findings illustrate a composite of perspectives and anecdotes concerning the instructional practices and viewpoints of international teachers. By creating a supportive community and allowing teachers sufficient time to adapt to the demands of their new position, administrators can facilitate the transition. The consensus among participants was that when preparing elementary international

teachers for employment in the U.S., administrators should contemplate providing support, professional learning, and coaching/mentoring. This would allow international teachers the opportunity to learn about classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and delivery of instruction. Moreover, participants conveyed a preference for administrators to provide continuous mentoring upon their arrival in the U.S. To ensure that good instructional practices are modeled effectively, participants also desired administrators to provide such guidance. Many of the teachers also emphasized that prior to entering the classroom, they must have sufficient time to acclimate to the environment, absorb the strategies, and become acquainted with the culture.

Furthermore, international teachers communicated that a heightened awareness to enhance the cultural orientation and sensitivity training provided to teachers once they arrive in the U.S. is needed. Specifically, administrators should prioritize comprehensive programs that not only familiarize teachers with the U.S. education system but also delve deeply into the cultural nuances of the local community and the diverse backgrounds of students. This should include training on effective cross-cultural communication, understanding expectations around student-teacher relationships, and addressing potential cultural biases in the educational environment.

Implementing changes to optimize cognitive coaching support is poised to significantly reduce challenges in the educational landscape. Customized professional development, driven by specific needs and goals, ensures that coaching directly addresses educators' challenges. Establishing regular feedback mechanisms creates a dynamic feedback loop, fostering continuous improvement and ensuring the ongoing relevance of coaching interventions. Incorporating diversity and inclusion training enhances cultural

responsiveness, reducing challenges related to cultural nuances. The integration of technology sessions improves accessibility, overcoming logistical hurdles. Fostering collaborative learning communities and involving administrators aligns coaching efforts with broader school goals, fostering a shared understanding and resolution of common issues. Utilizing data for informed coaching interventions ensures evidence-based support, reducing challenges associated with ineffective strategies. Peer coaching opportunities contribute to a collaborative atmosphere, sharing insights and effective problem-solving. In tandem, these changes create a more adaptive, supportive, and growth-oriented coaching environment, ultimately diminishing the challenges faced by educators.

These recommendations align with the work of Nuland et al. (2022), which proposed that retention of all personnel and staff of color can be aided by providing professional support such as mentorship programs, induction programs, and targeted professional development opportunities. Baker (2020) highlighted the importance of selecting a mentor who is cognizant of cultural distinctions, while O'Hara et al. (2020) concurred regarding the necessity of having mentors to support the success of international teachers.

Additionally, international teachers in the current study shared a commonality of cultivating a culture of continuous improvement. Coaches can play a pivotal role in supporting teachers as they navigate their professional development journey. This could include regular classroom observations and constructive feedback that provides insights into instructional practices, while collaborative planning and curriculum development ensure alignment with educational goals.

The third research question examined the similarities and differences in cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and sponsoring agencies. The results from the interviews revealed that international teachers from all four countries (Jamaica, the Philippines, Colombia, and India) agreed that they needed coaching support in classroom management techniques. Furthermore, cultural differences played a major role in how they adapted to American classrooms. Another similarity that international teachers from various countries and agencies shared was communication. Many of them expressed the challenges they faced communicating with parents, students, and colleagues. In addition, the same teachers offered insight about instruction being a difference in how they deliver content in their home country versus the U.S.

Misunderstandings and misinterpretations exist between individuals most frequently due to language barriers. Cultural and regional specificities of the user are reflected in these patterns of pronunciation (or "accent"), vocabulary, and grammatical structures. When individuals do not speak the same language, communication becomes extremely problematic (Absalon et al., 2019); however, it is crucial that international teachers inform mainstream students in the U.S. about the various accents and pronunciations of English used outside the country (Ospina & Medina, 2020).

International teachers in the current study communicated that common challenges in U.S. education include issues related to educational equity, cultural diversity, and variations in state-specific standards and assessments. These challenges may differ from those in other countries, including the teacher's native country. For instance, while the U.S. emphasizes accommodating a diverse student population, a teacher's native country might face different challenges, such as addressing resource constraints, language

barriers, or specific cultural considerations. Understanding the unique challenges in each educational context allows educators to tailor their approaches and implement effective strategies to address the specific needs of students.

Furthermore, another theme that emerged during the interviews with international teachers was the need for assistance with understanding the expectations for classroom instruction in the U.S. In the interviews, participants observed that in the U.S., teachers are provided with a plethora of resources, technology, and professional learning to support classroom instruction; therefore, international teachers need extra support with effectively utilizing technology tools and resources in their teaching practices. This support may include workshops on using learning management systems, educational apps, interactive whiteboards, and other digital tools to enhance instruction, engage students, and facilitate communication with parents and colleagues.

### **Implications**

Although the findings of this study hold practical significance, their generalizability is restricted by the qualitative case study design. There were 13 teachers from a school district in the southeastern region that comprised the study's small sample. An expanded scope of the research could be achieved by integrating educators from all Grades K-12 and refining the study design.

In an effort to address the issue of international teachers filling teacher vacancies in school districts, this research highlights the importance of offering cognitive coaching support to teachers. Such support is crucial for ensuring that teachers excel in their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication and language barriers, and instructional delivery. Furthermore, the research indicates the need for



prompt measures to guarantee that teachers are granted access to professional learning that specifically addresses the key areas of deficiency identified in this investigation. Additionally, leadership at the district and school levels can advance the discourse regarding cognitive coaching and its potential to assist educators in the process of self-monitoring and self-modifying their pedagogical approaches.

Improving the process of teaching and learning via cognitive coaching bolsters evidence-based instructional practice at a time when school districts and school leaders are contemplating strategies to address school improvement. By establishing transparency regarding the application and impact of cognitive coaching in general education settings, teachers can lay the groundwork for instructional transformations that promote student autonomy and establish fair instructional pedagogical approaches for integrating 21<sup>st</sup> century competencies (Coburn et al., 2016).

In addition, the present study provides international programs with insights into targeted strategies for enhancing the readiness of international teachers for their exchange experiences. One insight is the need to provide international teachers with an in-depth introduction to the district, state, and school policies and procedures prior to their placement in classrooms. Another implication for sponsoring agencies is to assign mentors who possess personal expertise in the field of international affairs to support international teachers. Lastly, an implication for school districts is to establish an independent district-sponsored meeting group committed to international teachers, wherein they convene with district leadership support staff to engage in discussions pertaining to their experiences.

## **Recommendations for Action**

There are a few recommendations and/or actions that surfaced from conducting this research that may contribute to a deeper understanding of how international teachers self-monitor and self-modify their teaching practices while working in the U.S. There are five recommendations for implementation.

### ***Recommendation 1***

When formulating a strategy to assist international teachers, leaders must thoughtfully contemplate which systems can be operationalized for the collective advantage of all recently hired personnel. Even though the requirements of international teachers differ from those of their colleagues, support systems are likely to be beneficial for all new teachers. Leaders of schools and districts are frequently the first point of contact for new teachers and have the ability to develop a support system for them prior to their start date at their respective schools. Districts and school leaders should provide an ongoing system of support to ensure that all new teachers feel inspired and accomplished. In the absence of proactive measures to facilitate a seamless transition to a novel environment, educators might not come to the realization that they require supplementary support until they have reached a physical or emotional breaking point where they have no intention of remaining in their new position and country. Schools and districts should offer assistance prior to this juncture.

### ***Recommendation 2***

Despite the teaching experience that international teachers bring to the districts and schools, it would be advantageous to have a point of contact who can assist them in navigating any questions or challenges that may arise upon their arrival. A coach could

potentially offer assistance to international teachers during their process of assimilating into the local community and school culture. Collaborating with a buddy instructor can prove advantageous in situations where an assigned mentor is not accessible. The assignment of a companion to the international teacher's school facilitates their understanding of the institution's specifics, aids in adjusting to their new role, and assists them in navigating the school community. Buddies can assist international teachers in acquiring information that satisfies fundamental requirements, such as understanding classroom supply procurement, becoming aware of anticipated conduct, and, if required, obtaining clarification on school regulations and processes. With the aid of information and assistance, international educators can feel at ease and prepared to set up their classrooms.

### ***Recommendation 3***

Teachers who are new or international and whose fundamental needs are being met are better able to heed the responsibilities of their positions, including lesson planning and instructional decision-making. Teachers with more experience can assist them in approaching curriculum and planning with assurance; however, administrators could benefit from offering additional opportunities for new international teachers to meet with their peer groups, grade-level teams, or academic coaches. To support international teachers, I am recommending quarterly international teachers' meetings, a multi-year induction program with extensive coaching support, and cultural sensitivity training.

### ***Recommendation 4***

Cultural sensitivity training would provide resources and support to help teachers

cope with cultural stress and navigate the challenges of living and working in a new country. Offering cultural sensitivity training for school staff and students would promote understanding and respect for different cultural backgrounds. This training would provide strategies for effective cross-cultural communication, including active listening, nonverbal communication, and sensitivity to cultural norms. This would allow international teachers to incorporate diverse perspectives into their curriculum and create classroom activities that celebrate cultural diversity. In addition, providing cultural sensitivity training would help teachers learn how to tailor their instructional strategies to meet the needs of students from different cultural backgrounds, leading to improved learning outcomes. Overall, cultural sensitivity training may play a crucial role in supporting international teachers by promoting cultural awareness, fostering inclusivity, and enhancing teaching effectiveness in diverse educational settings.

#### ***Recommendation 5***

Since there were no notable differences between teachers from the different sponsoring agencies, school districts can feel comfortable working with all agencies represented in this study (FACES, EPI, and ITES). While teachers from the Philippines noted there were a few similarities between education in their homeland and the U.S., they still identified needing the same types of support as teachers of other countries of origin. School districts essentially could develop strategies that promote positive classroom management activities, cohesion, collaboration, and cultural sensitivity. This would allow schools and districts to have a broader understanding of what this type of intercultural experience involves for international teachers and provide professional learning opportunities that support intercultural differences.

### **Recommended Plan of Action for the Study Site School District**

Each school district approaches the onboarding and induction process of international teachers in a unique manner, taking into consideration its specific resources and requirements. A school's determination for how to accommodate new staff members and teachers is impacted by factors such as revenue implications, the capacity to retain new personnel, and the obligation to offer equal opportunities to local and international candidates.

#### ***A Multi-Year Induction Program With Extensive Coaching Support***

In the U.S., the importance of providing improved assistance to new teachers is becoming more urgent (García & Weiss, 2020a). In response to this challenge, lawmakers and educators have enacted legislative measures and allocated resources to promote and facilitate the onboarding and mentoring of newly hired educators. A majority of states have implemented criteria for mentor selection, which encompass factors such as years of professional expertise and proof of efficacy (Goldrick, 2016).

A comprehensive teacher induction program that acquaints new teachers with the school, furnishes them with preparatory materials and resources, and outlines anticipated activities is one of the most effective methods we are aware of for fostering a sense of support among educators (McAllister, 2017). An opportunity to network with other new instructors inside and outside the school, a review of performance expectations and objectives, individual mentoring sessions, and periodic evaluations to offer constructive criticism and supplementary assistance may all be components of employee induction. Facilitative induction programs may assist nascent teachers in meeting their most pressing requirements upon entering the classroom, including guidance on curriculum

development, assessment procedures, and classroom management (Abdallah & Alkaabi, 2023).

To ensure international teachers are becoming acclimated to their new environment and have the necessary support, I recommend the following multi-year induction plan of action. A more detailed plan can be found in Appendix F. This multi-year induction program can be highly beneficial for organizations looking to invest in their employees' long-term success, improve retention rates, and foster a positive work environment. In addition, it provides accountability measures for the coach and the international teacher.

**Goals of the Multi-Year International Teacher Induction Program.**

1. Provide quarterly international teacher meetings (see Appendix G).
2. Integrate teachers new to the culture and climate of the school, district, and community. This would be achieved through
  - ✓ A district orientation day is held before the opening day of school
  - ✓ An introduction to the community with maps, demographics, and a bus tour of the school district will occur
  - ✓ A presentation of the district and school information policies and procedures
  - ✓ Introduction to the components of the induction/mentoring program structure and policies
  - ✓ An overview of the expectations of new teachers
  - ✓ A tour of the individually assigned school
  - ✓ Meeting with the coach/mentor and principal

- ✓ Initiate quarterly support meetings
3. Provide training in classroom fundamentals and best practices to beginning teachers focusing on the following:
- ✓ Classroom management and dealing with discipline.
  - ✓ Planning and assessment. Parent communication.
  - ✓ Differentiated instruction.
  - ✓ Teaching in a standards-based classroom.
  - ✓ Time management.
  - ✓ Technology integration.
4. Provide leadership and foster a culture of continuous professional growth through the development of a mentor/new teacher relationship:
- ✓ Coaches will be formally trained in cognitive coaching. The goal is to match beginning teachers with trained mentors/coaches.
  - ✓ Coaches/mentors and new teachers in the program will
    - Meet weekly to discuss new teachers' practices (classroom management, planning, assessment, time management, instructional practices, and resources) and support the new teachers' professional and personal development.
    - Meet informally and regularly to discuss needs to help new teachers understand and integrate into the school and community.
    - Model professionalism by working collaboratively, trying new ideas, and reflecting on successful methods and techniques from the coach's own experience.

- Visit other teacher classrooms. The principal will arrange for coverage to allow the coach or mentor to co-teach in the new teachers' classroom along with classroom observations for support. All meetings will be logged.
- Ensure that new teachers understand and are prepared for the evaluation process.

### **Recommendations for Further Study**

Although the study produced insightful information due to its qualitative design, the conclusions and analyses should not be extrapolated beyond the sample under investigation. The study included a purposeful sampling of 13 individuals: six Jamaican teachers, four teachers from the Philippines, two teachers from Colombia, and one teacher from India. The findings and significance may nonetheless be applicable to K-5 educational systems in the U.S. and abroad that are contemplating teacher exchange initiatives.

The experiences of international teachers vary across districts, schools, and sponsoring agencies. Future research recommendations concerning the experiences of international teachers are as follows:

- Conduct an investigation encompassing all grade levels to analyze any possible variances in the instructional needs of teachers in both elementary and secondary educational institutions.
- Conduct a longitudinal investigation that tracks various international teachers across distinct school districts and school levels (elementary and secondary) throughout distinct phases of their tenure, which may yield insights into the



experiences they encounter at various junctures of their employment in the schools. Acquiring such knowledge will facilitate the anticipation and avoidance of challenges that may arise in their transitions over months and even years of duration in the U.S. Permitting the participant to do so may potentially reduce the probability of their repatriation or commitment to abstain from teaching in the U.S.

- An intriguing comparative analysis could be made between the data from other school districts in the southeastern region about international teachers' values and beliefs about cognitive coaching. By examining the values and beliefs each respondent has concerning cognitive coaching, a qualitative component could be added to this research. In addition, a comparative study between international teachers' and American teachers' usage of cognitive coaching strategies in K-12 classrooms could add to the cognitive coaching research as well.
- For numerous educators, teaching on an international level can be a transformative experience. After the expiration of their contracts, international teachers return to their home countries to satisfy a 2-year requirement. The existing body of literature does not contain any data regarding international teachers who, following the expiration of their first 5-year teaching contract in the U.S., return to their home country to fulfill a 2-year contractual obligation before rejoining the country for a second-term contract. Determining how the experiences of returning international teachers influence their instructional practices, classroom management skills, and instruction delivery in the U.S.

during their second-term contracts could be enhanced through investigation of this phenomenon.

### **Researcher Reflections**

As the researcher, my assumptions and stereotypes about teachers from different countries or cultural backgrounds could have affected the perception of the participants and their teaching practices. These biases could have influenced data collection methods, data analysis, and the interpretation of findings. In addition, my preconceived ideas about the educational systems, pedagogical approaches, or teaching philosophies prevalent in the U.S. and my region could have impacted the way I understand and evaluate the teaching practices of international teachers, potentially leading to misunderstandings or misrepresentations in the research findings. Furthermore, my current position as a district-level coach within the research context could have created power imbalances that influenced the interactions and responses of international teachers. Biases related to my role as a district personnel may have impacted the level of trust and openness exhibited by the participants.

Acknowledging and addressing these biases is essential for conducting ethical and rigorous research with international teachers. I engaged in reflexive practices, continually questioning their assumptions, actively seeking diverse perspectives, and remaining open to learning from the experiences of the participants. By recognizing and mitigating personal biases, I was able to enhance the validity and authenticity of the qualitative inquiry into the experiences and practices of international teachers.

### **Summary**

Since the influx of international teachers to the U.S. is a permanent phenomenon

(Self & Dulaney, 2018), it would be advantageous for school administrators to gain knowledge on how to fulfill the international teachers' requirements to facilitate their success in American classrooms. Leaders can utilize the information gleaned from this study to inform their decisions regarding how to assist international teachers as they adapt to instructional practices, classroom management, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction in the U.S. Elementary international teachers from developing nations may be better equipped in delivering impactful instruction that enhances student achievement if district leaders incorporate findings from this study into their change approach to implementation. An additional component comprises an analysis of the rationale behind considering cognitive coaching as a potential form of professional development to assist international teachers with instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication, and language delivery of instruction.

Educators are undoubtedly confronted with an increasing multitude of intricate and time-sensitive matters requiring their attention; among them are inadequately staffed classrooms, health and safety concerns, and student behavior. By promoting a constructive school environment and offering suitable training materials, district administrators can diminish the burden of these persistent issues and increase the probability of recruiting and retaining diverse, highly qualified teachers. To achieve sustainable outcomes, it is imperative that these endeavors incorporate professional development initiatives to meet the unique needs of international teachers, regardless of their countries of origin or sponsoring agencies. By providing a targeted induction and support program for international teachers, similar to the one provided in this study, school districts can increase the likelihood of success and sustainability of international

teachers.

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**Appendix A**

**Site Permission Research Request**

Date:

Greetings Mr. /Mrs.

I am Dawn Scott, a doctoral student at Gardner-Webb University in the Educational Leadership Program. For my dissertation, I intend to conduct a qualitative case study examining the influence of Cognitive Coaching on Elementary International Teachers in a Southeastern School District.

There is a limited amount of research on the influence of Cognitive Coaching on International Teachers. This study is designed to explore the Cognitive Coaching Model using semi-structured interviews. I am requesting permission to conduct interviews with international teachers in your building. I hope to schedule one 30 to 45-minute, one-on-one interviews with participants, either face-to-face or virtually to gather their perceptions about Cognitive Coaching and the impact on their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction.

The school, school district, and international teachers, will not be identified. There will be limited amount of time away from their duties. I will not probe international teachers about their schools in particular, or anything that could reflect poorly on them. The letters of consent and other identifying information will be maintained separately from the collection. I will secure all materials in a locked file cabinet in my personal residence. After the completion of the study, I will destroy any documents that could reveal respondents and their classes.

Participation is voluntary. Participants may leave the interview at any moment without implications. This study does not involve any known risks for the participants. Should you have any inquiries about this study, please do not hesitate to contact me. By signing below, you grant me permission to interview international teachers in your building. Once I receive this signed copy, I will reach out to each teacher to request their permission and availability to participate in an interview process.

Please return the signed copy and retain a copy for your records.

Your time is greatly appreciated.

---

Principal Signature

---

Date

Respectfully,  
 Dawn Scott  
 Doctoral Candidate  
 Gardner-Webb University  
 Email: dscott7@gardner-webb.edu  
 Phone: XXXX

**Appendix B**

**Participant Recruitment Letter for International Teachers**

Good day, \_\_\_\_\_.

I am Dawn Scott, a doctoral candidate in the College of Education Program at Gardner-Webb University and a district-level instructional coach in the district. I have been granted permission by the school district and your principal to contact you about my study. This email is intended to invite you to take part in a research study exploring the influence of the cognitive coaching model on elementary international teachers in a southeastern school district. I expect that the findings of this research will enhance our understanding and support for international teachers.

Considering the multitude of buildings and grade levels in this study site district, I will select a purposive sample of international teachers. If you decide to participate, I will then obtain your written consent and schedule a mutually convenient time and date for the interview.

The purpose of this email is to inquire about your interest in participating in the study to share your experiences with coaching strategies and the cognitive coaching model. I hope to schedule one 30 to 45-minute, one-on-one interviews with participants, either face-to-face or virtually to learn more about their experiences with coaching. I can schedule the interview after school or during instructional planning times. Please respond to this email indicating your willingness to-participate in the study. Once I determine how many teachers are interested in participating in the study, I will select a representative group of 12-15 teachers to invite to take part in the study. I will let you know if you have been selected to participate in a follow up email.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. This study will not place you at risk, as your identity will be kept strictly confidential. Participants will not be identified in any way and all information pertaining to research participants will be stored in a secure locked file cabinet where only I will have access.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please contact me via email at [dscott7@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:dscott7@gardner-webb.edu). Please call me at XXXXX if you would like additional information about the study.

Thank you for considering participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Dawn Scott,  
Doctoral Candidate  
Gardner-Webb University

I have read the information contained in the letter regarding the above-mentioned study, which describes what I will be asked to do in order to participate in the study; and,

Yes, I would like to take part in the study.

-OR-

No, I decline to take part in the study.

If you selected yes to participate in the study, I will follow up with an email if you have been selected to participate and to schedule your interview.

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

**Appendix C**  
**Informed Consent Letter**



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

This email is to inform you that you have been selected to participate in my study on A Qualitative Case Study of the Influence of Cognitive Coaching on Elementary International Teachers in a Southeastern School District. Below, you will find the Informed Consent Form from Gardner-Webb University that provides specific details and procedures about the study. At the end of the letter, there is a link for you to schedule an interview. Once you are done, please scan this copy and email it back to me at dscott7@gardner-webb.edu.

Again, thank you for your willingness to participate. I will be in touch to confirm your interview appointment next week.

Sincerely,

Dawn Scott  
Phone XXXXXX

**Gardner-Webb University IRB  
Informed Consent Form**

**Title of Study:** A Qualitative Case Study of the Influence of Cognitive Coaching on Elementary International Teachers in a Southeastern School District

**Researcher:** Dawn L Scott/Doctoral Candidate/School of Education

**Purpose:** The purpose of this case study is to explore the influence of cognitive coaching on elementary international teachers in a southeastern school district. The study will investigate the effects of cognitive coaching on international teachers' abilities to self-monitor and self-modify their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction while working in the district.

**Procedure**

**What you will do in the study:** As a participant in this research, you will be asked to participate in an audio recorded semi-structured interview.

You will participate in a 30–45-minute interview about your experiences with the Cognitive Coaching Model. The interview will focus on cognitive coaching strategies that support communication and language barriers, classroom management, and the delivery of instruction. The interview will be videotaped for the purpose of data collection. After I have collected my data, I will send you an email containing the transcriptions and my notes so you can verify that I have accurately represented your views, perspectives, and encounters. You may skip or decline to answer any question or portion of a query that makes you feel uncomfortable. Additionally, you may end the interview at any time.

**Time Required**

The study is anticipated to require between 75 minutes of your time. The semi-structured interview is expected to last up to 45 minutes, followed by an additional 30 minutes for you to review my transcripts and notes.

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from the research study at any time without penalty. You also have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) for any reason without penalty. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in a de-identified state.

**Confidentiality**

The information that you give in the study will be handled confidentially. Your information will be assigned a pseudonym. The list connecting your name to this code will be kept in a locked and password-protected file cabinet in my personal resident. When the study has been completed and the data have been analyzed, this list will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report. The recordings of our interview will also be destroyed upon completion of all aspects of the study.

**Anonymous Data**

The information that you give in the study will be handled confidentially. Your data will be anonymous which means that your name will not be collected or linked to the data.

**Risks**

There are no anticipated risks in this study.

**Benefits**

Although this study may not benefit you personally, the goal is for the results to contribute to knowledge about, cognitive coaching strategies and the how, if at all, these strategies influence international teachers with the challenges of communication and language barriers, classroom management, and the delivery of instruction.

**Payment**

You will receive no payment or incentive for participating in the study.

**Right to Withdraw From the Study**

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw from the study, your audio tape for the interviews will be destroyed.

**How to Withdraw From the Study**

If you want to withdraw from the study at any time, please notify me and you will be withdrawn immediately. There is no penalty for withdrawing.

If you would like to withdraw after materials have been submitted, please contact [dscott7@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:dscott7@gardner-webb.edu)

If you withdraw from the study at any time, all interview data will be destroyed immediately.

**If you have questions about the study, contact:**

Dawn Scott  
EdD Candidate  
School/Department, Gardner-Webb University  
Researcher telephone number: XXXXX  
Researcher email address: [dscott7@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:dscott7@gardner-webb.edu)

Faculty Advisor name: Dr. Kathy Revis  
Faculty Research Advisor  
School/Department, Gardner-Webb University  
Faculty Advisor telephone number: XXXXX  
Faculty Advisor email address: [krevis@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:krevis@gardner-webb.edu)

**If the research design of the study necessitates that its full scope is not explained prior to participation, it will be explained to you after completion of the study. If you have concerns about your rights or how you are being treated, or if you have questions, want more information, or have suggestions, please contact the IRB Institutional Administrator listed below.**

Dr. Sydney K. Brown  
IRB Institutional Administrator  
Gardner-Webb University  
Telephone: 704-406-3019  
Email: [skbrown@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:skbrown@gardner-webb.edu)

**Voluntary Consent by Participant**

I have read the information in this consent form and fully understand the contents of this document. I have had a chance to ask any questions concerning this study and they have been answered for me. I agree to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

Please scan this copy and email it back to me at [dscott7@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:dscott7@gardner-webb.edu) . Please use the link below to sign up for an interview time.  
<https://forms.office.com/r/v9scHzDmp>

**Appendix D**  
**Interview Protocol**

## Interview Protocol

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Script:** *I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation for your participation in the interview component of my research. As mentioned in the email, the purpose of this study is to examine the influence of Cognitive Coaching on Elementary International Teachers in a Southeastern School District. I will ask you questions about Cognitive Coaching and coaching practices throughout our interview today, which will last 30 to 45 minutes. You may decline to respond to any questions or terminate the interview at any moment.*

*Do you permit me to audio record our chat today for future reference?*

*Are there any questions for me before we begin this interview?*

*Let's get started.*

### **Interview Questions**

Relationship Building Questions:

How is your day going?

Do you have any questions before we begin the interview?

Before we begin, is there anything I can do to make this procedure more comfortable for you??

**Research Question 1: How do international teachers describe the influence of cognitive coaching strategies in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?**

1. What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on your classroom management techniques?

Potential Probe: Please expand on your response.

What variables, in your opinion, influence classroom management in the United States?

Potential Probe: Expand on your response. Can you tell me more?

2. How is classroom management in the United States comparable to or different from classroom management in your own country?

Potential probe: Please expand on your answer. Give me an example.

3. What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on communication/language barriers?

4. What are your thoughts on the influence of coaching on the delivery of instruction?

**Research Question 2: How do international teachers describe their internal thinking processes associated with cognitive coaching in terms of improving their instructional practices, classroom management skills, communication/language barriers, and the delivery of instruction?**

5. What changes in your values and beliefs about teaching has occurred? What instructional experiences in the United States have caused this?

6. What, if any, changes has there been in the way you address relationships with students, administrators, etc.?

7. What, if any, changes in your students were noticed? If not, why?

How would you describe relationships with your students? How do you feel the students would respond to your teaching?

8. Tell me about some examples of suggestions made during cc feedback sessions that you have implemented? Tell me about some suggestions that you have not implemented?

9. What, if any, strategies did you learn from your coach to improve classroom management, communication and language barriers with students, and delivery of instruction?

**Research Question 3: What are the similarities and differences in the cognitive coaching needs of international teachers from various countries and various sponsoring agencies?**

10. What is your country of origin?

11. What recruitment firm recruited you to teach in the United States?

12. How is classroom management in the United States similar or different from classroom management in your country of origin?

Potential Probe: Expand on your response.

13. How are communication/language barriers in the United States similar or different from your country of origin?

14. How is the delivery of instruction in the United States similar or different from your country of origin?

15. Which of these challenges do you find most apparent in the United States? How does it compare to your experience in your native country, and how does it differ?

**Research Question 4: In what areas, if any, might international teachers identify as needing additional support?**

16. What changes do you believe, if any, are needed to further optimize cognitive coaching support in your school or district?

17. How are your teaching experiences similar or different when working with a coach?

18. In what other ways can your coach support you in your professional development?

19. What other suggestions might you offer to international teachers based on your experience?

20. What professional learning opportunity do you believe assisted you in transitioning to teach in the United States?

21. If you could change just a single aspect regarding the way school administrators prepare international teachers for their work in the United States, what would it be?

Possible Question: How do you believe implementing the change will reduce the number of challenges?

*Our interview is now complete. I really want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to you again for your dedication and participation-*

**Appendix E**

**Member Checking/Thank You Email**



Date:

Good day \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for taking part in my research study, *A Qualitative Case Study of the Influence of Cognitive Coaching on Elementary International Teachers in a Southeastern School District*. I kindly want your assistance in reviewing my transcripts and notes from your interview to ensure that my explanations of the transcribed interviews are accurate and credible, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the study. If you have any thoughts or adjustments, within the next 7 days, or have any queries or concerns, please email me at [dscott7@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:dscott7@gardner-webb.edu). I want to be certain that I provide precise information as an outcome of our conversation. I want to thank you again for taking part in this research. While specific references to names and other identifying information will be included in the transcript, they will be excluded or amended for the purposes of reporting in this study.

Again, I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your continued openness to share your ideas and for the significant contribution you have made to the study.

Warmest regards,

Dawn Scott

Phone Number: XXXXX

[dscott7@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:dscott7@gardner-webb.edu)

**Appendix F**

**Multi-Year International Teacher Induction Program**

	<p><b>Year One Implementation</b></p> <p>The first year of the Multi-Year Induction Program focuses on the classroom atmosphere, lesson planning and preparation, and instruction. During the first year, The coach should assist the educator in creating a learning environment, strengthening their ability to select and organize lesson content and student skills to be taught, and delivering content that engages students in the learning process and involves them in decisions when possible.</p>			
	<p><b>Multi-Year Induction Program with coaching support</b></p>			
<p><b>Year 1: Implementation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Weekly Face-to-Face (virtual or in-person) conversations with a coach (to provide real-time or near real-time support)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Four (4) observations/feedback cycles conducted by the coach</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observe skilled educators in practice four times (via videos, virtually, or in-person)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participate in two (2) professional learning workshops</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete online Micro-Credentials (approved by The Induction Coordinator)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Planned Work, Activities, and Tasks</b></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Timeline</b></p>	<p><b>Person(s) Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence of Success</b></p>

Weekly Face-to-Face Meetings (Virtually or in Person)	Induction Notebook w./ Mentor Log	Weekly	Coach/ International Teacher	Notes/Agenda from the meeting
Four Observations/Feedback Cycle	Induction Notebook/ Coaching Log Observation Form Discussion Log 4.0 Rubric Guiding Questions for Planning/ Instruction	Ongoing	Mentor/ International Teachers	Post Observation Notes/Feedback Teacher Lesson Plans
Observe Skilled/Veteran Teachers (Two times in person/virtually) or Recorded Versions of teachers	Induction Notebook Observation Template	Quarterly	International Teachers	Post Debriefing Notes from the observations/ Next Steps
International Teachers participate in a minimum of two professional learning workshops/ <b>(Classroom Management/ Curriculum/Instruction)</b>  Participate in Micro-Credentials (ex: Classroom Management, Planning, Delivery of Instruction, etc.)	Induction Notebook  Laptop	Ongoing	International Teachers Induction Coordinator District Curriculum Consultants/ Instructional Coaches	Agendas/ Handouts from the session Implementation of Strategies learned from the PLO incorporated into the lesson plan  Badges earned from Micro-credentials

	<p><b>Year Two Implementation</b></p> <p>The Multi-Year Induction Program focuses on refining the novice educator's skills related to the classroom environment, lesson preparation and planning, and.</p> <p>During Year Two, the coach should support the novice educator as they continue to hone their ability to establish an environment in which learning takes place, strengthen their ability to select and organize lesson content and student skills to be taught, and deliver content that engages students in the process of learning and involves them in decisions when possible.</p>			
	<p><b>Multi-Year Induction Program w. Coaching Support</b></p>			
<p><b>Year 2: Implementation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Face-to-Face (virtual or in-person) conversations with a coach (to provide real-time or near real-time support)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Four (4) observations/feedback cycles conducted by the Mentor</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observe skilled educators in practice four times (via videos, virtually, or in-person)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participate in two (2) professional learning workshops (final approval is at the Induction Coordinator discretion)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Planned Work, Activities, and Tasks</b></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b></p>	<p><b>Timeline</b></p>	<p><b>Person(s) Responsible</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence of Success</b></p>

Weekly Face-to-Face Meetings (Virtually or in Person)	Induction Notebook w./ Coaching Log	Weekly	Coach/ International Teachers	Notes/Agenda from the meeting
Four Observations/Feedback Cycle ( <b>Observations will be recorded</b> )	Induction Notebook/ Coaching Log Observation Form Discussion Log SC 4.0 Rubric Guiding Questions for Environment Swivel for recording the lessons	Ongoing	Coach/ International Teachers	Post Observation Notes/Feedback Teacher Lesson Plans Next Steps with one area to focus on
Observe Skilled/Veteran Teachers (Two times in person/virtually) or Recorded Versions of teachers	Induction Notebook Observation Template	Quarterly	International Teachers	Post Debriefing Notes from the observations/ Next Steps  Select at least two strategies learned from the observation & incorporate them into your lesson plan Schedule a time for the Mentor to observe the new strategies
International Teacher participates in a minimum of two professional learning workshops/ ( <b>Assessment/Evaluation</b> )	Induction Notebook	Ongoing	International Teachers Induction Coordinator District	Agendas/ Handouts from the session Implementation of strategies

<p>Participate in Micro-Credentials (ex: Classroom Management, Planning, Delivery of Instruction, etc.)</p>	<p>Laptop</p>		<p>Curriculum Consultants/ Instructional Coaches</p>	<p>learned from the PLO incorporated into the lesson plan Badges earned from Micro-credentials</p>
	<p><b>Year Three Implementation</b> The Multi-Year Induction Program addresses lesson planning and preparation, instruction, and student improvement. The purpose of this year is to develop "Assessment literate" teachers who understand the value of formative and summative assessment data and know how to use that data to drive educational decisions within their classrooms. The activities will be conducted in professional learning community (PLC) teams consisting of no more than eight teachers. Each site constructs the teams. Once constructed, the team members set their meeting dates, locations, and times (<b>by cluster</b>). During the meetings, the team members review the essence of assessment for and of learning and discuss how the two play out in their classrooms to understand better how to use data to make instructional decisions that best meet the needs of students. Teachers are required to implement several strategies and indicate the effectiveness of those strategies of student growth. Sites are provided with copies of <i>"Developing Assessment-Capable Visible Learner"</i> by Douglas Fisher, John Hattie, &amp; Nancy Frey. The books are to be used in conjunction with the Teacher Clarity &amp; Success Criteria Playbook. Resources can be found on the Corwin Press Website, along with forms and additional resources. These books can outline what may be used to set up the meeting and offer suggestions for conducting the session.</p>			
	<p><b>Multi-Year Induction Program</b></p>			
<p><b>Year 3:</b> Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participate in a Professional Learning Community ((virtual or in-person PLC) specific to the statewide mentoring program that focuses on using data to make instructional decisions that best meet the needs of his or her students.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participate in a small group book study with a learning team (The Teacher Clarity Playbook)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review text chapters before learning team meetings</li> </ul>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead a minimum of one (1) learning team meeting</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement strategies discussed during learning team meetings into classroom instruction</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect evidence of strategy implementation to share at follow-up learning team meeting</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a final reflection on Year 3</li> </ul>			
<b>Planned Work, Activities, and Tasks</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence of Success</b>
<b>Initial PLC Meeting</b>	PLC Manual PLC Facilitators Guide	One Time	International Teachers Induction Coordinator PLC	Reflection Forms Meeting Schedule Template
<b>Monthly PLC Meetings (Each in Induction Teacher Facilitates at least one meeting)</b>	Make sure the group has markers, chart paper, copies of anything they need (such as agendas), and other items necessary to the meeting	Ongoing	International Teachers	Meeting Notes/Big Ideas & Takeaways from the meeting
<b>Monthly Book Study</b>	Developing Assessment-Capable Visible Learner" by Douglas Fisher, John Hattie, & Nancy Frey	Ongoing	International Teachers	Chapter Response Form



<b>Evaluation of Year 3</b>		One Time	International Teachers Induction Coordinator	Reflection Form (Microsoft Forms or Google Form)
	<p><b>Year Four Implementation</b>  The Multi-Year Induction Program focuses on being able to assess your development in content knowledge and pedagogical skills. You will first select an area for growth for the remainder of the year. As this is a professional development requirement, sites may have designed the experiences for you to develop skills and knowledge aligned to the site needs. These may include book studies, lesson studies, action research, and other topics</p>			
	<b>Multi-Year Induction Program</b>			
<b>Year 4: Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a self-analysis to assess his or her professional development needs in content knowledge and pedagogical skills; develop and implement a personalized professional growth plan that addresses his or her individual needs identified through the self-analysis.</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a self-analysis (Pedagogical Skills and Content-Related Skills)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify areas of strength and areas for growth (select at least one (1) area for growth)</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a personalized professional growth plan to address the area(s) for growth</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the personalized professional growth plan (action research, individual book study, group book study, lesson study, college courses, or other professional learning as approved by your school administrator and Induction Coordinator and aligned with the educator's self-analysis)</li> </ul>			
<b>Planned Work, Activities, and Tasks</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Evidence of Success</b>

Self-Analysis of Teaching Experiences	Induction Notebook that includes PLOs attended,  observations & feedback notes <i>Written Reflections</i> <i>Ongoing</i>	Ongoing	International Teachers	Personalized Professional Growth Plan
Develop a Professional Growth Plan (Ex: Specific Professional Development Requirements, Participation in a book study with other teachers, conducting action research, or lesson study with other teachers)	DOE Educator Effectiveness Handbook	Ongoing	International Teachers	Formal Evaluation Documentation
Regularly attend professional learning opportunities offered by the school district	Proof of Registration for sessions  Professional Learning Management System (PMLS)	Ongoing	International Teachers	Certificates Renewal Credit Hours Agendas/Handouts

**Appendix G**

**Quarterly International Teacher Meetings**

## Quarterly International Teacher Meetings

### Provide quarterly meetings three times a year for international teachers

#### September Meeting

- ✚ **District Provided-** A thoughtful token of appreciation of a welcome basket that will be presented to newly hired international teachers. In addition to a map of the school and the surrounding area, the welcoming package will contain a letter from the school's leadership team, details regarding each individual school's mission and vision. Additionally, teachers will receive a school t-shirt or mug as additional gifts that may be included.
- ✚ Establish partnerships among the international teachers with each other and a coach/mentor.
- ✚ Provide a calendar for teachers to sign up for weekly check-ins (virtual or face-to-face)
- ✚ **Community Agencies:** Provide welcome baskets of household items: towels, pillows, cleaning supplies, gift cards to local restaurants, grocery stores or places to purchase supplies.
- ✚ Provide opportunities for informational sessions for international teachers about becoming acclimated to their new environment (Ex: Churches, the Housing Authority, Transportation Department, Neighborhood Supermarkets/Grocery Stores/Banks, etc.
- ✚ Share community calendars of events with international teachers to get acquainted with the surrounding community.

### January Meeting

- ✚ Mid-Year Check-In
- ✚ Provide opportunities for past international teachers to share their experiences.
- ✚ Present sessions on curriculum/instruction/social and emotional learning
- ✚ Allow international teachers from various countries and various agencies to form support groups.

### April Meeting

- ✚ Year-end celebration of Successes/Opportunities for Growth
- ✚ Allow the current international teachers to sign up to become an ambassador for the next group of international teachers arriving in the United States
- ✚ Permit international teachers to complete a Feedback /Self-reflection form about the quarterly meetings and ways to improve this program.