

ABSTRACT

Principal Transformational Leadership and the Texas Instructional Leadership Action Coaching Program: A Qualitative Case Study

Gayle White, Ed.D.

Mentor: Bradley Carpenter, Ph.D.

Transformational leadership continues to be in the spotlight, given that school systems are becoming increasingly demanding and complex. Evidence has shown principal effectiveness is foundational to the quality of instruction and student achievement. According to literature, leadership coaching has become one of the fastest growing initiatives in education. In 2017, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) created the Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching program to foster and equip principal leadership skills through coaching. The purpose of this study was to understand how leadership coaching impacted principal transformation leadership as a result of participating in the TIL Action Coaching program.

This qualitative case study with embedded multiple units of analysis included a literature review and a triangulation of methods including an open-ended demographic questionnaire, semistructured interviews, and a document review. The contextual setting for the research was the Region 12 consortium of schools in central Texas. The researcher coded and analyzed three deductive categories and uncovered six inductive emergent themes related to leadership coaching and transformational leadership

theoretical frameworks. Data identified the leadership coaching category of transformational processes with the theme of growth and nuances of reflection and collaboration. Regarding the leadership coaching category of listening, observation, and feedback, findings revealed the nuance of personalized supports. The category of transformational leadership revealed the attribute of intellectual stimulation demonstrating the emergent theme of challenge including three nuances of meaning—shared leadership, systems and protocols, and vulnerability.

Principal Transformational Leadership and the Texas Instructional Leadership Action
Coaching Program: A Qualitative Case Study

by

Gayle White, B.B.A., M.Ed.

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Jeffrey Peterson, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Dissertation Committee

Bradley W. Carpenter, Ph.D., Chairperson

David Schlueter, Ph.D.

John Wilson, Ph.D.

George Kazanas, Ed.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School

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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction to the Problem of Practice

A highly skilled and competent campus leader has the power to transform schools from the inside out. It is no surprise that school transformation efforts consistently place a high priority on the role of the campus principal in building teacher capacity and improving student achievement. As Reiss (2015) contended, principals are vital for student success and are often considered the second-most important contributor to student achievement, after teacher effectiveness. With an increased hyperfocus on state accountability, growing teacher turnover, and concerns regarding safety and student wellness, however, principals typically do not last long in the profession. In their study of principal turnover using data from the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Levin and Bradley (2019) reported, “The national average of tenure for principals was four years as of 2016-17” (p. 3), with only 35% of new principals staying at their assigned campus for a minimum of 2 years. These numbers are even more significant given Shoho and Barnett’s (2010) discovery that principal turnover significantly disrupts the campus, resulting in poor teacher retention and low student achievement, leaving aspiring principals to wonder if the leadership role is worth the effort.

With a goal of supporting the role of principals, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) created Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching as a developmental tool for leaders. However, since its roll out in 2017, the effectiveness of the TIL Action

Coaching program has yet to be validated by empirical research, leaving much to be discovered. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand how the new TIL Action Coaching fosters transformational leadership attributes in campus principals for leadership development.

Background to the Problem

What principals do and how they approach their work impact everyone (Espinoza & Cardichon, 2017; Levin & Bradley, 2019). Highly successful principals take measurable actions to create a positive climate, motivate and grow teacher instructional practices, and set high expectations for student achievement (Liu, 2020; Young et al., 2017). In a meta-analysis report by the Wallace Foundation (Mitgang, 2012), conclusive evidence affirmed that school leader practices have direct and indirect links to student achievement. How a principal goes about their work, what they believe about students, the teachers' capacity for growth, and how the principal responds to everyday demands and obstacles can significantly impact the entire campus (Espinoza & Cardichon, 2017; Liu, 2020; Young et al., 2017).

Tasked with multiple responsibilities, most principals step into their roles ill prepared to handle the overwhelming challenges that come with principalship (Milner et al., 2018). Researchers have shown that, aside from retirement or dismissal, principals leave due to poor working conditions, low salaries, lack of autonomy, politics, and inadequate professional development opportunities (Gray, 2018a; Levin & Bradley, 2019). In addition, principals often fail to receive systematic feedback related to performance, which causes many to lack self-awareness about their everyday practice (A. Gilley et al., 2010; J. Gilley & Gilley, 2007; Milner et al., 2018). Other problems occur

when districts promote their own people into leadership positions with little consideration of capacity for the job, plans to support them in the role, or professional training (Warren & Kelsen, 2013).

In 2014, TEA developed a new growth-model evaluation system called the Texas Teacher Evaluation System of Supports (T-TESS) to guide school improvement and transformation. The premise behind the framework posits principals need to coach teachers for continued growth, regardless of a teacher's years of experience, education, or level of instructional skill (TEA, 2020). Not long after implementation, however, TEA noticed principals were struggling to implement T-TESS with fidelity from a lack of knowledge and understanding on coaching methods and protocols (T. Longanecker, personal communication, May 2020).

Superintendents and central office staff called on TEA to help provide additional training on how to support principals on the coaching process. As a result, TEA created the TIL Action Coaching program to provide superintendents, central office, and principals the essential knowledge and skills necessary to coach teachers for improved performance and increased instructional capacity. In the training, the principal is coached by a supervisor (e.g., superintendent or central office personnel) who then coaches teachers (TEA, 2020). A TEA school improvement specialist (T. Longanecker, personal communication, May 2020) reported the original purpose of the TIL Action Coaching program was to build coaching capacity for principals when utilizing the T-TESS. To that end, TEA is optimistic that the TIL Action Coaching program will shift the way principals tend to think about teacher evaluations and development—a shift from top-

down and punitive to collaboration and growth (A. Prevost, personal communication, October 2020).

Leadership Coaching

The business sector has supported leadership development and coaching since 1990. In fact, executive coaching has become big business. Anthony (2017) described a 2010 publication from *Businessweek* highlighting the top 20 U.S. business firms and their budgetary commitments to develop managers and executives. Collectively, these companies spent over \$800 million toward leadership development targeted on leadership decision-making processes and overall growth in skills through executive coaching (Anthony, 2017). These trends in executive coaching should provide validation for districts to try leadership coaching as professional development for principals; however, only a few principals experience it. Instead, most principals are tasked with instructional coaching to improve teacher performance and raise student outcomes.

Since 2000, instructional coaching has become common practice by many school districts and their principals (D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; Reiss, 2015). In a meta-analytic research study, Kraft et al. (2018) concluded that personalized coaching significantly raised the quality of teachers' instructional practice and student achievement. Researchers have argued coaching reaps bountiful rewards for principals and school systems by bringing out the best in others and exhibiting an optimistic belief that all people have an unlimited capacity to achieve their goals (Reiss, 2015; Riddle et al., 2015).

Various coaching approaches exists; therefore, noting the stark differences between instructional coaching and leadership coaching is important. Principals are often

characterized as instructional leaders simply by the nature of their work—supporting teaching and learning (C. Day et al., 2016; Stark et al., 2017). An instructional coach may be described as a master teacher—one with years of content teaching experience.

Instructional coaching provides teacher supports in content, curriculum alignment, or classroom management by incorporating evidence-based instructional practices for improved student achievement (Knight, 2007). As the content expert, the instructional coach arrives sharing resources, conducting observations, modeling lessons, and providing feedback in order to improve teacher practice.

Leadership coaching, conversely, requires extensive training and experience on the part of the coach to propel leaders and school systems forward (Reiss, 2015).

Although a shared definition of leadership coaching does not exist, Lochmiller (2014) discovered a pattern among scholars' definitions: leadership coaching is a “learning relationship” (p. 63) between two people that clarifies and addresses professional goals for improved performance. Most educators agree that any meaningful learning relationship must be applied within context; thus, acquisition of learning and skills for principals is best supported within the environmental settings of school life and in learning how to address challenges as they arise (Lawrence, 2017).

Leadership coaching consists of a wide range of coaching methods and approaches (Campone, 2015; Whitmore, 2017). A review of empirical coaching literature uncovered five elemental themes: (a) relationship building; (b) questioning and problem-solving; (c) problem defining and goal setting; (d) listening, observation, and feedback; and (e) transformational processes (Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; Carey et al., 2011;

Passmore, 2007; Whitmore, 2017). As shown in Table 1.1, each element contributes to the improvement of the principal's daily practice.

Table 1.1

Leadership Coaching Applications for Principals

Core element	Coaching attribute	Applications for principals
Relationship building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual trust • Integrity • Honesty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidentiality • Vulnerability • Authentic • Nonevaluative
Assessment and questioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-discovery • Perception analysis • Problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative • Personality strengths/weaknesses • Situational awareness
Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action planning • Ownership • Choice • Self-responsibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulates goals • Solution development • Self-reflection
Listening, observation, feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal and nonverbal communication • Data-driven • Reflective practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active listening • Feedback • Adjust performance
Transformational processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional intelligence • Social awareness • Self-regulate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal skills • Emotional intelligence • Self-awareness skills

Note. Table was derived from a review of work by numerous researchers: Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; Passmore, 2007; Reiss, 2015; Whitmore, 2017; and Yarborough, 2018.

A mutual trusting relationship should be the highest priority for any type of coaching to be successful. Relationship building refers to the coach creating a mutual trust built on confidentiality, honesty, and empathy; consequently, the principal can be vulnerable and speak freely in a nonthreatening environment without fear of losing privacy (Christie et al., 2017; Lawrence, 2017; Whitmore, 2017). Assessment and

questioning occur when the coach guides the principal on what problems need to be solved while skillfully differentiating question types according to the objective (Campone, 2015; Cosner et al., 2017). As a result, the principal discovers their own strengths and weaknesses and recognizes performance gaps for the purpose of developing new habits and practices (Yarborough, 2018).

In goal setting, an effective coach works in partnership with the principal to create an effective action plan while promoting choice, ownership, and self-responsibility (Campone, 2015), strengthening the principal's ability to clearly articulate personal goals and solve authentic problems as they occur in context. An effective coach utilizes verbal and nonverbal listening skills, observes the principal in context, and provides authentic feedback (Cosner et al., 2017). In this way, the principal's self-awareness increases and adjustments are addressed (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Lee et al., 2019).

Transformational processes describe a coach helping the principal understand and process their thoughts, emotions, and actions (Anderson, 2013; Kimsey-House et al., 2018). In doing so, emotional intelligence becomes evident as the principal applies self-regulation techniques and successfully manages interpersonal skills in a variety of situations. When considered collectively, the core elements form an interwoven tapestry centered around strong relationships built on mutual trust and shared goals (Peláez Zuberbuhler et al., 2020).

Trends of Leadership Coaching Research

Trends in leadership coaching research reveal gaps regarding educational contexts and the effect transformational leadership coaching has on a principal's transformational leadership attributes. Although substantial research exists on executive coaching (i.e.,

organizational, business), studies on leadership coaching in educational settings continue to increase at a slow pace (Ellinger & Kim, 2014; A. Gilley et al., 2010). The limited but emerging body of literature highlights the need to explore the benefits of leadership coaching for new and veteran principals alike (Gray, 2018a; James-Ward, 2011). An even smaller amount of research exists on the barriers of leadership coaching implementation in educational environments (Cosner et al., 2017).

Research on how organizations support leadership development trails far behind other more prominent topics of study such as coaching effectiveness and key components of coaching (Lawrence, 2017). For example, Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018), in their systematic meta-analysis, reviewed 69 leadership coaching intervention studies and found only 3 studies focused on how organizational support impacts leadership coaching intervention. In addition, empirical literature linking leadership coaching and its transformational impact on principals continues to be small (Aguilar, 2017; Cox et al., 2018; Gray, 2018a). Perhaps the continued lack of leadership coaching literature in educational settings prevents school districts from fully embracing and implementing leadership coaching practices for their principals.

Statement of the Problem

The evolving role of the campus principal has gained attention in literature as school leaders move away from acting as managers to functioning as instructional leaders, literally influencing all areas of school life (Bauer et al., 2019). Current research on educational leadership had indicated that a thriving campus requires more than a good manager or an instructional expert; rather, it calls for a transformational leader (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Gray, 2018a; Kraft et al., 2018; Mendels, 2017). Bass

(1985) identified individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence as primary attributes leaders need to become transformational leaders. These four attributes are abbreviated as the 4 I's of transformational leadership.

Unfortunately, three main issues hinder principals from becoming transformational leaders. First, many principals enter the job unprepared to face the challenging demands transformational leadership requires—one that fosters professional growth of others, delegation of tasks, and collaboration—all of which require a high degree of trust and relationship building (Levin & Bradley, 2019). Second, traditional support and trainings lack authentic, contextual experiences necessary for principals to realize sustainable professional growth (Ray, 2017). Third, many campus principals encounter burnout and anxiety, producing negative outcomes for everyone—principal turnover, campus instability, and low student performance (Anderson, 2017; Duke, 2014; Espinoza & Cardichon, 2017).

Despite the many challenges placed on campus leaders, Texas school districts now have an opportunity to explore leadership coaching through the TIL Action Coaching program as a way to support and develop their campus principals. Since its roll out in 2017, Texas educators do not know if the TIL Action Coaching has successfully equipped principals with effective coaching skills necessary to impact teacher instruction and strengthen leadership capacity. Furthermore, there is limited research about the impact of leadership coaching on a principal's capacity to take on more transformational leadership behaviors for improved school outcomes.

Research Questions

1. What are the beliefs and perceptions of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers regarding the TIL Action Coaching program?
2. What do principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers perceive as critical TIL Action Coaching components for principal development related to the 4 I's of transformational leadership?
3. How might the TIL Action Coaching experiences and insights of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors) and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers align with the core elements of leadership coaching?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how the new TIL Action Coaching fostered transformational leadership attributes in campus principals for leadership development. The TIL Action Coaching program included but was not limited to the development of principals into effective instructional coaches for improved teacher classroom performance and leadership development. Transformational leadership attributes included the 4 I's of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory is one of the “central and most influential leadership models in the field of education administration” (Berkovich, 2016, p. 609). Transformational leadership focuses on developing the organizational capacity to tackle complex real-world problems by challenging the status quo with innovative solutions,

collaboration, and teamwork for continuous long-lasting improvement (Cox et al., 2018). Avolio et al. (1999) contended transformational leadership behaviors manifest through influence, inspiration and motivation, and interpersonal and intellectual competence; in other words, this theoretical framework targets the soft skills required by school leaders. Substantial evidence has demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors have tremendous influence over followers within organizations (Anderson, 2017; Lee et al., 2019). As a result, principals who internalize the key concepts found within the transformational leadership theory are more apt to lead their schools towards success.

Transformation leadership is founded upon adult learning theories, placing a high value on the process of learning that comes from problem-solving and critical thinking (Wells, 2014). Adults learn best, Cox (2015) explained, when they draw from their own experiences through observation, feedback, and reflection and when they are motivated by connecting their own experience in the learning process: “For the most part they are internally motivated . . . toward learning that will help them solve problems with an internal payoff” (p. 30). Developing transformational leaders, however, takes a deep level of commitment and perseverance because mindsets, perceptions, and belief systems can be slow to change.

The father of transformative learning, Mezirow (2003), claimed that all people have a worldview based on a set of “paradigmatic assumptions” (p. 59) made up of relationships, life experiences, culture, and education. Collectively, these assumptions make up a person’s worldview, belief systems, habits of mind, and a way of doing things. Some of these assumptions are conscious, whereas others are unconscious. For this reason, Mezirow (2003) argued, people struggle with change, especially to issues deeply

rooted in their worldview. These assumptions become so ingrained that it takes a “powerful human catalyst, a forceful argument, or disorienting dilemma to shake them” (Christie et al., 2017, p. 10). The adult learner must be willing to accept and trust the information to be ready for deep meaningful change to occur.

Meaningful change does not just happen. School districts must be systematically intentional when developing transformational leaders for meaningful, lasting change (Warrick, 2011). The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was created by Bass and Avolio (1990) to enable scholars of transformational leadership to systematically understand and measure essential transformational leadership attributes and characteristics. Now, 30 years later, Bass and Avolio’s (1990) Likert-scaled questionnaire continues to provide experimental researchers with a reliable tool to validate transformational leadership by identifying and categorizing key patterns within eight dimensions and four overarching indicators known as the 4 I’s of transformational leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Farnsworth et al., 2020). The 4 I’s are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence refers to inspiring followers to devote themselves and their own interest for the good of the organization (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Vashdi et al., 2019). Propositions, an explicit attention to what should be explored in a study (Yin, 2018), showed a direct link between increases in coaching skills demonstrated by the principal and increases in strong, relationships demonstrated with teachers. Inspirational motivation denotes the motivation of followers by providing challenging work for individuals and teams with optimistic encouragement and energy (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Through leadership coaching, the principal will motivate and engage his teachers by

setting small, measurable goals and celebrating teacher success. Intellectual stimulation engages followers to problem-solve in new and creative ways (Farnsworth et al., 2020; Warrick, 2011). As the principal applies effective coaching elements with teachers, a collaborative partnership develops, allowing teachers to see the gap in performance and creatively problem-solve for improved outcomes. The fourth I, individualized consideration, personalizes learning opportunities in a supportive climate to achieve professional goals and improve the organization or school (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Farnsworth et al., 2020). While coaching teachers, the principal will become more aware of individual needs of teachers by listening and supporting individual growth. As shown in Table 1.2, each of the 4 I's should translate into meaningful outcomes for the principal.

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

Methodology Rationale

A qualitative research design met the intent of this study due to the nature of how the overall data were collected and how procedures were recorded. Creswell and Creswell (2017) described the qualitative research design as “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals or groups ascribed to a social or human problem” (p. 4). In this qualitative study, a single case study design was used to understand how coaching leaders using the TIL Action Coaching program perceived the program’s ability to equip and improve principal transformational leadership attributes. A case study approach was chosen because coaching is a social phenomenon concerned with human experiences in a situated context.

Table 1.2

Transformational Leadership 4 I's and Propositions for Current Study

Transformational leadership attribute (4 I's)	Definitions	Propositions
Idealized Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspirational • Dedication to vision • Servant leadership • Honest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared vision • Mutual trust • Strong relationships • Role model
Inspirational motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging work • Teambuilding • Optimistic • Energetic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic encouragement • Challenging engagement • Collaborative goal setting • Celebrations of success
Intellectual stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative • Engaging • Encourages innovation • Challenges status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trusting partnership • Observation and feedback • Creative problem-solving • Critical thinking
Individualized consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized learning • Developmental attainment • Facilitative • Responsive to needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of needs • Active listening • Delegation of tasks • Coaching

I analyzed the experiences of several active stakeholders in the TIL Action Coaching program within the Region 12 Education Service Center (ESC) in Waco, Texas. Participant stakeholders included (a) five school principals representing different grade levels (elementary, middle, high school); (b) four superintendents (or principal supervisors), including three from small rural public and charter school districts (e.g., 500 student enrollment) and one superintendent from a midsize urban school district (e.g., 5,000 student enrollment); and (c) three Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers. The participants' experiences and insights helped obtain a holistic picture of whether and how

the TIL Action Coaching program benefits leaders and how transformational leadership attributes are manifested.

Notably, this study occurred during the 2020-2021 Coronavirus-2019 (COVID-19) global pandemic response. School administrators across the nation faced multiple challenges such as new virtual learning mandates, teacher shortages, and sizable learning gaps in student performance. These COVID-19 challenges have resulted in significant stress and anxiety for principals and superintendents, leaving little time and energy for outside distractions. The TIL Action Coaching program continued despite suffering momentum compared to previous years. I recognized these possible limitations on the study. Therefore, the methods chosen for the study were rigorous yet remained possible for most principals and superintendents to participate.

The triad of methods for this study included an open-ended background demographics questionnaire; a semistructured, adapted MLQ interview protocol; and a document review. Traditional studies have viewed MLQ feedback constructs through a quantitative lens; however, I used this measurement tool as a foundation for this qualitative study to inform my data collection by way of an adapted interview protocol. In doing so, I applied a descriptive deductive analysis to report my findings of principal transformational leadership improvement in the 4 I's as described by Bass and Avolio (1990), which are individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation.

Relevance and Significance of the Study

This research was designed to inform state and local educational leaders of the possible benefits and barriers of successful TIL Action Coaching implementation. The

study results may inform TEA on how the TIL Action Coaching addresses the goal of building principal capacity as effective coaches for teachers. Information gleaned from the study should provide guidance on future decisions for school district superintendents regarding leadership coaching as a means to develop and support principals. Lastly, principals need to know whether participating in TIL Action Coaching will improve transformational leadership attributes and, if so, which attribute is dominant. Ultimately the study could serve as the foundation for future educational leadership development programs.

No doubt, the demand for skillful, competent principals is urgent. Coaching is a worthy subject to study because it is now “emerging as one of the most significant approaches to the professional development” (Goff et al., 2014, p. 684). When implemented correctly, the collaboration between a coach and the leader epitomizes what schools should be—healthy partnerships built on shared trust and collective problem-solving.

Definitions of Terms

Coaching

The ideas of Cox et al. (2018), Reiss (2015), and Taylor et al. (2019) were combined to define a coach as a person who sees a gap in performance and deliberately seeks to provide support to another individual to improve achievement and clarify goals.

Leadership Coaching

This term refers to a personalized, one-on-one partnership between a school leader and a coach that focuses on strengthening leadership performance and behaviors for improvement (Cosner et al., 2017; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018).

Managerial Coaching

Managerial coaching is a specific application of coaching that enables managers or leaders to use coaching skills to create space for their followers to think more deeply across a wide range of resources for critical thinking and problem-solving (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Riddle et al., 2015).

Transformational Leadership

For the purpose of this study, transformational leadership is an approach by the leader's own personality, attributes, and ability to increase motivation and morale by targeting organizational and follower systems, beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions, thereby increasing their commitment, capacity, and engagement in achieving breakthrough results for the organization (Northouse, 2015, 2018; Vashdi et al., 2019).

Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The agency that oversees public education in Texas is the TEA. The TEA comprises the commissioner of education and agency staff. The TEA (2020) provides guidance and monitors activities and programs related to public education in Texas.

Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching

TIL Action Coaching is a training program based off the works of Paul Bambrick-Santoyo (2016, 2018), *Get Better Faster* and *Leverage Leadership 2.0*, to equip campus

and district leaders with the necessary skills to coach (TEA, 2020). In this way, principals are coached by a principal supervisor, and then the principal coaches the teachers.

Summary

Transformational leadership requires a leader to adopt a growth mindset—one that fosters strong relational trust through collaboration and engagement with others (Goff et al., 2014; James-Ward, 2011; Levin & Bradley, 2019). Often traditional professional development for leaders lacks genuine real-world experiences needed for long-term, sustainable professional growth (Cox et al., 2018; Riddle et al., 2015). Without careful attention, school leaders may experience unbearable stress, anxiety, and burnout, producing a potential tidal wave of negative effects for all stakeholders (Bauer et al., 2019; Reiss, 2015). The purpose of this qualitative single case study was to understand whether and how the new TIL Action Coaching fosters transformational leadership attributes in principals for leadership development. This study was designed to inform TEA, superintendents, and campus principals about how the TIL Action Coaching program improves transformational leadership development and what behaviors and beliefs are needed for successful outcomes. Transformational leadership theory has the power to facilitate positive change in principals and their followers by targeting four key attributes: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. When illuminating these attributes, principals ignite and shape positive cultures with optimistic energy towards organizational change (Northouse, 2015, 2018).

Chapter Two presents a review, synthesis, and analysis of the most recent and relevant literature on the theoretical framework as it pertains to leadership coaching and the

TIL Action Coaching program. For example, the research on coaching, principal readiness, and organizational supports for coaching was explored. The methodology used in this study, including the research design, setting, participants and recruitment, data collection, and data analysis, is explained in Chapter Three. Finally, attention was given to trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study.

There is no silver bullet. Coaching requires the right conditions to be highly effective in most educational settings. Leadership coaching is a researched professional development strategy that continues to produce positive outcomes for campus leaders. Once established, leadership coaching can turn a floundering new principal into a strong, confident, transformational leader.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

After reviewing the problem and purpose of the study, an overview of the TIL Action Coaching program is provided. Then, the review of research is presented according to three main strands. In Strand 1, a review of transformational leadership theory is presented, highlighting the differences between transactional leadership and transformational leadership. A historical evaluation related to Bass (1985) and the development of transformational leadership attributes coined by Bass and Avolio (1990) as the 4 I's is also detailed. Focusing on three leadership coaching methodologies most observed in educational settings, the essential elements of leadership coaching are then explored in Strand 2. I present the five predominant themes found in research to the actions and outcomes between the coach and the principal. Next, the TIL Action Coaching program components and the managerial coaching approach are presented in Strand 3. This strand includes the lack of widespread educational implementation as a possible reason for the gaps found in the literature and where deficiencies of measurable studies in the subject currently exist.

Overview of the Research and TIL Action Coaching

The demand for strong leaders in schools has never been greater (Lochmiller, 2014, 2018). Many principals enter the job filled with high hopes and an energetic tenacious drive to make a positive difference in education—to support teachers in their work and see all students reach their fullest potential (Shoho & Barnett, 2010). Yet the

current reality of leading a school is multilayered, encompassing complex issues and requiring more than passion, but also excellent managerial skills and a charismatic personality. Undoubtably, being a campus principal can be a lonely and sometimes thankless job. Overwhelming responsibility, pressures, and demands placed on campus principals steadily increase each year, often recognized in high-stakes state accountability pressures (C. Day et al., 2016; Duke, 2014), rising teacher retention issues (Levin & Bradley, 2019; Liu, 2020), and critical student social and emotional concerns (McCarley et al., 2016; Nedelcu, 2013). Certainly, today's campus principals need good measure of grit, perseverance, and, most of all, support.

The literature examined in this review predicted emerging psychological trends in school leadership research will increase as principals face more complex social and emotional issues (Stewart, 2006). School leadership research trends continue to move in the direction of the social sciences including cognitive and social psychological applications (Vashdi et al., 2019). In a meta-analytic literature review spanning 100 years, Lord et al. (2017) found the *Journal of Applied Psychology* contributed 17 seminal articles on leadership, which demonstrated steady research trends have leaned heavily on leadership behaviors and the predictive effects of transformational leadership on followers. This upward research swing within the social sciences began not long after the 1978 publication of *Leadership* by Burns. While leadership methodologies research began with Burns (1978), the mid-1980s marked a new phase of research, exploring theoretical constructs to leadership transformational abilities. The future of transformational leadership studies, noted by Lord et al., suggests “developments in

cognitive psychology” and “shared or collective leadership” (p. 445) demonstrate new trends and predictive implications for future leadership development.

Tackling complex social and emotional issues requires principals to be equipped with transformational skills and behaviors recognized as transformational leadership 4 I’s: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Although the 4 I’s are attainable, they are challenging to carry out. Here lies the problem. School districts desire and even require principals to use transformation leadership skills, yet seldom do districts invest the time, effort, and funds to bolster or development these skills (Cetin & Kinik, 2015; Vashdi et al., 2019). Researchers have shown that rather than traditional sit-and-get workshops and conferences, principals need authentic and embedded professional development opportunities. Such professional development includes practice-based approaches such as leadership coaching to increase transformational skills and behaviors in order to tackle complex issues; to meet high-stakes accountability; and to maintain a healthy, positive school culture (Aguilar, 2017; Peláez Zuberbuhler et al., 2020; Ray, 2017).

Since the federal government launched the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, TEA has reformed the state school accountability system with an A–F school ratings system. Failing schools over time risk being shut down or taken over. To combat the negative pushback on heavy-handed accountability, TEA created two new systems in support of Texas leaders and teachers called the Teacher Evaluation System of Supports (T-TESS) and TIL Action Coaching. In 2016, TEA replaced the Professional Development Appraisal System for teachers with a new growth-model appraisal system called the T-TESS. Principals welcomed the T-TESS growth model; however, many

struggled to understand how to implement its main component—coaching. In 2017, TEA responded with a program called TIL Action Coaching. Still in the infancy stage, there is much to be discovered regarding TIL Action Coaching effectiveness on principal development

Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how the new TIL Action Coaching fosters transformational leadership attributes in campus principals for leadership development. The TIL Action Coaching program includes but is not limited to the development of principals into effective instructional coaches for improved teacher classroom performance and leadership development. Transformational leadership attributes include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990). This literature review and study were designed to identify the TIL Action Coaching components critical for principal leadership development according to the perspective of the principal, superintendent, and trainer. Moreover, this study was designed to reveal how principals who participate in TIL Action Coaching grow in their transformational leadership understandings and behaviors, regardless of educational context.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Conceptual framing begins by drawing upon the theories of transformational leadership and transformative learning as they relate to leadership development through coaching. Transformational leadership, sometimes referred as charismatic leadership, has been characterized as the ability of a leader to facilitate positive change in individuals, teams, and organization by being insightful, persistent, and sensitive to the needs of their followers (Avolio et al., 1991; Bass & Avolio, 1990, 1993; McCarley et al., 2016;

Warrick, 2011). Northouse (2001) described transformational leadership as “the ability to get people to want to change, improve, and be led” (p. 581). No doubt, the transformational leadership theoretical framework dominates research circles and continues to be one of the most actively researched leadership paradigms, endorsing its influence and merits in a variety of contextual settings (Anderson, 2013; Anthony, 2017; Bass & Avolio, 1990, 1993; D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; McCarley et al., 2016; Siangchokyoo et al., 2019; Stewart, 2006; Warrick, 2011). The number of books on transformational leadership observed on most bookstore and library shelves serves to validate public acceptance of its practical applications for leaders.

Decades of empirical research on transformational leadership theory have provided organizational leaders confidence in its leadership application. Yet, Siangchokyoo et al. (2019) insisted transformational leadership theory research should apply rigorous strategies and systems when studying how leadership behaviors foster transformation in organizations and followers. Siangchokyoo et al. conducted a comprehensive meta-analytic literature review of empirical studies from the past century of transformational leadership research. The research team wanted to know how many of the previous 25 years of transformational leadership research studies measured follower psychological transformation as opposed to studies that linked transformational leadership to individual and organizational outcomes.

Siangchokyoo et al. (2019) noticed “hundreds of primary studies and dozens of meta-analyses have consistently produced moderate-to-strong relationships between transformational leadership and outcomes such as performance, engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover” (p. 2). Yet, few researchers measured follower transformation.

Of the 320 primary studies, only 135 were identified as showing the transformational leader's impact on follower transformation, most of these studies occurring in the last decade (Siangchokyoo et al., 2019). Once the 320 vetted articles were categorized and analyzed, Siangchokyoo et al. claimed transformational leadership theory had made a "radical leap from nascent theory to universally accepted paradigm" (p. 13) because most of the early research had been on the "predictive power" (p. 14) of the theory rather than its descriptive power.

The number of empirical research studies linking transformational leadership theory and leadership outcomes continues to be top heavy compared to the scant amount of research linking transformational leadership and follower impact (Lord et al., 2017; Siangchokyoo et al., 2019). Despite the high paradigm status, since 2012 transformational leadership research has slowly ebbed downward as newer, more trendy frameworks such as authentic leadership and distributed leadership take over the empirical literature scene (Berkovich, 2016; D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; Lord et al., 2017; Siangchokyoo et al., 2019).

In comparison to Siangchokyoo et al. (2019), Lord et al. (2017) revealed the rise and fall of transformational leadership theory development was caused by the limited nature of the evidence regarding its impact on follower transformation and the limited application of theoretical test suppositions. The examination of literature for the current study found a few outlier studies calling on practitioners to abandon the concept of transformational leadership theory, claiming it lacks clearly defined construct boundaries and characteristic dimensions; however, an overwhelming consensus of scholarship

disagrees with that outlier (Berkovich, 2016; Lord et al., 2017; Siangchokyoo et al., 2019).

Together, Siangchokyoo et al. (2019) and Lord et al. (2017) made a compelling point—if transformational leadership theory is to remain relevant, then future empirical studies must include “specification and operationalization of leader behaviors that elicit follower transformation and find systematic ways in which followers transform” (Siangchokyoo et al., 2019, p. 14). This qualitative study was designed to bridge the gap in literature on follower transformation by highlighting the operational ways in which the follower (in this case, the school principal) develops transformational leadership attributes after engagement in the TIL Action Coaching program.

Transformational leadership theory in educational settings remains relevant and strong despite its somewhat short historical presence of 25 years (Goff et al., 2014). Berkovich (2016) expanded on previous scholarship by considering the rise in popularity of transformational leadership theory within educational leaders. Between 1990 and 2014, transformational leadership scholarship in educational published documents showed a significant increase of 30%–45% when “school leadership” and “transformational leadership” were searched simultaneously. Today, transformational leadership is considered ideal school leadership and has become standard curriculum in most principal training programs (Berkovich, 2016).

Although empirical research on transformational leadership theory has a long historical presence, this review found more, not less, scholarship is required. As some scholars seek to persuade researchers to move away from transformational leadership theory, their arguments pale in comparison to the decades of empirical studies confirming

its validity. The gap in literature demonstrates a need to know how a focus on transformational leadership theory can improve leadership and their followers in organizations and how its constructs inform leadership development through the act of coaching.

Transformational Versus Transactional Leadership

Recognizing the difference between transformational leadership and transactional leadership is important. Burns (1978) made a stark distinction between transactional and transformational leaders (McCarley et al., 2016; Stewart, 2006, Warrick, 2011). Burns defined transactional leadership as “a relationship based on the exchange of valued items . . . political, economics, or emotional” (p. 263), whereas transformational leadership involves “motivation, morality, and ethical aspirations” (p. 263) of both the leader and follower. Bass and Avolio (1990) characterized transactional leaders as having a “contingent reward” (p. 112) style leadership; that is, transactional leaders work within the existing culture rather than working to foster it. These leaders set the work of followers, communicate explicitly how it will be done, and offer rewards—praise, recognition, promotions, performance evaluations—for a job well done (Bass & Avolio, 1990; Bass et al., 2003).

Although transactional leadership has the potential to propel organizations towards satisfactory performance, it fails to urge followers to sacrifice their own interests for the interest of the organization or leverage follower potential (Avolio et al., 1991; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Bass et al., 2003; D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012). It would be unfair, however, to say transactional style leadership has no place in transforming an organization. On the contrary, Bass (1985) contended both transactional and

transformational leadership styles were necessary for organizations to thrive. Bass et al. (2003) highlighted empirical evidence demonstrating that both transformational and transactional leadership styles positively predicted performance outcomes: “Transactional leadership provided the base that transformational leadership would augment in predicting performance” (p. 215). Bass et al. noted when transactional leadership utilizes a “higher order form of contingent reward” (p. 215)—namely, intrinsic motivators and recognition—transformational leadership traits begin to take over, thus bridging the gap between the two. Distinctions first proposed by Burns (1978) may be fading as new research emerges and the two leadership styles meld for optimal organizational outcomes.

Bass (1985) expanded on Burns’s (1978) theory by creating a way to measure and identify key attributes exhibited by transformational leaders. Bass (1985) laid the foundational research for what is widely accepted today as transformational leadership behaviors (Avolio et al., 1999; Farnsworth et al., 2020; Hamad, 2015; Warrick, 2011). Bass and Avolio (1990) developed the MLQ to help business executives and leaders identify key attributes of transformational leadership. Once analyzed and identified, Avolio et al. (1999) categorized the behaviors into four main components also known as the 4 I’s (Bass et al., 2003; Farnsworth et al., 2020; Hamad, 2015). These four components are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Avolio et al., 1991; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Warrick, 2011). Avolio et al. ’s (1999) work played a significant role in helping school leaders know and understand what successful transformational leadership looks like in the 21st century workplace.

The 4 I's of Transformational Leadership

Since Avolio et al. (1999), scholars have heavily relied on the 4 I's to understand what transformational leadership really looks like in the workplace and how it is perceived when effectively applied and lived out (Bass et al., 2003; Hamad, 2015; Vashdi et al., 2019). These four indicators help scholars identify the extent to which leaders exhibit transformational leadership qualities through the function of these four leadership behaviors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence. Often described as charisma, idealized influence is the emotional glue of leadership, inspiring followers to wholeheartedly devote themselves and their own interest for the good of the organization (Balyer, 2012; D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012). Leaders with idealize influence exhibit high morals, ethics, and integrity and act as role model for the followers (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993). Followers view leaders with idealized influence as highly trusted, admired, and respected. In a recent quantitative survey study, Vashdi et al. (2019) examined the link between idealized influence and organizational learning by means of the MLQ to assess how transformational leaders' behaviors such as idealized influence improved organizational learning processes. Vashdi et al. validated the Lord et al. (2017) findings on idealized influence by concluding when leaders provide vision and charisma, followers are more likely to increase creativity, retention and transference of knowledge.

Inspirational motivation. One of the most noticeable behavior traits, inspirational leadership seeks to add meaning and purpose towards a clear and shared vision for goal attainment to keep followers motivated (Avolio et al., 1991; Bass, 1985; Warrick, 2011).

Through meaning and purpose, the leader's behaviors motivate followers by providing challenging work for individuals and teams with optimistic encouragement and energy (Bass & Avolio, 1993). In a sense, leaders with inspirational motivation utilize an emotional appeal with their followers through role-modeling, affirmation, and encouragement to reach ambitious goals, making followers "feel valued, self-confident, and assured that their leader can overcome obstacles and help the group meet new challenges and opportunities" (Avolio et al., 1991, p. 14). More than giving an occasional "pep" talk, leaders who engage in walking the walk of hard work set an example that others desire to follow.

Intellectual stimulation. Leaders exhibiting intellectual stimulation challenge the status quo and ignite the followers' work with innovative and creative approaches to problem-solving (Bass, 1985). D. V. Day and Antonakis (2012) depicted intellectual stimulation as the most "rational" and "nonemotional" (p. 266) component of transformational leadership. It is here leaders engage their followers to problem-solve in new and creative ways. The leader encourages risk taking and promotes new ideas and critical thinking to improve their organization (D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; Farnsworth et al., 2020; Warrick, 2011). As a result, followers exhibit greater motivation to achieve personal and organizational goals (Antonakis, 2012).

For example, McCarley et al. (2016) conducted a study to examine the relationship between teacher perceptions on school climate and transformational leadership behaviors. In a sample of 399 Texas teachers representing five large urban high schools, McCarley et al. reported significant effect size variances between transformational behaviors and school climate, as idealized influence contributed 64%

towards positive school climate, followed by intellectual stimulation and individual consideration with 55.2% and 54.7%, respectively. Given that, school districts should be interested in coaching principals to collaborate with teachers in the problem-solving process, knowing it contributes to the overall morale and well-being of the school.

Individualized consideration. Transformational leaders with individual consideration can be described as leaders who listen to the needs of their followers and pay attention to the individual growth needs by acting as a coach rather than a boss (Anthony, 2017; Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 2004). Followers receive personalized learning opportunities in a supportive climate to achieve professional goals and improve the organization or school (Bass & Avolio, 1990, 1994; Farnsworth et al., 2020). To understand why leaders choose to exhibit individualized consideration, Anthony (2017) conducted a quantitative examination on how leadership coaching impacts individualized consideration. Anthony discovered leaders with experience in practical leadership coaching engage more in individualized consideration than leaders without leadership coaching. When a transformational leader chooses to engage with individuals for developmental attainment, individual motivation increases and spills over into positive organizational morale (McCarley et al., 2016; Stewart, 2006; Vashdi et al., 2019).

Discussion

The literature reviewed in this strand of the study affirmed transformational leadership theory as being one of the most researched theoretical frameworks in the last century (Anderson, 2013; Anthony, 2017; Bass & Avolio, 1990; D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; McCarley et al., 2016; Siangchokyoo et al., 2019; Stewart, 2006; Warrick, 2011). Defining transformational leadership theory is difficult due to the complex nature of the

phenomenon. However, most scholars in this review agreed transformational leadership theory is the ability of a leader to enable positive change in their followers, which impacts the entire organization (Avolio et al., 1999; Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass & Avolio, 1990; McCarley et al., 2016; Northouse, 2001; Warrick, 2011). Through this examination, I recognized a prevailing presence of the 4 I's of transformational leadership behaviors (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) and the potential influence these 4 I behaviors have on followers, schools, and work life (Avolio et al., 1991; Balyer, 2012; Berkovich, 2016; Farnsworth et al., 2020; Schmitt et al., 2016).

In addition to the 4 I's, this scholarship review discovered scholars primarily apply quantitative methods to link leadership performance and behavior transformation and Bass's (1985) 4 I's. Furthermore, a heavy reliance on Bass and Avolio's (1990) MLQ to measure and quantify the results was evident from the review (Cetin & Kinik, 2015; Lord et al., 2017; Siangchokyoo et al., 2019; Vashdi et al., 2019). With this singular focus on determining correlation between leadership performance and behavior transformation, the individual nuances and differing perspectives addressed through qualitative research methods connected with the MLQ have not been explored. Hence, I found a sizable gap exists in exploring transformational leadership theory through the qualitative case study lens. In response, this study was designed to fill the research void by using a qualitative single case study design with an interview protocol adapted from the MLQ to explore how the 4 I's manifest themselves in principals through leadership coaching in regards to the TIL Action Coaching program.

Finally, it was clear in the review that transformational leadership theory research historically has leaned toward understanding the acquisition of the 4 I's and how such acquisition contributes to a leader's improved outcomes or performance. Due to this hyperfocus on leader acquisition and improved performance, follower transformation and organizational changes related to this transformation have not been addressed (Balyer, 2012; Geijsel et al., 2003; Leithwood & Slegers, 2006). Unique to this study, I took the perspective of the principal as both follower and leader in regard to leadership coaching through the TIL Action Coaching program because of how the program is presented. The rationale behind this decision comes from the understanding of TIL training framework, which relies on the superintendent or principal supervisor to coach the principal (principal viewed as the follower), who then coaches the teachers. To see the principal as the follower should add to the existing literature in three ways: (a) by using a qualitative single case study in which the research explored the complexities of the phenomenon of transformational leadership; (b) by adapting the MLQ, typically used as a quantitative tool, as a qualitative adapted interview protocol; and (c) by understanding how the experiences of the principals related to the TIL Action Coaching program align to the core elements of academic leadership coaching.

Leadership Coaching

Despite over 25 years of scholarship on the topic, researchers still struggle to find a consensus on exactly what coaching is (Cox et al., 2018; Reiss, 2015; Riddle et al., 2015; Wahl et al., 2013). Much of the debate over leadership coaching definitions has revolved around the nature of personalization within the phenomenon of coaching itself. There is, however, a generally accepted definition of coaching as a structured discovery

process aimed to support sustainable behavioral change with a focus on learning and development (Campone, 2015; C. Day et al., 2016; Gray, 2018b; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). Given this accepted definition, leadership coaching is the act of coaching designed for leaders with the aim of improving and developing leadership capacity (Carey et al., 2011; Cosner et al., 2017). To better understand leadership coaching, Aguilar (2013) and Bloom (2005) described what coaching is not; it is neither a program to fix people nor is it mentoring, therapy, or consulting. Taken together, coaching helps others be better at what they do and how they do things. It makes sense that places of learning would be ideal settings for coaching to thrive because they share the same mission—helping people learn and grow through mutual trusting relationships and reflective conversations about learning (Cox et al., 2018).

Leadership coaching increases self-confidence and improves overall performance and practices (Cosner et al., 2017). Numerous quantitative empirical studies suggested coaching interventions can have significant positive effects on performance, skills, well-being, coping, goal attainment, and attitudes to work (Carey et al., 2011; David & Cobeau, 2016; Lochmiller, 2014; Ray, 2017; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Yarborough, 2018). Likewise, Aguilar (2013) and Bloom (2005) established a link between coaching and improved leadership performance and follower commitment. Carey et al. (2011) noted leadership coaching implementation challenges may include skepticism at the individual level, a failure to align coaching outcomes with organizational goals, an unwillingness to be coached, and a mismatch of coach to coachee. Despite these obstacles, leadership coaching research continues to slowly gain momentum, serving to validate the developmental tool as a way to support leaders (Carey et al., 2011;

Lochmiller, 2014; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). The nature of leadership coaching is personal; however, numerous leadership coaching methodologies exist and may vary according to intent and purpose.

Leadership Coaching Methodologies

Coaching can be a messy process of inquiry and personal discovery. That said, methodologies offer shape and structure to the highly subjective process. Current methodological opportunities abound for leadership coaches, all providing specific development of leadership skills and behaviors. Although there is broad agreement that methodologies provide coaches with a framework by which to navigate the process, views differ regarding which coaching methodology makes the most contributions towards successful leadership outcomes and which techniques most influence successful coaching interventions for leaders (Aguilar, 2013; Bloom, 2005; Campbell, 2018; Cox et al., 2018; MacKie, 2016). This literature review discovered three fundamental methods of leadership coaching: instructional coaching, facilitative coaching, and transformation coaching (Aguilar, 2013; Bloom, 2005; Campbell, 2018; Cox et al., 2018).

Instructional coaching. Instructional coaching is the most common, influential coaching approach in schools today (Aguilar, 2013; Gray, 2018a; Knight, 2007). Bloom (2005) described instructional coaching as the coach sharing from their own lived experiences, expertise, and researched best practices by using coaching strategies. Literature examined in this review discovered leadership job performance improves when focused on teaching and learning because a primary factor of instructional coaching involves the expansion of instructional knowledge and skills required of principals (Goff et al., 2014; Gray, 2018a).

Two studies from Knight (2007) and Kraft et al. (2018) have yielded empirical evidence on the merits of instructional coaching. Knight performed a comparative, qualitative study exploring improved teaching quality and implementation of instruction when teachers were provided instructional coaching as opposed to workshop trainings. Fifty-one semistructured interviews conducted over 12 weeks reported 15 out of 22 coached teachers continued implementation of quality instruction, compared to only 3 out of 22 workshop teachers (Knight, 2007). Kraft et al. conducted a systematic meta-analytic review of 60 empirical articles based on causal designed research between 2006 and 2017 to see if instructional coaching improved classroom practices and student outcomes. Kraft et al.'s findings confirmed Knight's conclusive evidence on the potential coaching has as a developmental tool and indicated a substantial correlation between instructional coaching interventions and student achievement. The works by Knight and Kraft et al. add to the already large body of research on improved teacher performance gaps and instructional coaching. Instructional coaching supports this type of situational learning; learning within the school setting affords principals the opportunity to practice new skills and behaviors (Gray, 2018a; James-Ward, 2013; Lochmiller, 2014).

Facilitative coaching. Facilitative coaching draws from a developmental learning conceptual framework. As a means of support, facilitative style coaching works to help leaders find new ways of thinking and explore beliefs and values. When utilizing a facilitative method, the coach does not presume to have all expertise; rather, the coach works to shape the leader's skill, knowledge, and beliefs to construct new skills, knowledge, and beliefs that will lead toward future actions (Aguilar, 2013). An effective

facilitative coach, as MacKie (2016) and Bloom (2005) confirmed, accomplishes this through actions such as reflection, listening, observation, feedback, and self-awareness.

Facilitative coaching is the most effective way to identify leadership challenges and navigate relationships with teachers, parents, district administration, and the general public (Bloom, 2005; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014; Lochmiller, 2014). For example, a coach may prompt the principal with questions such as “Why is that an important issue for you?” “How does that relate to the challenges you are facing?” or “What responsibility do you have for that?” Evidence from this review found multiple coaching approaches underneath the facilitative coaching umbrella; however, the cognitive behavioral approach is most prominent and well suited for leadership development (Aguilar, 2013; Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; Cox et al., 2018; David & Cobeanu, 2016).

Cognitive behavioral coaching is a “non-judgmental process of intervention” (Aguilar, 2013, p. 57) that integrates cognitive, behavioral, and problem-solving strategies. Some of the main goals of cognitive behavioral coaching are to facilitate leaders in achieving realistic goals, enhance self-awareness of underlying emotional barriers, develop effective behavioral skills, build self-confidence, and promote positive self-talk (David & Cobeanu, 2016). To facilitate these goals, a cognitive behavioral coach collaborates with the leader to explore the problem or issue, challenge current perspectives, and consider new ones. Empirical evidence has validated that facilitative coaching attributes make a significant impact on individuals and organizations (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; David & Cobeanu, 2016; Ratiu et al., 2016). Without question, campus principals work in highly stressful situations nearly daily. Utilizing a

facilitative method with a cognitive behavioral coaching approach may prevent principals from leaving the position when faced with stress, anxiety, and burnout.

Transformational coaching. Linked to neuroscience and social sciences, transformational coaching is the practice of emotional intelligence and demands the highest attributes of a leader—integrity, balance, empathy, and a growth mindset (Crane, 2017; Peltier, 2011; Whitmore, 2017). Transformational coaching challenges one’s belief systems and illustrates how beliefs manifest into actions (Cox et al., 2018; N. Smith & Hawkins, 2018; Whitmore, 2017). Transformational coaching offers leaders an opportunity to shift the “meaning scheme or action logic” (N. Smith & Hawkins, 2018, p. 232); that is, transformational coaching shifts mindsets. The transformational coaching literature (e.g., Cox et al., 2018; N. Smith & Hawkins, 2018) aligned with Mezirow’s (1998) transformational learning theory in which a schematic meaning is made up of a person’s specific viewpoints, values, and assumptions, thus generating a person’s emotional responses to life events. Empirical studies on change theory attributed transformational coaching as a method for triple-loop learning, in which radical changes in thinking yield radical shifts in outcomes (Bloom, 2005; Cox et al., 2018; N. Smith & Hawkins, 2018). Bloom (2005) agreed, “The ultimate goal of the coaching process is triple-loop learning and personal transformation” (p. 89). Nowhere does the common phrase “people are our greatest resource” ring truer than in 21st century schools. Transformational coaching can be a powerful developmental tool as it targets relationships, dialogue, performance, and humility and unconditionally demonstrates a positive regard for others and their contributions (Crane, 2017).

Core Elements of Leadership Coaching

Coaching elements describe the practical applications of coaching, serving as the tenets of what researchers have discovered about good coaching (Ting & Scisco, 2012). After careful examination of past and current research studies, patterns and trends emerged across a multitude of coaching approaches, which resulted in organizing emerging patterns and trends into five overarching categories. The five most common elements identified by the research in this literature review were (a) relationship building; (b) questioning and problem-solving; (c) problem defining and goal setting; (d) listening, observation, and feedback; and (e) transformational processes (Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; Carey et al., 2011; Passmore, 2007; Whitmore, 2017).

As seen in Figure 2.1, the overall trend in this research found the core elements are linked together, with relationship building playing a significant role in the success of the other elements. From this perspective, the elements should not be viewed as individual silos; rather, they should be viewed as a tapestry of interdependent links in which one missing link impacts another. With this interdependence of core elements in mind, previous research has determined that the central factor to successful leadership coaching hinges on relationship building. Ultimately, without a trusting relationship, leadership development in all other elements will not flourish.

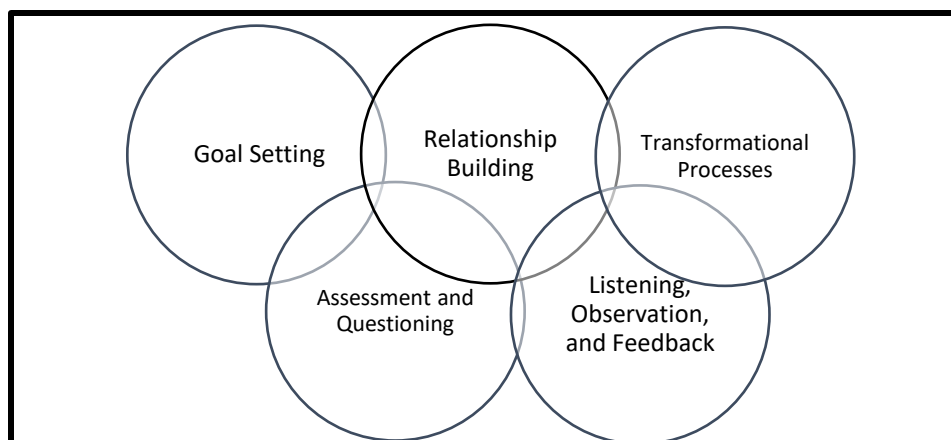


Figure 2.1. *Core Coaching Elements Found in Literature Review*

Relationship building. It is foundational that the coach and the leader establish a healthy relationship based on mutual trust (Aguilar, 2013; Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; James-Ward, 2011; Ray, 2017; Reiss, 2015; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). So much does the literature affirm this belief that Reiss (2015) personified the relationship between the coach and coachee as the third person in the room, a “designed alliance” (p. 96). Researchers have contended that creating a mutually trusting relationship should be the highest priority for every leadership coach (Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014; Yarborough, 2018). Bloom (2005) described trust as an “assessment one individual makes about another, . . . and like all assessments, its validity resides in the individual making the judgment” (p. 27). These judgments, then, can make or break trusting relationship at all levels.

Establishing trust for leadership coaches is especially important. Leaders work in a fishbowl, particularly school principals, who undergo public scrutiny from a diverse set of stakeholders (Reiss, 2015). That being said, school principals are vulnerable on many fronts. As leadership coaches seek to maintain trust, they must include space for safety, confidentiality, honesty, and empathy (Aguilar, 2013; Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015;

Carey et al., 2011; Passmore, 2007; Reiss, 2015; Whitmore, 2017). Relatedly, Aguilar (2013) recognized vulnerability as a natural part of coaching because learning, reflecting, and taking risks can be frightening, causing apprehension, anxiety, and sometimes distrust of the other person's motives. Ladegard and Gjerde (2014) asserted that trust occurs when the parties acknowledge vulnerability and view the intentions of others with a positive mindset. Indeed, successful leadership coaching depends on relational trust.

Assessment and questioning. One benefit for coaches who are skilled in inquiry strategies is the ability to monitor the thinking and productivity of the coachee. When this occurs, the coach is able to guide the focus on what problems need to be solved. Leadership coaching scholars encourage differentiating question types according to the purpose or gained benefit by separating clarifying questions and probing questions (Aguilar, 2013; Campone, 2015). Joo et al. (2012) and Yarborough (2018) described the process of questioning as the catalyst to explore meaning, belief systems, and perspectives. Still others equate questioning techniques as a way to reframe perspectives and facilitate dialogue for discovery. Despite the various inquiry types, questioning and assessment techniques most often have been viewed together in literature studies regardless of the framework used for leadership coaching because to find areas of growth requires some type of perception assessment and analysis (Milner et al., 2018; Peláez Zuberbuhler et al., 2020). Perception assessment should be continuous, cyclical, and led primarily by the principal's contextual situation, strengths, weaknesses, and needs (Aguilar, 2013; Gray, 2018a; Joo et al., 2012).

Perhaps one of the most popular assessments found in leadership or executive settings is the MLQ (MacKie, 2016; Peltier, 2011). The MLQ has five forms composed

of 36, 45, 50, or 90 items to measure leadership style behaviors. The standard MLQ—also known as the MLQ 5X short—consists of eight leadership dimensions, with each dimension containing four items and 45 questions overall (MacKie, 2016; Shatzer et al., 2014). The MLQ uses a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*frequently, if not always*). The MLQ 5X assessment measures a person’s strengths and weaknesses in transformational leadership behaviors (Shatzer et al., 2014). One of the main benefits of the assessment has been the impact on multiple empirical research studies (Nedelcu, 2013). Unlike others, the MLQ 5X spans the “whole spectrum of leadership” (MacKie, 2016, p. 70) and includes the 4 I’s as well as other dimensions, such as transactional, passive avoidant, and laissez-faire style leadership. This study used the most recent MLQ 5X, adapted as a qualitative interview protocol to explore the complexities of leadership coaching and its impact on principals in various contextual settings.

Assessment and inquiry promote self-discovery for leaders, helping them to face the demands of reality with some measure of victory. Yarborough (2018) placed assessment and questioning at the heart of leadership coaching because leaders “grow most effectively when these elements are present” (p. 54). As leadership coaches apply assessment and questioning techniques, gaps close between the leader’s “ideal selves and their current selves” (Yarborough, 2018, p. 54). This gap analysis serves as a powerful motivation tool as the leader and coach identify where the leader is and where the leader desires to be (David & Cobeau, 2016; James-Ward, 2011; Yarborough, 2018). As campus principals contextualize their own gaps in performance and behavior with a coach, the possibilities for transformation increase.

Goal setting. The ability to challenge leaders through the process of goal-setting lies at the center of coaching. In a comprehensive meta-analytic literature review, Bozer and Jones (2018) discovered quantitative research dominated most empirical studies, linking coachee goal orientation to understanding coaching outcomes as an “antecedent of coaching effectiveness” (p. 351). Setting goals involves initiating action plans, providing choice, and taking ownership and self-responsibility in order to facilitate learning (Campone, 2015; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014; Reiss, 2015). Whether long or short term, leadership goals are ideally measurable, specific, and most often reflect the type of coaching approach utilized. For example, transformational leadership goals may include analyzing mental constructs impeding performance. The coach may facilitate goals for increased self-awareness or a growth mindset, thus liberating greater opportunities for change (Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; Carey et al., 2011; Joo et al., 2012; Lochmiller, 2014, 2018).

Articulation of goals has the potential to set in motion a “forward-looking” experience that is “solution-focused rather than . . . problem-focused” (Campone, 2015, p. 62). Scholars have agreed that a direct correlation between solution articulation and the use of goals and self-regulation is key to raising skill and performance levels for leaders, noting skill and performance coaching requires specific abilities to achieve individual and organizational goals (Cavanagh & Grant, 2018; Cox et al., 2018; Grant, 2011). When goals of the organization differ from individual needs, the clarification of goals becomes paramount (Cox et al., 2018). Assisting campus principals with goal setting should be top priority for any coaching approach because distractions for leaders are many and inevitable.

Listening, observation, and feedback. If mutual trust and relationship building are at the heart of coaching, then listening, observation, and feedback are the arteries. No one wants to be partnered with a coach who fails to listen. MacKie (2016) described listening, observation, and feedback as “micro-skills” for any type of coaching (p. 144). Yet listening is not enough to see measurable growth. Rather, when joined with observing and giving feedback, the three become a powerhouse to make change happen quickly. Scholars defined listening as giving attention to context and to nonverbal data (Bloom, 2005; Bommelje, 2015; Campone, 2015). Listening and observing verbal and nonverbal communication from leaders provide coaches real-time data to know what type of feedback to give. Likewise, observations allow coaches to make meaningful connections between what areas need attention and what feedback might be appropriate (Cosner et al., 2017).

Researchers have defined feedback as information that provides an additional perspective about a situation, reinforcing and strengthening current practice (Goff et al., 2014; Gray, 2018a, 2018b; James-Ward, 2011; Kouzes & Posner, 2020). Feedback can be one of the most helpful ways for a principal to apply relational leadership (Leithwood & Azah, 2016; Vashdi et al., 2019). Honest and timely feedback based on listening and observing opens opportunities for leaders to build on their strengths and address weaknesses (Bloom, 2005; Cox et al., 2018; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). Goff et al. (2014) used a multiyear study to investigate the impact of feedback and coaching interventions on leaders. Their findings added to the research on feedback: “Providing meaningful feedback through principal assessment and helping principals to adequately interpret feedback through coaching are viable tools to improve leadership practice” (Goff et al.,

2014, p. 698). In the contextual setting of coaching, feedback provides the leader an alternative viewpoint or perspective and becomes an essential ingredient for transformation—one that can raise self-awareness for the leader and significantly impact those around the leader.

Transformational processes. Adult learning theory posits that all individuals have the potential to problem-solve (Ellinger & Kim, 2014; Lawrence, 2017; Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016). Highly effective coaches are able to unlock an individual’s potential, thus setting in motion the ability to change and reach goals. To be transformational, leadership coaching must include transformational processes that help the leader understand their thoughts, emotions, and actions (Carey et al., 2011; Joo et al., 2012). Mihiotis and Argirou (2016) contended coaches help leaders broaden limited self-perceptions and see what beliefs and behaviors may need to be removed or rearranged to fill gaps. To be effective, this transformational process must be entirely led by the coachee rather than the coach (Gray, 2018a; Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016; Passmore, 2007; Ray, 2017). In this way, mutual trust is maintained, and leader commitment and motivation levels remain high.

To meet the challenges of campus life, school leaders need the capacity to self-regulate and self-manage (Kram & Ting, 2006). These self-management capabilities are what Daniel Goleman (1995) first coined as emotional competencies or emotional intelligence (Campone, 2015; Carey et al., 2011; Joo et al., 2012; Kram & Ting, 2006; Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). Boyatzis et al. (2000) defined emotional competency as a person who demonstrates “self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills at appropriate times and ways in sufficient frequency

to be effective in the situation” (p. 343). In essence, emotional competency includes the soft skills of leadership.

Goleman’s (1995) developmental work on emotional competency continues to remain strong in the lifeworld of leadership coaching circles. Peltier (2011) confirmed emotional competency unlocks doors and provides a powerful framework and vehicle for leadership development. Leadership coaches who devote time to study and incorporate emotional competency into coaching provide a valuable service to the leaders they coach. Researchers have demonstrated leaders often fail due to the lack of emotional intelligence rather than lack of skill at performance tasks (Cox et al., 2018; Kram & Ting, 2006; Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016; Passmore, 2007; Whitmore, 2017). The most mentioned transformational elements of emotional competency in literature include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills (Boyatzis et al., 2000; Kram & Ting, 2006; MacKie, 2016; Peltier, 2011). As leadership coaches invest time developing emotional competency skills, principals are more likely to expand their interpersonal and social-interaction skills, creating positive leadership traits. According to Bowman-Perks et al. (2015), leaders with emotional intelligence have the following traits:

- They cope proactively with life’s demands and pressures without caving in. . . .
- They build and leverage cooperative, effective and rewarding relationships with others. . . .
- They . . . set and achieve personal, professional and meaningful goals in a manner that is compatible with what is best for them and others. . . .
- They seek first to understand, and then to be understood.
- They are sufficiently assertive and act with authority in making difficult and courageous decisions when the need arises. . . .
- They are typically positive and lead by example.
- They are realistically optimistic about maximizing their potential and able to get the most out of others. (p. 52)

Discussion

In this study, leadership coaching is defined as a personalized, one-on-one partnership between a school leader and a coach that focuses on strengthening leadership performance and behaviors for improvement (Cosner et al., 2017; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). The literature reviewed confirmed leadership coaching research as an emerging field of study with an emphasis on leadership coaching interventions to develop leaders for organizational improvement (Cox et al., 2018). Quantitative case studies prevailed as the primary method to understand leadership coaching as a developmental tool for leaders, regardless of the contextual setting (Celoria & Roberson, 2015; Forde et al., 2013; James-Ward, 2011, 2013; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014). Only two qualitative studies and one mixed methods study on leadership coaching existed in the literature reviewed. Although growing in number, leadership coaching in educational settings lags far behind the amount of leadership coaching studies conducted in the business sector. Similar to executive coaching research, educational qualitative researchers examined in this review primarily linked leadership performance with the potential influence of leadership coaching as intervention. Few researchers have focused on how leadership coaching affects the follower (Aguilar, 2013; Cox et al., 2018; Lochmiller, 2014).

Lastly, the literature reviewed in the leadership coaching strand addressed three prominent leadership-coaching methodologies: instructional coaching, facilitative coaching, and transformational coaching. These three leadership coaching methodologies are specific to needs of the individual yet represent a broad scope of coaching approaches. Within the literature reviewed, a wide range of scholarly opinions existed when identifying the core elements of coaching. In response, emerging patterns and

trends found in this literature review included five core elements unique to the current study: (a) relationship building; (b) problem defining and goal setting; (c) problem-solving and questioning; (d) listening, observation, and feedback; and (e) transformational processes.

TIL Action Coaching Program

Background

In 2014, TEA changed the state's mandated evaluation systems for teachers from a compliance, check-off model known as the Professional Development Appraisal System to a more growth-oriented and supportive evaluation system called the T-TESS and the Texas Principal Evaluation System of Supports. Despite the agency's efforts to move away from the traditional "gotcha" (punitive) evaluation system, the significantly improved T-TESS uncovered a new problem for TEA and educational leaders: campus and district leaders were unskilled in coaching techniques when using the new T-TESS growth-model evaluation systems. Moreover, TEA Deputy Commissioner Tim Regal reported Texas superintendents and central office personnel struggled to find innovative solutions to the ever-increasing problems surrounding principal turnover (personal communication, October 9, 2020). In response, TEA sought to find new ways to support and develop leaders through authentic, job-embedded coaching supports.

The beginning stages of development included the state commissioner's creation of a special task force made up of school improvement specialists. The mission was to create a systematic program that would help move the needle for all Texas schools in student achievement, teacher retention, and leadership development (T. Regal, personal communication, 2020). With the new state A–F accountability system receiving a deluge

of negativity, the TEA taskforce knew an innovative approach was needed to support schools and their leaders—they needed to move away from the traditional top-down “do it or else” model towards a transformational, collaborative approach.

The TEA taskforce began a 1-year process of reviewing empirical research on leadership coaching and vetting leadership coaching vendors. TEA Director of School Improvement Ashley Prevost (personal communication, 2020) reported the team leaned heavily towards the University of Washington and the Wallace Foundation Principal Pipeline research project (Turnbull et al., 2016) as an exemplar model. The Wallace Foundation project had a profound impact on the initial development of the TIL Action Coaching framework (A. Prevost, personal communication, 2020). Of the research studies analyzed by the Wallace Foundation (2008), 45 researchers and teams asserted that leadership training should not end when principals are hired; instead, training must continue with a quality, on-the-job coaching and mentoring program for principals. The Wallace Foundation (2008) research reaffirmed what the TEA school improvement team already knew—traditional reliance on “sit-and-get,” lecture-type professional development trainings fails to provide valuable long-lasting support and pales in comparison to the high-accountability pressures placed on school principals. As a result, the Wallace Foundation Principal Pipeline research (Turnbull et al., 2016) propelled momentum towards leadership coaching as a catalyst toward Texas school improvement efforts.

TIL Action Coaching Program Framework

Two prominent leadership coaching vendors, Relay (located in New York, NY) and Teacher Trust (located in Dallas, TX) caught the attention of the taskforce. A

common approach utilized by Relay and Teacher Trust was an instructional coaching model developed by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo called *Leverage Leadership 2.0* (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018) and *Get Better Faster* (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016). The works by Bambrick-Santoyo left a powerful impression on the designers of TIL. T. Regal (personal communication, 2020) highlighted *Leverage Leadership* as instrumental in identifying seven high-leverage domains for leaders to target.

In *Leverage Leadership 2.0*, Bambrick-Santoyo (2018) identified and categorized seven high-leverage activities into two main domains—instructional and cultural. Instructional and cultural are essential, T. Regal (personal communication, 2020) explained, because one cannot happen without the other. Under each domain, Bambrick-Santoyo (2016) identified specific action steps leaders must take when coaching teachers and teams of teachers for high-quality teaching and learning to occur. The action steps under the instructional domain are (a) data-driven instruction, (b) instructional planning, (c) observation-feedback, and (d) professional development. Without a positive culture, teachers will struggle with effective instructional practices. Bambrick-Santoyo's (2018) culture domain includes three actions steps for principals: (a) student culture, (b) staff culture, and (c) managing school leadership teams. Table 2.1 highlights the links between Bambrick-Santoyo's (2018) high-leverage activities and this literature review of leadership coaching.

Table 2.1

Seven Levers of Leadership Connected to Literature Review

Lever	Definition	Research
Instructional levers		
Data-driven instruction	Defined as the road map to rigor and adapt teaching to meet students' needs	Goff et al., 2014; Gray, 2018a; Knight, 2007
Instructional planning	Backward planning to guarantee strong lesson plans	Goff et al., 2014; Gray, 2018a; Knight, 2007;
Observation and feedback	Coach teachers to improve the learning	Lee et al., 2019; MacKie, 2016; Peláez Zuberbuhler et al., 2020;
Professional development	Strengthen culture and instruction with hands-on training that sticks	Goff et al., 2014; Gray, 2018a; Knight, 2007; Taylor et al., 2019
Cultural levers		
Student culture	Create a culture where student learning can thrive	Aguilar, 2013; Bloom, 2005; Cox et al., 2018
Staff culture	Build and support teams	Cox et al., 2018; Lochmiller, 2014; Taylor et al., 2019
Managing school leadership teams	Train instructional leaders through systems to expand impact across the school	Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; Ellinger & Kim, 2014; Joo et al., 2012

Note. Levers from *Leverage Leadership 2.0*, by P. Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018, John Wiley & Sons.

Bambrick-Santoyo's (2016) *Get Better Faster* coaching model came as a result of the Urban Institute research on high-leverage principal actions. Specifically, the Urban Institute followed 65 principals in Miami's public schools and found most principals spend only 6% of their time in "day-to-day instruction: observing classroom, coaching teachers, . . . leading trainings, using data to drive instruction, and evaluating teachers" (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016, p. xix). In *Get Better Faster*, Bambrick-Santoyo (2016)

challenged the status quo by beseeching district leaders to evaluate the work they are asking their principals to do. District leaders are the game changers when prioritizing the most valuable work, improving instruction and culture (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016).

According to TEA School Improvement Specialist T. Longanecker (personal communication, May 15, 2020), the TIL Action Coaching program embeds on-the-job leadership training using a practice-based approach. Although originally created with school improvement and accountability in mind, the TIL training should be accessible by every Texas school. As such, TEA chose to partner with the Regional Educational Service Centers (ESCs) statewide, applying a train-the-trainer implementation model. Regional ESCs are developmental support centers for all public schools in the state and serve as the hub for professional development for all levels of educators in multiple contextual settings.

After a year of extensive training from TEA, regional ESC trainers rolled out the first TIL Action Coaching trainings in the summer of 2017. Districts labeled “Improvement Required” by the state accountability system were given a funded mandate to attend all of the comprehensive 17-day training. Despite encouragement for all schools to sign up for TIL Action Coaching, school districts hesitated. Perhaps the slow recruitment of districts was from a lack of trust in TEA, the amount of time, commitment and funds required, or the belief that coaching principals would not work. Nevertheless, as shown in Table 2.2, of the districts who have participated since 2017, TEA reported significant growth in school participation and campus improvement (T. Regal, personal communication, 2020). Over half of the D- or F-rated campuses requiring school improvement during the program’s 1st year of implementation finished the year having

improved one to two letter grades in student growth measures. The data continue to inform TEA of the program’s bright future for Texas schools wanting to improve student outcomes and coach leaders in how to coach others in the domains of instruction and culture. As of 2020, the 3rd year of implementation, TEA continued to add more tracking and progress-monitoring systems to gauge TIL Action Coaching effectiveness (A. Prevost, personal communication, October 2020).

Table 2.2

Texas Instructional Leadership Action Coaching Participation Data

Year	# of participation	# of D/F grade campus participation	% of D/F grade campuses improved to C or higher rating
2017-2018	60	27	56
2018-2019	73	12	50
2019-2020	316	129	No data due to COVID-19

Note. Data report from Texas Education Agency Deputy Commissioner for School Improvement Tim Regal.

TIL Action Coaching Program Training Model

Two main components of the TIL Action Coaching program make it unique. First, the program is designed to create an internal coaching system by requiring the superintendent or principal supervisor to attend all trainings to learn how to actively coach the principal. Second, the program uses a manager-as-coach approach. As shown in Fig. 2.2, the trainer coaches the superintendent on how to coach the principal, the superintendent coaches the principal on how to coach the teachers, and the principal coaches the teachers and teacher teams.

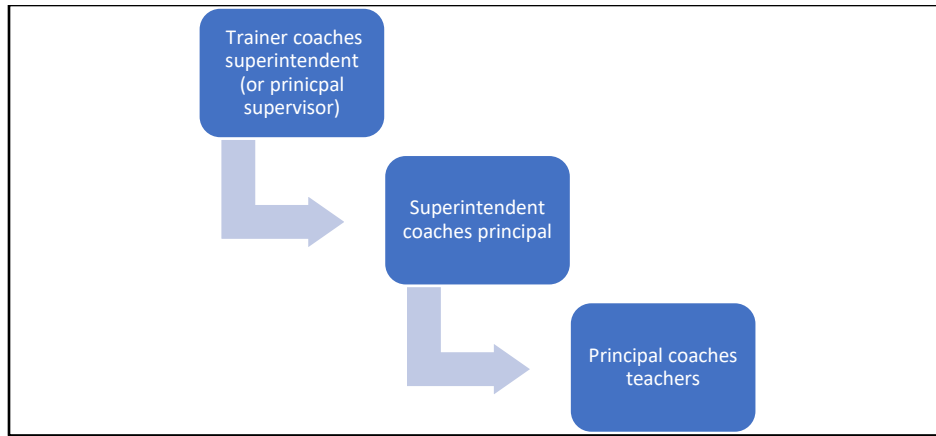


Figure 2.2. *Texas Instructional Leadership Action Coaching: Manager-as-Coach Model of Trainings*

The internal coaching system. The central focus underpinning the TIL Action Coaching program is the redefining of the principal position by shifting the leadership role toward becoming an effective instructional leader rather than a manager of programs and systems. However, T. Regal (personal communication, October 2020) explained the taskforce felt strongly that if principals were to make this shift successfully, the principal supervisor or superintendent must be involved in the training because often superintendents oversee the work of the principals and act as mentors during the 1st year on the job.

According to Regal (personal communication, October 2020), the decision to include the superintendent or the principal's supervisor in the training was two-fold. First, TEA wanted to foster long-term sustainability of the program to reduce principal turnover. Principal turnover is problematic across the state, especially in low-rated schools requiring school improvement. Second, TEA wanted superintendents empowered and equipped to coach principals for job-embedded leadership development. The decision to add the superintendent or principal supervisor attendance requirement in the TIL

Action Coaching program framework reinforced what was discovered in the current review of empirical research.

In the review, researchers confirmed the skills required for managerial coaching to flourish consisted of interpersonal skills such as listening, questioning, feedback, and facilitation (Cox et al., 2018; A. Gilley et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2017; Milner et al., 2018; Ratiu et al., 2016; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). Relatedly, Carey et al. (2011) noted, “Internal coaching from supervisors or managers has the benefits of prior knowledge and experience of the organizational culture, mission, and politics, as well as measurement ability, consistency, and embeddedness of coaching processes” (p. 66). Given the empirical evidence, the TIL Action Coaching framework of creating internal coaching systems places significant emphasis on the superintendent and the campus principal to create and sustain school improvement efforts.

The role of the superintendent. The lack of engagement from the superintendent and central office staff can damage leadership coaching efforts and organizational outcomes. Research has shown organizational context plays a critical role on leadership outcomes and the likelihood of successful and sustainable transference of leadership skills (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Cox et al., 2018; Ely et al., 2010; Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016). Yet, scholarly examination on how managerial coaching affects organizational outcomes, including leadership effectiveness, continually lags behind other efforts (Beattie et al., 2014; Cox et al., 2018; Ely et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2017). In one of the most comprehensive systematic reviews on executive coaching outcome studies, Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018) reported that of the 110 executive coaching studies reviewed, 69 studies focused solely on the coachee, 18 focused on the coach, and just 3

focused on organizational outcome. Surprisingly, Athanasopoulou and Dopson found no research existed that analyzed the influence organizational support had on the leadership coaching intervention.

Without central office leveraging top-down support, campus principals are likely to view coaching interventions as punishment rather than opportunities for growth. Educators have long linked evaluative growth plans to equal job reassignment or termination. Executive teams must ensure mature practices are in place and leaders make intentional effort to head off misconceptions from the beginning (Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016; Ray, 2017). In this way, the executive team reassures the leader that coaching is a means of development and not the exit door. In fact, perception of support is often all it takes to change a leader's mindset about coaching. Bozer and Jones (2018) concluded when leaders perceive high levels of workplace training support, better training transference outcomes are realized. When supervisors reinforce and support the perceived value of the coaching process, follower efforts increase to meet growth expectations (Ely et al., 2010; Ray, 2017). As superintendents and central office staff consider implementing TIL Action Coaching for building principal capacity, the literature garnered thus far in this review may provide additional reassurance in its practice. Principals who embed effective coaching into their everyday practice are likely to experience some level of transformation for themselves and their schools.

Managerial Coaching Approach

Utilizing a managerial coaching approach is another unique feature of the TIL Action Coaching program. Although the program materials do not explicitly reference a specific coaching approach such as facilitative or transformational, this literature review

found strong correlations between the Texas TIL Action Coaching framework and the managerial coaching approach. The managerial coaching approach is a relatively new concept that has emerged in the 21st century workplace (Bommeljé, 2015; Cox et al., 2018; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018; Whitmore, 2017). The demand for managers to acquire coaching skills has been increasing with no signs of stopping (Beattie et al., 2014; Ellinger & Kim, 2014; Joo et al., 2012; Lawrence, 2017). Yet despite an exponential growth in managerial coaching research, there is little consensus on how to define it, how to measure it, or what value it adds to the organization context (Lawrence, 2017).

Ellinger and Kim (2014) defined managerial coaching as the process by which a supervisor (manager or leader) facilitates the learning and development processes of subordinates by activating their behaviors and professional skills. Bozer and Jones (2018) described managerial coaching as a “one-to-one custom-tailored, learning and development intervention that uses a collaborative, reflective, goal-focused relationship to achieve professional outcomes that are valued by the coachee” (p. 342). Managerial coaching’s distinctive features, according to Cox et al. (2018), include (a) the coach’s mindset, (b) the skills of the coach, (c) the behaviors required for successful managerial coaching, and (d) the contextual factors that may be influential in promoting this type of leadership approach in the organization. Likewise, a cross-cultural comparative analysis of findings by Hamlin et al. (2006) uncovered strong empirical support for this facilitative type of leadership and identified managerial coaching behaviors that empower workplace improvement; these behaviors align to the core coaching components identified in this literature review.

Managerial coaching versus executive coaching. If not careful, managerial coaching can become confused with executive coaching. The term *executive coaching* broadly covers any type of coaching with leaders from middle management upwards. One striking difference between managerial coaching and executive coaching is the use of the external coach and the partnership alliance between the coach, the executive, and the organization. As executive coaching seeks to align the capabilities of the leader with the goals of the organization, managerial coaching internally focuses on individual growth and development (Anderson, 2013; Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; Hamlin et al., 2006; Lawrence, 2017).

In a systematic literature review on managerial coaching, Lawrence (2017) noticed scholars too often focused on examining external executive coaching and assumed conclusive evidence equally applied to internal managerial coaching. This, according to Lawrence, would be a mistake: “This would be a valid approach should it be proven, . . . but there is little evidence to support such an assumption” (p. 43). Some shared attributes between the two coaching approaches have been recognized in the literature, specifically behavior change, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence (Ellinger & Kim, 2014; Stokes & Jolly, 2018). Regardless, evidence has confirmed both managerial and executive coaching approaches improve leadership behaviors and skill performance (Anderson, 2013; Bozer & Jones, 2018; Ellinger, 2003; Ellinger et al., 2011).

Examination of managerial coaching literature and other fundamental transformational facilitative coaching approaches backs up the TIL Action Coaching framework and the idea that training principals and school leaders to be coaches creates

better schools. For instance, a qualitative study by Bommelje (2015) credited managerial coaching as a means to foster and support organizational change: “Such initiatives seek to move organizational cultures away from ‘command and control’ toward a more positive, humanistic, and motivating communication styles and the establishment of a coaching culture” (p. 70). van Nieuwerburgh (2018) echoed Bommelje, claiming learning to become a coach is the most effective way for principals to become excellent practitioners. In addition, Lawrence (2017) discovered similar findings, demonstrating the efficacy of managerial coaching in organization and leadership improvement, specifically in regards to job satisfaction, follower commitment to the organization, and individual and team performance.

Empirical research literature has confirmed that making the shift from performance-driven leaders to coaching leaders should reap significant rewards for district electing to participate in the TIL Action Coaching program. Specifically, van Nieuwerburgh (2018) outlined five possible benefits of having school leaders trained to coach. As shown in Table 2.3, this literature review found several empirical studies that aligned with van Nieuwerburgh’s five possible benefits.

Table 2.3

Managerial Coaching Training Benefit Connections Between the van Nieuwerburgh (2018) Study and Current Research

Possible benefits of having school leaders trained as coaches	Current research reviewed
Managerial coaching training can motivate leaders as well as impact performance and behaviors of their followers.	Bommelje, 2015; Cox et al., 2018; A. Gilley et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2017; Lee et al., 2019; Milner et al., 2018
Managerial coaching training encourages reflective practice and self-development.	A. Gilley et al., 2010; Milner et al., 2018; Peláez Zuberbuhler et al. 2020; Ratiu et al., 2016
Managerial coaching training may help leadership performance in areas such as managing meetings and professional development for staff.	Bommelje, 2015; Peláez Zuberbuhler et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2019; Young et al., 2017
Managerial coaching training empowers leaders to provide effective and timely feedback.	Bass & Riggio, 2006; Lawrence, 2017; Ratiu et al. 2016
Managerial coaching training enables school leaders to lead by example, encouraging others to adopt a coaching mindset.	Cox et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2019; Ray, 2017; Taylor et al., 2019; Young et al., 2017

Note. Benefits in first column based on *Coaching in Education: Getting Better Results for Students, Educators, and Parents*, by C. van Nieuwerburgh (Ed.), 2018, Routledge.

By aligning current literature with van Nieuwerburgh's (2018) managerial coaching training benefits, the principals choosing to engage in the TIL Action Coaching program can find relevant applications and connections to the core work of leading a school. Clearly, managerial coaching approaches positively influence individuals, teams, and organizational performance (e.g., Cox et al., 2018; Ellinger & Beattie, 2009; A. Gilley et al., 2010; Milner et al., 2018). However, despite the positive results identified in this review, managerial coaching rarely happens in school settings (Beattie et al., 2014; A. Gilley et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2017). As school districts and state agencies such as

TEA endorse coaching as a new school improvement strategy, managerial coaching studies in educational settings should increase, likely demonstrating that when a leader takes on the role of a coach, leadership behaviors improve.

Managerial coaching barriers. Certainly, every innovation has obstacles to overcome, and managerial coaching is no different. One obvious hurdle when implementing manager as coach is the leader must want to be coached and open to learning how to coach others (Cox et al., 2018; Joo et al., 2012; Lawrence, 2017; Milner et al., 2018). J. Gilley and Gilley (2007) and Milner et al. (2018) offered several caveats to school organizations when seeking to train principals on how to coach teachers. One of the more pressing issues, stated by J. Gilley and Gilley, stems from the difference in status between a coaching principal and a teacher. Milner et al. highlighted troublesome issues when an urgent problem necessitates the leader giving directives rather than taking the time to coach or times when the principal must evaluate the teacher.

Like many managers, school principals often enter the job with little skill set to become successful at coaching (Beattie et al., 2014; Lawrence, 2017). In this respect, training on how to coach becomes paramount. From this view, skill transfer and pretraining motivation for principals rely primarily on supervisor support starting from the superintendent's office on down.

Key Components of TIL Action Coaching

TEA draws heavily from Bambrick-Santoyo's (2016) *Get Better Faster* coaching approach, which includes three basic action steps. These three action steps are found within each of the leverage leadership instructional and culture domains and activities previously discussed (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018). Bambrick-Santoyo's (2016) premise is

simple: Teachers do better when they know better. In other words, teachers will grow when they can see what success looks like in real time and can set small, measurable goals coupled with consistent and timely feedback. The key components of the *Get Better Faster* coaching framework are described as microcosmic in that action steps are broken down into “specific, practice-worthy actions” (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016, p. 5). The TIL (2019) training manual described a praise-worthy action as something the teacher can do in a week. Once the granular high-leverage action is chosen, the coach uses effective, high-impact role-play to practice perfection and then monitors progress frequently.

The three main components of plan, execute, and monitor are foundational to *Get Better Faster* coaching success (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016). First, the coach plans for the coaching session by breaking down a needed skill into small, measurable action steps. Second, the coach and coachee collaborate to see the need for improvement and practice for mastery. Third, the coach follows up with frequent observations and provides timely feedback. Under plan, evaluate, and monitor sections are three essential action steps that summarize how to implement any one of the seven leverage leadership domains, called See It, Name It, and Do It (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016).

Plan, execute, and monitor phases. The plan phase marks the first action taken by the coach and must not be overlooked. In the plan stage, the coach scripts out the coaching session by following the essential see it, name it, do it sequence and prepares an exemplar model of best practice for clarity and communication (TIL, 2019). The execute phase marks the time to practice what perfect execution looks like. In this sense, Bambrick-Santoyo (2016, 2018) advocated practice makes perfect; therefore, he argued coaching sessions should include a time to lock in the essential granular action step and

role-play to anticipate any obstacles or misconceptions. The role-play, performance-based activity trademarks Bambrick-Santoyo's (2018) style with the motto "practice makes perfect, and perfection can be reproduced" (p. 15). Finally, the monitor phase requires the coach to observe the newly learned skill in real time and provide timely feedback for reinforcement and growth. The power of feedback, Bambrick-Santoyo (2018) explained, is to clarify for the purpose of improvement, not evaluation.

See it. When applying the "see it" action step, the coach (for example, the principal) must prepare the initial work by choosing the granular action step needed for the teacher to take and finding an exemplar model to show the teacher what success looks like. The exemplar may come in the form of an ideal learning target or an exemplar of an instructional strategy video. With an exemplar in hand, the principal is equipped to coach the teacher, and the teacher will have clarity of what the principal needs to see for growth (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018).

After finding the exemplar of the microcosmic action step needed, the coach scripts the coaching session with guided questions to narrow the focus and prompt thinking. For example, the principal may ask, "What was your objective or goal when you ...? Or, what did the students have to do to meet that goal?" After one or two prompting questions, the principal shows the exemplar and moves the teacher toward seeing the gap of practice. The principal then may ask something like, "What is the gap between the exemplar and what happened in your class today?" When applied correctly, this type of thinking should move the coaching session into the "name it" stage.

Name it. Although the shortest stage, the "name it" stage allows the teacher to self-discover what needs to improve. The coach (e.g., the superintendent or principal

supervisor) directs the follower (in this case, the principal) to name the gap. This stage is critical to recognizing the need to change practice. Alternatively, the principal guides and facilitates self-discovery of what the teacher will work on and how the teacher will execute it. For example, the principal may ask, “What are the key steps to take to close the gap?” or “Based on what we discussed today, what do you think your action step should be next?” (TIL, 2019). Rather than the principal telling the teacher what to do for improvement, the principal builds trust and buy-in when allowing the teacher to name the essential improvement needed.

Do it. The TIL Action Coaching training manual (TIL, 2019) described the “do it” stage as the key ingredient for implementation success. In this stage the coach (in this case, the superintendent or principal supervisor) plans and prioritizes the highest leverage action steps and practices each step before “taking it live” in real time (p. 9). The superintendent as coach and the principal as follower are encouraged to script out responses or engage in role-playing a scenario for gained confidence and mastery. Once the principal has planned and practiced for success, the coach (superintendent or principal supervisor) would follow up with an observation and feedback session. For example, the superintendent may guide the principal to script out a teacher data meeting. Once scripted, the principal would “take it live” and role-play the main parts of the meeting (e.g., the beginning and closure). Soon after the coaching session, the superintendent or principal supervisor observes the principal performing the teacher data meeting and provides direct and explicit feedback.

The Cyclical Nature of Plan-Execute-Monitor Phases

The plan-execute-monitor phases have a cyclical nature. Along with the action steps of see it, name it, and do it, the phases are repeated until mastery is achieved and the changed behavior becomes routine (see Figure 2.3). For this reason, choosing a bite-sized, achievable action step, Bambrick-Santoyo (2018) explained, becomes paramount for the coaching model to see results. Action steps, if too large, can overwhelm a teacher and can lack clarity for success.

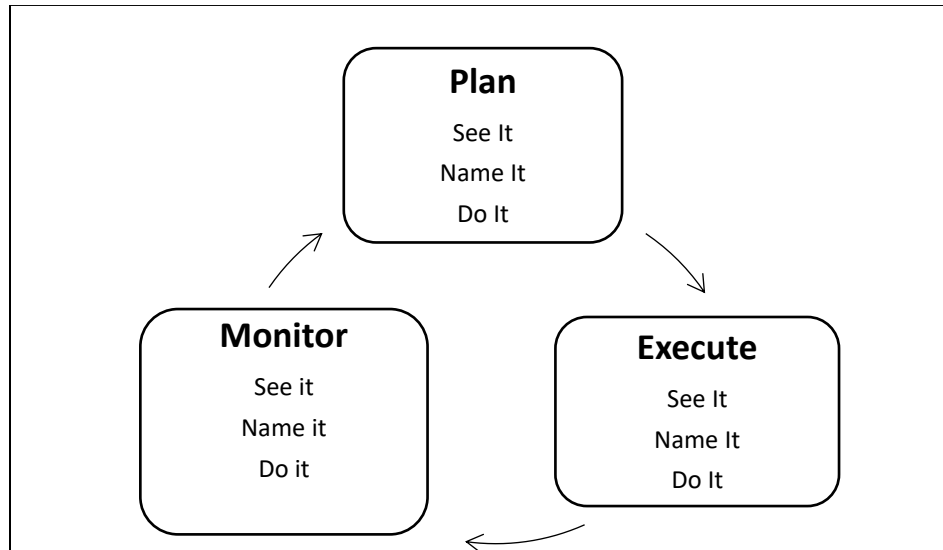


Figure 2.3. *Cyclical Nature of Texas Instructional Leadership: Three Phases and Essential Action Steps*

The acts of choosing microcosmic action steps; scripting out questions and thinking prompts; practicing with performance-based activities such as role-playing; and observing and providing explicit feedback mirror what the literature examined identified as common elements of coaching. As shown in Figure 2.4, alignment is observable with the common elements of coaching—relationship building, questioning and problem-solving, problem defining and goal setting, listening, observation and feedback, and

transformational processes (Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; Carey et al., 2011; Passmore, 2007; Whitmore, 2017).

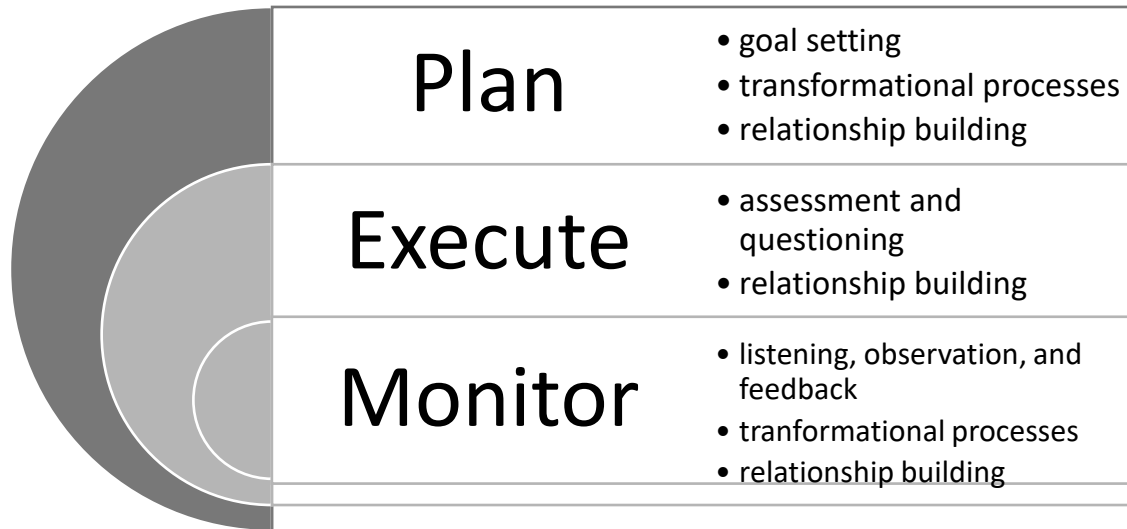


Figure 2.4. *Alignment of Literature Review Core Leadership Coaching Elements With Bambrick-Santoyo (2018) Coaching Stages and Action Steps.* Three stages from *Leverage Leadership 2.0*, by P. Bambrick-Santoyo, 2018, John Wiley & Sons.

Discussion

The goal of *Get Better Faster* and *Leverage Leadership 2.0* (Bambrick-Santoyo (2016, 2018) is to create systems and concrete strategies to build principals' capacity to implement excellent instructional leadership practices. In doing so, teacher classroom practices improve, and student growth is achievable. In this qualitative study, I wished to understand how the TIL Action Coaching program based on the works by Bambrick-Santoyo (2016, 2018) fostered transformational leadership skills in principals as they implemented the plan-execute-monitor coaching stages.

The practice-based coaching model presented by Bambrick-Santoyo (2016) continues to be a game-changer for school improvement efforts nationwide. TEA's adoption and promotion of *Get Better Faster* and *Leverage Leadership* concepts,

components, and essential action steps (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016, 2018) by means of the TIL Action Coaching initiative provide Texas educators with a comprehensive professional developmental program. The TIL Action Coaching program promises to improve student outcomes, retain valuable teachers, and develop campus leaders for the complex work of instructional and cultural school improvement. The TIL Action Coaching model promotes Bambrick-Santoyo's (2016, 2018) coaching model while using a managerial coaching approach. The premise behind managerial coaching is school leaders are trained on how to coach teachers—in this way, everyone learns and improves practice. The trickle-down approach of TIL Action Coaching holds a promising future for Texas educators wanting to create more collaborative, growth mindset cultures inside the schools they lead.

The conceptual framework of this study, as shown in Figure 2.5, centers around the premise that superintendents (or principal supervisors) actively participate in the TIL Action Coaching program. When the superintendent (or principal supervisor) promotes and engages in TIL Action Coaching, the campus principal will take on more transformational leadership attributes, identified by Bass (1985) as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Previous researchers have shown evidence that the level of excitement, energy, and participation from a superintendent or principal supervisor may be a reliable predictor regarding leadership coaching and how the principal perceives its added value for professional growth and improvement (Bommer et al., 2004; Milner et al., 2018; Schmitt et al., 2016).

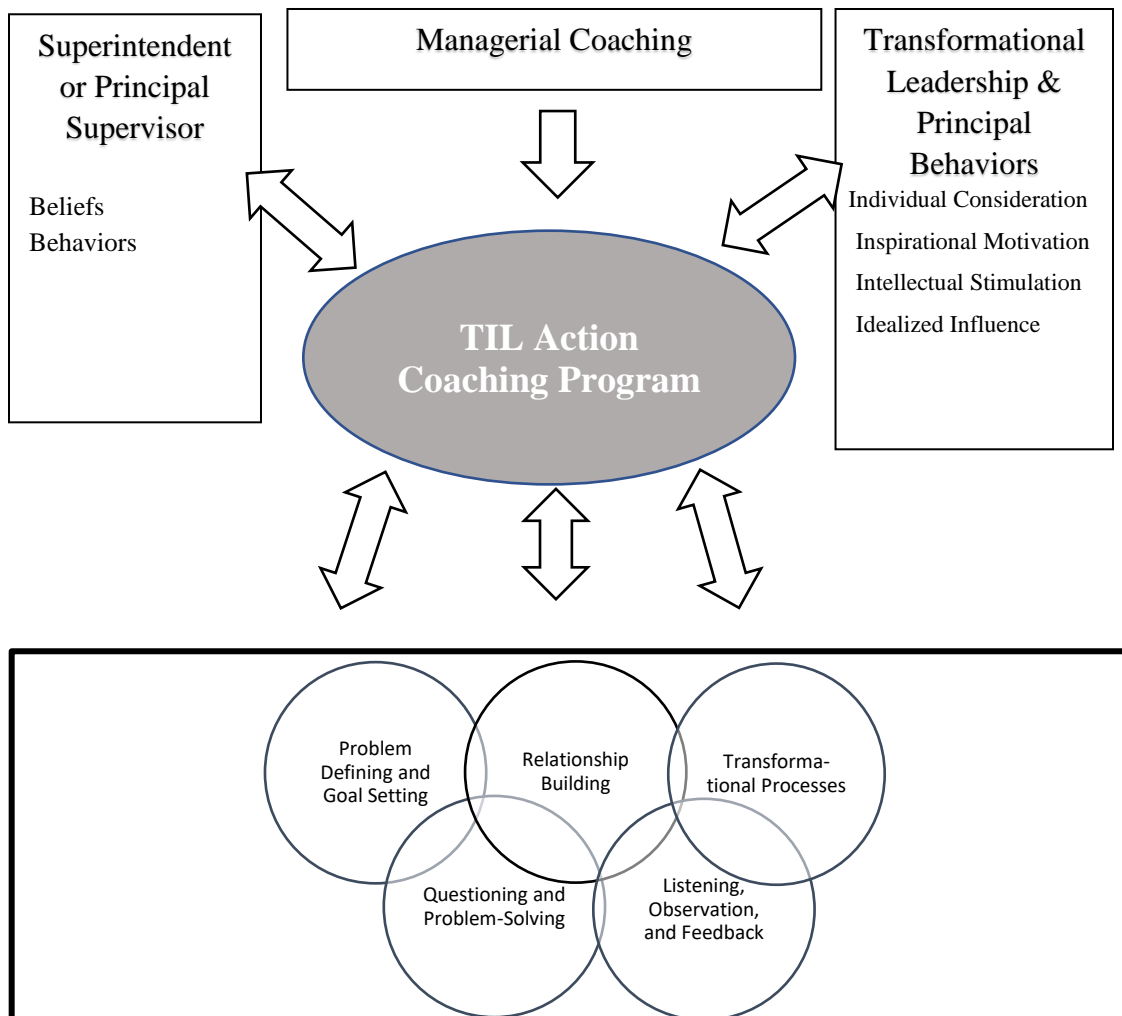


Figure 2.5. *Conceptual Framework of Study*. TIL = Texas Instructional Leadership.

However, it is unknown which of the superintendent (or principal supervisor) beliefs and behaviors play a role in the success of TIL Action Coaching. Furthermore, educational leaders do not know what key components of TIL Action Coaching are perceived to be critical for principal transformation. Finally, superintendents or principal supervisors need to know what core elements of leadership coaching are reflected in the TIL Action Coaching program. Therefore, this literature study laid the groundwork as the study was designed to answer several research questions.

1. What are the beliefs and perceptions of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers regarding the TIL Action Coaching program?
2. What do principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers perceive as critical TIL Action Coaching components for principal development related to the 4 I's of transformational leadership?
3. How might the TIL Action Coaching experiences and insights of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers align with the core elements of leadership coaching?

Summary

The components of transformational leadership behaviors were found to be as relevant today as they were when Burns composed them in 1978. Empirical evidence has confirmed school principals who increase understanding and application of transformational leadership behaviors such as the 4 I's coined by Bass (1985) improve their performance and their followers' performance. However, leadership development through coaching does not happen unless top school executives support its implementation. Knowing the importance of leadership, the state education agency created TIL Action Coaching for the purpose of helping school districts develop and retain strong campus leaders. The antecedent behaviors and beliefs of superintendents and principal supervisors may hold the key to the future success of the TIL Action Coaching program.

The findings in this literature review echo the positive impact leadership coaching can have on schools and their principals. As a developmental tool, leadership coaching

promotes relationship building by establishing mutual trust and provides opportunities for principals to self-discover strengths and gaps in a safe, structured, and nonjudgmental atmosphere. Principals spend an enormous amount of time handling emergencies and meeting accountability expectations, leaving little energy to develop their followers, much less themselves. Studies on managerial coaching have shown that when leaders become coaches themselves, they have the potential to grow in excellent practices (A. Gilley et al., 2010; Milner et al., 2018; Peláez Zuberbuhler et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2019; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). Schools require leaders who can perform at high levels with emotional intelligence to continuously build cultural capacity on campuses. Evidence has shown leaders without soft skills will likely break down school culture (Celoria & Roberson, 2015; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014; McCarley et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the review of literature contributes to the accepted knowledge that the transformational leadership conceptual framework serves as the cornerstone for job-embedded leadership development approaches such as coaching. Several researchers have argued for school leaders to expand and bridge the more common transactional-style leadership to more worthy transformational leadership behaviors for sustainable success. If the empirical research on managerial coaching remains steady, the TIL Action Coaching model should yield positive rewards for all schools embracing its trainings and implementation. Research explored in this review showed manager-as-coach developmental programs can increase leadership engagement and motivation when effective trainings apply core aspects of coaching. Superintendents and central office personnel interested in implementing TIL or any leadership coaching must reject the spectator mindset; rather, top leaders must believe in the evidence research provides and

fully engage in the leadership coaching process for best principal and organizational outcomes.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This chapter describes the rationale behind the study's methodological choices, what actions I utilized to conduct the study, and how I approached data collection and analysis. The methodology design was a qualitative embedded single case study. First, a brief overview of the problem, purpose, and research questions is presented. Then, I describe the research design and the rationale based on the research questions. Next, the logic behind the choice of participants and how data were collected and analyzed are described. I close the chapter with a discussion on trustworthiness and ethical concerns.

School principals with transformational leadership attributes have the potential to powerfully impact schools and student achievement (Liu, 2020; Shoho & Barnett, 2010; Young et al., 2017). However, most principals are unprepared to face the pressures and demands required to do the job successfully. As presented in the literature review, leadership coaching is a viable approach that provides authentic, embedded, and ongoing professional development for school leaders. TEA created a leadership coaching program called TIL Action Coaching to combat the needs of principals and bolster leadership effectiveness; however, little is known on whether the TIL Action Coaching program meets principals' needs related to their leadership development and transformational leadership attributes and, if so, how and in what ways.

Therefore, the purpose of the study was to understand how the new TIL Action Coaching fostered transformational leadership attributes in campus principals for

leadership development. The TIL Action Coaching program includes but is not limited to developing principals into effective instructional coaches for improved teacher classroom performance and leadership development. Transformational leadership attributes include the 4 I's of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the beliefs and perceptions of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers regarding the TIL Action Coaching program?
2. What do principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers perceive as critical TIL Action Coaching components for principal development related to the 4 I's of transformational leadership?
3. How might the TIL Action Coaching experiences and insights of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers align with the core elements of leadership coaching?

Research Design

The research questions formed the foundation for selecting a qualitative single case study design (Yin, 2018). Historically, case studies have been viewed as a catch-all for the in-depth descriptive analysis of a phenomenon; however, modern case studies are described as an all-encompassing mode of empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary real-life phenomenon within a bounded system (Creswell & Poth, 2018;

Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). The research literature has some ambiguity, as scholars use various descriptors when referring to case study design: an approach, a method, methodology, strategy, or form of inquiry. Regardless of the terminology used, prominent scholars of case study design know data collection for case studies are simple in theory yet complex in practice (Creswell, 2014; Harrison et al., 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014).

This case study is defined as an embedded single case study because it encompassed one regional educational service center in Waco, Texas as the single case. As shown in Figure 3.1., the boundaries of the case consisted of the single case: (a) the place (Region 12 ESC), (b) the TIL Action Coaching leadership development program, and (c) the timeframe of the research (e.g., February 2021 to April 2021). The embedded units of analysis (Yin, 2014) were identified as a type of participant: principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 trainers.

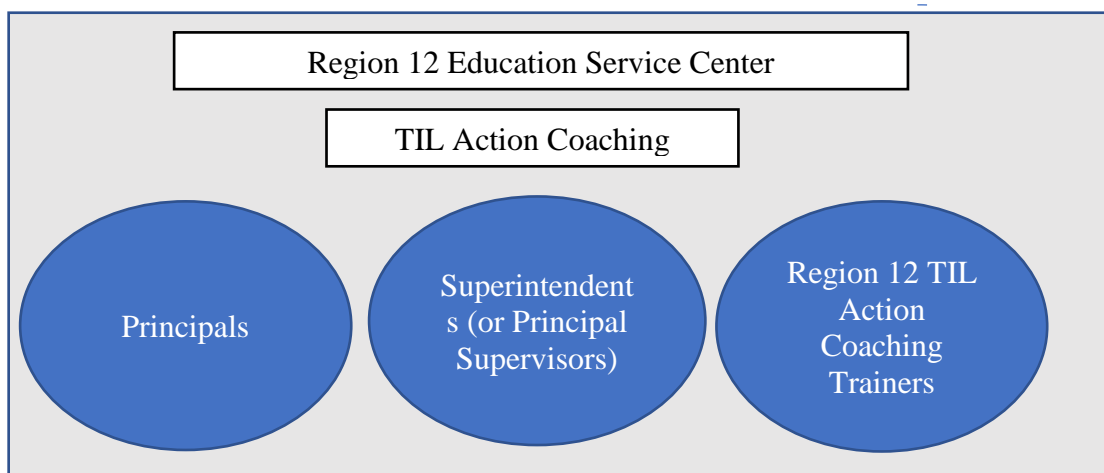


Figure 3.1. *Bounded Single Embedded Case Study With Embedded Units of Analysis.*
TIL = Texas Educational Leadership

A qualitative case study approach was appropriate for the study because leadership coaching involved multiple principal transformational leadership development dimensions bounded in a specific context, the Region 12 ESC, and the contexts in which the participants are naturally embedded (i.e., their individual schools, districts, or the TIL Action Coaching program). Framed from a constructivist viewpoint, I sought the multiple realities and life experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018) of principals regarding their transformational leadership experiences through the TIL Action Coaching program. In keeping with Yin's (2018) definition, a triad of empirical data collection methods was used—questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and documents.

Setting

Since TEA selectively trains ESC school improvement specialists to deliver TIL Action Coaching professional development (TEA, 2020), the researcher conducted the study with school districts in the Region 12 ESC consortium. Region 12 ESC is located in Waco, Texas and as of 2021 serves 76 public school districts and 11 charter schools spanning 12 counties. That said, the Region 12 ESC consortium of schools provided a broad and rich diversity of cultures and school contexts.

The researcher chose to bound the single case to Region 12 ESC for three main reasons. First, Region 12 ESC spans a large geographic area and provides multiple options such as rural and urban school districts to recruit active TIL Action Coaching program participants. Second, the consortium of school districts located within Region 12 ESC represents public, private, charter, rural, urban, and suburban districts, ranging from low student enrollment (e.g., 500 student enrollment) to very large student enrollment (e.g., 17,000 student enrollment). Preference was given to principals and superintendents

(or principal supervisors) from rural and suburban school districts with greater than 900 but not more than 10,000 student enrollments. Enrollment size was emphasized so the principals and superintendents (or principal supervisors) closely reflected the majority of school districts across the state. Third, the Region 12 ESC consortium of schools represents a wide range of economically disadvantaged population school districts. The researcher considered the contextual demographics of enrolled students' economically disadvantaged ratio. Schools with higher enrollment of economically disadvantaged students typically encounter unique challenges compared to schools with fewer financially underprivileged students (Espinoza & Cardichon, 2017; Levin & Bradley, 2019; Young et al., 2017). That said, principals and superintendents or principal supervisors of schools of more than 50% economically disadvantage likely would require more support and leadership coaching. Table 3.1 demonstrates the prioritization and rationale of the criteria.

Table 3.1

Site Criteria With Rationale

Site criteria	Rationale
Must be a school district within the Region 12 Educational Service Center (ESC) consortium	Texas Instructional Leadership training only obtained through ESC
Rural (or suburban) and urban school districts with a student enrollment between 900 and 10,000 students preferred	Reflects the majority of Texas school districts Most principals have previous years of experience in educational leadership
50% or more economically disadvantaged student enrollment preferred	Principal challenges are typically more challenging

Participants

This study aimed to discover how leadership coaching through the TIL Action Coaching program fostered a principal's transformational leadership attributes. These insights and discoveries required the researcher to apply purposeful sampling when selecting participants. Scholars have agreed that purposeful sampling is the most logical type of selection for qualitative case studies because qualitative research aims to discover, understand, and gain insight from an array of individuals, programs, or activities that are directly aligned with the phenomenon and problem being explored (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 1995, 2010; Yin, 2018). By using purposeful sampling, the researcher was able to gain access to and understand significant issues in greater depth (Patton, 2015). Accordingly, this study used a criterion-based selection and placed considerable importance on defining participants' characteristics and providing a rationale for why the characteristics were essential to the study.

The study included school principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and trainers within the Region 12 ESC consortium of schools. Selection of principals and superintendents (or principal supervisors) was dependent on the number of recruitment email respondents garnered. This case study population included the following embedded units of analysis: (a) five school principals, (b) four superintendents (or principal supervisors), and (c) three Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers.

The selection of the principals played a significant role in this study as the purpose of the study centered around the principals' perspectives and lived experiences of the TIL Action Coaching program as it fostered transformational leadership attributes.

Therefore, the researcher selected principal participants based on four criteria. First, the principals had a minimum of 1 year of professional experience in their current assignment. The 1st year of principalship is a stressful one. Therefore, preference was given to campus leaders with at least 1 year of experience to avoid extreme negative viewpoints regarding additional workload when engaged in the TIL Action Coaching program. Second, principals represented each of the three school levels: elementary, middle, and high school. Third, strong cultures celebrate and embrace diversity (Coyle, 2018); therefore, selecting principals representing a mixture of gender and racial ethnicities was preferred. Lastly, a representation of diverse perceptions of the TIL Action Coaching program was considered. Obtaining diverse perceptions of the TIL Action Coaching program provided a more holistic analysis of the training and expose differing perspectives.

The superintendent (or principal supervisor) must be a district leader in the Region 12 consortium of schools and be actively participating in the TIL Action Coaching program. Finally, the Region 12 ESC TIL Action Coaching trainer should be a TEA-certified TIL Action Coaching trainer employed with Region 12 ESC. Principal, superintendent (or principal supervisor), and trainer criteria for this study are presented in Table 3.2. In Table 3.3, the researcher presents an ideal principal sample applying a maximum variation sampling strategy (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A popular approach to purposeful sampling in qualitative research is maximum variation sampling. Maximum variation sampling allows for a greater range of application, resulting in an increase likelihood that future consumers of this research will find personal relevance to their own particular experience or phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Table 3.2

Principal, Superintendent, and Trainer Sampling Criteria

Participant	Criteria
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a minimum of 1 year of professional experience in their current assignment • Represent one school level: elementary, middle, or high school • Be from a range of ethnicities—for example, one White, one Black, and one Latinx • Represent diverse perceptions of the Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching Program
Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a superintendent in Region 12 • Be a superintendent who is participating in the TIL Action Coaching program
Trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a current trainer for the TIL Action Coaching program • Be a coach for Region 12

Table 3.3

Ideal Principal Participant Sample

Principal	Gender	Ethnicity	% of student population of low SES	School level
1	Female	White or Asian	50%	High school
2	Female	Black or Hispanic	75%	Middle
3	Any	Any	50–75%	Any
4	Male	White or Asian	50%	Any
5	Male	Black or Hispanic	75%	Elementary

Note. SES = socioeconomic status.

Recruitment Processes

The researcher utilized a three-phase recruitment process consisting of three electronic emails (see Appendix A). In Phase 1, the researcher enlisted the Region 12 ESC director of TIL Action Coaching to email all TIL participating school district

principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL trainers. For convenience, the researcher provided a sample email to the director. The initial email informed all TIL Action Coaching participant leaders of the study and requested a reply stating their consideration to participate. In Phase 2, the researcher sent a follow-up email to selected participants that included a cover letter communicating the purpose of the study, a participation request, a statement guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity, and a volunteer consent form. Phase 3 consisted of an email with a closed- and open-ended questionnaire using a common digital format in Google Forms. The advantages of utilizing an internet platform are simple and straightforward: The internet reduces time lost to travel and increases flexibility for participants to reflect and respond, resulting in a deeper discussion on the topics in a comfortable and nonthreatening environment.

Data Collection

This study applied three data collection methods—a questionnaire, an adapted MLQ 5X interview protocol, and a document review—to examine the perceived development of transformational leadership attributes described as the 4 I's: inspirational motivation, individual consideration, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990). Collecting multiple forms of evidence deepens the real-world connection to the phenomenon and bolsters case study findings (Yin, 2018). Furthermore, this “converging lines of inquiry” or triangulation of data strengthens the validity of the case study and provides multiple perspectives of reality (Yin, 2018, p. 127).

Questionnaires

Quality research relies on good questions, not on good answers (Yin, 2018). With this in mind, this case study used closed-ended demographic questions and descriptive open-ended questions (Appendices B and C). Through this questionnaire, the researcher compiled narrative evidence related to the participant's demographic information such as gender, ethnicity, number of years in education, number of years as an educational leader, and years of engagement in the TIL Action Coaching program. The purpose of the closed- and open-ended questionnaire was fourfold: (a) to help with participant selection, (b) to provide background and demographic information, (c) to know participants' experience with the TIL Action Coaching program, and (d) to understand perceptions and beliefs of leadership coaching. Before distribution, the researcher piloted the questionnaire to ensure each open-ended question was valid and clear.

Interviews

Common to qualitative case studies is the use of interviews. In using interviews, researchers aim to understand key insights of the participants' viewpoints. Yin (2018) described the interview process as guided conversations that can identify relevant sources of evidence. Like Yin (2018), Merriam and Tisdell (2016) defined the interview as a conversation with structure and purpose. No doubt, the interview is valuable to qualitative research as it allows the researcher to garner information not easily observed—such as emotions, thoughts, and intentions (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Gustafsson, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018).

The researcher selected the MLQ 5X and created an adapted interview protocol. The adapted interview protocol was used to explore the experiences and perspectives of

principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and trainers on principal development of the 4 I's (Bass & Avolio, 1990). The original quantitative MLQ 5X consists of eight dimensions containing the 4 I's domains and 45 questions overall; the instrument measures a person's strengths and weaknesses in transformational leadership behaviors, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale measuring frequency of behaviors (MacKie, 2016; Shatzer et al., 2014).

There are several advantages to using the MLQ 5X in qualitative research. First, the MLQ 5X assesses perceptions of leadership effectiveness of team leaders, supervisors, managers, and top executives, regardless of the organization's type or size (Bass et al., 2003). Second, the assessment has consistently contributed to multiple empirical research studies (Nedelcu, 2013; Shatzer et al., 2014). Third, the MLQ 5X effectively links a leader's style to expected performance outcomes (Bass, 1985; Bass et al., 2003). Finally, the MLQ 5X spans a broad range of leadership dimensions including the 4 I's, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, which are fundamental to this study (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Bass et al., 2003).

Interview protocol creation. The researcher established a five-step process to create the Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol (see Appendices D, E, and F). First, the researcher purchased an official copy of the MLQ 5X and an assessment manual through an online source (www.mindgarden.com). Second, questions reflecting each of the 4 I's were identified. Third, utilizing a table format, the researcher thoughtfully revised the MLQ 5X questions in such a way that maintained the original intent yet allowed principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and TIL Action Coaching trainers

the opportunity to express personal points of view within their contextual lived experiences regarding transformational leadership attributes and leadership coaching through the TIL Action Coaching program. Fourth, to ensure alignment, the researcher created a side-by-side view (see Appendix G) of the MLQ 5X questions and the interview question adaptation for the principals, the superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the TIL Action Coaching trainers. For the final fifth step, the researcher piloted the Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol to ensure questions aligned to the aim of this study and to validate effectiveness. A sample side-by-side comparison of the MLQ 5X question stems and the Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol question stems is shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Sample of the Side-by-Side Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X Question Stems and the Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Question Stems

MLQ 5X question	Adapted MLQ 5X interview questions		
	Principal	Superintendent (or principal supervisor)	Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainer
Intellectual stimulation			
30. I get others to look at problems from many different angles.	How does TIL Action Coaching encourage you to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others?	How does TIL Action Coaching encourage the principal to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others?	How does TIL Action Coaching encourage leaders to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others?
Inspirational motivation			
26. I articulate a compelling vision for the future.	Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching helping you communicate a vision for the future.	Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching helping you and the principal communicate a vision for the future.	Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching aiding school leaders to communicate a vision for the future.
Idealized influence			
21. I act in ways that build others' respect for me.	In what ways does TIL Action Coaching promote and build mutual respect between you and your followers?	In what ways does TIL Action Coaching promote and build mutual respect between the principal and followers?	In what ways does TIL Action Coaching promote and build mutual respect between the principal and followers?
Individual consideration			
31. I help others to develop their strengths.	In the TIL program, how much time is allotted toward developing others' strengths?	In the TIL program, how much time is allotted toward developing others' strengths?	In the TIL program, how much time is allotted toward developing others' strengths?

Note. Spanner headings represent the 4 I's of transformational leadership. TIL = Texas Instructional Leadership.

By adapting the systematic features of the MLQ 5X to elicit qualitative data, the researcher developed a qualitative tool as a unique approach to this study, serving two distinct functions. First, the researcher utilized a known validated tool (MLQ 5X) that directly correlates with the 4 I's of transformational leadership. Second, the researcher created an open-ended qualitative tool for principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and trainers to describe experiences, beliefs, and perceptions of how transformational leadership attributes are manifested in principals. The purpose of the Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol (see Appendices D–F) was to gain access to the perspectives and experiences of the principals, superintendent (or principal supervisor), and TIL Action Coaching trainer related to the 4 I's—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

The Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol laid the foundation to inform data collection and aligned with the purpose and research questions of the study. In keeping with Yin's (2018) descriptors, interviews provided rich insight on how participants perceived how the TIL Action Coaching program develops transformational leadership in school principals and what perceived behaviors and beliefs from the principals and superintendents (or principal supervisors) were crucial for successful TIL Action Coaching program implementation. The interview process utilized a semistructured design with flexibility for follow-up questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Documents

Documents collected for this study supported the purpose of this study on transformational leadership and the TIL Action Coaching program. Common to qualitative studies, document collection can be broadly defined as a wide range of written, visual, digital, and physical resources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For this study, the researcher sought to collect and analyze documents that shed light on the various ways TIL Action Coaching fosters the 4 I's of transformational leadership in principals. Congruent to the research questions in this study, the researcher analyzed two main types of documents.

First, the TIL Action Coaching training manual (TIL, 2019) and presentation notes demonstrated what TEA hopes to convey when training school leaders. The manual and presentation notes gave insight into what successful training includes—the scope and sequencing of ideas, the prioritized key concepts, and the types of embedded activities. Second, the Region 12 trainer annotated notes and reflections afforded the researcher valuable insight from the trainer's perspective. For example, anecdotal notes on what works and what does not, agenda flexibility, and personal reflections of self-efficacy as a trainer helped uncover meaning, develop understanding, and highlight relevance to the study. Table 3.5 demonstrates the application of the three data collection methods applied in the study: interviews, questionnaires, and document review. The triangulation of data served to strengthen the validity of the case study design.

Table 3.5

Data Collection and Possible Outcomes

Type of data	Participants	Process	Possible data outcomes
Interviews	Superintendents (or principal supervisors) Principals Region 12 ESC TIL Action Coaching trainers	Semistructured Online via Zoom platform	Perceptions of TIL Action Coaching effectiveness Quality of training & trainer Principal transformational skills Barriers of TIL implementation Manager-as-coach approach
Questionnaires	Superintendents (or principal supervisors) Principals Region 12 ESC TIL Action Coaching trainers	Open-ended Online via Google Doc, Microsoft Word, email	Principal transformational skills TIL Action Coaching program effectiveness
Document review	Region 12 ESC TIL Action Coaching trainers	Document retrieval	TIL trainer manual Trainer antidotal notes TIL website

Note. ESC = Educational Service Center; TIL = Texas Instructional Leadership.

Data Analysis Methods

This section detailed the data analysis decisions appropriate for a qualitative, single case study with embedded units of analysis. Experienced scholars have argued case study analysis can be unruly if the researcher does not carefully develop rigorous analytic approaches and protocols to avoid skewed empirical thinking (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Crowe et al., 2011; Gustafsson, 2017; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). The researcher used a deductive reasoning strategy to analyze multiple data sets ranging from concrete documents to descriptive accounts. A descriptive deductive analysis reported principal

transformational leadership findings of the 4 I's (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Bass et al., 2003) and the core elements of leadership coaching reflected in the TIL Action Coaching program, thereby indicating what components of the program foster transformational leadership skills in principals.

This study was shaped around three main strands: (a) transformational leadership theory, (b) leadership coaching, and (c) the TIL Action Coaching program. Therefore, the researcher gathered general constructs into those three scholarly strands. The research questions in the literature review drove each subunit of data within each strand. Based on the research questions, data subunits focused on (a) the 4 I's of transformational leadership, (b) the essential elements of leadership coaching, and (c) the TIL Action Coaching program. Then, as shown in Figure 3.2, the data were organized into units and subunits. The researcher applied a thematic coding framework to recognize significant patterns and themes of transformational leadership using the units and subunits as organization. Crowe et al. (2011) described a coding framework as being practical and efficient and including five stages: familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping, and interpretation.

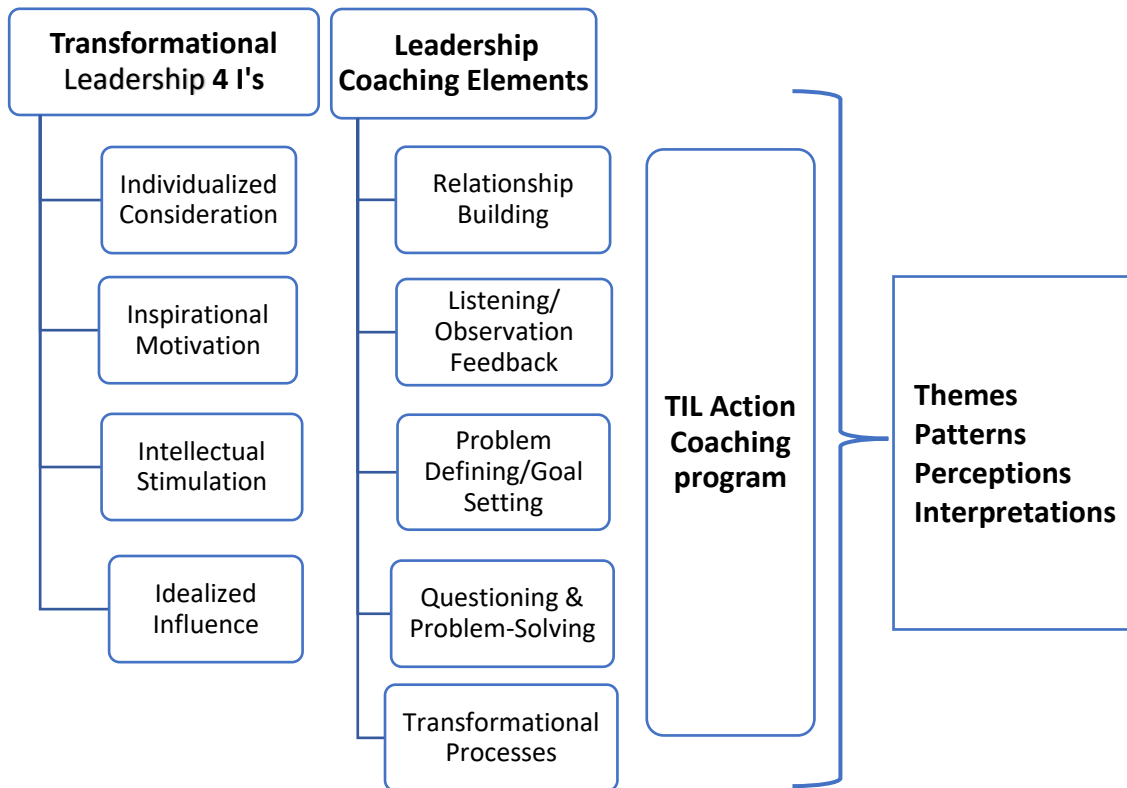


Figure 3.2. *Data Analysis Organizational Chart*. TIL = Texas Instructional Leadership.

To manage the data, the researcher utilized a third-party computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called NVivo to manage and organize the collected interviews, questionnaires, and document data. Scholars have confirmed the use of a digital database to accomplish the task of transferring raw data into units, subunits, and categories (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Crowe et al., 2011). Even though the software assists in the qualitative data analysis process, I was in control of assigning the data units into the appropriate codes or categories based on my data analysis plan (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Trustworthiness

Designing a case study required integrating a quality of trustworthiness (Baxter & Jack, 2008). To promote this study's trustworthiness and credibility, the researcher employed four strategies: triangulation, member checking, thick description, and bias clarification. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), triangulation examines evidence from various sources and provides a rationale justification for emerging themes. Yin (2018) identified four triangulation types: data, evaluator, theory, and methodology. Regardless of the type applied, triangulation is a "powerful strategy for increasing the . . . internal validity of your research" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 245). This study triangulated data beyond face-to-face interviews to include questionnaires, observation field notes, and TIL program training documents.

To enhance triangulation, the researcher employed rich, thick descriptions. Rich, thick description is an in-depth form of writing that vividly contextualizes the participants' actions, environment, relational contexts, and emotional reactions. This type of writing allows the reader to identify with the study's complexities and make internal connections with the findings of the study (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 1995). Member checking requires the researcher to ask the participants if the data presented accurately represent the data collected. For example, the researcher conducted a follow-up interview to allow the participants to comment on the findings and provide feedback on emergent themes and interpretations.

Self-reflective bias clarification established an open and transparent narrative of the study for effective reflexivity (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell and Poth (2018) described reflexivity as the act of acknowledging that

researchers bring to the study their interpretations of the data based on a variety of contextual approaches—cultural, social, gender, and so on. Scholars have warned that when data are ignored, misrepresented, or selected based on the researcher's preconceptions, validity and trustworthiness are lost (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Ethical Considerations

All participants in this research study participated voluntarily. The researcher explained the benefits as well as potential risks. Likewise, participant could choose to not participate in the study at any time (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Prospective participants were kept anonymous throughout the study and given pseudonyms to protect individual privacy. The following indicators were used to describe the following participants of each interview or questionnaire: S1 (superintendent or the assigned principal's supervisor), P1 (elementary principal), P2 (middle school principal), P3 (high school principal), and TR (Region 12 trainer). The researcher made the transcriptions and written notes available to the participants upon request and took careful consideration of the wishes of all participants when decisions about data were reported (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018).

Research Bias and Limitations

Researchers have an ethical duty to outline the limitations and potential pitfalls of biases in research studies (J. Smith & Noble, 2014). Bias in research refers to any inclination or influence that distorts results (Galdas, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; J. Smith & Noble, 2014; Yin, 2018). Qualitative researchers must demonstrate rigor and transparency relevant to methodological approaches (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Gustafsson,

2017; J. Smith & Noble, 2014). I had attended previous trainings with a Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainer; thus, I might be susceptible to favoring a positive outcome of the developmental application. Likewise, as a previous campus principal, I desired to see campus principals supported in authentic ways utilizing a coaching approach and improving transformational leadership skills.

Several limitations had to be considered at the onset of this study. First, due to the recent COVID-19 global pandemic response, the selection of schools within the Region 12 consortium that actively engage in the TIL Action Coaching might limit school participant choices. Second, the TIL Action Coaching program is considered a new program with limited contextual data from which to draw from. Third, the size of the district selected might make it challenging to sustain participant anonymity.

Summary

This chapter explained the methodology used for this qualitative single case study. The research questions and literature review laid the foundation of how leadership coaching was studied. In particular, this qualitative embedded single case study examined the 4 I's of transformational leadership—individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence—related to leadership coaching and the TIL Action Coaching program developed by TEA. In classic qualitative style, data collection comprised of multiple sources: interviews, a questionnaire with closed- and open-ended questions, and document review. Trustworthiness was established by triangulating data; using rich, thick description; member checking; and ensuring transparency of researcher bias.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

This chapter begins with a review of this case study on principal transformational leadership, including the purpose of the study, the research questions, data collected for the study, and the steps of data analysis. After the review, a description of each participant is presented to provide contextual perspective for the study. The main findings from this case study on principal transformational leadership regarding the TIL Action Coaching are the focus of this chapter.

Study Overview

The research questions formed the foundation for this qualitative single case study design (Yin, 2018). This case study was an embedded single case study because it encompassed one regional ESC in Waco, Texas. The boundaries consisted of a single case: (a) the place (Region 12 ESC), (b) the TIL Action Coaching leadership development program, and (c) the timeframe of the research (February 2021 to April 2021). The embedded units of analysis (Yin, 2014) were identified as the type of participant: principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 trainers.

A qualitative case study approach was appropriate for the study because leadership coaching involved multiple transformational leadership development dimensions for principals bounded in a specific context, the Region 12 ESC, and the contexts in which the participants were naturally embedded (i.e., their schools, districts, or the TIL Action Coaching program). The qualitative case study used deductive and

inductive methods with a constructivist perspective as I looked at multiple realities and life experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018) of principals, superintendents, and trainers as they participated in the TIL Action Coaching program through Region 12 ESC.

Participants were grouped into three units of analysis consisting of five campus principals, four superintendents or assistant superintendents, and three Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers. Participant details are presented in the following section.

In keeping with Yin's (2018) definition of a case study, I used a triad of empirical data collection methods through questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and documents. The data collected for this study included a nine-question questionnaire with closed demographic questions and open-ended perceptual prompts related to the TIL Action Coaching program. Interviews contained seven to nine questions per semistructured interview focused on the four transformational attributes of the MLQ. Four TIL Action Coaching resource documents were analyzed: (a) the 2019 training manual, (b) anecdotal trainer notes, (c) the TIL website, and (d) a Region 12 ESC promotional brochure. Documents were submitted by the trainers and Region 12 ESC or collected from the main TIL Action Coaching webpage. All questionnaires were formatted as a Google Form and distributed through electronic email. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, all the interviews were conducted using the Zoom platform through the internet.

As shown in Table 4.1, the findings for this study were determined using a six-step coding and analysis process, with the seventh step being a holistic cross-analysis of the embedded units of analysis. The ultimate goal of the analyses was to create emergent codes, which were organized into parent codes, child codes, and microcodes of analysis

using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. After completing the six steps, I analyzed the data across the embedded units of analysis.

Table 4.1
Data Analysis Process

Step	Analysis
1. Read and listen to the transcript.	Read transcript two times for accuracy
2. Add notes throughout the data that highlighted interesting concepts.	Annotated interesting concepts and wrote about them in the margin of the transcript
3. Determine emergent codes from initial notes from the transcript.	Created a list of codes in the NVivo platform and then read through each transcript to find commonalities, which were the emergent codes
4. Make connections between the emergent codes.	Emergent codes categorized to find the connections between codes
5. Repeat Steps 1–4 for each transcript	Repeated Steps 1–5 for each questionnaire, transcript, and document
6. Refine all emergent codes.	Analyzed and merged codes according to the embedded units of analysis
7. Cross-analyze the embedded units.	Created a list of similarities and differences

Setting

The setting for this study encompasses a consortium of 76 schools serviced within the Region 12 ESC located in Waco, Texas, 97 miles south of Dallas, 102 miles northeast of Austin, and 180 miles northwest of Houston. The Region 12 ESC building sits on the corner of a major highway, Texas State East Highway 6, and a major road, South Bagley Ave. Due to the large geographic area, Region 12 ESC provided a broad and rich diversity of schools for the study. Due to COVID-19 response protocols, all interviews and electronic questionnaires were conducted via the internet through Google Forms and

Zoom meetings. TIL Action Coaching documents were collected electronically from Region 12 ESC trainers and the researcher's professional development manual.

Participants

The participants in this qualitative study were grouped into three embedded units of analysis: principals, superintendents or principal supervisors, and trainers. All participants were experienced educators with 10 years or more of experience and currently working in a public or open-enrollment charter school district within the Region 12 ESC. Table 4.1 presents demographics in aggregate. All of the principals and superintendents served in schools and districts, respectively, with over 50% of students economically disadvantaged. Most of the participants were White, and the majority were female. Principals are defined as the head leader of an assigned campus. Superintendents or principal supervisors are leaders at the district level whose primary role is to oversee the district-wide systems and culture. Superintendents or principal supervisors included one head superintendent and three assistant superintendents. Lastly, the primary function of the Region 12 ESC trainer is to provide individual and collective professional development and support for all schools within the Region 12 consortium of schools. The connecting link for each of these participant groups was the TIL Action Coaching program created by TEA to build leadership capacity for school improvement.

Table 4.2

Participant Characteristics

Characteristic	Principals	Superintendents	Trainers	Total
Gender				
Female	4	3	2	9
Male	1	1	1	3
Ethnicity				
White	4	4	2	10
Other	1			1
Black			1	1
School level				
Elementary	4			
Secondary	1			
Type of district				
Urban	2			
Urban open-enrollment charter	2	1		
Rural	1	2		
Suburban		1		
Texas Instructional Leadership Action Coaching Experience				
1 year	1	2	2	5
2–2.5 years	4	2		6
3 years			1	1

Principals

All principals in this study have worked in education over 10 years. One female elementary principal was in her 1st year as the campus leader. Three female elementary principals had completed their 2nd year as campus leaders at the time of the study. One elementary principal worked on the same campus for 4 years. One male principal had worked at the same campus for 5 years. In Table 4.3, I illustrate the diverse attributes of

each participant and their respective schools. Then I present a narrative profile for each principal.

Table 4.3

Principal Profiles

Participant	Main components of profile
Principal 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elementary principal - 2.5 years of experience with Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching - Urban independent public school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Principal 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elementary principal - 1 year of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Urban public school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Principal 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elementary principal - 2 years of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Rural independent school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Principal 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elementary principal - 2 years of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Urban open-enrollment charter school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Principal 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Secondary principal - 2 years of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Urban open-enrollment charter school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population

Principal 1. Principal 1 identified her ethnicity as “other.” Principal 1 has been in education for over 10 years and has served as an elementary principal at a large, public school district located in the Region 12 ESC for 2 years. Principal 1 rated the TIL Action

Coaching program as 3 on a scale of 1–5, since she has been unable to implement TIL Action Coaching program to its fullest due to the campus response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Principal 1 stated the district implemented TIL to impact teacher growth and ultimately raise student achievement.

Principal 2. Principal 2 is a White woman with over 10 years of experience as an educator. She has been the elementary principal for 1 year at a large, urban public school district. Although she has only participated in the program for 1 year, Principal 2 rated the TIL Action Coaching program a 4 on a scale of 1–5, with 5 being *excellent*. Principal 2 felt the TIL Action Coaching program effectively modeled how to support teachers with personalized professional development. Principal 2 had never experienced coaching training and found her personal growth as a new campus principal highly valuable.

Principal 3. Principal 3 is a White, female elementary principal at a small, rural public school. She has 10 or more years of experience in education. Principal 3 has been in her current role for 2 years and has participated in the TIL program for 1 year. On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being *excellent*, Principal 3 rated the TIL Action Coaching program a 4, stating the district’s participation with TIL Action Coaching program has been a positive experience. Principal 3 described TIL as a great program despite the obstacles of COVID-19. Her involvement in TIL was a direct result of the superintendent’s directive for the district.

Principal 4. Principal 4 is a White woman with over 10 years in education. She currently works as an elementary principal at a small, open-enrollment charter school district in the Region 12 ESC. On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being *excellent*, Principal 4 rated

the TIL Action Coaching program a 5, stating the district's participation with TIL Action Coaching program has been a positive experience. The open-enrollment charter school district decided to implement TIL Action Coaching to improve teacher efficacy and build professional capacity within teachers.

Principal 5. Principal 5 has been in education over 10 years and is currently a secondary principal at a small, open-enrollment charter school district in the Region 12 ESC. On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being *excellent*, Principal 5 rated the TIL Action Coaching program a 4, describing the program as having met all expectations for implementing an effective coaching program that differentiates by campus based on need. Despite COVID-19 interruptions, Principal 5 felt the TIL Action Coaching experience gave his team the structure needed to develop teachers. When asked why his campus chose to participate, Principal 5 explained the district was looking to support the district instructional coaching initiative and wanted to ensure they had a systematic program to support those efforts.

Superintendents

Three of the district leaders worked as an assistant superintendents for their districts, whereas one was titled Superintendent of Schools and evaluated all principals. All superintendents in this study identified as White on the ethnic demographic question and all indicated they work in districts serving greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student populations. Two represented rural districts, one a suburban district, and one an urban open-enrollment charter. In Table 4.4, I provide the basic superintendent participant profile information. Following the district leader group

information, I provide a more detailed narrative of each participant to capture the essence of each individual.

Table 4.4

Superintendent Profiles

Participant	Main components of profile
Superintendent 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Superintendent of Schools - 1 year of experience with Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching - Rural public school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Superintendent 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction - 2.5 years of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Rural public school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Superintendent 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction - 2 years of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Suburban public school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population
Superintendent 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction - 1 year of experience with TIL Action Coaching - Urban open-enrollment charter school district - Greater than 50% economically disadvantaged student population

Superintendent 1. Superintendent 1 is a White woman and has been in education over 10 years. She has served as Superintendent of Schools for 1 year in a rural district with over 50% of the student population being economically disadvantaged. On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being *excellent*, Superintendent 1 rated the TIL Action Coaching program a 4, noting that the TIL Action Coaching program allowed her principals to standardize effective teaching. Superintendent 1 felt the TIL Action Coaching program

had improved principal performance. She specifically credited the “waterfall” document as helping her principals construct specific and timely feedback for their teachers. The waterfall document is a three-page t-chart graphic tool that lists and prioritizes specific high-leverage teacher actions—one column consists of instructional rigor, and the other consists of classroom management (see Appendix H). Actions are listed sequentially, in phases. Superintendent 1 choose to enroll her district in the TIL Action Coaching program to allow her team of principals to grow and learn together while becoming more instructionally aligned. At the time of this study, Superintendent 1 had completed her 1st year in the TIL Action Coaching.

Superintendent 2. Superintendent 2 is a White man and has been in education for over 10 years. Superintendent 2 has served as the assistant superintendent at a public school district in Central Texas for 2.5 years. On a scale of 1–5, Superintendent 2 rated his experience with the TIL Action Coaching program a 5 (*excellent*) and rated the program overall a 4. He described the TIL Action Coaching as a valuable program that drills down to almost every administrator’s weakness—instructional leadership. Superintendent 2 found the training materials to be concise, focused, and following true accountability for principals and principal supervisors, producing positive results for his district. Superintendent 2 chose to participate in the TIL Action Coaching program because he felt the district needed a better framework for walk-through classroom observations and desired long-term sustainability. With this decision, Superintendent 2 stated the coaching component provided by the TIL fulfilled that purpose and has made a significant impact in the 2 years since district implementation.

Superintendent 3. Superintendent 3 is a White woman and has been an educator for over 10 years. She has served in her current position as assistant superintendent for 7–9 years. The district she serves was described as a suburban district with over 50% of the student population economically disadvantaged. When asked how she would rate her experience with the TIL Action Coaching program, Superintendent 3 rated the program a 5, the highest rating. Superintendent 3 noted that she had learned a great deal by participating in the TIL Action Coaching program. The program’s specificity provided gave her team the focus needed to improve classroom instruction. Her district was mandated to participate in TIL Action Coaching due to the improvement required by state identification and the need to improve campus leadership. The district has completed 2 years of TIL Action Coaching.

Superintendent 4. Superintendent 4 is a White woman with over 10 years of experience as an educator. For the previous 2 years, Superintendent 4 has worked as assistant superintendent at a large, urban, open-enrollment charter system in Central Texas. Although she has only participated in the program for 1 year, Superintendent 4 rated TIL Action Coaching program as 5, *excellent*, the highest rating. Superintendent 4 felt the framework and content were excellent and especially appreciated the embedded, on-the-job coaching days for implementation fidelity. The charter school system completed its 1st year in the program and chose to participate to train principals on how to better support teacher growth.

Trainers

Three state-certified TIL Action Coaching trainers volunteered for this study. These Region 12 ESC trainers consisted of one Black woman with 3 years of trainer

experience, one White man with 2 years of trainer experience, and one White woman with 1 year of trainer experience. All trainer participants indicated they were TIL Action Coaching trainers certified through TEA and currently employed with Region 12 ESC in Central Texas.

Trainer 1. Trainer 1 is a White man who has been a certified TIL Action Coaching trainer for Region 12 for 1 year. Trainer 1 rated the program as 5, *excellent*, the highest rating. The trainer described his experiences as a TIL Action Coaching program trainer as “an excellent way to help schools determine the highest leverage action items to improve their campuses.” Trainer 1 rated his perception of the TIL Action Coaching program’s effectiveness on leadership development as a 5, highlighting that the TIL Action Coaching framework of protocols and systems that can be applied in any school. Trainer 1 stated any school could improve if the framework is followed with fidelity. Finally, Trainer 1 listed all core leadership coaching elements used in this study—relationship building; transformational processes; goal setting; listening, observation, and feedback; and questioning and assessment—as prominent levers in the TIL Action Coaching program. When asked which transformational leadership attributes he perceived to be dominant in the TIL Action Coaching program, Trainer 1 listed the 4 I’s of transformational leadership: individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation. As Trainer 1 offered no explanation, it was assumed Trainer 1 understood all attributes were dominant in the TIL Action Coaching program.

Trainer 2. Trainer 2 is a White woman who has worked as a Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainer for 1 year. Trainer 2 rated the program as 5, *excellent*, the

highest rating possible. To illustrate her perceived value of TIL Action Coaching, Trainer 2 provided an example of its impact on school leaders: “One principal supervisor participates in the training and role plays with her principals. . . . She is demonstrating to her staff that she is also a learner and willing to be vulnerable to be a better leader.” Trainer 2 rated the program a 4 on a scale of 1–5. She explained that although the training is excellent, she feels administrators respond differently based on expertise and confidence in coaching. In Trainer 2’s experience as a trainer for TIL Action Coaching, she listed relationship building; goal setting; listening, observation, and feedback; and questioning and assessment as the most prominent core leadership coaching elements in the program. Finally, Trainer 2 listed three of the 4 I’s—individual consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation—as key attributes fostered by the TIL Action Coaching program.

Trainer 3. Trainer 3 is a Black woman who has worked as a Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainer for 3 years. Trainer 3 rated her experiences as a trainer for the program as good. Trainer 3 described the training as “fascinating” but hard. “It brings expectations, order, and accountability to instructional leadership work. . . . It takes so much time for people to actually commit to this level of engagement. . . . People need a year to get the culture ready for the transition.” On a scale of 1–5, with 5 being *excellent*, Trainer 3 assigned a 4 regarding her perceptions of the TIL Action Coaching program’s effectiveness on leadership development. Trainer 3 explained that leadership development through TIL Action Coaching relies on mindset, and often she finds many are resistant to change. In her experience, Trainer 3 reported the most prominent effective core leadership coaching elements in TIL Action Coaching are that of listening,

observation, and feedback. Trainer 3 listed individualized consideration as the one transformational leadership attribute fostered through TIL Action Coaching.

Leadership Coaching Findings

In this section I present the findings based on five core leadership coaching elements I discovered from my understanding of the literature review: (a) transformational processes; (b) listening, observation, and feedback; (c) relationship building; (d) assessment and questioning; and (e) goal setting. This process therefore makes these findings unique in terms of analysis. Two of the five leadership coaching elements emerged in this study: transformational processes and listening, observation, and feedback (see Table 4.5). In the sections below, I organized the data first by the deductive category (core element of leadership coaching) and then by the inductive emergent themes within the categories. I present the nuances of meaning that were prominent within each theme related to the participants' experiences and understandings within each emergent theme. In alignment with case study research and embedded units of analyses, I display the data associated with each participant group (i.e., trainers, superintendents, and principals). When applicable, I embed the document review within each theme. In some instances, data did not emerge for all participant groups for all categories or themes.

Table 4.5

Leadership Coaching Elements, Themes, and Topics

Core element	Inductive theme	Topics
Transformational processes	Growth	<p>Growth through reflection: Principals gain new perspectives of leadership approaches and teacher growth</p> <p>Growth through collaboration: Principals linked superintendent involvement with connectedness and growth</p>
Listening, observation, and feedback		<p>Growth through personalized supports: Principals perceived growth and confidence through activities that personalized supports for teachers</p>

Transformational Processes Themes

Transformational processes in leadership coaching refer to the ability of principals to self-reflect on their own practices, thoughts, emotions, and actions as a means to experience professional change, to reach goals, and to foster change in others. Based on the inductive analysis, two themes emerged within the transformational process deductive category: (a) growth through reflection and (b) growth through collaboration. In the next section, I present the data supporting each theme by the participant group (i.e., unit of analysis).

Growth through reflection. The first theme that emerged regarding transformational processes was growth through reflection. Throughout the interviews, it became apparent that principals gained new perspectives on their leadership approaches with behaviors such as listening and self-awareness, linking leadership growth to teacher growth. For this study, new perspectives were defined as a new way of thinking or a new

viewpoint. Reflection influenced leadership development regarding how principals engaged teacher growth through the phenomenon of coaching.

Principals reported leadership coaching fostered professional growth and new perspectives on leadership approaches. As leaders gave attention to specific teacher needs, leadership coaching shaped points of view about growth; principals discovered the influence coaching had on leadership approaches. Before her participation in TIL Action Coaching, Principal 1, a leader of a large campus, identified herself as the type of leader with little empathy towards teachers; however, through leadership coaching, she learned to listen to her teachers with more empathy. She stated,

I'm able to show empathy more now. . . . I've always been a "Come on, grow up, get yourself going, you should be able to do it" [type of] person. But I would say taking that time to listen to what the other person is saying [so] you're really not telling people, you're listening them. And that is the important part of coaching. I believe with TIL, it helped me take a giant step forward.

Principal 1's response highlighted the influence leadership coaching had on her leadership approach with teachers when she listened with more empathy.

Principal 5, a campus leader of a small, secondary, urban charter school, acknowledged the coaching process fostered reflective practices and helped him internalize the impact of leadership behaviors:

When I think about self-awareness and self-management, self-regulation, . . . the reflective process of the coaching model fosters those kinds of behaviors. People [teachers and leaders] have to internalize the impact of the strategies [behaviors] they're using in the moment. It's that internalization of being a reflective person that [TIL] Action Coaching model definitely fosters.

Principal 5's response illustrates how leadership coaching fostered reflective practices centered around emotional intelligence and soft skills such as self-awareness, self-management, and self-regulation commonly associated with transformational leadership. As Principal 5 analyzed the coaching model of TIL Action Coaching, he likened the

reflection process as an internalization of behaviors and strategies and stated reflection through the coaching model impacted his leadership approaches.

Principal 4 echoed Principal 5 in the way coaching had “reframed” her thinking around leadership:

It’s [leadership coaching] helped me to think through the way that a teacher thinks about things differently . . . and helped me be more well-rounded in the way that I communicate things, the way that I process things and move forward. It [coaching] also helped me reframed the way that I think about leadership. As a leader, it’s less of “Do this” and it’s more of, “Let me help you make sure that you have the tools to make sure that this gets done” and then “Let me follow back up so that we can ensure that you’re doing it appropriately.”

Here, Principal 4 showed the importance of considering how leaders and teachers often approach problems from different viewpoints. Principal 4 explained that coaching enabled her to be more balanced in her thinking and in her approaches with teachers, such as not telling teachers what to do but providing them with the tools to make changes in their instructional practices.

Similar to Principal 4, Principal 3, a new principal of a small, rural campus, described how leadership coaching encouraged professional growth and shaped how she approached instructional improvement:

It’s transformed [me] a lot, actually. I’m still fairly new, so I feel like I’ve been growing and learning just as much as my teachers have. And so, I think it’s definitely shaped me and the things [instructional improvement] that I’ve been trying to do [with teachers].

Principal 3’s response described how leadership coaching promoted transformational growth by pushing her to think about instructional leadership practices differently. As a new principal, Principal 3 acknowledged the support she received through coaching.

The above testimonials from Principals 1, 2, 4, and 5 demonstrated how leadership coaching experiences broadened their views of themselves and the types of

leadership behaviors needed for improved teacher and leadership outcomes. The findings from principals in relation to transformational processes within leadership coaching focused on soft skills of leadership behaviors and strategies, as principals perceived coaching allowed them time to reflect and internalize behaviors and emotions.

Growth through collaboration. Another common trend among principals was growth through collaboration. Growth through collaboration included the concepts of less top-down leadership and a sense of connectedness with superintendents and colleagues. According to the principals, when superintendents actively engaged in coaching principals, they noticed professional transformational growth.

Throughout the theme of growth through collaboration, principals identified concepts centered on less heavy-handed leadership and the idea that when superintendents actively engaged in coaching principals, principals felt less isolated and more connected with the central office. From the follower perspective, principals stated superintendents' involvement in coaching positively influenced professional growth as a result of the "everyone-gets-coached" framework in the TIL Action Coaching program. Principal 4, a veteran elementary principal from an open-enrollment charter school district, expressed her superintendent's involvement galvanized the learning process for everyone because the most significant impact on growth was when everyone, including the superintendent, learned together.

Principals 1 and 5 confirmed this concept, expressing campus leaders cannot work in isolation; rather, connections to the central office through coaching strengthened the learning for all. Principal 1 stated,

We're all in this together, and it's not a top-down thing. We can't be pitted against each other. As a principal, I want to build that cohesiveness with my staff

and instructional team. The importance of building that cohesiveness within the district administration has to happen, because . . . I have been in a place [district] where you had to take care of yourself, and that definitely doesn't work.

Likewise, Principal 5 observed growth multiplied through the everyone-gets-coached framework. Principal 5 stated,

As the campus leader, . . . if I'm able to impact one instructional coach who [then] impacts 10 teachers, . . . it's exponential growth. The superintendent is being coached externally by the Action Coaching coaches, and then it [coaching] should flow down from there. I think that is probably the most transferable learning, . . . because sometimes I think what's missing is the district-to-campus connection.

Here, Principal 5 associated the multilevel coaching framework offered in the TIL Action Coaching program with growth through collaboration as it unified the central office and campus in ways not existing prior to leadership coaching.

Principal perspectives associated professional growth with the idea that superintendent engagement in coaching unified leaders and fostered a sense of connectedness. Everyone worked together towards a common goal and collectively learned how to coach together. Furthermore, the TIL website from the document review substantiated the above principal reflections on collaborative growth. The website defined TIL as a program that seeks to "support campus and district leaders on their ability to build the capacity of educators they manage." With that stated, principals stated superintendent involvement in coaching built their professional leadership capacity and bolstered collaborative learning for all involved.

Listening, Observation, and Feedback Theme

Based on the literature review, listening, observation, and feedback in leadership coaching is defined as the development of leaders through embedded real-time data.

Leaders have time to make meaningful connections between listening and observing teachers and providing appropriate feedback.

Document review. This study reviewed the TIL webpage as part of the document review. On the TIL webpage, the purpose and mission statement of the TIL Action Coaching program is “to foster continuous improvement by helping campus and district administrators grow concrete instructional leadership skills in the areas of observation and feedback.” The following section highlights data supporting the TIL mission statement and the theme. My analysis uncovered the inductive theme of growth through personalized supports within the listening, observation, and feedback deductive category.

Growth through personalized supports. Highly effective leadership coaching empowers coaches to unlock the potential of followers through mindful attention to individual needs. The emergent theme of growth through personalized supports centered around the idea that when principals engaged in challenging coaching activities such as scripting and role-playing to personalize the growth needs of their teachers, they sensed professional growth and confidence to continue with coaching practices. Personalized support, related to leadership coaching in this study, is defined as customization of observation and feedback according to individual needs for improved performance.

Principals identified the skill development of personalized supports, such as scripting feedback conversations learned through the TIL Action Coaching training activities, produced a sense of confidence and growth. Principals perceived the activities through the TIL such as scripting, role-playing, and video coaching conversations equipped them to better personalize supports for their teachers.

One example of such scripting activities, “Giving Effective Feedback—Ashley Anderson’s Script,” was reviewed in this study. Pulled from the TIL Action Coaching training manual (TIL, 2019), the exemplar script served as a model for school leaders to script out future coaching conversations. The adapted example in Table 4.6 shows that the document follows the “See-It, Name-It, Do-It” protocols suggested in *Get Better Faster* (Bambrick-Santoyo, 2016). Notice leaders must narrow the focus with questions about gaps in practice, prompting the follower to name the gap, and then practice the desired action with the follower through role-play.

The scripting exercise in Table 4.6 illustrates how principals and superintendents may experience some levels of uneasiness from prompting to role-play actional steps needed to improve practice. Principal 3 mentioned the importance of feeling confident to coach teachers: “I didn’t feel like I was suited enough to actually improve my own teachers. I felt like they’re the experts, but this has really improved my own growth and made me confident and to know what I’m doing.”

Table 4.6

Adapted Sample of an Exemplar Script: Giving Effective Feedback

Phase	Example script
See it	“Before jumping into independent practice, I saw you asking one procedural and one conceptual question. What was the impact on their practice?”
Name it	“Based on what we discussed today, what do you think your action step should be?” “What are the keys to closing the gap?”
Do it	“Let’s plan before we practice.” “We are going to practice with actual student work from today’s class, so I want to reflect on the exemplar in your lesson plan from today.” “Now that we have our exemplar, let’s take it live and role play.”

Likewise, Principal 4 placed importance on the systematic nature of TIL Action Coaching, claiming the clarity of systems and activities ushered in confidence and energy:

It feels very systematic. We're going to do this, and then we need to do this, and then we need to do this. I guess the process has never left me feeling like, "What am I going to do next?" The process has always left me feeling like, "Okay, well, here we go," which I think is helpful. As a leader, it energizes you because you're not left questioning.

Principal 4's response illustrated how the TIL Action Coaching processes provided explicit clarity, leaving her feeling less anxious about next steps. Although activities such as role-playing actionable steps with teachers challenged leaders, these activities left a lasting influence on professional growth and confidence.

Other principals identified activities such as scheduling more time in the classroom and advanced planning for personalized feedback as producing a sense of professional growth and confidence. Principal 5 interpreted the "customization of learning" with his teachers as an essential part of his professional growth as a principal: "Looking at the specific [teacher] skills has allowed me to really target gaps for teachers, to have more effective conversations as opposed to lots of checking-in type conversations." Moreover, Principal 5 recognized traditional professional development only gave superficial rewards. In contrast, TIL Action Coaching program provided him authentic, embedded professional growth through the ongoing coaching systems and activities, such as scripting and role-playing with a laser-like focus on instruction:

Any traditional professional development is exciting at first, but TIL Action Coaching process requires follow-up, and that's where I struggle most—[knowing how] to keep the process going and stay focused. The TIL helps me stay focused on the coaching process. By that I mean the schedule, the regular check-ins, the scripting, the relearning, and taking it one kind of step at a time. It helps [me] focus on pedagogical skills and the process of how we coach [our teachers]. Focus is probably the highest motivational impact and the biggest change for me.

The above response from Principal 5 highlighted how leadership coaching systems and protocols through the TIL Action Coaching program fostered motivation to coach teachers for continuous instructional improvement.

The principal responses above illustrate that challenging activities within the TIL Action Coaching program provided opportunities to develop skills to personalize supports for teachers, translating into more confidence and motivation towards future coaching efforts to develop teachers. As evidenced in the document review, trainer anecdotal notes and agendas validated principals' remarks, as trainer agendas instructed principals to "create an observation, feedback schedule based on teacher prioritized needs and schedule bi-weekly teacher data analysis with response planning times." These trainer notes shed some light on the TIL Action Coaching program's dedication to ensure principals remain focused on instructional leadership.

The act of learning how to personalize teacher supports through activities such as scripting observation-feedback meetings created a sense of accomplishment and confidence. Principals were able to increase time in classrooms and provide valuable feedback to teachers. This section highlighted the inductive emergent theme of growth derived from two of the five leadership coaching core elements—transformational processes and listening, observation, and feedback. Interestingly, this study found principals were the only participant group to place significant importance on leadership coaching experiences related to activities.

4 I's of Transformational Leadership Findings: Intellectual Stimulation Themes

The four attributes, widely known as the 4 I's of the transformational leadership theoretical framework were foundational for this qualitative case study. Based on the

literature review, the 4 I's identified by Bass and Avolio (1990) are intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence. One of the four transformational leadership attributes surfaced among participants—intellectual stimulation. Intellectual stimulation encourages followers to look for new, creative approaches to problem-solving. As shown in Table 4.7, the data revealed the emergent theme of challenge as participant groups identified three areas that impacted leadership behaviors: (a) challenge through shared leadership, (b) challenge through systems and protocols, and (c) challenge through vulnerability.

Table 4.7

Intellectual Stimulation Themes and Topics

Theory attribute	Inductive theme	Topics
Intellectual stimulation	Challenge	Challenge through shared leadership Superintendents gained awareness of principal development and changed leadership approaches with principals.
		Challenge through systems and protocols Principals perceived systems promoted new approaches to complex problems and leadership. Superintendents believed the waterfall document changed principal effectiveness.
		Challenge through vulnerability Trainers observed leadership transformation through activities that promoted vulnerability.

The embedded units of analysis (i.e., principals, superintendents, and trainers) in this study noticed participation in TIL Action Coaching challenged behaviors and beliefs about approaches to leadership development, systems and protocols, and vulnerability. For this study, challenge involved a shift in behaviors and beliefs towards

transformational growth and principal instructional leadership improvement. Findings from this study demonstrated the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation centered around three main nuances of meaning:

1. Superintendents were challenged through shared leadership as they gained a new awareness of principal development.
2. Principals stated systems and protocols challenged how they approached leadership, whereas superintendents indicated the waterfall document protocol challenged principal growth.
3. Trainers perceived leaders were challenged through activities requiring vulnerability.

Challenge through shared leadership. It is important to distinguish shared leadership from collaboration, as the two are often viewed as the same. Whereas shared leadership involves collaboration, collaboration does not always involve shared leadership. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), collaboration occurs when people work together to produce or create something. In contrast, shared leadership occurs when leaders influence one another to maximize effectiveness (Northouse, 2015). Therefore, the concept of shared leadership in this study focused on the idea that the task of coaching for growth and development was shared through a collaborative effort between all participant groups (the principals, the superintendents, and the trainers) rather than a team led by one individual (Kukenberger & D’Innocenzo, 2019). In this way, leaders (i.e., principals, superintendents, and trainers) manage each other and take collective responsibility for the outcomes.

Superintendents expressed active involvement in TIL Action Coaching increased shared leadership and increased awareness of principal needs, fostering new beliefs and behaviors about leadership development approaches with principals. A veteran assistant superintendent in a suburban school district, Superintendent 2 noted the “hands-off” approach from the central office had not resulted in better outcomes regarding principal development. However, using the TIL Action Coaching processes, Superintendent 2 attributed his gained awareness stemmed from direct involvement with the principals. He recognized how his behaviors needed to shift from teacher-focused to principal development focused:

My direct involvement changed the dynamics of our professional development conversations so that we could talk about how *what* we do has an important and direct impact on how well the teachers do. It was important for me in my role to shift. . . . I changed from trying to focus on teacher development to focus on principal development for [instructional] improvement.

As a superintendent of a small rural district, Superintendent 1 was challenged through TIL Action Coaching to build principal leadership capacity:

With the more veteran principal, I think it’s helped me see that while he has been a principal for a while at different levels, he had difficulty giving specific, coachable feedback to teachers. I’m seeing the layers [of coaching skills] that are being added to build his toolbox. I gained an awareness of principal needs through guided, specific opportunities to look at each principal within the perspective of the learning. . . . I was able to help coach them in a way that I would not have been able to do before the [TIL Action Coaching] training.

The experiences of Superintendents 1 and 2 demonstrated how leadership coaching engagement shifted viewpoints about principal instructional leadership development and how leadership coaching built instructional leadership capacity in principals.

Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic response limiting her presence on campuses, Superintendent 3 indicated her involvement in leadership coaching compelled

her to rely on dialogue rather than physical presence and visibility, pushing her toward having a greater self-awareness in how she approached principals:

We've [principals and I] been able to have some conversations that have been frank but enlightening, and those [conversations] have impacted my own self-awareness in how I approach my principals. I think being able to go through the coaching process during COVID has helped develop some of my own soft skills with my principals that have ended up impacting campus culture and leadership.

Superintendent 3's comments underscored how superintendents involved in leadership coaching were challenged in two different ways. First, Superintendent 3 viewed shared leadership as the driving force behind principal need awareness; therefore, she approached principal development differently (i.e., utilizing conversation and dialogue rather than visible presence). Second, Superintendent 3 stated shared leadership challenged her to look inward and develop the soft skills needed to improve her principals since the COVID-19 pandemic response required more remote communication and less physical presence on campuses. Data regarding intellectual stimulation revealed that superintendents were challenged due to active engagement in TIL Action Coaching and understood awareness of principal needs forged new beliefs and behaviors in how they approached principal development.

Challenge through systems and protocols. Challenge through systems and protocols related to the concept that transformational leaders motivate followers through systems and protocols to challenge the status quo and better the organization. Principals sensed the focus on systems and protocols challenged leadership to approach complex issues differently. Superintendents perceived protocols such as the waterfall document provided instructional leadership clarity for principals and challenged campus leaders to look at new approaches to the complex problems.

Principals understood the TIL Action Coaching systemic framework challenged them to consider new ways to solve complex problems. Elementary Principal 1 emphasized systems and protocols challenged her to recognize why complex problems cannot be solved with compliance check-off lists:

It has been very important to be able to go in and drill down [with systems] to what the true problem is on the campus. Prior to COVID, we went through a lot of the TIP [Targeted Improvement Plan] trainings, and, as the principal, I started realizing we were checking a lot of boxes, but not to the complexity we should be. . . . It [TIL Action Coaching systems] has been a true eye-opener.

Similar to Principal 1, secondary Principal 5 shared how systems and protocols challenged how he approached everyday problematic issues. Principal 5 admitted he had been a “reactionary leader” before coaching, but the “systemic nature of the protocols” improved his ability to anticipate problems:

This process says that before we get into the problem or troubled situation, we’re going to be having conversations of setting up proactive plans, setting up success criteria for specific activities or tasks, and then having specific action steps that then we revisit it the next time we come together. Through [TIL coaching] protocols, I’ve learned to be more proactive *before* I get in some kind of problem.

Principal 5’s comments illustrate how systems and protocols significantly challenged his approach to leadership, from a leader who reacted to problems to a leader who proactively predicted future problems. In the same way, explicit systems and protocols challenged Principal 4 to think differently about how she communicated with teachers.

Principal 4 stated,

This explicitness and programmatic process is what we as leaders and what teachers need in order to get things done. We just do. And so I think it’s helped me to think through the way that a teacher thinks about things differently. I think it’s helped me be more well-rounded in the way that I communicate things, the way that I process things and move forward. I think it all goes back to the benefits of the systematic nature of coaching.

Principal 4's above response underscored the importance of systems and processes in leadership. Principal 4 acknowledged systems pushed her to consider how teachers approach instruction and compelled her to reframe how she communicated with teachers.

In contrast, Principals 2 and 3 emphasized how systems such as setting weekly agendas and scheduling classroom visits reaped rewards of teacher approval and kept them focused on the most important thing—instructional best practice. Principal 3 recalled,

I have a weekly agenda now, but I make sure that I hit so many classrooms every single week, which that was not there before. I now have a system to organize it, making sure that the teachers see me in the classroom. Teachers love seeing me in the classrooms now.

Principal 2 echoed Principal 3's response as she perceived systems and protocols challenged her ability to stay focused on the most critical work, linking her own new growth to teacher new growth: "I think it [coaching system] has really helped me to stay focused on the most important work. . . . I've been really excited to see the change that has happened with our teachers in just small, incremental steps along the way."

The above responses from principals exemplify leaders who take on the attribute of intellectual stimulation to approach complex problems in new and creative ways. For Principal 5, systems and protocols paved the way for transformational leadership, as evidenced in his move to be less of a reactionary leader and more of a proactive leader. Principals 1, 3, and 4 demonstrated transformational leadership attributes as they discovered new ways of approaching communication, focus, and time management, thus promoting a sense of new growth in leadership performance. Principals in this study understood the systems and protocols in TIL Action Coaching program propelled new

ways of thinking about leadership performance and acquired character attributes of intellectual stimulation within transformational leadership.

Superintendents stated systems and protocols such as the waterfall document changed principal leadership performance and provided district leaders energy to approach problems in new ways. As shown in Table 4.8, the waterfall document utilized in the TIL Action Coaching program supplies leaders with a concrete resource to identify high-leverage teacher coaching needs for leaders. A waterfall document is a tool that prioritizes teacher actions for instructional rigor and classroom management (see Appendix H). As the sample in Table 4.8 demonstrates, the waterfall document helps guide the leader to find a teacher's area of needed growth in two main areas—classroom management and instructional rigor.

The document begins with priority action Step 1 (routines and procedures or developing effective lesson plans) and continues down the list. The principal analyzes where teacher growth is needed most on the list and then moves down the list after each action step is mastered. Each action step is broken down into micro or bite-sized steps to allow leaders to provide specific and manageable feedback to teachers.

Table 4.8

Sample of the Waterfall Document: Phase 1

Top action steps used by instructional leaders to launch a teacher's development	
Management trajectory	Rigor trajectory
Develop essential routines & procedures	Write And internalize lesson plans
1. Routines & Procedures 101: Design and Roll Out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan & practice critical routines and procedures moment by moment. Explain what each routine means and what it will look like. Write out what teacher and students do at each step, and what will happen with students who don't follow the routine. Plan & practice the rollout: how to introduce routine for the first time. Plan the "I Do": how you will model the routine. Plan what you will do when students don't get it right. 	1. Develop Effective Lesson Plans 101: Build the foundation of an effective lesson rooted in what students need to learn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write precise learning objectives that are data-driven (rooted in what students need to learn based on analysis of assessment results) Curriculum plan-drive Able to be accomplished in one lesson Deliver a basic "I Do" as a core part of the lesson. Design an exit ticket (brief final mini-assessment) aligned to the objective.

Superintendents stated TIL Action Coaching systems and protocols such as the waterfall document challenged principal leadership performance and energized district leaders to view problems in new and creative ways. Superintendents understood the challenges principals faced as instructional leaders; however, they admitted most principals (including themselves) lacked the skill set to coach. Superintendent 1 noted the concrete nature of the waterfall document clarified the pervasive issue with instructional leadership in her district: "It was the lack of specific coachable feedback that we were not doing prior to this work." Superintendent 2 agreed with Superintendent 1 by

acknowledging the missing link for his principal's leadership development was the need for a "tangible system," which would help his principals stay focused and not become overwhelmed.

Superintendents explained systems and protocols fostered new approaches to the familiar yet complex problems, resulting in renewed energy for school administrators.

When superintendents actively participated and experienced success, they were reinvigorated and energized by the work. Superintendent 3 stated,

I'm so excited about it [TIL systems], because I've been in this particular position for about 7 years, and so you begin to feel in a rut. I feel these systems and trainings have reinvigorated me. It's when you see the way everything builds upon one another, and it [waterfall document] gives real concise action points, I think it's just going to help us to all be so much more successful in a systematic way moving forward.

Superintendent 1 described the energy she received after every coaching protocol training:

I'm seeing principal growth as instructional leaders and the energy that we've gotten from that [growth] has been wonderful. . . . We leave those days [of coaching training] really tired and full of ideas, but it is energizing. Prior to TIL Action Coaching and the waterfall document, this type of work [coaching] did not exist. . . . It [waterfall document] has been instrumental to our success.

Responses from Superintendents 1 and 3 demonstrate how systems and protocols fostered individual and team energy when taking on complex issues such as teacher instructional practices.

Superintendent 2 expanded on the impact systems and protocols had on his principals' sense of confidence and success:

The principals started off training being uncomfortable, but they soon began to experience some success in terms of having a conversation with a teacher that wasn't just praise . . . but point[ing] out a specific area of coaching that needed to be addressed. As a result, they saw marked improvement. And that felt good. I saw smiles and surprised reactions of, "This isn't so hard" or "This really works."

So that was helpful for the principals in building their self-confidence, [knowing] they can be effective instructional leaders.

Like Superintendents 1 and 3, Superintendent 2 made comments demonstrating how systems and protocols motivated and energized him while observing principals gain confidence to coach teachers.

Coaching protocols such as the waterfall document guided leaders through the complex maze of helping teachers grow in classroom instructional practices and provided the confidence and energy needed for improved campus and district leadership. In doing so, district leaders and principals mirrored traits associated with intellectual stimulation within the transformational leadership theoretical framework.

Challenge through vulnerability. For this study, communication was defined as the verbal and nonverbal transmission of information. Trainers understood that the behaviors of district and campus leaders changed when placed in environments that nudged them towards vulnerability. Because school administrators are often viewed as good at everything, trainers noticed leaders struggled with activities such as scripting and role-playing requiring transparency and vulnerability. However, trainers observed transformational change when principals and district leaders engaged in activities that fostered transparency and vulnerability.

Data trends emerged as trainers claimed superintendents and principals transformed as they were challenged through training activities that fostered transparency and vulnerability in a safe, nonthreatening environment. Trainers noted TIL Action Coaching training activities such as scripting, role-playing, and feedback from peers unified leaders around a common language. They invited leaders to embrace moments of

vulnerability without fear of judgment. Trainer 3 recalled how one of her districts “transformed” themselves through TIL Action Coaching activities:

What I’ve seen that’s been transformational is their willingness to collaborate, to be vulnerable, and put themselves in the hot seat. They role-play with each other, and then they’re giving each other feedback constantly. So, you can see that as a team, they are really developing.

Trainer 3’s response illustrates how leaders take on attributes of intellectual stimulation when challenged to accept mistakes and communicate with transparency and vulnerability through the various training activities such as role-playing coaching sessions with their peers.

Like Trainer 3, Trainer 2 testified leadership teams welcome more risk when they understand the purpose behind the training activities:

I think mindset is everything. You got to really, truly have an understanding beyond just using a framework of what your why is and what you’re trying to do and you have to embrace it. Everybody gets coached. It doesn’t matter who you are. I think a culture of high expectations and a culture of being vulnerable is important for anybody to transform. I don’t think it’s something that an outside person can make you do. The model serves as a mirror just to see yourself and be more self-aware.

Like Trainer 3, Trainer 2’s claim illustrates how leaders who have the mindset to take a risk and be vulnerable are those who genuinely transform themselves and their teams. She argued vulnerability is not something an outside trainer can make you do; instead, it must come from an inward desire to take the risk and be transformed.

Trainer 1 agreed with Trainers 2 and 3, adding training activities such as scripting challenged yet improved leadership through times of vulnerability:

So there’s like a push-pull of how much trainers can put on staff [leadership teams] because this [training] requires vulnerability for a leader to be successful. I often see a resistance to scripting because it takes a measurable amount of vulnerability.

Here, Trainer 1 placed importance on vulnerability and claimed that for transformation to occur in leaders, principals and superintendents must be willing to take the risk of making mistakes in front of their peers and followers. The above experiences from trainers identified vulnerability as the linchpin for leadership transformation, as beliefs and behaviors were changed through activities requiring transparency and emotional risk.

Cross-Analysis of Embedded Units of Analysis

In this section, I present the analysis of each embedded unit of analysis (i.e., the principals, the superintendents, and the trainers) as the data related to the two theoretical frameworks presented in the literature review (leadership coaching and transformational leadership) and the emergent themes within the deductive categories. The dominant themes for leadership coaching were transformational processes and listening, observation, and feedback. Regarding transformational leadership theory, the dominant attribute was intellectual stimulation, as shown in Table 4.9. Next, I present the similarities and differences between the dominant themes and interpret important nuances of meanings within each deductive category.

Table 4.9

Cross Analysis of Embedded Units of Analysis

Deductive category	Inductive theme	Topics with nuances of meaning
Transformational processes Listening, observation, and feedback	Growth	Growth through reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals gained new perspectives of leadership approaches and associated teacher growth with their own professional growth.
		Growth through collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals connected superintendent engagement with increased connectedness and professional growth.
		Growth through personalized support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals associated growth and confidence through TIL Action Coaching activities designed to personalize supports, such as observation feedback meetings for teachers.
Intellectual stimulation	Challenge	Challenge through shared leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superintendents gained new awareness of principal needs and increased shared leadership for principal development.
		Challenge through systems and protocols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principals said systems promoted new approaches to complex problem and leadership performance. Superintendents understood the waterfall document impacted principal effectiveness to solve complex problems.
		Challenge through vulnerability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainers perceived leadership transformation through coaching activities requiring vulnerability.

Principals: Leadership Coaching

Within transformational processes and its emergent theme of growth, findings of this study revealed principals understood TIL Action Coaching training produced significant principal growth in three ways: (a) through reflective practices (transformational processes); (b) through collaboration with central office supervisors (transformational processes); and (c) through the coaching activities, systems, and protocols offered in TIL Action Coaching trainings (listening, observation, and feedback). First, principals “reframed” their thinking surrounding leadership approaches through reflective practices as they shifted perspectives and associated teacher growth with their own. Principal 5 described reflective practice through leadership coaching facilitated the time he needed to “internalize the impact of the strategies” used with teachers. Leadership coaching paved the way for principals to take on new mindsets related to soft skills such as self-awareness, listening, and empathy; therefore, reflective practices from TIL Action Coaching improved principals’ leadership effectiveness and teacher growth.

Second, principals found exponential growth through collaboration as it related to the TIL Action Coaching framework and transformational processes. Principals stated superintendent involvement in TIL Action Coaching felt “less top-down” and produced less isolation and more connectedness with the work environment. Principals liked the internal managerial coaching approach where everyone gets coached, from the superintendent to the teacher, bridging the two worlds of campus life and central office. Third, principals understood the TIL Action Coaching systems and protocols such as

scripting observation feedback meetings empowered them to effectively personalize supports, which fostered a sense of accomplishment and confidence.

In summary, principals interviewed from the study highly regarded the leadership coaching experiences through the TIL Action Coaching, expressing the program pushed them to reflect on their leadership practices in new ways and empowered them to personalize supports for teacher growth in systematic ways. Furthermore, principals communicated the TIL Action Coaching managerial coaching approach gave them a strong sense of connectedness with their superintendent. The systems and training activities such as scripting equipped them to provide specific, personalized supports to improve teacher performance. In the end, principals reported a renewed sense of energy and confidence.

Principals: Transformational Leadership

Revealed in the literature review, leaders with intellectual stimulation attributes challenge the status quo and find creative approaches to problem-solving (Bass, 1985). In the deductive category of intellectual stimulation, principals who engaged in TIL Action Coaching training placed importance on the framework through systems, protocols, and training activities; as a result, principals discovered new approaches to complex problems and leadership performance. Since the TIL Action Coaching framework required superintendents to actively participate, superintendents were also impacted by leadership coaching. For example, Superintendent 3 explained the systems and protocols of the waterfall document “reinvigorated” her as she observed her principals grow in instructional leadership. Systems, protocols, and activities such as scripting, and role-playing facilitated new perspectives in campus leaders on problem-solving and translated

leadership development to teacher growth. The TIL training manual, trainer notes, and agendas related to the TIL Action Coaching program validated principal perspectives. The program relies heavily on equipping school leaders through the lens of coaching protocols and systems. Findings from the principal unit of analysis showed that the TIL Action Coaching program drove new ways of thinking about leadership performance; thus, principals attained character attributes of intellectual stimulation within transformational leadership.

Superintendents: Transformational Leadership

In the deductive category of intellectual stimulation, superintendents who participated in TIL Action Coaching training identified two themes: (a) challenge through shared leadership and (b) challenge through systems and protocols. Shared leadership in this study was defined as the act of coaching for growth, and leadership development is shared through a collaborative effort. From this viewpoint, superintendents were challenged to take more ownership or shared leadership of principal development after actively participating in the coaching process and seeing principal growth needs up close. Superintendent 1 acknowledged her involvement provided “specific opportunities to look at each principal within the perspective of the learning.” From this viewpoint, superintendents took on the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation as they adopted new behaviors and attitudes to solve the leadership development conundrum for principals. Superintendents stated active engagement in coaching fostered awareness and clarified the strengths and weaknesses of their campus leaders, bringing on a new sense of purpose and resolve to provide continuous support for principal leadership development and ultimately student achievement.

Regarding the second theme of challenge through systems and protocols, superintendents highly regarded the waterfall document as significant to principals' capacity to creatively approach complex problems for effective leadership. District leaders identified the waterfall document utilized in the TIL Action Coaching program as a concrete tool to identify leaders' high-leverage teacher coaching needs and build the principal's skill performance. As systems and protocols laid the foundation for principal teams to think differently about instructional leadership, superintendents felt a renewed sense of energy and purpose for the important work of principal development. In all, superintendents reported the time invested in TIL Action Coaching program was well spent, as active engagement in TIL Action Coaching program led to shared leadership for principal development and a greater awareness of principal growth needs.

Trainers: Transformational Leadership

In the deductive category of intellectual stimulation, trainers revealed the theme of challenge through vulnerability. Trainers recognized principals and superintendents are often associated with perfection and having all the correct answers; however, they adamantly emphasized that as transformational leaders, school leaders must be willing to risk making mistakes in front of their peers and followers. For trainers, true transformation happens as a direct result of taking risks and participating in activities requiring acts of vulnerability. Trainers noted TIL Action Coaching training activities often asked leaders to embrace moments of vulnerability and propelled leaders to break the mold of the status quo through training activities such as scripting, role-playing, and receiving feedback from peers and subordinates. Findings from this study showed the

perspective from trainers validated the transformational attribute of intellectual stimulation when leaders engaged in vulnerability.

Similarities and Differences

Principals and superintendents identified with attributes found in intellectual stimulation, although each held different nuances of meaning between them. Principals placed high regard on leadership coaching as a means to develop instructional leadership and seemed less aware of acquiring transformational leadership attributes. In contrast to principals, superintendents focused their attention more on how the by-products of leadership coaching influenced campus leaders rather than the act of leadership coaching itself. Zero themes emerged related to leadership coaching core elements regarding superintendents, and only one of the four transformational leadership attributes—intellectual stimulation—rose to the top. Although trainers valued leadership coaching, they targeted the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation through vulnerability; trainers strongly believed the activities and protocols of TIL Action Coaching fostered transformational leadership through challenging moments of vulnerability.

All participant groups agreed on three primary ideas within the theoretical frameworks (leadership coaching and transformational leadership) reviewed in this study. First, each group recognized leadership coaching through the TIL Action Coaching framework leveraged growth for all everyone—principals, superintendents, and teachers. Reflective practices and protocols encouraged principals to growth for themselves and for teachers differently. Superintendents mentioned active involvement increased awareness of principal needs and galvanized plans for sustainable leadership development.

Likewise, trainers vowed that all school leaders grew in transformative behaviors when individuals and teams engaged in moments of vulnerability through coaching activities.

Principals interpreted activities, systems, and protocols to challenge how they problem solved for teacher growth. Superintendents zeroed in on the waterfall document as a valuable tool for principal development. Interestingly, trainers' responses served primarily to validate most of the perceptions and beliefs expressed by the principals and superintendents.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings from my qualitative case study with multiple embedded units of analysis on how the TIL Action Coaching program fosters principal transformational attributes. Findings were reported from the closed- and open-ended questionnaires, interviews, document reviews, and the themes that emerged from the collected qualitative data.

Evidence in this study demonstrated that the leadership coaching phenomenon influenced principals in transformational processes related to reflection; collaboration; and listening, observation, and feedback as well as the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation. Superintendents and principals understood intellectual stimulation through the lens of shared leadership. Specifically, the TIL Action Coaching managerial coaching framework (e.g., trainers coach superintendents, who then coach principals, who then coach teachers) and challenging activities such as scripting and role-playing fostered exponential principal growth and left superintendents optimistically energetic about the sustainability of leadership development. Finally, the

trainers reported observing transformational leadership attributes in superintendents and principals as a direct result of vulnerability through training activities.

Using thematic coding and cross-analysis, multiple emerging themes became evident within the leadership coaching phenomenon and the transformational leadership strands collected from the single case study with embedded units of analysis. The leadership coaching deductive category of transformational processes included the inductive theme of growth and two nuances of meaning: (a) growth through reflection and (b) growth through collaboration. The leadership coaching deductive category of listening, observation, and feedback included nuances of meaning related to personalized supports.

Within the strand of transformational leadership, the deductive category of intellectual stimulation included the emergent inductive theme of challenge with three nuances of meaning: (a) challenge through shared leadership, (b) challenge through systems and protocols, and (c) challenge through vulnerability. In the next chapter, I synthesize themes discovered from the literature review, questionnaire, semistructured interviews, and document review and answer the research questions presented in Chapter One. Finally, I provide the implications of this study for leaders and outline recommendations to strengthen current practices.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

The following sections discuss the findings through the lens of two theoretical frameworks (transformational leadership and leadership coaching), linking this research to previously reviewed literature. This chapter summarizes the research findings from the literature review and single case study with embedded units of analysis. In addition, I provide practical implications and suggest recommendations for future studies related to leadership coaching and transformational leadership. Finally, the limitations of my research and a final summary bring the chapter to a close.

Overview of the Study

Problem of Practice

Principals are called to be instructional leaders, as they are tasked with developing teacher instructional capacity to raise student achievement (James-Ward, 2013; Knight, 2007). Yet, many campus leaders face unprecedented challenges such as increasing accountability; rising expectations from parents; teacher shortages; student well-being; and, most recently, global COVID-19 pandemic response protocols (Urlick et al., 2021). It is not surprising to see principals discouraged, isolated in the work, or leaving the profession altogether (Levin & Bradley, 2019; Northouse, 2001). Often these beliefs and behaviors from principals stem from a lack of ongoing embedded support and authentic growth opportunities to successfully face these challenges and be effective instructional leaders (Anderson, 2017; Duke, 2014; Espinoza & Cardichon, 2017; Ray, 2017).

Principals tasked with leading modern complex school systems require transformational leadership attributes, identified by Bass (1985) as individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Bozer & Jones, 2018; Gray, 2018a; Kraft et al. 2018). TEA developed the TIL Action Coaching program to support principal instructional leadership development through leadership coaching (TEA, 2020). Since the beginning of TIL Action Coaching in 2017, Texas educators do not have empirical evidence demonstrating whether the program effectively equips principals with the coaching skills necessary to build instructional leadership capacity and whether leaders grow in transformational leadership as a result of the program.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to understand how the new TIL Action Coaching fostered transformational leadership attributes in campus principals for leadership development. The TIL Action Coaching program included, but was not limited to, the development of principals into effective instructional coaches for improved teacher classroom performance and leadership development. Transformational leadership attributes included idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990). Three research questions guided this study.

1. What are the beliefs and perceptions of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers regarding the TIL Action Coaching program?
2. What do principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers perceive as critical TIL Action Coaching

components for principal development related to the 4 I's of transformational leadership?

3. How might the TIL Action Coaching experiences and insights of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers align with the core elements of leadership coaching?

Overview of Methodology

I used a qualitative, single case study with multiple units of analysis. The single case study consisted of principals and superintendents representing districts from a consortium of 76 schools serviced through Region 12 ESC located in Waco, Texas and Region 12 ESC employed TIL trainers. Participants were clustered into three units of analysis: five campus principals, four superintendents or assistant superintendents, and three Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers. Noteworthy, data collection occurred over 3 months (February to April) during the 2020 COVID-19 global pandemic.

I used three data collection methods for this study. First, a nine-item questionnaire provided demographic information and solicited open-ended responses regarding the TIL Action Coaching program. Second, semistructured interviews consisted of seven to nine questions per individual focused on the four transformational attributes adapted from the MLQ. Third, three TIL Action Coaching program artifacts were included to provide extra contextual information: the training manual, web page, and submitted trainer anecdotal notes. An additional document, the Region 12 ESC promotional brochure, highlighted key components of the TIL Action Coaching program to enlist district engagement.

Using a six-step coding analysis process, I coded each deductive category for emergent patterns and themes. In addition, I conducted a cross-analysis of the embedded

units of analysis. I uncovered multiple emergent codes from the coding analyses and organized them into parent codes, child codes, and microcodes using NVivo qualitative data analysis software. I completed the cross-analysis by interpreting themes across participant groups within both theoretical frameworks. Using two theoretical frameworks—leadership coaching and transformational leadership—in the analysis processes, I created a comprehensive and complex perspective of the participants’ experiences related to the TIL Action Coaching program.

Findings

This study uncovered three deductive categories (transformational processes; listening, observation, and feedback; and intellectual stimulation) from two theoretical frameworks (leadership coaching and transformational leadership) established in the literature review. As shown in Table 5.1, two inductive themes of growth and challenge emerged, which yielded six topics: reflection, collaboration, personalized supports, shared leadership, systems, and vulnerability.

Table 5.1

Summary of Findings

Deductive category	Inductive theme	Topic
Transformational processes	Growth	Reflection
		Collaboration
Listening, observation, and feedback	Challenge	Personalized support
Intellectual stimulation		Shared leadership
		Systems and protocols
		Vulnerability

Conclusions

Based on the interpretive findings from Chapter Four, I present the overarching conclusions related to the existing literature on leadership coaching and transformational leadership. This section centers around the three research questions proposed in this case study and the conclusions within each question. Five conclusions were drawn taken from the study:

1. Participants described the TIL Action Coaching framework grounded in managerial coaching as a critical component for principal leadership development.
2. Principals understood leadership coaching experiences through the TIL Action Coaching program cultivated collaborative partnerships between superintendents and principals and improved the working environment.
3. Participants stated TIL Action Coaching activities and the waterfall document are essential components for principal instructional leadership skill development.
4. Participants understood leaders take on the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation through leadership coaching experiences in TIL Action Coaching training.
5. Participants found reflective practices through the leadership coaching core element of transformational processes fostered emotional intelligence in principals.

Research Question 1: Beliefs and Perceptions Regarding the TIL Action Coaching Program

Introduction to Research Question 1. Each year, principals are encouraged to attend leadership development training such as conferences, remote learning, and workshops to improve practice continuously. Since its inception in 2017, the TIL Action Coaching program has offered a new approach for leadership development—leadership coaching. The TIL Action Coaching approach was designed to improve principal instructional leadership capacity, but Texas educators know little of its impact on principal development. Therefore, I designed the first research question to explore the beliefs and perceptions of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers regarding the TIL Action Coaching program. Three conclusions are related to the participants’ beliefs and perceptions about the TIL program. Research Question 1 was the following: What are the beliefs and perceptions of principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers regarding the TIL Action Coaching program?

Conclusion 1: The TIL Action Coaching framework grounded in managerial coaching is a critical component for principal leadership development. Principal participants stated the TIL Action Coaching framework proved to be highly effective for their leadership development. Principals described their experiences with the TIL Action Coaching program’s managerial coaching approach as having “galvanized the learning” and as having connected the central office to campus. Concerning the TIL Action Coaching program, managerial coaching promotes the idea that everyone gets coached,

from the top executive (superintendent or principal supervisor) to the manager (principal) to the subordinate follower (teacher).

The reactions from principals' beliefs about learning transference for everyone is not new and has been addressed by numerous scholars. When leaders perceive high levels of workplace support through avenues such as managerial coaching, improved leadership behaviors and skill performance are realized, thus reinforcing the perceived influence of coaching (Anderson, 2013; Bozer & Jones, 2018; Ely et al., 2010; Ray, 2017). Principal participants' experiences and beliefs about the importance of a managerial coaching aspect in the TIL Action Coaching program are not uncommon. Researchers' findings asserted that managers who learn how to coach are more likely to cultivate excellent practices for themselves and their organizations (A. Gilley et al., 2010; Milner et al., 2018). Managerial coaching literature confirmed an internal coaching framework such as the one reflected in the TIL Action Coaching program fosters individual and organizational growth. From both perspectives—follower and coach—managerial coaching placed principals in an interesting position: on one side, principals are coached by their superintendent and experienced coaching from the lens of the follower; on the other side, principals coached teachers and were energized from observing teacher growth.

In contrast to this qualitative case study, most managerial coaching scholars examined the phenomenon from a quantitative lens (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018; Beattie et al., 2014; Ely et al., 2010; Lawrence, 2017). In addition, the findings from this study paralleled a study by educational leadership scholar van Nieuwerburgh (2018), who asserted principals learning to become a coach is the most effective way for leaders to

become excellent practitioners. As shown in Table 5.2, the perspectives and experiences expressed by principals related to the TIL Action Coaching managerial coaching framework paralleled two of the five indicators of van Nieuwerburgh's (2018) examination on managerial coaching benefits for school leaders. These two indicators emerged for two reasons: (a) the act of coaching teachers allowed principals as the leader (coach) to think differently about how they approached teachers through TIL Action Coaching training activities, and (b) reflective practices experienced by the principals as a follower fostered instructional leadership growth.

Table 5.2

Parallel Findings to van Nieuwerburgh's (2018) Possible Benefits of Having School Leaders Trained to Coach

Possible benefits (van Nieuwerburgh)	Study findings regarding TIL Action Coaching framework
Managerial coaching training can motivate leaders as well as impact performance and behaviors of their followers.	Principals reported beliefs and behaviors changed in their approach to their followers (i.e., teachers).
Managerial coaching training encourages reflective practice and self-development.	Principals recognized reflective practices reframed how they thought about instructional leadership and professional growth.

Note. TIL = Texas Instructional Leadership. Benefits in the first column based on *Coaching in Education: Getting Better Results for Students, Educators, and Parents*, by C. van Nieuwerburgh (Ed.), 2018, Routledge.

Conclusion 2: Principals understood leadership coaching experiences through the TIL Action Coaching program cultivated collaborative partnerships between superintendents and principals and improved the working environment. Because of principals' unique role and perspective in the TIL Action Coaching program as a follower and a leader, they understood leadership coaching improved the working environment

from two perspectives. From the standpoint of followers, principals sensed coaching experiences through the TIL Action Coaching program encouraged collaborative partnerships with their superintendent, given coaching experiences minimized top-down style leadership with their superintendent (i.e., leader). Consequently, principals experienced less isolation in their work. It was not unusual to discover principals sensed closer working relationships with their superintendents. Goldring et al. (2018) and Mihiotis et al. (2016) found organizations applying leadership coaching for principal development reported closer working relationships between principals and their superintendents, since superintendents were more attentive to the challenges principals faced and gained more awareness of principals' growth needs. My findings closely aligned with Bommelje's (2015) assertions, which identified leadership coaching diminished top-down leadership and fostered a collaborative culture for improved working environments. However, the study differs in relation to examining the principal–superintendent relationship in school settings and understanding the principals' follower–leader perspectives through qualitative methods.

As a leader, the principals believed the TIL Action Coaching program provided the time, space, and support to nurture growth in their instructional leadership practices. From the leader perspective (i.e., coach), principals noticed how coaching teachers changed their beliefs and behaviors about instructional leadership approaches. Principals experienced a renewed sense of energy and confidence as they associated professional growth with teacher growth. Numerous scholars have pointed to the benefits realized from coaching in relation to their own learning, growth, and development and the potential in followers to change organizations (Beattie et al., 2014; Carey et al., 2011; Joo

et al., 2012; Lawrence, 2017); however, these studies did not explore the phenomenon through a qualitative lens or in educational settings. In fact, for the literature review, I did not find any scholarship that explored this unique leader-follower position in principals within a managerial coaching work environment such as the one found in the TIL Action Coaching program. I discovered how leadership coaching impacted principals since they perceived their professional development through a 360-degree lens. With this understanding, the leader-follower perspectives associated with minimized top-down leadership and instructional growth produced feelings of an improved working environment for principals.

Conclusion 3: TIL Action Coaching activities and the waterfall document are essential components for principal instructional leadership skill development. Principals and superintendents understood the TIL Action Coaching program improved instructional leadership in principals through coaching activities and the waterfall document (see Appendix H) found in the TIL Action Coaching program. Principals had more experiences related to skill development through activities, whereas superintendents identified the waterfall document fostered principal skill performance and leadership growth.

Principals 1, 3, and 4 claimed that the TIL Action Coaching activities such as scripting and role-playing helped them focus on the “right work” (instructional leadership) and equipped them to personalize teachers’ support, fostering renewed energy and confidence. Superintendents 1 and 2 described the waterfall document as a concrete tool that propelled instructional leadership skill performance in new and veteran

principals. The superintendents also felt empowered to support principals for leadership sustainability.

It is not uncommon to find school leaders developing skills through coaching activities and explicit coaching protocols similar to those found in the TIL Action Coaching program. Several quantitative researchers have discovered professional skill attainment through leadership coaching provides opportunities for growth since authentic, job-embedded settings result in sustainable learning for everyone (Anderson, 2013; Ellinger, 2003; Ellinger et al., 2011; Lawrence, 2017; Wells, 2014). These previously mentioned studies targeted leadership coaching and its impact on performance skill attainment and follower outcomes. In contrast, my research differed in three ways: (a) it applied a qualitative approach in an educational context, (b) it comprised three participant groups (principals, superintendents, and trainers), and (c) it included follower and leader outcomes.

Research Question 2: Critical TIL Action Coaching Components Related to the 4 I's of Transformational Leadership

Introduction to Research Question 2. Bass's (1985) 4 I's of transformational leadership is one of the most researched leadership topic of all time and has become essential learning for most school leadership programs (Berkovich, 2016). The transformational leadership attributes identified by Bass are intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration. Therefore, Research Question 2 was the following: What do principals, superintendents (or principal supervisors), and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers perceive as critical TIL Action

Coaching components (activities, strategies, etc.) for principal development related to the 4 I's of transformational leadership?

Conclusion 4: Leaders take on the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation through leadership coaching experiences in TIL Action Coaching training. All participants (i.e., principals, superintendents, and trainers) acknowledged the transformational leadership attribute of intellectual stimulation was realized through leadership coaching experiences. Scholars described intellectual stimulation in leaders as the ability to engage followers in creative problem-solving while challenging the status quo (D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; Farnsworth et al., 2020; Warrick, 2011). Superintendents perceived leadership coaching engagement as critical for principal transformational leadership growth. Principals and trainers stated coaching activities such as scripting and role-playing were foundational for transformational leadership development. Trainers specified vulnerability as the linchpin for principal leadership transformation.

Superintendents expressed active involvement in TIL Action Coaching increased shared leadership and provided close observations of principal needs. These district leaders recognized new beliefs and behaviors about leadership development approaches with principals. These leaders also experienced feeling energized from observing principal growth. Superintendents 1 and 2 acknowledged that direct engagement in leadership coaching changed how they approached principal growth; they were energized to observe that principals utilize systems to approach problematic classroom instruction in new and creative ways.

The findings from superintendents add to current transformational leadership research trends, as superintendents identified shared leadership as a significant factor in facilitating transformational growth in principals (Hamlin et al., 2006; Taylor et al., 2019; Yarrow, 2018). Several transformational leadership studies suggested leaders who are aware and sensitive to the needs of their followers facilitate positive change in individuals and organizations (Avolio et al., 1999; Bommeljé, 2015; Leithwood & Azah, 2016; McCarley et al., 2016; Warrick, 2011). Comparable to this study, those academic efforts connected leader sensitivity and awareness to follower transformation. Yet the reviewed literature utilized very few qualitative studies to explore leadership (e.g., superintendent) engagement on followers (e.g., principals). No qualitative studies linked managerial coaching to TIL Action Coaching program and principal transformational leadership attainment. Furthermore, the adapted MLQ 5X interview protocol aligned superintendents' and principals' responses with the 4 I's of transformational leadership attributes. Based on this unique qualitative tool, I gained comprehensive insights and nuanced perspectives of superintendent engagement and their perceived influence on principal transformation leadership development.

In the role of leader (coach), principals recognized coaching experiences in TIL Action Coaching shifted how they reacted to and approached teachers. For example, Principal 5 perceived coaching processes helped him be more thoughtful and less reactionary in his leadership, whereas Principal 4 thought learning how to coach teachers enabled her to think like a teacher, thus shifting how she interacted with them.

The coaching experiences expressed by principals showed commonality with transformational leadership and leadership coaching literature illustrating leaders develop

transformational attributes such as self-awareness, questioning, and reflective practices when engaged in coaching for leadership growth (Cox et al., 2018; A. Gilley et al., 2010; Ratiu et al., 2016; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). Furthermore, principal coaching experiences through TIL Action Coaching align with research by Peláez Zuberbuhler et al. (2020) and Ray (2017) verifying practice-based approaches such as leadership coaching increase transformational skills and behaviors in leaders. However, their studies differed in two ways: (a) Peláez Zuberbuhler et al. viewed coaching as a means for leadership intervention and organizational change, and (b) Ray studied follower impact within a single urban school district. Lord et al., (2017) and Siangchokyoo et al. (2019) highlighted current transformational leadership scholarship lags in understanding follower psychological transformation through the lens of acquiring transformational leadership attributes such as intellectual stimulation. This research should narrow the academic gap in that principals identified systems and activities that challenged and shifted leadership beliefs and behaviors associated with intellectual stimulation.

Trainers argued that leaders and their teams demonstrated characteristics of intellectual stimulation related to transformational leadership when principals and superintendents experienced vulnerability during performance-based activities. Trainers 2 and 3 believed coaching activities were transformational when leaders allowed themselves to be vulnerable and put themselves in the “hot seat” for the good of the team. Historically, scholars have connected vulnerability with trust (Aguilar, 2017; Bloom, 2005; Campone, 2015; Carey et al., 2011; Passmore, 2007; Reiss, 2015; Whitmore, 2017). Taylor et al. (2019) described trust as a precondition for vulnerability given the right environment. Interestingly, in the literature review, I did not find any examination—

quantitative or qualitative—showing vulnerability as the linchpin for transformation development in leaders; instead, studies showed vulnerability as a conduit for individual and collective trust. This case study found acts of vulnerability in leaders transformed individuals and improved teams.

It is essential to note the literature review found few educational leadership qualitative studies have explored principal transformational leadership acquisition through leadership coaching experiences. Quantitative information utilizing surveys and the MLQ dominated the research review, limiting the findings to concrete statistical analysis of leadership coaching and its impact on acquiring transformational leadership attributes. Gathering information qualitatively from three different groups (principals, superintendents, and trainers) and three methods (questionnaires, interviews, and document review) enabled me to uncover a more comprehensive explanation of the lived experiences and nuanced perceptions related to leadership coaching and transformational leadership.

Research Question 3: Aligning Beliefs and Insights With Core Elements of Leadership Coaching

Introduction to Research Question 3. For this study, I analyzed information from the leadership coaching literature review and identified five essential core elements. These five core elements of leadership coaching are relational building; goal setting; questioning and assessment; transformational processes; and listening, observation, and feedback. Therefore, Research Question 3 was the following: How might the TIL Action Coaching experiences and insights of principals, superintendents (or principal

supervisors) and Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers align with the core elements of leadership coaching?

Conclusion 5: Reflective practices through the leadership coaching core element of transformational processes fostered emotional intelligence in principals. True to adult learning theories, learning occurs most often when adults draw from their own experiences through reflective practices and link to their understandings in the learning process (Cox et al., 2018; Wells, 2014). Principals described how the reflective practices in the TIL Action Coaching program changed their beliefs and behaviors about approaches to leadership and promoted emotional intelligence growth. Principals 1, 3, and 5 understood leadership coaching experiences enabled them to listen with more empathy, internalize coaching behaviors, and find balance in how they communicated and processed ideas and issues with teachers.

Engagement in the TIL Action Coaching program transformed principals through the transformational processes, urging leaders to reflect on their understandings, thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. The literature surrounding transformational processes has ascribed emotional intelligence as instrumental in helping principals apply soft, interpersonal skills necessary to lead modern complex school systems (Anderson, 2013; Gray, 2018b; Kimsey-House et al., 2018; Mihiotis & Argirou, 2016; Passmore, 2007; Ray, 2017). Other scholars argued managerial coaching approaches, such as those found in TIL Action Coaching program, support interpersonal skills through reflection facilitation and galvanize emotional intelligence in leaders (Cox et al., 2018; A. Gilley et al., 2010; Ellinger & Kim, 2014; Lawrence, 2017; Milner et al., 2018; Ratiu et al., 2016; Stokes & Jolly, 2018; van Nieuwerburgh, 2018).

Historically, leadership coaching scholarship has relied heavily on qualitative case study application (Celoria & Roberson, 2015; Forde et al., 2013; James-Ward, 2011, 2013; Ladegard & Gjerde, 2014). However, Athanasopoulou and Dopson (2018) noted an insignificant number of qualitative studies exist on managerial coaching and even fewer studies consider managerial coaching and its influence on education. This qualitative case study should serve to broaden the scope of literature on leadership coaching and managerial coaching in two ways:

1. The findings from this qualitative case study add to existing leadership coaching literature, acknowledging studies in educational settings are few and far between (Aguilar, 2017; Cox et al., 2018; Lochmiller, 2018).
2. The qualitative case study adds to the literature on managerial coaching in education and its impact on the follower (in this case, the principal) and the principal as a coach.

Furthermore, this research differs from existing qualitative examination in educational leadership literature, which largely has targeted coaching as an intervention for principal performance instead of leadership coaching and principal transformational leadership attainment. One distinctive difference comes from the TIL Action Coaching framework and its reliance on the managerial coaching approach for principal development with the understanding of the principal as both the follower (the one being coached by the superintendent or principal supervisor) and as the leader or coach. With that said, the findings from this study reveal principals noticed an increase in soft skills and gained emotional intelligence from TIL Action Coaching experiences.

Implications

This study identified the catalysts for principal transformational leadership from the perspectives of leadership coaching and transformational leadership frameworks and the TIL Action Coaching program. The findings expand on existing literature based on how superintendents, principals, and trainers responded to leadership coaching as a developmental approach for principal transformational leadership. This study proposes six implications for educators interested in developing principal transformational attributes through leadership coaching.

1. Texas districts should consider enrollment in the TIL Action Coaching program through a local regional education service center.
2. Principal preparation programs and districts should consider designing an internal leadership coaching program grounded in a managerial coaching framework.
3. Principal preparation programs and districts should include superintendent engagement at every level in leadership coaching programs.
4. Superintendents should invest time and energy toward leadership coaching for best principal development outcomes.
5. Principal preparation programs and district leaders should ensure systems, protocols, and activities provide principals with explicit tools and performance-based practices for improved instructional leadership outcomes.
6. Principal preparation programs and districts should ensure the working environment can support leadership vulnerability practices.

Understanding the impact superintendent involvement had on principal development, it would be negligent to ignore the significant influence an internal coaching program may have on principal preparation programs and school districts. Considering TEA continues to offer the TIL Action Coaching program for Texas educators, Texas districts may elect to enroll in the program through a local regional ESC. However, the TIL Action Coaching program is not a magic bullet. This research suggests all principal preparation programs and districts, regardless of location, size, or economic status, can design an internal leadership coaching program grounded in a managerial coaching framework. Furthermore, this research suggests an internal managerial coaching framework strengthens collaborative partnerships between superintendents and principals, potentially impacting the working environment and academic outcomes. As such, leadership development programs and district leaders should involve superintendent engagement at every level.

Undoubtedly, potential success from a managerial coaching approach implies superintendents are eager to engage in the work of principal development beyond principal punitive remediation. As the district gatekeeper, superintendents often control professional development efforts. Training initiatives come in many forms; however, ongoing organization support from the central office seems worth the investment. From this perspective, superintendents must be willing to invest time and energy toward learning how to coach themselves for ongoing principal transformational leadership development. This understanding should energize educational leaders to find creative ways to integrate key managerial coaching components identified in TIL Action Coaching as a common experience rather than a rare anomaly.

This study contends with existing literature showing systems, protocols, and performance-based activities stretched thinking and promoted new and creative ways to solve complex problems in leaders. Principal preparation programs and district leaders should analyze current systems, protocols, and professional development activities in light of these findings and seek to look for ways system design and protocols add or take away from principal effectiveness. Based on my findings, coaching activities urging leaders to practice vulnerability with their colleagues led to individual and team transformation. Therefore, for leadership preparation programs and districts to transform leaders through vulnerability, they must first nurture a trusting culture for vulnerability practices to become the norm.

Recommendations

In terms of principal transformational leadership development, the findings from the study have the potential to lay the groundwork for future educational leadership development programs and districts. An internal coaching framework such as the one found in TIL Action Coaching was recognized by participants as instrumental in principals' transformational development. An extension to this research might be to examine how managerial coaching approaches foster organizational change in schools and districts, as little empirical evidence exists in educational research on the phenomenon. The superintendents who participated in this study acknowledged time with principals as beneficial in understanding principal growth needs. Future research could examine the relationship between the time commitment of superintendents or central office in leadership coaching efforts and its effect, if any, on principal and teacher development.

Lord et al. (2017) and Vashdi et al. (2019) observed a steady increase in research trends on leadership behaviors and the predictive effects of transformational leadership on followers. Likewise, Stewart (2006) predicted emerging psychological trends in school leadership research would increase as principals face more and more complex social and emotional issues. This study showed that the blending of reflective practices and the TIL Action Coaching program's internal managerial coaching approaches fostered principals' emotional intelligence. Based on current research trends, school educators tasked with leadership development could investigate cognitive, social, and emotional intelligence applications through leadership coaching in educational settings. Future research efforts also may consider applying longitudinal qualitative scholarship to gather information on the long-term impact of reflective practices through coaching on social-emotional health of individuals and organizations. School leadership can be messy and complex, causing many leaders to be emotionally overwhelmed. Due to the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, it would benefit educational research to add to the empirical evidence linking leadership coaching during turbulent times and its impact on educational leaders and followers. Last of all, this study aims to inform national, state, and local educational administrators such as TEA, principal certification and training programs, and regional service centers of the results. A white paper of the findings from this study should shed some light on the potential benefits leadership coaching programs such as TIL Action Coaching may have on educators, schools, and districts.

Limitations

While this study provides important insights into principal transformational leadership development, it also had limitations that should be considered. J. Smith and

Noble (2014) warned of potential pitfalls of biases in research studies. Bias in research refers to any influence that may distort results (Galdas, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; J. Smith & Noble, 2014; Yin, 2018). To be transparent, I had attended previous training with Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainers, and research findings might be susceptible to favoring positive outcomes of leadership coaching applications. In addition, as a previous campus principal, I wished to see campus principals supported in authentic ways and was optimistic in the coaching approach to build leadership capacity in transformational leadership attributes.

This study began participant recruitment and data collection efforts at the beginning of the 2020 global COVID-19 pandemic which warrants its own discussion. This qualitative case study undoubtedly encountered obstacles from the 2020 COVID-19 global pandemic response. At the time of leader recruitment, school administrators across the state were challenged mentally, emotionally, and physically. Thus, leaders were hesitant and cautious about adding one more task to their schedules. In this regard, recruiting enough participants for desired diversity sampling was difficult. As a result, I included all willing participants responding to the recruitment letter and questionnaire. The COVID-19 global pandemic response reduced the number of schools within the Region 12 consortium actively engaged in the TIL Action Coaching. Several district leaders decided to postpone TIL Action Coaching initiatives. Although the TIL Action Coaching program continues to gain momentum across Texas, the program's newness limited contextual data from which to draw upon. Trainers and school leaders expressed COVID-19 protocols resulted in limited face-to-face training and observations, causing some of the participants to feel they had not experienced TIL Action Coaching to its

fullest. Despite COVID-19 pandemic protocols, participant groups were favorable to TIL Action Coaching and expressed a desire to continue leadership development through coaching.

Summary

It comes as no surprise that school reform efforts place a high priority on the role of the campus principal (Levin & Bradley, 2019; Lochmiller, 2018; Northouse, 2001). Principals' vital role in school success continues to increase as they are called to solve numerous complex problems—teacher turnover, school safety, and student emotional wellness. However, all these challenges pale in comparison to the COVID-19 global pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic protocols have ushered in unprecedented stress on school leaders. Although schools in Texas seem to be turning the corner on COVID-19, school leaders likely will feel its impact for years to come. With the growing need for transformational principal leadership, leadership development for principals cannot be ignored. This research discussed the TIL Action Coaching program and how its leadership coaching framework addresses principal growth needs through coaching.

Since 2017, TEA has designed the TIL Action Coaching program to address instructional leadership growth needs for principal effectiveness. The purpose of this study was to understand how the TIL Action Coaching fosters transformational leadership attributes in campus principals for leadership development. The principals in this study perceived coaching experiences provided valuable support and empowered them to develop the skills necessary to be better instructional leadership.

This qualitative single case study with multiple embedded units of analysis discussed the TIL Action Coaching framework. It centered around two conceptual

frameworks—leadership coaching and transformational leadership—making it a complex and comprehensive study. Evidence drawn from the literature review and case study suggests the TIL Action Coaching program framework mirrors a facilitative managerial coaching approach, requiring executive leaders to engage in coaching processes. The findings from principals highlighted the core coaching elements of transformational processes and listening, observation, and feedback. Principals recognized systems, protocols, and activities paved the way for leadership development and transformational growth. Unique to this study, the TIL Action Coaching framework postulates the principal as both follower and coach. In the follower role, principals found superintendent engagement through leadership coaching felt less heavy-handed or top-down, fostering deeper connections and less isolation in the hard work of campus leadership. As a coach, principals reported activities, systems, and protocols shifted how they reacted and approached teachers.

Knowing the reciprocal nature of coaching, including superintendents as a unit of analysis was intentional for this research and added depth in understanding the phenomenon in educational settings. As superintendent participants observed principal growth needs up close, they discovered a sense of shared leadership regarding the principal developmental process. Superintendents reported TIL Action Coaching protocols such as the waterfall document provided a concrete tool principals could use for instructional leadership improvement. The need for Texas educators to develop transformational attributes in principals will likely not go away. It would benefit district leaders to take proactive measures to implement a viable leadership coaching program

similar to the TIL Action Coaching program for continuous principal support and sustainability, knowing outstanding principal leadership improves schools.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Phases 1, 2, and 3 of Recruitment Emails

Phase 1

Dear TIL principals and superintendents,

Region 12 TIL trainers, principals, and principal supervisors have an opportunity to participate in a Baylor study on principal development through the TIL Action Coaching program.

Your participation is valuable. The Baylor TIL Action Coaching study will help Region 12 TIL improve program services, advise TEA of program effectiveness, and inform school leaders on how TIL Action Coaching fosters leadership development in principals and their supervisors.

Please look for an email from Gayle White, a current Baylor graduate student in the K-12 Educational Leadership Ed.D. program. In her email, Gayle will introduce herself, inform you of the short study, and elicit your interest.

The Region 12 leadership team appreciates your consideration in helping us better serve you through TIL Action Coaching program. If you have additional questions, please contact Gayle White at [email] or by phone at [phone number].

Thanks,
Tammy Becker
Director of School Leadership
Region 12 ESC

Phase 2: Recruitment Follow-Up Email

Dear TIL principals and superintendents,

I am excited to inform you of an opportunity to engage in a Baylor study of TIL Action Coaching, Region 12 trainers and current TIL participating schools. As you know, TIL Action Coaching training is intense and requires time, energy, and commitment. Since its roll out in 2017, schools participating in TIL Action Coaching have grown from 27 to 316 throughout the state. However, little is known of its leadership development value to participating principals and their supervisors or superintendents.

My study will seek to gain perspectives from participating principals and their supervisors on TIL Action Coaching as a leadership development tool. *As an experienced campus and district administrator, I understand your time is valuable.* All principals and their supervisors who express an interest will receive a short background survey (6-8 questions) and a \$5 Starbucks gift card for your time and willingness to participate.

Please reply to this email expressing your willingness to participate by copying the following statement:

Yes, I am interested in knowing more about the study and will consider participating.

Thank you, in advance, for your willingness to participate in the Baylor TIL Action Coaching study through Region 12. Your perspectives regarding TIL Action Coaching will enrich Region 12 TIL program services, advise TEA of program effectiveness, and inform Texas school leaders on how TIL Action Coaching fosters leadership development in principals and their supervisors.

Sincerely,

Gayle White

Phase 3: Principal/Superintendent/Principal Supervisor Recruitment Email

Dear Dr. _____ (Principal/Superintendent/Principal Supervisor)

Hello, my name is Gayle White. I currently serve as the Content Coordinator of Secondary Schools for ELAR, SS, and G/T Services with Midway Independent School District located in Waco, Texas. In addition, I am a doctoral candidate at Baylor University in the K-12 Educational Leadership program and am ready to begin my dissertation process of collecting data for my qualitative case study.

The target of my study centers on how principal development is impacted by participating in the new Texas Instructional Leadership (TIL) Action Coaching program. Specifically, I hope to understand better how the TIL Action Coaching program fosters transformational skills in principals and what role the superintendent plays on its effectiveness.

I am interested in interviewing you to gain insight on your thoughts, perceptions, and experiences with the Texas Instructional Leadership program.

- The interview will take between 30 and 45 minutes and requires no preparation on your part.
- We can do the interview online, over the phone, or face to face, whichever you prefer (and whichever aligns with the current COVID 19 requirements).
- All interviews will be audio recorded.
- We will schedule the interview during the months of ____ or at your convenience.

Your input in this study would be highly valuable and I would take special care not to use your name or any identifying information about your district in my study. My proposal has been submitted and reviewed by my Baylor University Dissertation Committee. It is my hope that you will consider participating in my research.

All participation is voluntary. If you do choose to participate, you have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without any repercussions.

If you are available to schedule an interview for this research, please contact me at [number] or by email at [email]. Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Gayle White

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for the Principal and Superintendent (or Principal Supervisor)

1. How many years have you been in education?
2. How many years have you participated in the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching program?
3. What best describes your district or campus: rural or urban?
4. What best describes the student economically disadvantaged rate in your district or campus?
 - a. Below 50% economically disadvantaged student population
 - b. Above 50% economically disadvantaged student population
5. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
6. What best describes your ethnicity?
 - a. White
 - b. African American
 - c. Hispanic
 - d. Mixed
 - e. Other
7. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent, how would you rate your experience in the TIL Action Coaching program? Explain your rating.

8. Why did your campus or district decide to engage in the TIL Action Coaching program?

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire for the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching Trainers

1. How many years have you been in education?
2. How many years have you been a trainer with the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching program?
3. What is your gender?
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
4. What best describes your ethnicity?
 - a. White
 - b. African American
 - c. Hispanic
 - d. Mixed
 - e. Other
5. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being excellent, how would you rate your experiences as a trainer in the TIL Action Coaching program? Explain your rating.

APPENDIX D

Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol for Principals

1. Tell me about a time when TIL Action coaching encouraged you to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others.
2. Tell me about a time when you suggested to a teacher a new or different way of looking at how to complete an assignment or task that related to your work with the TIL Action Coaching program.
3. Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching helping you communicate a vision for the future.
 - a. How has the TIL Action Coaching program helped you shared your personal values and beliefs about education with your teachers-individually or as a group?
4. How does being a part of the TIL Action Coaching energize you about what needs to be accomplished?
5. Give me an example of how TIL Action Coaching promotes and builds mutual respect between you and those you lead?
6. Since being in the TIL Action Coaching program, tell me about a time when you acknowledged individual teachers' needs, abilities, and/or aspirations.
 - a. How did the TIL Action Coaching program processes help you in this experience?
7. Since being in the TIL Action Coaching program, tell me about how you have helped develop others' strengths.

APPENDIX E

Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol for the Superintendent (or Principal Supervisor)

1. Tell me a time when TIL Action coaching encouraged you to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others.
2. When working with teachers, how do you encourage new ways to complete an assignment or task?
3. Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching helping you communicate a vision for the future.
 - a. How has it helped you communicate your most important values and beliefs?
4. How does being a part of the TIL Action Coaching energize you about what needs to be accomplished?
5. Give me an example of how TIL Action Coaching promotes and builds mutual respect between you and those you lead.
6. Tell me of a time when TIL Action Coaching encouraged you to acknowledge individual needs, abilities, and aspirations.
7. In what ways do you think the TIL program helps you develop others' strengths?

APPENDIX F

Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Protocol for the Region 12 TIL Action Coaching Trainer

1. Describe the TEA TIL training experience.
 - a. Do you think the training prepared you to be successful?
 - b. How effective is the training framework working?
2. What do you feel are the critical components of TIL Action Coaching program that foster principal transformation?
 - a. What are the barriers of the program for leaders?
3. How important is it that the superintendent or principal supervisor be actively involved?
 - a. Give an example of how the superintendent or principal supervisor involvement improved principal development.
4. Describe how the TIL Action Coaching program help leaders define problems and set goals.
 - a. How does TIL Action Coaching encourage leaders to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others?
 - b. In what ways does the TIL program foster principal emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills?
5. In what ways does TIL promote and build mutual respect between the superintendent and the principal or between the principal's followers?

6. Have you seen evidence of district improvement because of the implementation of TIL Action Coaching?
7. How does the TIL Action Coaching foster relationship buildings, problem-solving, and goal setting?

APPENDIX G

Side-by-Side Alignment of MLQ 5X Questions and the Adapted MLQ 5X Interview Questions

4 I's	MLQ 5X	Adapted MLQ 5X question stems		
	Question stem	Principal	Superintendent (or principal supervisor)	Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainer
Intellectual stimulation	30. I get others to look at problems from many different angles	Tell me about a time when TIL Action coaching encouraged you to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others.	Tell me a time when TIL Action coaching encouraged you to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others.	How does TIL Action coaching encourage leaders to look at problems from various angles by enlisting help from others?
	32. I suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments	Tell me about a time when you suggested to a teacher a new or different way of looking at how to complete an assignment or task that related to your work with the TIL Action Coaching program.	Tell me about a time when you suggested to the principal a new or different way of looking at how to complete an assignment or task that related to your work with the TIL Action Coaching program.	In what ways does the TIL program encourage superintendents and principals to approach new ways of completing a task?
Inspirational motivation	26. I articulate a compelling vision for the future	Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching helping you communicate a vision for the future.	Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching helping you and the principal communicate a vision for the future.	Describe ways you see TIL Action Coaching aiding school leaders to communicate a vision for the future.
	13. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished	How does being a part of the TIL Action Coaching energize you about what needs to be accomplished with teachers?	How does being a part of the TIL Action Coaching energize you about what needs to be accomplished with principals and teachers?	Describe ways TIL fosters energy in leaders regarding what needs to be accomplished with superintendents and principals.

4 I's	MLQ 5X	Adapted MLQ 5X question stems		
	Question stem	Principal	Superintendent (or principal supervisor)	Region 12 TIL Action Coaching trainer
Idealized Influence	21. I act in ways that build others' respect for me	Give me an example of how TIL Action Coaching promotes and builds mutual respect between you and your followers.	Give me an example of how TIL Action Coaching promotes and builds mutual respect between you, the principal and his/ her followers.	Give me an example of how TIL Action Coaching promotes and builds mutual respect between the superintendent and the principal or between the principal's followers.
	6. I talk about my most important values and beliefs	How has the TIL Action Coaching program helped you shared your personal values and beliefs about education with your teachers-individually or as a group?	How has the TIL Action Coaching program helped you shared your personal values and beliefs about education with your principals-individually or as a group?	Describe how TIL encourages leaders to communicate personal values and beliefs about education.
Individual consideration	29. I consider an individual as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others.	Since being in the TIL Action Coaching program, tell me about a time when you acknowledged individual teachers' needs, abilities, and/or aspirations.	Since being in the TIL Action Coaching program, tell me about a time when you acknowledged individual teachers' needs, abilities, and/or aspirations.	How does TIL foster recognition of individual needs, abilities, and aspirations between superintendents, principals and their followers?
	31. I help others to develop their strengths	Since being in the TIL Action Coaching program, tell me about how you have helped develop others' strengths	Since being in the TIL Action Coaching program, tell me about how you have helped develop others' strengths	In the TIL program, how much time is allotted toward developing others' strengths?

APPENDIX H

Waterfall Document

PHASE	MANAGEMENT TRAJECTORY:	RIGOR TRAJECTORY:
PHASE 1: PRE-TEACHING (SUMMER PD)	<p>DEVELOP ESSENTIAL ROUTINES & PROCEDURES</p> <p>1. Routines & Procedures 101: Design and Roll out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan & practice critical routines and procedures moment-by-moment : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain what each routine means and what it will look like Write out what teacher and students do at each step, and what will happen with students who don't follow the routine Plan & practice the roll out: how to introduce routine for the first time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan the "I Do": how you will model the routine Plan what you will do when students don't get it right <p>2. Strong Voice: Stand and speak with purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Square Up, Stand Still: when giving instructions, stop moving and strike a formal pose Formal Register: when giving instructions, use formal register, including tone and word choice <p><i>*Note: Many other topics can be introduced during August training. What are listed above are the topics that should be addressed to reach proficiency. Other topics to introduce—even if the teachers will not yet master them—could be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Least invasive intervention Narrate the Positive Create a Challenge/Build Momentum Teacher Radar: know when students are off-task Do It Again: practice routines to perfection--have students do it again if it is not done correctly (and know when to stop Do It Again) 	<p>WRITE AND INTERNALIZE LESSON PLANS</p> <p>1. Develop Effective Lesson Plans</p> <p>101: Build the foundation of an effective lesson rooted in what students need to learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write precise learning objectives that are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data-driven (rooted in what students need to learn based on analysis of assessment results) Curriculum plan-driven Able to be accomplished in one lesson Deliver a basic "I Do" as a core part of the lesson Design an exit ticket (brief final mini-assessment) aligned to the objective <p>2. Internalize Existing Lesson Plans:</p> <p>Make existing plans your own</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalize & rehearse key parts of the lesson, including the "I Do" and all key instructions Build time stamps into the lesson plan and follow them

PHASE	MANAGEMENT TRAJECTORY:	RIGOR TRAJECTORY:
<p>PHASE 2 (DAYS 1-30)</p>	<p>ROLL OUT & MONITOR ROUTINES</p> <p>1. What to Do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economy of Language: give crisp instructions with as few words as possible (e.g. 3-word directions). Check for understanding on complex instructions. <p>2. Routines & Procedures 201: Revise and perfect them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise any routine that needs more attention to detail or is inefficient, with particular emphasis on what students and teachers are doing at each moment • Do It Again: have students do the routine again if not done correctly the first time • Cut it Short: know when to stop the Do It Again <p>3. Teacher Radar: Know when students are off task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberately scan the room for on-task behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose 3-4 “hot spots” (places where you have students who often get off task) to scan constantly ○ “Be Seen Looking”: crane your neck to appear to be seeing all corners of the room • Circulate the room with purpose (break the plane): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Move among the desks and around the perimeter ○ Stand at the corners: identify 3 spots on the perimeter of the room to which you can circulate to stand and monitor student work ○ Move away from the student who's speaking to monitor the whole room <p>4. Whole-Class Reset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a planned whole class reset to re-establish student behavioral expectations when a class routine has slowly weakened over previous classes • Implement an “in-the-moment reset” when a class veers off task during the class period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example: Stop teaching. Square up. Give a clear What to Do: “Pencils down. Eyes on me. Hands folded in 3-2-1. Thank you: that’s what Harvard looks like.” Pick up tone & energy again. 	<p>INDEPENDENT PRACTICE</p> <p>3. Write the Exemplar: Set the bar for excellence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Script out the ideal written responses you want students to produce during independent practice • Align independent practice to the rigor of the upcoming interim assessment <p>4. Independent Practice: Set up daily routines that build opportunities for students to practice independently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write first, talk second: give students writing tasks to complete prior to class discussion, so that every student answers independently before hearing his or her peers’ contributions • Implement a daily entry prompt (Do Now) to either introduce the day’s objective or review material from the previous day • Implement and review a longer independent practice and/or a daily Exit Ticket (brief final mini-assessment aligned to your objective) to see how many students mastered the concept <p>5. Monitor Aggressively: Check students’ independent work to determine whether they’re learning what you’re teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create & implement a monitoring pathway: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a seating chart to monitor students most effectively ○ Monitor the fastest writers first, then the students who need more support • Monitor the quality of student work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check answers against your exemplar ○ Track correct and incorrect answers to class questions • Pen in hand: Mark up student work as you circulate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use a coding system to affirm correct answers ○ Cue students to revise answers using minimal verbal intervention (Name the error, ask them to fix it, tell them you’ll follow up)

PHASE	MANAGEMENT TRAJECTORY:	RIGOR TRAJECTORY:
PHASE 3 (DAYS 31-60)	ENGAGE EVERY STUDENT 5. Build the Momentum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give the students a simple challenge to complete a task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: “Now I know you’re only 4th graders, but I have a 5th grade problem that I bet you could master!!” Speak faster, walk faster, vary your voice, & smile (Sparkle) 6. Pacing: Create the illusion of speed so that students feel constantly engaged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a hand-held timer to stick to the times stamps in the lesson & give students an audio cue that it’s time to move on Increase rate of questioning: no more than 2 seconds between when a student responds and a teacher picks back up instruction Use countdowns to work the clock (“do that in 5..4..3..2..1”) Use Call and Response for key words 7. Engage All Students: Make sure all students participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to call on all students Cold call students Implement brief (15-30 second) Turn & Talks Intentionally alternate among multiple methods in class discussion: cold calling, choral response, all hands & turn and talks 8. Narrate the Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrate what students do well, not what they do wrong <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I like how Javon has gotten straight to work on his writing assignment.” “The second row is ready to go: their pencils are in the well and their eyes are on me.” While narrating the positive and/or while scanning during a re- direct, look at the student(s) who are off-task Use language that reinforces students getting smarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise answers that are above and beyond or strong effort 9. Individual Student Corrections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipate student off-task behavior and rehearse the next two things you will do when that behavior occurs. Redirect students using the least invasive intervention necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity Eye contact Use a non-verbal Say student’s name quickly Small consequence 	RESPOND TO STUDENT LEARNING NEEDS 6. Habits of Evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach students to annotate with purpose: summarize, analyze, find the best evidence, etc. Teach and prompt students to cite key evidence in their responses 7. Check for Whole-Group Understanding: Gather evidence on whole group learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll the room to determine how students are answering a certain question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “How many chose letter A? B? C? D?” [Students answer the question on whiteboard: “Hold up your whiteboards on the count of three...” Target the error: focus class discussion on the questions where students most struggle to answer correctly 8. Re-teaching 101--Model: Model for the students how to think/solve/write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give students a clear listening/note-taking task that fosters active listening of the model, and then debrief the model: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What did I do in my model?” “What are the key things to remember when you are doing the same in your own work?” Model the thinking, not just a procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow the focus to the thinking students are struggling with Model replicable thinking steps that students can follow Model how to activate one’s own content knowledge and skills that have been learned in previous lessons Vary the think-aloud in tone and cadence from the normal “teacher” voice to highlight the thinking skills. We Do and You Do: give students opportunities to practice with your guidance

PHASE	MANAGEMENT TRAJECTORY:	RIGOR TRAJECTORY:
PHASE 3 (DAYS 31-60)	ENGAGE EVERY STUDENT 6. Build the Momentum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give the students a simple challenge to complete a task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: “Now I know you’re only 4th graders, but I have a 5th grade problem that I bet you could master!!” Speak faster, walk faster, vary your voice, & smile (Sparkle) 7. Pacing: Create the illusion of speed so that students feel constantly engaged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a hand-held timer to stick to the times stamps in the lesson & give students an audio cue that it’s time to move on Increase rate of questioning: no more than 2 seconds between when a student responds and a teacher picks back up instruction Use countdowns to work the clock (“do that in 5..4..3..2..1”) Use Call and Response for key words 8. Engage All Students: Make sure all students participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to call on all students Cold call students Implement brief (15-30 second) Turn & Talks Intentionally alternate among multiple methods in class discussion: cold calling, choral response, all hands & turn and talks 9. Narrate the Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrate what students do well, not what they do wrong <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I like how Javon has gotten straight to work on his writing assignment.” “The second row is ready to go: their pencils are in the well and their eyes are on me.” While narrating the positive and/or while scanning during a re- direct, look at the student(s) who are off-task Use language that reinforces students getting smarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise answers that are above and beyond or strong effort 10. Individual Student Corrections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipate student off-task behavior and rehearse the next two things you will do when that behavior occurs. Redirect students using the least invasive intervention necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity Eye contact Use a non-verbal Say student’s name quickly Small consequence 	RESPOND TO STUDENT LEARNING NEEDS 7. Habits of Evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach students to annotate with purpose: summarize, analyze, find the best evidence, etc. Teach and prompt students to cite key evidence in their responses 8. Check for Whole-Group Understanding: Gather evidence on whole group learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll the room to determine how students are answering a certain question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “How many chose letter A? B? C? D?” [Students answer the question on whiteboard: “Hold up your whiteboards on the count of three...” Target the error: focus class discussion on the questions where students most struggle to answer correctly 9. Re-teaching 101--Model: Model for the students how to think/solve/write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give students a clear listening/note-taking task that fosters active listening of the model, and then debrief the model: “What did I do in my model?” “What are the key things to remember when you are doing the same in your own work?” Model the thinking, not just a procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow the focus to the thinking students are struggling with Model replicable thinking steps that students can follow Model how to activate one’s own content knowledge and skills that have been learned in previous lessons Vary the think-aloud in tone and cadence from the normal “teacher” voice to highlight the thinking skills. We Do and You Do: give students opportunities to practice with your guidance

PHASE	MANAGEMENT TRAJECTORY:	RIGOR TRAJECTORY:
PHASE 3 (DAYS 31-60)	ENGAGE EVERY STUDENT 11. Build the Momentum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give the students a simple challenge to complete a task: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: “Now I know you’re only 4th graders, but I have a 5th grade problem that I bet you could master!!” Speak faster, walk faster, vary your voice, & smile (Sparkle) 12. Pacing: Create the illusion of speed so that students feel constantly engaged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a hand-held timer to stick to the times stamps in the lesson & give students an audio cue that it’s time to move on Increase rate of questioning: no more than 2 seconds between when a student responds and a teacher picks back up instruction Use countdowns to work the clock (“do that in 5..4..3..2..1”) Use Call and Response for key words 13. Engage All Students: Make sure all students participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure to call on all students Cold call students Implement brief (15-30 second) Turn & Talks Intentionally alternate among multiple methods in class discussion: cold calling, choral response, all hands & turn and talks 14. Narrate the Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrate what students do well, not what they do wrong <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I like how Javon has gotten straight to work on his writing assignment.” “The second row is ready to go: their pencils are in the well and their eyes are on me.” While narrating the positive and/or while scanning during a re- direct, look at the student(s) who are off-task Use language that reinforces students getting smarter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise answers that are above and beyond or strong effort 15. Individual Student Corrections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipate student off-task behavior and rehearse the next two things you will do when that behavior occurs. Redirect students using the least invasive intervention necessary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity Eye contact Use a non-verbal Say student’s name quickly Small consequence 	RESPOND TO STUDENT LEARNING NEEDS 10. Habits of Evidence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach students to annotate with purpose: summarize, analyze, find the best evidence, etc. Teach and prompt students to cite key evidence in their responses 11. Check for Whole-Group Understanding: Gather evidence on whole group learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poll the room to determine how students are answering a certain question. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “How many chose letter A? B? C? D?” [Students answer the question on whiteboard: “Hold up your whiteboards on the count of three...” Target the error: focus class discussion on the questions where students most struggle to answer correctly 12. Re-teaching 101--Model: Model for the students how to think/solve/write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give students a clear listening/note-taking task that fosters active listening of the model, and then debrief the model: “What did I do in my model?” “What are the key things to remember when you are doing the same in your own work?” Model the thinking, not just a procedure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrow the focus to the thinking students are struggling with Model replicable thinking steps that students can follow Model how to activate one’s own content knowledge and skills that have been learned in previous lessons Vary the think-aloud in tone and cadence from the normal “teacher” voice to highlight the thinking skills. We Do and You Do: give students opportunities to practice with your guidance

Note. Adapted from Bambrick-Santoyo, P. (2016). *Get better faster: A 90-day plan for coaching new teachers*. John Wiley & Sons. Reprinted with permission. Retrieved from <https://visiblybetter.cepr.harvard.edu/files/visibly-better/files/get-better-faster-scope-sequence.pdf>

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