



Using IDELS for Progress Monitoring of Vocabulary and Reading Fluency of Bilingual
Second Grade Students.

A Special Project

Presented to

Dr. Gordon Martinen

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Master of Education

Michael Garcia

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MASTER'S PROJECT

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FACULTY APPROVAL

Using IDELS for Progress Monitoring of Vocabulary and Reading Fluency of Bilingual
Second Grade Students.

Approved for the Faculty

Andrea Martinez Faculty Advisor
9/10/2020, Date

ABSTRACT

The author of the Project prepared an abstract that described the need to test bilingual students in early exit programs using EDILS (DIBELS). The ability to test students on a weekly basis enabled student's to progress at a rate that demonstrated and showed better gains and understanding in vocabulary and reading fluency. Regular tracking had shown students ability to achieve higher outcomes and scores that would be reflected on higher WASL scores by transitional Spanish speaking students. The student's progression at a higher rate allowed better vocabulary and comprehension in their native language by administering IDELS as an effective progress monitoring method. The author believed that higher testing scores in Spanish literacy resulted in higher achievements in English, while students were making the mid-year transition to 100% English instruction.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background for the Project

Many school settings throughout the state of Washington expected bilingual students to be fully literate in the native language by the middle of the third grade year.

According to Vannoy, divergent views on whether needs were best met through instruction in the student's first language and English, known as bilingual education, or instruction solely in English, compounded the challenge and led to varied language support programs (2004 p.1). Districts with early exit programs transitioned students at the middle of the 3rd grade; early exit required instructing students in English with no Spanish being spoken within the classroom. Districts with pre-school and kindergarten programs first taught non-English students entirely in English. The start to a good education was off to a disastrous beginning as mentioned by Borelli, "the ability to distinguish and manipulate phonemes is a must for the successful acquisition of beginning reading skills" with the early educational years being of most importance (1997 p.2). Early exit students were being instructed in English when not ready for success. At mid-year instruction changed from Spanish to English in order to enable students to take part in various standard based assessment tests, the most important being the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL).

State test scores compared to dual language programs through the 5th grade showed a higher percentage of achievement when compared to that of early exit. The concern created was that early exit bilingual programs were setting second language students up for failure. As times in the educational field have changed since the beginning of the 21st

Century more challenges for educators have been encountered compared to that of meeting the academic achievement of the growing number of limited English proficient (LEP) students” (Vannoy 2004 p.1). Early exit schools were expecting bilingual students to participate and succeed in full emersion English instructed classrooms; when bilingual students were not ready for transition. Educators who understood the essential value of program effectiveness would identify data and take it into account in order to help the students reach the highest rate of Spanish literacy before full English emersion took place.

Schools also had pre-Kindergarten programs that first taught non-English students entirely in English. In years past education had looked at “the ability to distinguish and manipulate phonemes as a must for the successful acquisition of beginning reading skills” (Borelli, 1997, p.2). After the full year of instruction students were put into bilingual classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

Although the state of Washington had not taken a valuable in depth look at which second language program worked best, bilingual and second language coordinators have said students must be fully literate in the 1st language in order to be successful in English instructed classrooms. According to Project I CARE (I can read) “ children who do not possess limited prior knowledge in letter names, phonological sensitivity, phonics, and reading fluency in their native language are more likely to struggle while learning to read in the primary grades and are at-risk for reading failure” in the future (Cassidy, 2003, p. 193). Why did schools exit children from bilingual programs if not yet fluent in the home language?

The author's intention was to find out if weekly Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (Spanish version, IDELs) testing increased bilingual student's ability for higher literacy outcomes and adequate gains. Higher testing and literacy scores enabled students to make an easier transition towards full English instruction. The author wanted to use IDELs progress monitoring along with Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) and Read Naturally to see if the results would show higher English reading test scores when transition was required. Reading had been identified as the most important academic process children must master to prosper in their advancement in school success. Proper development and acquisition of skills critical to reading were essential for better student outcomes while learning core curriculum had been important towards monitoring student progress.

Purpose of the Project

The author tested second grade bilingual students on a weekly basis to determine if IDELs created better literacy outcomes for bilingual students. Progress monitoring documentation, was used as a valuable asset in support of the necessity to have students instructed in Spanish for a longer period of time. Allowing bilingual students adequate time to acquire their first language had been sought as an important means towards better second language acquisition.

Delimitations

The study was providing bilingual students at a Southeastern Elementary school in Washington State the opportunity in meeting the needs of second language learners. A large percentage of the student body had a below average Spanish vocabulary that attributed to the poverty and limited education of bilingual students. Children were put

into regular self contained English instructed or Spanish instructed settings after a language questionnaire was returned by the guardians/parents of the bilingual students. The writer's classroom was composed of 27 (13 girls and 14 boys) students and all had parents of Hispanic origin. The student enrollment at the school was 305. In the fall of 2009 the school added Kindergarten students because of a change in boundaries.

Based on the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) demographic report the school had a gender makeup composed of 56.1% male and 43.9% female students. The ethnicity was widely dominated by Hispanics (63.9%), followed by White (33.4%), with the other ethnic groups being comprised of Asian (1.3%), Black (1.0%), and American-Indian (3%). The school was located on the west side of the school district and had been widely populated by Hispanic families, many parents had jobs that were paying just over minimum wage, this can be identified by the large number of students on free and reduced (86.9%) lunch program . The section of town where this Title I school was located had the most crime and arrests due to domestic problems; this can be attributed to the penal correction center located just two miles North of the school.

Special programs had been widely used as a way of enhancing student progress and growth. Nutrition and intervention were necessities staff and specialist used in order to ensure growth. The Title I school had a high percentage of students receiving free or reduced priced meals (86.9%), and all students in grades K- 2 received free lunch and breakfast. Almost 20 % of the students received extra specialist instruction in reading/ language arts, and math. Five percent were enrolled in special education based on OSPI report card.

The transitional education program in grades K-3 was due to the early exit

program composed of 26.4% students. Bilingual students had the opportunity to be placed in a regular English classroom if parents chose to forgo Spanish directed instruction.

Student absence rate was just over 1% due to families going to Mexico on extended trips during the holiday season. Parents on long trips left without informing or properly communicating with the office.

The school had 29 teachers; with eleven able to speak Spanish with different levels of communication. The school had six bilingual teachers. The average years of teaching experience was at 15.1 years. Teachers with master's degree was 24.1%, some were beyond that, and others were pursuing different advancement or incentive degrees.

In the fall of the 2009 school year all second grade bilingual students were tested to determine IDELs scores. After assessing the student scores; ten were at grade level in reading fluency and vocabulary and ten were chosen to take part in a study monitored in a qualitative manner. The ten chosen candidates were measured from September through the second week of December. The author did not want to progress monitor strategic or intervention bilingual students for this experiment due to bilingual students being monitored by specialists. The study was closely conducted by the researcher in quest of weekly gains in reading and vocabulary fluency. The author tracked weekly progress of five of the ten selected bilingual students to measure growth of reading fluency, especially for transitional bilingual students pushed to acquire English at a forced rapid rate. Duran (2007) stated that "until a student is at ease in Spanish, which could take as long as 7 years" progress monitoring needed to be closely investigated in order to close the achievement gap among white and Latino students in academic achievement (ERIC,

p.3). Although there may be a large percentage of English language learners who may have conversational proficiency in two languages but do not possess the academic language required for school success was not enough to be successful when being tested in bilingual student's second language (NABE ,2003, p. 113).

Assumptions

In order to assess the students properly the author was trained in administering IDELs by the schools reading and intervention specialists. The teachers were advised to assess their own students in order to understand the effectiveness of the reading program and their teaching effectiveness. Students were given the same opportunity to gain fluency and reading comprehension with the aid of Harcourt reading instruction. As with every classroom, students identified to need more one on one instruction were able to receive extra help in order to reach the highest and fullest academic reading outcome. The popular IDELs assessment from the University of Oregon researched based reading and fluency test was used in accordance to help identify student level of reading and fluency. The author understood the importance of gaining literacy at the highest level in order to facilitate second language literacy development especially in the earliest years of education (Cloud, 2007, p.18).

Research Question

Did periodic IDELs (DIBELS) testing allow bilingual students better outcomes in comprehension and reading fluency when administered on a weekly basis? If student's were allowed more time to fully acquire a second language did this lead to quicker second language learning and more proficiency in a second language?

Null Hypothesis

Second grade students using IDELs monitoring assessment in helping in higher comprehension made greater than expected growth on DIBELs, this was measured by the independent *t*-test at .05 level of significance. Two separate groups were used (control and treatment group) for this experiment.

Significance of the Project

The author found that the research was an integral part to the success of the bilingual students. The researcher believed that the higher the Spanish language learners were in vocabulary and reading fluency in the first language; the higher the range of fluency would be when put into a situation where second language learners were receiving English instruction. For language minority students, the single most important predictor of success in second language learning was the level of proficiency in students primary language (Cloud, 2007, p. 53). Progress monitoring was a strategic methodology that shed insight into the importance of when to transition bilingual students into an English instructed classroom. The need to require the district in this community to consider early exiting students more Spanish instruction helped students attain reading fluency. Early exit programs had shown that many students were not proficient enough to succeed when put in a self contained English classroom. Frequent assessments of Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (IDELs) were used to encourage districts to look at the need for more progress monitoring of bilingual students in order to achieve better outcomes for transitional early exit candidates.

Procedure

In the Fall of the 2009 academic school year: a bilingual classroom of 27 students

were administered the IDELs test. The test was used to identify the range of student's literacy level. The author was given permission by the school principal and intervention specialists to give ten selected candidates the IDELs fluency test. The students selected were similar in academic fluency which gave the researcher credible indicators of the effectiveness of weekly IDELs after the first week of testing in order to identify which students needed intensive and strategic instruction. Ten students at grade level were selected for the experiment. Of the two groups, control group students were administered the IDELs test every six weeks and the treatment group were administered the IDELs test every week. Data were monitored in order to identify the difference of outcome. Future growth was to be provided to the districts bilingual department at a later date that helped in supporting the importance of allowing students in the bilingual and dual language students more intervention and educational procedures to meet the needs of its school population.

Definition of Terms

IDELs (DIBELS). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills test that measured vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency for each student in their first language

ELL. English Language Learner student that first language not of English, but learning the language using a pacing guide that helped students to attain a second language.

WASL. Washington Assessment of Student Learning that measured state mandated test identifying student knowledge of core curriculum learned at grade level.

OSPI Office of Superintendent of Public Schools that has valuable information about school districts progression of educational factors.

DRA. Developmental Reading Assessment that measured student accuracy, fluency, and recall that allowed teachers to pinpoint intervention strategies when needed.

Acronyms

IDELs (DIBELS). Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills.

ELL. English Language Learner.

WASL. Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

OSPI. Office of School Practice and Instruction.

DRA. Direct Reading Assessment.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

The author began a research study that investigated bilingual students in a school located in a school district that supported second language learners in schools that possessed early exit bilingual programs, dual language programs, and pre-Kindergarten programs. They first taught bilingual students in English programs with paraprofessionals that had been implemented to help translate English to Spanish speaking students when needed. The school was located on the western part of town where many low income families of Anglo and Spanish speaking households lived. Low language and vocabulary understanding of both groups had been pinpointed as the downfall of state test scores. Many of the parents worked in low income jobs in the vast agriculture workforce during the crop season. The student population parented by single households was said to be due to the strain of supporting families. The school was the first to implement a bilingual program in 1986 with the goal of accommodating the enormous influx of Spanish speaking students. Currently OSPI showed low academic test scores and results for Bilingual and Anglo students in math, reading, writing, and science. The following WASL results were taken from the 2008-09 Washington state report card information. The author taught 2nd grade bilingual, all of the students (27) speak both languages, the 1st language or home language was Spanish. Many of the students were at below average Spanish vocabulary which can be attributed to the poverty and limited education of the parents. Students were put into regular self contained English instructed or Spanish instructed settings which were determined after a language questioner was sent and returned by the guardians of the students. The classroom was composed of 27 (13 girls

and 14 boys) students and all had parents who were Hispanic.

Special programs had been widely used as a way of enhancing student progress and growth. Nutrition and intervention were necessities that staff and specialist used in order to ensure growth. This elementary school had a high percentage of students that were receiving free or reduced priced meals (86.9%), and all students in grades Kindergarten through second grade received free lunch, students also had the opportunity to get the learning day off to a good start with free breakfast (this applied to all students enrolled). Almost twenty percent of the students received extra specialist instruction in reading/ language arts, math, and some also took advantage of special education.

Transitional Early Exit

The transitional early exit education program instructed students in kindergarten through third grade due to the early exit program that is composed of 26.4% students.

Student absence rate was at 1.4% and this was due to families going to Mexico on extended trips during the holiday season. Many times parents left without informing or properly communicating with office staff.

The school had 29 teachers, and most were able to speak Spanish with different levels of communication. The school had six bilingual teachers. Many teachers had been part of the growth and improvement at the school with the average years of teacher experience being at 15.1 years. Teachers with master's degree was (24.1%), some were beyond that, and others were pursuing other advancement or incentive degrees. The staff was considered highly qualified (100%).

The following indicated WASL comparisons from the past 3 years (2005-08).

Reading scores showed a 2% (3rd 34%, 4th 52.5%, and 54.5%) rise from the previous year. This may be attributed to the student or class make-up (size, students on IEP, ELL students and more). Math scores also indicated 2% (3rd 24%, 4th 22.5%, and 5th 24.2%) rises. Writing showed 35% of the students met standards (3rd was at 50%, and 4th at 20%). Science had a very low 12.1% of students met standards (3rd 20%, and 4th 36%). The low economic or poverty level has risen and this had a definite impact on the level of learning. Poverty obviously added obstacles that students must overcome in order to succeed.

The need for positive and beneficial programs that served the students had been a question that school districts asked themselves with the assistance of their administrative teams. Building personnel had asked how they could accommodate the high rate of Latino student enrollment. The addition of special programs had improved personal well being and pride, but many had speculated that all students should learn English without considering what would serve each student with the capabilities of better academic outcomes. Texas was the first state to recognize the importance of educating Latino students in their native or first language. Educators understood the importance of allowing their students to gain reading fluency before having students make the transition into an English classroom. Understanding language or vocabulary at a high frequency and fluency rate provided students with the needed background that allowed them to succeed in the second language. Programs throughout the state of Washington had implemented pre-Kindergarten programs that taught their students in their native language, but some had also encountered programs that instructed non-English speaking preschool candidates in English. After the strenuous and non productive preschool year

students were placed in a bilingual program.

Bilingual Early Exit Program

The school had implemented an early exit program that was thought to be beneficial for its bilingual population. Since WASL state testing assessments started it had put a definite strain on the learning and teaching abilities by teachers and its stakeholders. Historically “ELL and LEP students had not always been included in state testing programs” (NCLB, 2001). The programs were set up to teach students in the native or first language from pre-K through the middle of the 3rd grade. Students were taught with 100% Spanish instruction in Kindergarten, the 1st grade students received 10% of the instruction in English, in the 2nd grade students were taught 20% of the instruction in English, this was not considering the English instruction received in pull-outs (library, music, and P.E.). In the 3rd grade 50% of the instruction was in English and after Christmas break students received 100% instruction in English. Early-exit bilingual programs were implemented to teach course content in the students’ native or home language, quickly transitioning into all-English instruction. The goals were to develop English language skills quickly so that students could enter English-only classrooms by the end of the first or second grade. According to Stephan Krashen research indicated, when schools provide children quality education in their primary language, they give them two things: knowledge and literacy. The knowledge that children get through their first language helps make the English they hear and read more comprehensible. Literacy developed in the primary language transfers to the second language, because we learn to read by reading, that is by making sense of what they read added with learning to read a language that

is understood (Stephan Krashen, 1996. 2).

If a program was not well coordinated and planned to give children the best possible outcomes of learning, it is safe to say that school districts were failing at educating all diverse students and their families.

Pre-Kindergarten Language Instruction

Bilingual programs had understood the importance of instructing students in their first language. Children learned more and at a quicker rate when instruction was aimed at meeting the needs of their student population in the child's native language. There had also been "stricter requirements and higher standards which led educators to take a closer look at the importance of early intervention for all students at risk of failure in school" (Barnett and Hustedt, 2003, p.16). When instruction was mixed with both English and Spanish, students had a tendency to encounter cognitive barriers that stalled the ability to learn at an effective rate. In early grades it was essential the "students understand and refer to acceptance steering behaviors and attitudes that teaches appreciation of their first and second language, while also teaching the importance of social skills and self awareness" (Marzano, 2009, p.70). The appreciation of cultural languages helped generate learning and progression when aimed with generalized goals, and programs were not putting the children's ability to learn effectively first. It was disturbing to not have been able to see the negative affects that educational programs were putting kids through. According to findings by Calderon and Minay-Rowe,

students put into pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms must have high levels of "increasing letter knowledge (the ability to distinguish and identify the letters of the alphabet) and phonemic awareness (understanding

that spoken words composed of smaller units of sound) helped children begin to understand how the English and Spanish alphabets work” (Calderon and Minaya-Rowe, 2003, p. 114).

This had no significance to teaching phonics through drills. This best ensured by utilizing learning poetry and songs that were alliterative and rhymed, and by making charts about letter/sound discoveries. Early childhood education for second language learners needed to be aimed at sounds and proper word fluency and recognition.

Dual Language Programs

Schools in states that had a high level of second language learners had tried many different programs that had been aimed at meeting the needs of its diverse population. In findings by Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan programs for dual language first began by having bilingual teachers instruct students using a pull-out method.

Bilingual programs considered a bridge for all students to have access to and benefit from dual language programs because “they put emphasis on educational practices that are research based suited and aligned with the schools vision and goals, they also help students achieve cognitive and linguistic structure including sounds, words, and grammar. The biggest benefit is teaching to the socio-cultural understanding and proper communication skills essential towards language learning (Calderon, Minaya-Rowe, 2003, p.5).

Many times the students had been taught for simply one hour each day. Bilingual instruction was thought to be using a translator to get students to do English work even though the student had no idea what was being said. In some schools students were used

as a translator's. Things have since changed due to the effective innovations of teachers who were experts in language acquisition. In findings by Calderon and Minaya-Rowe studies had indicated that,

if bilingual students attain only a very low level of proficiency in their first language without a solid foundation of acquisition their interaction through their own and other languages in terms of input and output is likely to be impoverished and high levels of language will not be attained" (Calderon, Minaya-Rowe, 2003, p. 17).

Specialists had realized the importance of having students learn their first language to the fullest literacy reading level. Washington state school districts moved to dual language instruction where students were taught in both English and Spanish, alternating instruction of reading, science, writing, and math each day. According to research studies conducted by Dr. Collier and Dr. Thomas found

astounding achievement when considering that second language students were achieving higher scores than that of native English students being schooled through their own language, and who have all the advantages of nonstop cognitive and academic development and socio-cultural support. English language learners can outpace native-English speakers year after year until they reach grade level in their second language, where they are schooled in a high enrichment program that teaches the curriculum through their primary language and through English.

Support of student achievement can be made when the school has an effective framework of teaching effectiveness. The entire school must be on board in order to continue to

move in a direction that showed positive outcomes for students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

Progress Monitoring

Program effectiveness implementation was used to help teachers better monitor student achievement and academic progress. Researchers Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan found that when looking at the best essentials in performance,

many studies have pointed out the importance of using student achievement data to shape and/or monitor program effectiveness; more specifically, effective schools use assessment measures that are aligned with the school's vision and goals, with the school's curriculum, and with related standards" (Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan, 2009, p.11).

This was the means that allowed teachers to see the progress of second language and overall student learning. In order to best achieve student outcomes, schools had devised a plan to ensure teachers accountability by requiring frequent reflection to data. When taking a close look at the advancement of student literacy teachers made sure that meetings were in place to help better evaluate student progress and intervene with new avenues of intervention when needed. As schools moved towards standards based assessment it was even more imperative that schools utilized the help of a SWAT or CAST (teachers and academic specialists that come together and talked about meeting the needs of students of concern) team member to analyze the student progress for better outcomes. Specialist and teachers alike understood the significance that "some things are important at all stages of learning to read and write, meaningful and interesting activities provide engaging contexts for ELLs to acquire the diverse skills that are necessary to

become fluent readers and writers” (Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan, 2009, p.18). Skills and knowledge that related to small units of written language, such as the sounds of letters, mapping sounds to letters, and phonological awareness, were particularly important early on in the stages of intervention and student progression of first and ultimately in acquiring a second language.

Intervention Strategies

At the beginning of each academic school year students were given a literacy assessment test using IDELs which were research based. This test was used to ability group students when instructing during reading and language arts. Schools throughout the state of Washington used this measure as an avenue of providing specialists with a comprehensive list of students of concern. Intervention specialist and district data specialist realized that

time needs to be set aside for vocabulary building before, during, and after each lesson. Even fluent speakers of English suffer in the early stages of instruction when vocabulary and background building activities are not conducted, one of the major reasons second language learners do not progress quickly is that not enough time is spent on vocabulary development even when they are reading and writing in their first and second language (Calderon, Minaya-Rowe, 2003, p.89).

When all students had been tested meetings were held with each grade level to inform teachers of students who needed strategic or intervention plans to ensure student progress in literacy. The effects of literacy instruction found by Calderon, Minaya-Rowe pointed out that primary language indicated considerable evidence that

bilingual readers use knowledge of their first language as they read in a second language and they attempt to transfer skills in their native language using phonological awareness, word recognition, oral discourse skills, vocabulary, comprehensive strategies, and writing. The higher the threshold level of literacy in Spanish or native language, the easier it is to transfer those skills into English" (Calderon, Minaya-Rowe, 2003, p.109).

Every trimester the team of six specialists analyzed and discussed advancement of students and new strategic plans to meet the goal set for each student of concern at the beginning of each academic school year. This enabled teachers to put students in pull-out intervention and strategic small group instruction.

First Language Acquisition

School districts in the Washington State faced or had a building population that required special needs and many were discussing ways to accommodate student progression of learning. The most important being that students be given the best educational opportunity to succeed with research based opportunities that ensured the best practices for teaching second language students. In studies by Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan indicated when solidifying first language

students can decode fluently but lack the skills needed to comprehend text and complex grammar and background knowledge related to academic text, therefore it is important to begin to build students language competence during the early grades so they can succeed in higher grades when reading and when reading and writing text becomes

the focus of teaching and learning” (Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan, 2009, p.19).

School buildings common barrier had been that students who possessed a second language be given instruction that helped in the development of their first language followed by the acquisition of a second language. School districts had been quick in trying to advance students at a pace that had not been conducive to its student population. The plan of instruction and intervention had been well thought out in order to allow students of a second language the opportunity for future advancement while first being instructed in their first language. As mentioned by Calderon and Minaya-Rowe,

in order to allow students to learn a second language through reading fluency and comprehension “evidence shows that readers use knowledge of their native language as they read using phonological awareness, and word recognition, oral discourse skills, vocabulary, comprehension strategies, and writing; the higher the threshold level of literacy in their first language, the easier it is to transfer those skills into English as long as they have a solid primary foundation (Calderon and Minaya-Rowe, 2003, p.109).

Allowing second language learners time to acquire their first language to the fullest had indicated higher levels of understanding when making transitional changes to English instruction.

Summary

Federal and state legislation required, and studies indicated, that educators must focus attention on providing high quality education starting with the nations

youngest students. More emphasis had been focused on students who had little or no English proficiency. This was in support of program accountability to allow students the required strategies in acquiring acquisition of a second language. It had become known that an effective dual language program that guided students towards first teaching in the student's first language provided the most achievement and favorable academic growth at a faster pace. Long term data had identified the learning phase of a second language in an efficient dual language program that took from five to seven years in order to allow proficient second language acquisition.

Dual language programs were implemented to allow growth to school districts having a percentage of students with a second language. Schools that were able to identify a high level of strategic teaching and supporting students of a second language best prepared students to meet 21st Century requirements. All schools mentioned in their district and school mission statements and school improvement plans to accommodate students with the needs that students must be equipped with in order to properly advance through the academic grades.

Educators worked together in planning the best possible scenarios for its school demographics. A constructive and feasible plan had been implemented with the assistance of its program effectiveness committee. When looking closer at students to see what works normally a clearer picture was provided a clearer picture of the strategic and monitoring tactics that could be utilized to improve student outcomes. Progress monitoring of students of a second language were of utmost importance when looked at closely. Students were monitored in many different ways to identify if the second language candidates made academic growth in their first language. The

Writing Language Proficiency Test (WLPII) showed acquisition and understanding in vocabulary and comprehension, periodic IDELs monitoring can provide teachers with a visual of success, and intervention and strategic instruction in small groups and can provide students with more one on one instruction.

Schools that required teachers to give IDELs testing on a periodic schedule allowed teachers insight on what strategies needed to be focused on in order to keep students progressing in a successful way. Quarterly committee discussions with classroom teachers, reported on IDELs tests of their students helped keep teachers applying intervention instruction. Along with IDELs monitoring teachers gained another insightful piece of progress by periodically using DRA and read naturally testing to show fluency and comprehension.

The importance of second language acquisition had been aimed first at providing students instruction in their first language. As mentioned earlier, students who were provided with an educational program that exhibited emphasis to their native language had a higher success rate. When students were able to score high on their Writing Language Proficiency test (WLPII test, IDELS) the transition to a second language can be easier and more attainable. Programs that exited second language students to a self contained English classroom had shown students scoring low on state performance tests (reading, writing, math, and science). Students who had been allowed to acquire their first language to the fullest and highest achievement had the confidence to perform better on the state WASL test. The present study was aimed at the importance of having students monitored closely along with the opportunity to allow second language students the necessary academic teaching with the use of an effective dual language

program that allowed high levels of academic acquisition and academic growth.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Treatment of Data

Introduction

The author administered the IDELs test to all second grade students during the first two weeks of the opening school year. Schools throughout the state of Washington used IDELs and DIBELs as a tool in order to measure how much students had retained vocabulary and comprehension after having two and a half months of little or no practice of reading or instruction. After administration of the research based test that was produced by the University of Oregon researcher's, the author documented each individual score with the aid of a panel of building professional assessment team members. The teacher and Committee of Assessment Team (CAST) members were able to pinpoint students who needed extra intervention by labeling students as at grade level, strategic, and intervention candidates. Students identified as intervention and strategic needed to receive extra help from educators who were experts in reading and language instruction. The author chose to conduct an insightful look at how periodic testing and monitoring would benefit the student best at gaining better reading and vocabulary outcomes. From the 27 students tested the author chose ten students who were at grade level in vocabulary and comprehension skills. The ten students were put into two separate groups that would be used in the project. The treatment group of five students would be tested on a weekly periodic basis, while the second treatment group of five students would be monitored every six weeks, which was the regular testing period for students who were at grade level. The IDELs test was the common assessment measure used for the bilingual students during this quarterly experiment. The author's intentions

were to prove if periodic testing and monitoring allowed bilingual students more gains than those that were tested every six weeks. The author's concern was that bilingual students who were in an early exit program needed more time and the opportunity to gain the most vocabulary and comprehension skills and strategies before being required to exit the self contained bilingual classroom in order to participate on state testing during their third grade year.

Methodology

The author found significant evidence that suggested avenues of helping second language students the opportunity to become proficient enough to succeed when introduced to a self contained English instruction classroom. According to Klinger, "the concept of providing scientifically based instruction, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making within a tiered model seems like an appropriate and promising approach for English language learners" (2006). The students were put into groups that paired them up with students with similar learning capabilities. It was essential to keep important documentation on their progress. The author conducted an experiment with the use of students and their educational understanding and ability to learning. Eric Digest, suggested that "bilingual students process information more slowly in their less familiar language; which accounts for their slower speed of test taking" (2009). The author chose to identify growth from fall to winter for both groups that were identified as being at grade level in reading and comprehension skills. Group A was given the IDELs test six times and group B was given the IDELs test three times. This allowed the author to see if there was a definite change in learning more vocabulary and comprehension when administering the IDELs test on a periodic basis.

Participants

At the beginning of the 2009-10 academic school year 27 students were IDELs tested to see where each measured in reading, vocabulary, and comprehension abilities. In the fall students who score above 35 words with fluency per minute were considered to be at grade level. Any other students who scored below were put into intervention plans based on where they scored below the required grade level score. Students who were unable to read more than 25 words per minute and who demonstrated low comprehension and recall levels were categorized as being at risk, and students who scored above 25 words but below 35 were considered to be strategic. These students were monitored closely by our Committee Assessment of Student Team (CAST) reading and intervention team and many times made great gains (due to periodic discussions to see how they were academically advancing). The author chose ten students who were put in to groups of five (A and B). These were students who were academically at grade level in all reading and language abilities. Students in both groups scored above 35 words but below 55 on the IDELs measurement test that was administered at the beginning of the school year. As the groups were chosen the author tested the groups from September through December. Treatment group A was given the IDELs test eight different times to show growth while control group B was given the test two different times. The author wanted to prove that with periodic testing and monitoring of IDELs testing in vocabulary and comprehension allowed students more adequate gains for acquisition and understanding that would lead student better outcomes when placed in a full emersion English program.

Instruments

Documented data administered from IDELs testing was kept in order to validate the experimental measure of student growth in both treatment and controlled groups. The IDELs test which is the Spanish version of the popular research based English DIBELS test out of the University of Oregon Educational Research Center. Many districts throughout the state used this method to ensure that students were tracked and monitored in order to keep visible data of student reading and comprehension outcomes of learning. Treatment group A were administered the IDELs test once during the fall to winter growth study. Treatment group B were tested a total of six times during the fall to winter testing period.

Design

The author used a study that identified the measurement of growth for each group within a three month period. The treatment was used to identify the need to allow bilingual students in an early exit program to be required to be monitored on a periodic basis in order to allow student to gain academic vocabulary to the fullest in their first language. This was important to the author in order to allow students of a second language to acquire at least at grade level or above grade level success in reading vocabulary and comprehension before being required to be instructed in a second language (English). This gave the students better academic success when put in a self contained English instruction classroom. The author chose to conduct the study with two treatment groups that were at similar academic levels in reading vocabulary and comprehension achievement. The treatment groups were given the first IDELs exam at the beginning of the school year in order to see where they scored in vocabulary and

comprehension. After testing students were chosen using two categories (fluency and word count within one minute). Group A and B were to be used in further administering of the IDELs test from the beginning of the academic school year through the first couple of weeks in December. Group A (treatment) which was composed of five students were given the test every week whereas Group B (control) was administered the test every six weeks. By the end of the qualitative measurement experiment the author's intention was to see the significant growth in students who were monitored on a close periodic phase. The author wanted to determine that periodic monitoring would show students making more growth than students who were administered the IDELs test on a monthly basis. This would be identified as progress and program effectiveness to allow better student outcomes and would help bilingual students achieve higher success when moved to regular English instruction. Within each method there was a variety of designs. For example, in an experimental study the researcher may use a pre and post-test to determine growth in academic progress of each student's cognitive learning skills.

Procedure

In the fall of the 2009 academic school year, a bilingual classroom of 27 students were administered the IDILs (DIBELS) test. The test was used to identify the range of each student's literacy level in comprehension and vocabulary levels of achievement. The author was given permission by the school principal and intervention specialists to give ten selected candidates the fluency test starting in September and concluding in early December. Data had been kept in order to identify the difference and significance of the treatment group's achievement and outcome. Significant growth was provided to the district's bilingual department that helped in supporting the importance of allowing

students in the bilingual and dual language programs more intervention and educational procedures to meet the needs of its stakeholders.

Treatment of the Data

The author used the scores that were kept from treatment group A and B throughout the first quarter of the academic school year. The two treatment groups who were chosen for the experiment were kept in an IDELs tracking log that showed the growth of each student. With the assistance of the building specialist, growth was shown on a graph that identified advancement from September through December. A data analysis spreadsheet was used to monitor the student growth within the provided months of the experiment. At the conclusion of the measurement experiment which concluded in early December the scores were submitted while using the CD Stat Pak measurement program in order to identify the growth from each experimental group (a *t*-test for independent groups was used).

Summary

The author tested each of 27 students to see where each student scored on the IDELs test. As the testing was being conducted it was evident that the group who were administered the periodic testing were able to identify who needed extra intervention. This information allowed the student to receive extra intervention in order to achieve academic success and direct teaching. These were in accordance with the 2nd grade assessment curriculum and helps bilingual students succeed at grade level when put into a self-contained English classroom. The author noted that extra teaching needed to be implemented with students who were monitored closely. Growth was analyzed with more in-depth understanding than those that were treated every six weeks. It was found

that close monitoring on IDELs achievement tests were able to grow at a faster pace. The author stated that teachers who assessed their students on a periodic basis provided their students with greater opportunities in academic growth and learning opportunities.

Although the treatment groups were similar in IDELs vocabulary and comprehension achievement measures at the beginning of the study, it was visible to see the greater and quicker advancement for those students who received more one on one monitoring on a periodic basis of analysis.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of the Data

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of the periodic testing monitoring that supported bilingual students in reading vocabulary and comprehension. Achievement and academic advancement were used while using the research based IDELs testing module. The population consisted of ten students who were enrolled in a bilingual classroom during the 2009-10 academic school year. All students were Hispanic and their home or first language was specified as Spanish. Of the 27 classroom students ten were chosen based on academic reading vocabulary and comprehension levels. The IDELs test measured reading vocabulary and comprehension in oral proficiency in Spanish and students were put into two separate groups of similar at grade level measurement. This was used as an indicator of proficiency and language fluency for each student in their home or first language. Weekly monitoring was used for treatment group A whereas measurement for treatment group B was tested every six weeks. This study was to be used as evidence on the importance of monitoring bilingual students. It provided students with essential proficiency to be successful in an early exit program that required bilingual students to receive full English instruction by the middle of their 3rd grade year; this was done in order to allow them to participate on the state WASL test. When looking at the state report card and scores for bilingual students in third, fourth, and fifth grade; it was evident to point at the importance of allowing sufficient growth in order to give bilingual students the opportunity for academic success. All of the students included in the experiment were more proficient in their home

language (Spanish) with some having little proficiency in their second language.

The following scores showed the results of the controlled and the treatment group during the experimental period from fall to winter. Treatment Group B were administered the IDELs test a total of six times allowing the author to review feedback of the results, whereas control group B was given feedback three times during the testing period of the experiment. Outcomes pointed to the adequate growth of both groups with visible and more success pointing to treatment group B as opposed to the control group A results. The number of scores for groups A and B were taken into analysis in order to record the beginning foundation of learning for treatment group A and control group B.

Each group had five separate students that were used in comparison of growth outcomes from fall to winter. The mean for treatment group A pre-test showed a score of 45.60, whereas control group B showed a score of 55.00. The t -value was measured at -10.78 and the degree of freedom was eight. This indicated a significant separation of scores among each group (A and B). An analysis taken using the post-test scores were also submitted using the Statpak for measurement and the mean for treatment group A in the winter showed a score of 68.20, whereas control group B pointed to a mean of 70.20. The t -value was -0.46 and the degree of freedom of eight. The results showed that treatment group A had more growth from fall to winter than that of control group B.

TABLE 1

Feedback results (six) of treatment group A during the fall to winter experiment

<i>Student</i>	<i>Pre-test</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	<i>F4</i>	<i>Post-test</i>
A1	45	47	48	53	59	62
A2	45	48	51	57	58	64
A3	46	50	55	56	62	69
A4	46	53	64	66	67	73
A5	46	53	76	76	68	73

Feedback results (three) of control group B during the fall to winter experiment

<i>Student</i>	<i>Pre-test</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>Post-test</i>
B1	53	63	75
B2	54	65	57
B3	54	65	76
B4	57	67	76
B5	57	59	67

The validity and the reliability issues are examined and indicated.

Note. Group A= students given the test every 2 weeks; Group B students given the test every six weeks. The students were given the test at the beginning (September) of the academic school year and it was conducted through the early part of December. Students took the IDELs test at the beginning of the 2009-10 school year. The scores were used to measure the advancement that bilingual students made in an early exit program. The author wanted to identify the need to monitor bilingual students closer than those of English proficiency before requiring bilingual students to be immersed in a self contained English instructional classroom. Only those that were chosen for the experiment took part in the IDELs.

TABLE 2

t-test of Pre-Post test of early exit bilingual students

Grade	Group A		
2 nd (bilingual) Test	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Pre	5	45.60	3.94
Post	5	68.20	6.11

Grade	Group B		
2 nd (bilingual) Test	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Pre	5	55.00	1.87
Post	5	70.20	8.29

Description of the Environment

The author conducted the experiment during the 2009-10 academic school year. The opportunity presented was for students in a bilingual program who were making academic progress in the quickest way using first language teaching subject matter that related to the regular 2nd grade curriculum. Ten students were chosen after the entire class of 27 participants were given the IDELs reading comprehension fluency test. The ten students chosen for the treatment group study were similar in fluency and comprehension skills. Participants were tested for a period of three months to determine if periodic assessment using the research based IDELs Spanish test helped in quickening and acquiring higher levels of reading vocabulary and comprehension skills needed to excel when placed in a self contained English instructional classroom. The author divided testing periods, meaning five of the participants were given close monitoring every week while the second treatment group of participants tested every six weeks; which is the normal testing and monitoring period for students who were meeting grade level standards. Student's were tested individually in a quiet and reserved place in order to allow concentration while testing. The IDELs test when administered took four to five minutes to administer. Other forms of assessment were also conducted to help students advance in reading and comprehension (DRA and Read Naturally), but they were not part of the treatment study. The experiment concluded in the second week of December and data was to be submitted while using the CD Stat Pak assessment measurement in order to identify growth in reading vocabulary and comprehension between each treatment group.

Hypothesis/Research Question

Does IDELS (DIBELS) testing, when administered on a weekly basis allow bilingual student's adequate gains? Will this allow bilingual or second language students the essentials for succeeding in a self contained English classroom?

Null Hypothesis

Second grade student using IDELS monitoring assessment in helping in higher comprehension will not make greater than expected growth on DIBELS measured by non-independent *t*-test at .005 level of significance.

Results of the Study

The following Table identified the ten student periodic scores that were administered the test from September through the second week in December. The students were categorized in two separate groups in order to show significance in growth among students who were closely monitored using the IDELS reading vocabulary and comprehension test and students who were given the test every six weeks. The IDELS test results were analyzed using the Statpak, producing statistical and associated Value. Based on the analysis, the treatment group (A) demonstrated higher Achievement on the IDELS test compared to the control group. In TABLE 1 you were able to see the scores of treatment group A and control group B that showed the beginning to end results of testing. Treatment group A indicated a total of six scores throughout the testing period from fall to winter, whereas control group B showed three different scored during the same time frame.

A *t*-score of 5.94 was determined in the statistical analysis in treatment group A, whereas control group B had a *t*-score of 4.0 (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2005). The mean of the treatment group (A) and control group (B) IDELs scores determined the value of *t*. The mean of the treatment group was 68.20, and the mean of the control group was 70.20. The degree of freedom was set at eight. The evidence suggested the results of the treatment group was significantly different from the control group. The score taken from both group's (treatment group A and control group B) showed a difference in beginning measures of reading and comprehension skills.

TABLE 3

Participants

Group	Fall Scores	Winter scores	Difference
Treatment group A	45	62	17
	45	64	19
	46	69	23
	46	73	28
	46	73	28
<hr/>			
df=8	mean=68.20	<i>t</i> =-5.94	<i>p</i> >.05

*treatment group A findings

Group	Fall Scores	Winter Scores	Difference
Treatment group B	53	75	18
	54	57	3
	54	76	22
	57	76	19
	57	67	10
<hr/>			
df=8	mean=70.20	<i>t</i> =-4.0	<i>p</i> >.05

*The table showed the students fall and winter assessment scores for students who were used in the experiment.

The treatment and control group scores where the statistical analysis was used showed a growth difference among each group. Treatment group A indicated a mean of 23 and control group showed a mean of 14.40. This was taken from the winter scores where both groups had showed various growth outcomes from fall to winter. At the conclusion of the experiment both groups showed gains, but most significantly in treatment group A. The t -value was 2.08 and the degree of freedom was eight. The degree of freedom for 0.05 was 2.31, 0.01 was 3.36, and 0.001 was 5.04.

Statistical Analysis

Statistics	Value
No. of sums for X	5
Sums of scores for X	115.00
Mean of X	23.00
Sum of squared scores for X	2747.00
SS of group X	102.00

No. of sums for Y	5
Sums of scores for Y	72.00
Mean of Y	14.40
Sum of squared scores for Y	1278.00
SS of group Y	241.20

t -value=2.08

Degree of Freedom=8

$$t = \frac{\sum D}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2 - \frac{(\sum D)^2}{N}}{N-1}}}$$

$$t = \frac{\sqrt{2747.00 - \frac{(115.00)^2}{5}}}{\sqrt{5(5-1)}}$$

$$\frac{\sqrt{1278.00 - \frac{(72.00)^2}{5}}}{\sqrt{5(5-1)}}$$

Findings

The author was able to conduct the experiment with the approval of the Data Specialist and the District Assessment Director. The findings showed significant support of the essential achievement that bilingual students were able to gain based on the growth that was identified while administering the IDELs research based assessment. This tool identified student progress in reading vocabulary and comprehension of each student when the test was administered more frequently than those who were tested every six weeks. Students at the beginning of each academic year are to achieve a score of 35 words read per minute that would indicate they had met expectations based on program effectiveness of student outcomes. By mid -year students were classified at grade level by scoring 50 words read per minute on reading and language fluency when administered the IDELs test. All students were given the IDELs a final time at the end of the academic school year. Students meeting growth and academic achievement must be able to score 65 words per minute in order to be labeled as meeting grade level expectation. The authors concerns were that not all of the students who were placed in a bilingual classroom had met status of grade level, but they had still been required to proceed to third grade and eventually had been taught a second language without having the foundation to succeed in a self contained English classroom. The author had developed a plan to show that when students are assessed on a periodic basis they had shown better growth and teachers were able to give better intervention help to students who had not met grade level status based on the IDELs test. It is well know that reading and language proficiency helped each student whether they were Hispanic or English language candidates and they had more success the higher their vocabulary and comprehension skills had shown. The author was concerned for students who were not meeting grade

level expectations in their first language and yet had been required to succeed in English. Testing for the experiment allowed students to gain the highest level of Spanish comprehension achievements when it was required of each student by the middle of the third grade. The table shown in this chapter identified significant evidence that treatment group A had been lower scoring in fluency and comprehension than treatment group B at the beginning of the academic year, but showed better and more feasible gains by mid-year than those of treatment group B when given periodic assessments by using the IDELs test. The outcome had been apparent and it was an integral piece of the importance of giving bilingual students more intervention in order to close the achievement gap when required to test (WASL) using the Washington state assessment in reading, writing, math, and science. The test also allowed the educator to pinpoint areas that needed to be addressed in order to see where the specialist needed to put more emphasis in using intervention strategies when bilingual students were not meeting expectations.

The same periodic assessment could be used for English speaking students who may need further intervention in order to have a successful education. The author noted that if the vocabulary and comprehension skill of each student was not progressing in a meaningful way they would continue to fall behind their peers with each academic year.

Discussion

Bilingual programs understood the importance of instructing students in their first language. Children learned more and at a quicker rate when instruction was aimed at meeting needs of their student population in the child's native language. There had also been "stricter requirements and higher standard led educators to take a closer look at

the importance of early intervention for all students at risk of failure in school” (Barnett and Hustedt, 2003). When instruction was mixed with both English and Spanish students had a tendency to encounter cognitive barriers that stalled their ability to learn at an effective rate. Programs were not putting the children’s ability to learn effectively first. It was disturbing being able to see the negative effects that educational programs were putting kids through while not fulfilling educational outcomes of each student.

The school had implemented an early exit program that was thought to be beneficial for its bilingual population. Since WASL state testing assessments started it had put a definite strain on the learning and teaching abilities by teachers and its stakeholders. Historically “ELL and LEP students had not always been included in state testing programs” (NCLB, 2001). The programs were set up to teach students in their native or first language from pre-K through the middle of the 3rd grade. Students were taught with 100% English instruction in kindergarten, the 1st grade students received 10% of the instruction in English, in the 2nd grade students were taught 20% of the instruction in English, this was not considering the English instruction received in pull-outs (library, music, and P.E.). In the 3rd grade 50% of the instruction was in English and after Christmas break students received 100% instruction in English.

Schools in states that have a high level of second language learners have tried many different programs that have been aimed at meeting the needs of its diverse population. Programs for dual language first started by having bilingual teachers instruct students using a pull-out method. Many times the students were taught for simply one hour each day. Bilingual instruction was thought to be using a translator to get students

to do English work even though the student had no idea what was being said. In some schools students were used as translators. Things have since changed due to the effective innovations of teachers who are experts in language acquisition. Specialists had realized the importance of having students learn their first language to the fullest literacy reading level. Washington state school districts had moved to dual language instruction where students were taught in both English and Spanish alternating instruction of reading, science, and math each school day.

Program effectiveness implementation had been used to help teacher's better monitor student achievement and academic progress. In order to best achieve student outcomes schools have devised a plan to ensure teacher's accountability by requiring frequent reflection of data. When taking a close look at the advancement of student literacy teachers make sure that meetings are helpful; to better evaluate student progress and intervene with new avenues of intervention when needed. As the movement towards standards based assessment had been more imperative and importance needed to be utilized to help student's progress for better outcomes.

At the start of each academic school year students were given a literacy assessment test using IDELs which is research based. This was used to properly ability group students when instructing during reading and language arts. Schools throughout the state of Washington use this measure as an avenue of providing specialists with a comprehensive list of students of concern who needed intervention. When all students had been tested meetings were held with each grade level to inform teachers of students who needed strategic or intervention plans to ensure each students progress in literacy. Every trimester the team of six specialists analyzed and discussed advancement by

students and new strategic plans were discussed in order to meet the goal set for student.

School districts throughout the state of Washington face or have a building population that requires special needs. School buildings common barrier was that students who possessed a second language be given instruction that helped in the development of their first language and then the acquisition of a second language. School districts had been quick in trying to advance students at a pace that was not conducive to its student population. The plan of instruction and intervention must be well thought out in order to allow a student of a second language the opportunity for future advancement while first being instructed in their 1st language.

The following discussion supported the importance of having students who were learning a second language, should first acquire and be given the additive support in order to give students the foundation in their first language before instruction began in the second language. The support was taken from research that identified the essential needs of each English Language Learner (ELL) or Second Language Learner (SLL) in order to allow academic success. For many years the emphasis was placed on getting second language learners to learn English at the quickest rate. However, research has documented that schools throughout were not giving the entire population ample thought towards successful acquisition, especially if the school was heavily populated with diverse students who were not proficient in their first language. Districts had created programs and curriculum suited to allow growth and specialists keeping data on growth had been able to identify trends that showed the importance of better intervention strategies to meet student needs. This had been thought to be a learning disability and programs were keeping students from proper learning and achievement levels that would

accommodate bilingual and diverse students with meeting grade level outcomes.

Summary

In this chapter the author outlined supportive evidence of the importance of schools implementing programs that were structured to meet the needs of its school demographics. The schools which were comprised of a large percentage of bilingual students had developed a well thought out curriculum and instruction model, that had ensured that students were given every avenue of proper guidance and academic teaching that elevated the cognitive essentials for bilingual students. Although most bilingual and dual language programs had made accommodations at meeting the needs of students, there were still programs that needed critical thinking in support of having pre-school programs that taught and instructed bilingual students in their first language. Schools had been neglecting the understanding that students must possess language and comprehension in their first language in order to excel in second language instruction. Educators had developed strategies of assessment that measured each student in reading, writing, math and science learning that helped in monitoring student cognitive learning. Data was used in developing intervention teaching for students who had not made adequate growth. The author constructed the treatment groups (A and B) in order to gain additive support of the need to give bilingual students more support. Reading and comprehension IDELs testing were used to help students learn the grade level curriculum in reading and language arts in their first language. Students who were scoring low in Spanish were given greater support in order to help student success before making the transition to English instruction. When bilingual students were not at grade level in their first language, it was evident that they were not going to be successful when put in a self

contained English classroom. Early exit programs were developed in order to try to close the achievement gap, but research has shown that students learn or acquire language within five to seven years of instruction. Students were being exited from bilingual instruction without having the foundation to support academic success. Many early exit programs have since turned to the dual language instruction through grades five in order to ensure proper and higher acquisition. Although programs have changed in order to appease and help students in bilingual programs to achieve success; we had still found students that needed more support due to the differences in learning styles. Monitoring of student growth by using data had been an instrumental tool in visibly seeing student growth in reading and language acquisition with the use of IDELs testing. Students had been placed in categories of intervention, at grade level, and strategic groups in order to help in greater and quicker acquisition. The authors development of periodic monitoring of students had identified the need to test bilingual students closely in order to gain the highest achievement that would help when making the transition to English instruction. Students were able to make the change in instructional learning from Spanish to English with more ease. Although districts had made ample changes to curriculum teaching by implementing programs that help in achievement, there was still thoughtful planning that needed to be carefully looked at to ensure that bilingual students were progressing at a rate that helped them be successful when required to take the ever popular state WASL test. The schools elementary state report card had indicated that the student population needed to be equipped with curriculum changes that would help a higher percentage of bilingual students pass state required tests.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

The author developed an experimental study in order to validate findings that ensured bilingual students the highest and most successful assessment tools that would be used to help in developing proficient acquisition in the student's (bilingual) their first language before putting second language students in a self contained English classroom. The school had developed new avenues for language attainment and positive student outcomes. Schools throughout the country had tried rigorously to accommodate second language students in order to close the achievement gap and appease bilingual students rate of understanding. This needed to be done to successfully attain scores that were required in identifying students making adequate progress when state tests were administered (WASL). Students who were labeled as being second language students needed to be monitored and assessed at a closer rate in order to lift student scores. The author's goal was to gain valuable validating research on the need to give the bilingual student more intervention in order to achieve better student understanding in core classroom instruction such as reading, writing, math, and science. As mentioned in earlier chapters students must first be given ample instruction and adequate time to allow growth. Research has indicated that students need five to seven years of instruction in their first language before seeing gains when compared to their English speaking counterparts in state testing. Not only do they need to be instructed for a long period of time, but they must be taught by a highly qualified teacher who uses vocabulary that is going to ensure that the students learn the state level curriculum.

Summary

The researcher believed that the higher the Spanish language learners were in vocabulary and reading fluency in the first language; the higher the range of fluency would be when put into a situation where second language learners were receiving English instruction. For language minority students, the single most important predictor of success in second language learning is the level of proficiency in student's primary language (Cloud p. 53). It has been researched that programs take ample amount of time to allow students to gain proficiency in their first language in order to allow full academic advancement primarily in their spoken language before making the transition to a fully immersed English second language classroom. This research has indicated higher success in all academic core teaching and testing results. Students should not be pressured in making progress in a set time frame, especially with all of the learning differences that educators and students encounter in their progression of learning. According to Vannoy, divergent views on whether needs were best met through instruction in the student's first language and English, known as bilingual education, or instruction solely in English, compounded the challenge and led to varied language support programs (2004 p.1). Districts that used varied data to assess student progress with timely monitoring and intervention strategies allowed students to gain more advancement than regular bilingual early exit programs that required students to be filtered into an all English classroom at a recommended time. Thoughtful planning and insightful teaching tactics furnished bilingual students with better academic learning that enables better and higher results leading to successful acquisition of their first language which helped eliminate barriers of cognitive learning. There are still many schools that implemented the early exit programs

which transitioned students at the middle of the 3rd grade; early exit required instructing students in English with no Spanish being spoken within the classroom. This therefore compounded the challenge of the student and/or the teacher in making accommodations in providing bilingual students with the best possible academic teaching. Since research findings had found that more instruction in the students first language had been supported, districts had constructed pre-kindergarten programs that first taught non-English students entirely in Spanish in order to give bilingual or second language students more academic structure. Schools throughout the state of Washington previously had pre-kindergarten programs that first taught non-English students entirely in English. Bilingual coordinators and data specialist had encountered that in the early years of education "the ability to distinguish and manipulate phonemes is a must for the successful acquisition of beginning reading skills" (Borelli, 2002, p.2). Pre-K programs had for years given instruction in English and then students had been placed in the 1st grade bilingual classrooms for two and a half years. The popular IDELs assessment from the University of Oregon researched based reading and fluency test was used in accordance to help identify student level of reading and fluency. The author understood the importance of gaining literacy at the highest level in order to facilitate second language literacy development especially in the earliest years of education (Cloud, 200, p.18). Since the review of IDELs assessment programs have taken a new direction in allowing proper academic growth instruction and learning, it has elevated positive and advanced academic advancements in bilingual instruction.

Conclusions

The author found reliable evidence based on the findings of the experiment that

identified more growth in students when administered and monitored on a periodic basis that allowed adequate gains. This enabled bilingual students better outcomes in reading fluency and vocabulary comprehension and understanding. Findings were supportive of the need to have bilingual students in a longer teaching and learning setting, when required to be immersed in a self contained English classroom in an early exit program. Students take up to seven years to fully acquire a second language that allowed confidence and cognitive understanding in their first language that sets a solid foundation for transitional teaching in a second language. The tables added to the research suggested that students showed more growth when assessed and monitored closely when compared to assessing on a quarterly basis, as has been the normal protocol for students meeting the benchmark in the Spanish IDELs scale. This helped teachers to gain measureable data that provided the teacher with better plans of what students needed in intervention and strategic teaching for each individualized student's learning. The table identified the difference in growth in treatment group A and group B, when the group scores were added; growth was more evident with the students in group A. Both were taken into account for the experiment at the beginning of the school year (September) and were assessed through the first part of December. The treatment group test scores for the assignment were taken from students who showed at grade level status at the beginning of the school year. Treatment group A was slightly lower than that of treatment group B in achievement when the experiment began, but showed better gains than that of treatment group B when the study concluded. The CD Stat Pak was used to indicate findings of better outcomes due to periodic assessment. The author used the IDELs assessment tool to measure growth along with read naturally and DRA assessment

monitoring to give each individual the best possible scenario for constructing a solid foundation of acquiring vocabulary and language comprehension. The opportunity to gain more understanding in the first language provided students a smoother transition to a self contained classroom in the middle of the 3rd grade. The table and scores were used to show the importance of implementing a program that would allow students to be taught longer in their first language by planning and implementing a dual language program for the upcoming school year. The program allowed students to be instructed in their first language through the 5th grade. This ensured students gained more language and acquisition of core materials that helped in providing students the important curriculum of state core materials in order to score higher on state tests. The rigorous teaching curriculum was constructed for English speaking students and educators were constantly working at meeting state mandates for each grade level, but not much emphasis was taken into account when second language students were not meeting district and state curriculum growth. Since research findings had concluded that in order to close the achievement gap with English speaking peers students needed to be placed in a classroom that allows bilingual students to learn cognitive core essentials in their first language. Schools throughout the state were beginning to understand and implement dual language programs that taught students in first and second language through the fifth grade simultaneously. The growth was supported best in dual language programs as opposed to early exit, and regular bilingual programs. The percentage of students meeting the benchmark while being taught in a dual language setting showed much greater achievement than bilingual and early exit programs.

Recommendations

As I concluded my research experiment it is important to note that bilingual and second language students be allowed to be instructed in their first language for a period of five to seven years. This would allow students learning a second language to fully acquire a solid foundation of language proficiency in their first language. Implementing programs that accommodate student's while using highly qualified teachers that are strongly proficient provides students with the best outcomes. Teaching needs to be aimed at high levels of cognitive learning that is equivalent to regular grade level curriculum. With new programs being implemented it is important to use the proper plan of curriculum alignment and coordination and provide the best possible teaching tactics and strategies that are going to provide students with high levels of learning. .

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