

Implementations of a Supplemental Educational Service  
Provider in Regards to  
Hispanic English Language Learners

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A Special Project

Presented to

Dr. Robert P. Kraig

Heritage University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Masters of Education

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Majida Shakura Brooks

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FACULTY APPROVAL

Implementations of a Supplemental Educational Service Provider

In Regards to

Hispanic English Language Learners

A Master's Special Project

by

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## ABSTRACT

### Implementations of a Supplemental Educational Service Provider In Regards to Hispanic English Language Learners

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The researcher conducted a study on the effects of a supplemental educational service provider regarding 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade Hispanic English language learners in San Joaquin County, California. The researcher sought to find if 15 hours of supplemental instruction in reading/language arts was enough to significantly raise students' test scores on a post-test. Students were tested and surveyed regarding their post-intervention confidence levels in reading/language arts. After careful analysis, the researcher concluded that 15 hours of instruction time did indeed help to raise students' test scores in reading/language arts.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into legislation the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that ensured federal funding to America's neediest schools; and for the first time in American history an attempt was made to address poverty and its relationship to students' school performance at the federal, state, and local government levels. In 2001, this act was reestablished when President George Bush passed the No Child Left Behind law (NCLB) that required schools to show Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in order to meet compliance with federally mandated guidelines.

These guidelines called for accurate data reporting by states and local educational agencies (LEA) in the subject areas of math, and reading/language arts, with science added in 2007-08. These new accountability measures were aimed at increasing student performance at the local and national levels. Schools who did not meet AYP three years in a row were required by law to provide low-performing students with services that would help them succeed in school. One such service provided was the use of supplemental educational services (SES).

Under NCLB, SES was defined as "additional academic instruction designed to increase the academic achievement of students in low-performing schools." The law further stated that the SES "must be high quality, research-based, and specifically designed to increase student achievement." In addition, the federal legislation also required that SES "be provided outside the regular school day." (U.S. Department of Education, 2002)

### Statement of the Problem

According to federal regulations mandated by NCLB, SES were required to provide about 30 hours of academic services outside of regular classroom time. Students at two elementary (K-8<sup>th</sup>) schools in Stockton Unified School District, San Joaquin County, CA, were provided academic tutoring in the areas of math and reading/language arts for approximately 33 hours from February 24, 2010, to April 24, 2010. Each tutoring session included one hour of math, and one hour devoted to reading/language arts. Ninety-nine percent of the students were Spanish speaking, with Spanish being their primary home language, while only one of five tutors spoke Spanish.

After being in school for six and a half hours students often came to the tutoring sessions unfocused and tired. The researcher observed students were not serious about receiving additional academic instruction; although students in the primary grades were more apt at attending than students in the middle grades.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to see if approximately 15 hours of outside academic assistance was enough to significantly raise English Language Learner (ELL) students' test scores in reading/language arts.

### Delimitations

This study was delimited to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students at Henry and McKinley Elementary Schools in Stockton Unified School District in San Joaquin County, California. Students began after-school tutoring on February 24, 2010 for two two-hour sessions per week, until April 24,

2010. Each session was disseminated into one hour of tutoring for math, and one hour of tutoring devoted to reading/language arts.

McKinley Elementary had 760 students, with an ethnic makeup of: American Indian 4.5%, Asian 3.8%, Pacific Islander 0.3%, Filipino 13%, Hispanic 71.4%, African-American 5.5%, and White 1.4%. The percentage of students who qualified for free/reduced priced meals was 94%.

Henry Elementary had a total population of 973, with an ethnic makeup of: American Indian 6.6%, Asian 3.2%, Pacific Islander 0.5%, Filipino 1.1%, Hispanic 72.9%, African-American 3.3%, and White 12.4%. The percentage of students who qualified for free/reduced priced meals was 88.2%.

### Assumptions

The researcher assumed that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students would score higher on their reading/language arts post-test than they did on the pre-test after spending approximately 15 hours of reading/language arts instruction. It was also assumed that students responded truthfully on the questionnaire about their level of confidence regarding their reading/language arts skills. The researcher also assumed that the tutor for this grade level was competent in this subject area, and knew how to engage and motivate students to learn, especially English Language Learners, and that all students were given equal testing time on both tests.

### Hypothesis

Low performing ELL Henry and McKinley Elementary students will show additional academic gains in reading/language arts after receiving 15 hours of instruction.

Students who participated in the tutoring program will report confidence that they are better at reading/language arts as a result of receiving additional instruction time.

### Null Hypothesis

Low performing Henry and McKinley Elementary students will not show additional academic gains as a result of receiving supplemental tutoring in reading/language arts.

Students who participated in the after-school tutoring program will not report confidence that they are better at reading/language arts as a result of the SES program.

### Significance of the Project

This project was important because it addressed whether 15 hours of additional academic instruction was significant enough to raise students' test scores in reading/language arts. It also was important because it helped to ascertain whether students felt confident in the instruction they were receiving.

### Procedure

The following procedures were used in the research of this project:

1. Permission was granted by the president and CEO of the SES provider at Henry and McKinley Elementary Schools.
2. Selected literature was reviewed and studied at Heritage University, Seattle Public Libraries, King County Libraries, and through internet databases.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in the after-school tutoring programs at Henry and McKinley Elementary Schools were given a pre-test in reading/language arts.
4. Scores from the pre-test were calculated (see Appendix A).

5. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in the after-school tutoring programs at Henry and McKinley Elementary Schools were given a post-test in reading/language arts.
5. Scores from the post-test were calculated.
6. 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students were surveyed regarding their confidence levels in reading/language arts.
7. Results of the survey were tabulated and charted.
8. Results of the reading/language arts pre-test and post-test were tabulated and graphed.

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms were used for the purpose of this study:

English Language Learners. A person who is in the process of learning English and has a first language other than English.

Limited English Proficiency. A person who was not born in the United States and whose native language is one other than English. This person's ability to read, speak, and write English may be sufficient to deny him the ability to meet the state's proficiency level of achievement on state assessments.

#### Acronyms

AYP. Adequate Yearly Progress

CDE. California Department of Education

DARC. Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Comprehension

ED. United States Department of Education

ELL. English Language Learners

ESEA. Elementary and Secondary Education Act

LEA. Local Educational Agency

LEP. Limited English Proficient

NCLB. No Child Left Behind Act

PI. Program Improvement

SES. Supplemental Educational Services

## CHAPTER 2

## Review of Selected Literature

### Introduction

This chapter was organized around the following topics: (a) Title 1, (b) No Child Left Behind, (c) Supplemental Educational Services, (d) Reading/language arts instruction, (e) Literary development in English Language Learners, (f) Phonological awareness, (g) Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Comprehension, (h) Summary.

### Title 1

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into legislation the ESEA that established federal guidelines regarding the education of America's poor students. The act included several statutes that mandated federal guidelines regarding the American educational system. It was noteworthy to mention that the act did not establish a national curriculum; on the contrary, it provided federal funds that helped local educational systems in the areas of professional development, instructional aids, and resources that supported educational programs.

This law was a groundbreaker for other federal programs that eventually were established to provide equal educational opportunities to poor educational districts who were not achieving academically, compared to their richer counterparts. Under ESEA, Title 1 stipulated a set of programs administered by the United States Department of Education (ED) that distributed funds to local educational agencies (LEA) and schools with a high percentage of low-income students. Typically, for a school to qualify for this program, at least 40% of its students had to qualify as low-income.

Also, under Title 1 of the ESEA, statutory provisions were made that included limited English proficient (LEP) students' assessments. Prior to 2004, these were not mandated by ESEA, but now LEAs had to include annual assessments in reading/language arts and math for LEP students who had been in the United States and attended school for less than 12 months. The statute further stipulated that reasonable accommodations had to be made to assist these students with testing, which also included native language assessments. ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov))

In Stockton Unified School District, in 2008-09, there were 10,598 English Language Learners (ELL), which made up 28% of the total population district-wide. Of this total, 8,436 spoke Spanish as their first language, which included 22.3% of the district's ELL population. ([www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us))

### No Child Left Behind

The NCLB act of 2001 set the stage for educational improvement on a national, state, district, and school-wide bases. Although other federal regulations had been mandated since the passage of the ESEA in 1965, at no other time in the history of the United States had the educational system held accountability to such measures. Not only were individual schools held accountable, but districts and LEAs had to prove that *all* students were meeting proficiency levels on standardized state exams.

Under the banner of NCLB, schools, districts, and LEAs had to show they were making Adequate Yearly Progress towards proficiency for all students in the areas of reading/language arts, and math, with science added in the year 2008. The goal of NCLB was to have all students proficient in these areas by 2012-13. Adequate Yearly Progress



The criterion for meeting AYP included graduation and participation rates, percent proficient, and API (Academic Performance Index). Accordingly, if a school or LEA did not meet at least one of its targets, it was labeled as not meeting AYP.

In the state of California, four state exams were used in its assessment of student proficiency. They were: the California Standards Tests (CSTs), which was administered to grades 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>; the California Modified Assessment (CMA), which was administered to 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades; the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA), which included grades 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade; and finally, the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which was administered to 10<sup>th</sup> graders. For each of these exams, the targeted participation rate was 95%.

When determining federal AYP, a school, LEA, or state had to have a minimum API of 650, or had to have a growth point of one, as well as meeting participation, graduation and percent proficient rates.

In determining graduation rate for AYP, a school, LEA, or a state must have had a graduation rate of at least 83.1%. If this target was not met in one year, then the next year the rate must have increased by 0.1%, or have an increase of at least 0.2% in a two year average. According to data reported by Henry Elementary and McKinley Elementary Schools, both schools failed to meet AYP for 2009. In addition, only 20.2% of ELL at McKinley Elementary met the target of 46% in reading/language arts. While only 18.5% were proficient in reading/language arts at Henry Elementary, with the same target rate. ([www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us))

## Accountability

Since NCLB, states, LEAs, and local schools had to significantly account for student achievement. This data had to be accurate and reliable, for it determined a schools' or LEAs' AYP status. These results were produced in what were called state and district report cards. These reports had to meet statutory requirements, and they had to accurately reflect gains, or not, in student, district, and LEA achievements. All schools receiving Title 1 funds had to make known to the public their results.

In keeping with these requirements, and in an effort to maintain better measures, California's Department of Education (CDE) had a multi-tiered system of state-wide reporting. Since 1999, CDE used both state and federal accountability results in their "Accountability Progress Reporting" (APR) system. Under the state requirements, Base and Growth Academic Performance Indexes (API) were included in the results; whereas with federal reporting, AYP and PI results were included.

California's API were based upon state-wide testing, and the results were measured from year-to-year, with the base and growth being the baseline score of student performance on a scale of 200 to 1000, as measured on the STAR Program tests, and the California High School Exit Examinations (CAHSEE) administered in the spring of the previous year. In addition, student subgroups results were used if they were considered to be "numerically significant." And to be considered in this category, the subgroup had to have at least 50 students who made up at least 15% of the valid scores; or at least 100 students who had valid scores for that particular subgroup. ([www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us))

In determining subgroup status, the following categories were used:

- English Learners
- Africa-American
- American-Indian or Alaska Native
- Filipino
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- Two or More Races
- Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- Students with Disabilities ([www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us))

In determining AYP, newly arrived LEP students' assessments were not included with the mainstream students' test scores in reading/ language arts. Nonetheless, these students' scores were counted as participants towards meeting the 95% participation requirement for meeting AYP, if the students took an English language proficiency test.

According to NCLB, if a school or LEA did not meet API targets, it could not make AYP, and it would be identified as needing Program Improvement (PI). In which case, the school would have to implement other services to boost students' academic performance. Prior to 2006, schools were classified as either one of two Title 1 programs: targeted assistance (TAS) or school wide program (SWP).

In 2006, the United States Department of Education (ED) granted California its request to do away with the old identification criteria. Now, those LEAs receiving Title 1 funds were identified for PI if they did not make AYP two years running in the same content area district-wide or in each grade span; if there were a large number of subgroups not attaining passing scores; or if AYP was not reached on the LEA's API or graduation rate.

As for schools receiving Title 1 funds, they were identified for PI if school-wide they did not meet AYP in mathematics or English/language arts; or if they did not make AYP on the same API or graduation rate. This status also applied to subgroups. Consequently, both Henry and McKinley Elementary schools were placed in PI status for 2009; with Henry being in year 2 and McKinley in year 5. ([www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us))

### Supplemental Educational Services

According to NCLB regulations, supplemental educational services are selected by the parents of low-income students who qualify for such services based upon their attendance in schools in their 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> year in Program Improvement (PI). The providers must be approved by the LEA, in accordance to federally mandated guidelines that stipulate the chosen curriculum “must be high quality, research based, and specifically designed to increase student academic achievement.” ([www2.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html))

When selecting a SES, parents were able to choose a for-profit or non-profit organization that may or may not be part of the school district or LEA. The federal guidelines did not stipulate that SES must be part of the school, and each state had rules in determining SES eligibility. Even religious organizations were able to qualify as providers of these services.

Prior to NCLB, educational service providers were not regulated by state and federal mandates regarding alignment with state academic standards. Now, each SES curriculum must adhere to its states’ standards; and they must have been able to show that students were indeed attaining proficiency levels on standardized tests. SES that could not show such progress, were

not approved by LEAs, and subsequently their names were withdrawn from the list of eligible providers. ([www2.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/nclb/choice/help/ses/index.html))

Parents at McKinley Elementary School had a choice between two providers; while students at Henry Elementary had a choice of four SES providers. As a whole, Stockton Unified School District had 38 SES providers approved by ED.

### Language Arts Instruction

It was no surprise the ELL students had a difficult time with comprehending texts and understanding what had been taught. Oftentimes their parents had limited English abilities, and English was not spoken in the home.

For Henry and McKinley Elementary schools, this presented a special case, because almost half of their students were classified as ELL; with less than 1.5% at Henry, and less than 8% at McKinley, being redefined the next school year as Re-designated Fluent-English-Proficient (RFEP) after passing a state English proficiency assessment. ([www.ed-data.k12.ca.us](http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us))

According to *California's English-Language Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools* manual, language arts instruction from grades kindergarten to third grade was crucial in determining a student's future success in school. By the beginning of 4<sup>th</sup> grade, students who had not mastered the ability to read with fluency, write compositions, and recall information from texts, were at a greater disadvantage than those students who had.

Another critical skill that was pertinent to language acquisition was vocabulary. For ELL students, vocabulary knowledge was critical to school success. And according to Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle, and Watts-Taffe (2006), "vocabulary is one of the strongest correlates

of the discrepancy between the reading performance of native English speakers and that of ELLs. This correlation remains despite the fact that many ELLs possess a large vocabulary in their native language” (p. 526).

One approach Blachowicz et al. (2006) believed educators could utilize in the classroom was explicit vocabulary instruction that integrated the curriculum. The authors further stressed the need of educational leaders to provide teachers with in-service training that specifically addressed teaching vocabulary, and that vocabulary instruction should remain constant, even through the high school years, when it was thought students had already mastered language acquisition.

#### Literary Development in English Language Learners

Developing literary skills was hard for ELL students who had not mastered the English language. Not surprisingly, their comprehension skills were also lacking, which made other school subjects hard to understand as well, and as a result, many did not do well on standardized exams. Acquiring literacy was a process that went beyond the decoding of words. Indeed, language development was a realm of study that was complex in and of itself.

Literacy acquisition for ELL students was also particularly hard because of the differences in phonological awareness employed when native Spanish speakers learned English. At times, students would improperly use Spanish syntax, spelling, and phonology when decoding English words. And this in turn presented a problem with students’ comprehension.

#### Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness was the ability to distinguish sound structure in a language. Unlike phonics, which was the rules of a language when sounds were put together, phonological awareness refers to units of speech and how the listener segments and blends these sounds together to make sense.

Reading research scientist, Dr. Karen Ford (2005), in her presentation *Fostering Literacy Development in English Language Learners*, maintained that ELLs may benefit from the ability to transfer phonological awareness skills from their native language to English. She asserted that students with strong phonological awareness who successfully transferred this knowledge to English were more successful in literacy development. According to Ford, this was because phonological awareness skills “develop in a particular pattern, which is the same from one language to another (i.e. from larger to smaller units of sound – from word to syllable to onset-rime to phoneme)” (p. 1).

On the other hand, phonological awareness in ELLs could hinder a students’ literacy development if the student inappropriately generalized Spanish phonology, syntax, and spelling to their second language. This process was called negative transfer, or interference. According to Ford, students who negatively transferred their first language to their second language were more likely to have problems with learning the rules of English (Ford, 2005).

In order to lessen a student’s chance of interference, Ford suggested that teachers of ELLs utilize a balance approach in their teaching to solidify language acquisition and minimize confusion. She recommended that teachers assessed students in English, as well as in their

primary language. In this way, teachers could ascertain whether the student had a learning disability, or if their difficulties were due to a deficit in English proficiency (Ford, 2005).

Another approach Ford suggested to help ELLs with written language were spelling assessments. Ford quoted the work of Helman (2004), who suggested teachers of ELLs begin instruction with what she called the commonalities the two languages share in terms of sounds and patterns; this then would be followed with instruction on the differences in sounds and patterns. In this fashion, students, as well as teachers, would be able to understand the natural shift of phonological abilities from Spanish to English, and would be able to properly identify the confusion caused by negative transfer (Ford, 2005).

#### Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Comprehension

According to Diane August (2006), a researcher with the Center for Applied Linguistics; David J. Francis, University of Houston professor; and Han-Ya Annie Hsu and Chaterine E. Snow of Harvard University, ELL students did poorly on standardized exams because most exams included “high levels of English oral proficiency, or decoding ability”. In response to this, August and her team of university professors designed the Diagnostic Assessment of Reading Comprehension (DARC), a comprehension assessment that reflected central comprehension processes. Namely, the ability to remember newly read content; the ability to make inferences related to the text; being able to access important background knowledge; and making inferences that required incorporating background knowledge with the text were necessary.

Since ELL students typically had less background knowledge of the text, less vocabulary, and were less familiar with mainstream discourse, they oftentimes were not enthusiastic about



reading, which may have affected outcomes on standardized tests. Also, in considering the lack of vocabulary development in ELL students, current assessments did not take into consideration the comprehension processing of these readers, which the DARC did.

Using the work of Hannon and Daneman (2001) as a springboard, August and her team developed DARC for elementary ELL students using words that were simple and easy to decode. Their assessment also eliminated the need for students to provide background knowledge to the text being assessed. In this way, it was easier for ELL students to relate to the text and feel at ease with reading. The assessment was written in both English and Spanish, with both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking assessors.

The assessment had both reading and listening sections, with the student taking either one, depending on their reading ability. Upon initial assessment, if a student missed more than eight real words, he must take the listening portion of the test. Since the test included made up words, these were not included as missed words on the preliminary evaluation. However, if a student missed more than eight real words, he was required to take only the listening portion.

Students were then asked yes-no questions regarding the passage. Students were also required to explain their yes or no responses, then they were instructed to re-read or listen to the passage a second time. The finally phase of the assessment asked students to look at a copy of the passage and point out made-up words or words they didn't understand.

Pilot studies indicated that ELL students who took the DARC scored better than students who had previously taken the reading passage subtest on the Woodcock-Johnson Language Proficiency Battery test. Moreover, the studies indicated that the test's yes-no questions were

suitable in indicating the students' thinking, and that the English and Spanish versions were equivalent in content and analysis. And more importantly, the reading items on the assessment were at the appropriate level (August et al., 2006).

### Summary

Many instructional models were developed to aid ELLs to become successful in gaining English proficiency within the American educational system. No one model was the same and no one model provided all there was to learn within the vast discipline of language arts. And although NCLB and Title 1 provided some assistance with helping ELLs achieve their goals of English proficiency, schools with a large percentage of Hispanic students had to do more to meet AYP and stay in compliance with federal laws. Supplemental educational services were one step in this direction, but parents, and students themselves, must strive for educational excellence.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology and Treatment of Data

#### Introduction

Henry and McKinley Elementary Schools in Stockton Unified School District in San Joaquin County, California failed to meet AYP 3 consecutive years, and was mandated by NCLB to provide its students with SES. The researcher sought to find out if, after receiving 15 hours of additional instruction in reading/language arts, the students' scores would increase on a post-test administered by the SES. In analyzing the data and determining educational and statistical significance, a *t* test was used.

#### Methodology

For this study the researcher chose to do a one-group pretest-posttest experimental research design. The researcher used a group of sixteen 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders in a SES tutoring program that operated from February 24, 2010 through April 24, 2010.

The researcher served as a tutor for the SES, and sought to find out if the program was effective in teaching ELL students reading/language arts. The researcher obtained permission from the SES president, and students' pre-test scores were recorded. During the course of the tutoring program, the researcher observed teaching techniques used by the students' tutor and also researched best practices in teaching ELL students reading/language arts skills by doing library and internet data base searches.

After completion of the program, students were administered a posttest in reading/language arts. These results were collected, and compared to the pretest.

Students were also given a questionnaire regarding their attitudes about reading/language arts after completion of the program. The results of the pretests, posttest, and student surveys were recorded and charted using Microsoft Excel.

### Participants

Participants in this study consisted of sixteen 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students at two K-8<sup>th</sup> elementary schools in Stockton Unified School District, Stockton, California. Henry Elementary participants included: two 4<sup>th</sup> grade boys and one 4<sup>th</sup> grade girl; five 3<sup>rd</sup> grade boys and two 3<sup>rd</sup> grade girls. At McKinley Elementary, there were two 4<sup>th</sup> grade boys and one girl; and two 3<sup>rd</sup> grade girls and one boy. The ethnic make up of students were Hispanic. All students qualified for free/reduced priced lunch and all students had Individual Service Learning Plans (ISLP) with reading/language arts as an area of focus.

### Instruments

There were three instruments used in the design of this study. The first was a reading/language arts pretest administered by the SES. The second instrument used was a post-test within the same category – reading/language arts. And finally, a 10 question survey developed by the researcher was given to the 16 students used in the study of this project. The students were required to answer questions regarding their confidence in reading/language arts after completion of the program, rating each question as strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

In determining the project's content validity, on the pre and post reading/language art tests, all content areas in these subjects were measured: word analysis, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing. Thus, both item validity and sampling validity were attained.

Due to the fact that there was no control group, there were no threats to internal validity regarding selection and morality. And given that both assessments were administered by the same tutor, using the same publisher, in the same setting, there were no threats to instrumentation validity.

### Design

This study was a one-group pretest-posttest design. It was intended to determine if 15 hours of reading/language arts instructions was enough to significantly increase ELL students' test scores. Participants were given a pretest, they received 15 hours of instruction, then were administered the posttest. Participants were also given a survey to ascertain their level of confidence in reading/language arts after receiving supplementary instruction.

### Procedure

For the purposes of this study, permission was granted from the SES provider to collect 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students' pretest reading/language art scores. Once students completed the allotted 15 hours of instruction, a posttest was administered by the SES tutor, and these were collected by the researcher as well. Both tests were analyzed and graphed using Microsoft Excel 2007.

The students were also given a survey written by the researcher that measured their level of confidence in the subjects of reading/language arts after the completion of the program. These results were reviewed and graphed using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

#### Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the pretest and the posttest was analyzed and graphed using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. A statistical calculator was used to measure the results of the tests.

#### Summary

The researcher gathered data from the pre-test and the post-test, as well as the results from the survey. The results were compared, calculated, and graphed. In addition to tabulating the results of the tests, the author researched best practices in teaching ELLs reading/language arts.

## CHAPTER 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

Under NCLB, schools were required to offer low-performing, low-income students educational options that were researched-based and designed to increase their proficiency levels on state standardized tests. ELL students had a hard time acquiring targeted levels of proficiency on exams, and were offered after-school tutoring by a SES. They were given approximately 15 hours of instruction in reading/language arts.

The researcher sought to find if 15 hours of supplementary instruction in reading/language arts was enough to significantly raise test scores on a posttest after administration of a pretest. The students were then surveyed regarding their confidence levels in reading/language arts after completion of the program. This chapter includes the findings of these results.

#### Description of the Environment

This project was delimited to sixteen 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade ELL students in an after-school SES tutoring program at Henry and McKinley Elementary Schools in Stockton Unified School District, Stockton, California. The district had a Hispanic enrollment of about 60%, with 28% being ELL; and about 80% qualifying for free/reduced price meals.

The program operated from February 24, 2010 through April 24, 2010. The students had approximately 15 hours of supplemental instruction in reading/language arts. A pretest and a

posttest was administered by the SES, and students were given a survey created by the researcher assessing their confidence in reading/language arts skills after completion of the program.

### Hypothesis/Research Question

Low performing ELL Henry and McKinley Elementary students will show additional academic gains in reading/language arts after receiving 15 hours of instruction.

Students who participated in the tutoring program will report confidence that they are better at reading/language arts as a result of receiving additional instruction time.

### Null Hypothesis

Low performing Henry and McKinley Elementary students will not show additional academic gains as a result of receiving supplemental tutoring in reading/language arts.

Students who participated in the after-school tutoring program will not report confidence that they are better at reading/language arts as a result of the SES program.

### Results of the Study

To tabulate the student data for non-independent statistic sample analysis, the researcher used the *t*-test. For all sixteen students, the t-test showed the number of pairs as 16, the sum of deviation was 129.00, the mean of deviation was 8.06, and the sum of deviation squared was 1617.00. For significance finding at t-test equals .05, with equal a degree of freedom 15, the t-value 2.141 was required. The researcher's t-value finding was 5.20, and therefore the hypothesis was supported, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Students were also given a questionnaire after the completion of the program, which asked them to respond to a series of questions regarding reading/language arts. They were told to



respond by circling whether they strongly agreed (4), agreed (3), disagreed (2), or strongly disagreed (1) with each question.

For the question #1, the average student response was 2.3 indicating that over half of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the question, I read books without being told.

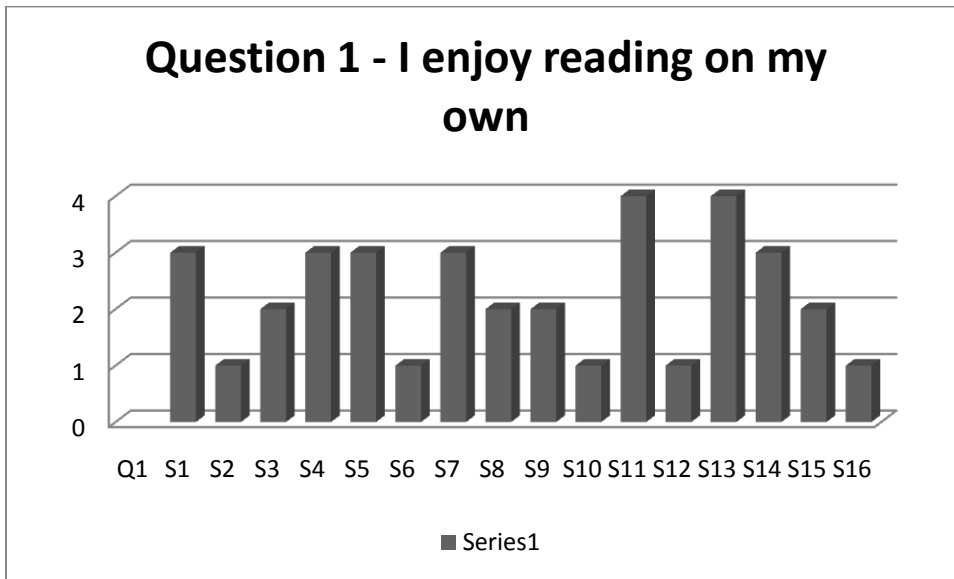


Figure 1

For the question #2, the average student response was 2.6 indicating that just over half of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the question, I enjoy reading on my own.

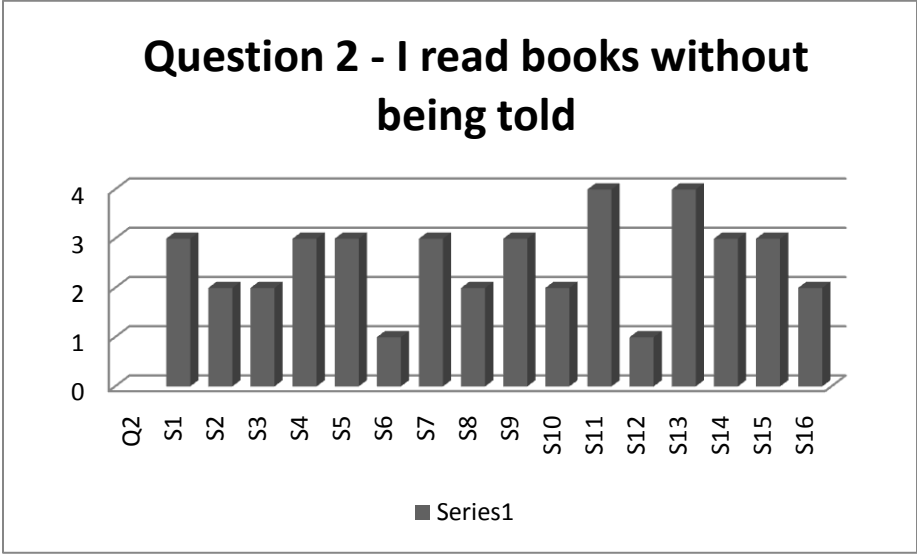


Figure 2

Question #3 asked students whether they kept a journal, and 75% of the respondents reported that they strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement.

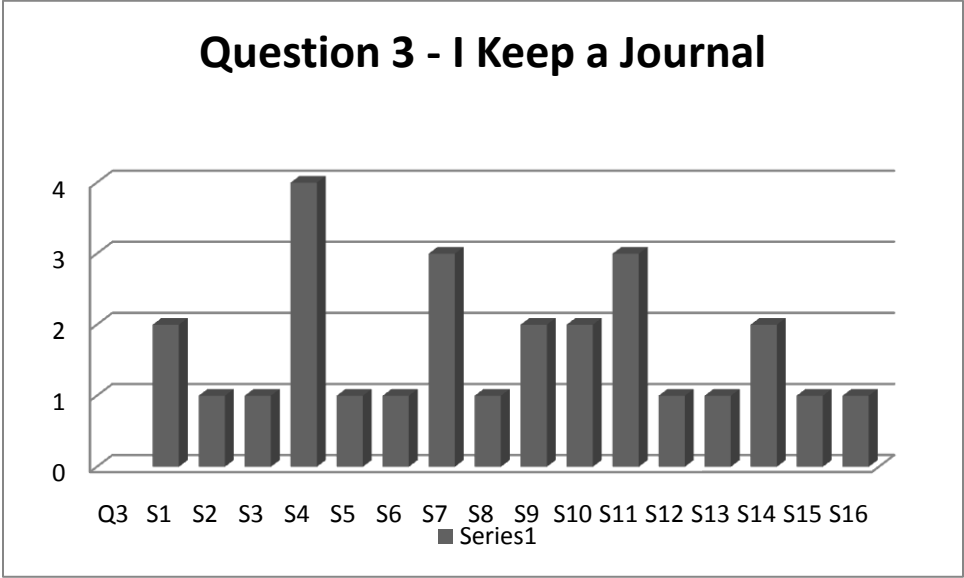


Figure 3

The average student reply for question #4 was 2, which indicates that over half the students did not enjoy writing.

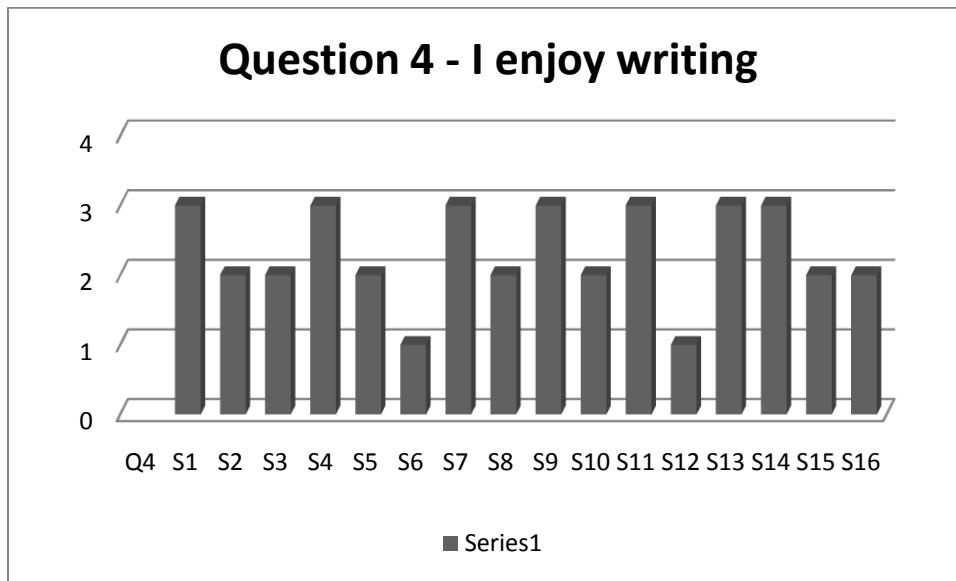


Figure 4

The average student response for question #5, which asked students if they did not know a great deal of words, was 3, which suggests that these students did not have a large vocabulary.

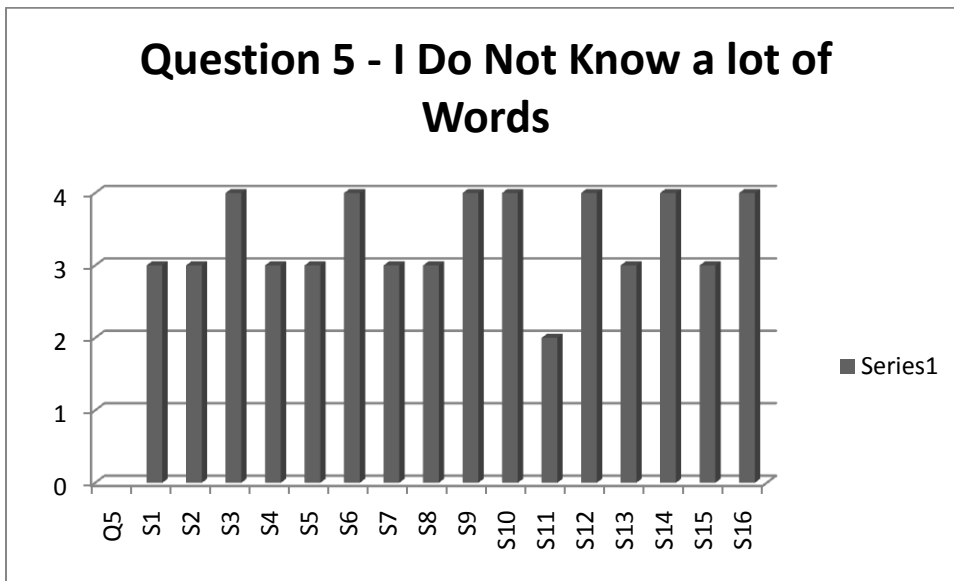


Figure 5

Question #6 asked students if tutoring had helped them develop a larger vocabulary, and the average response was 3; all but one student indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

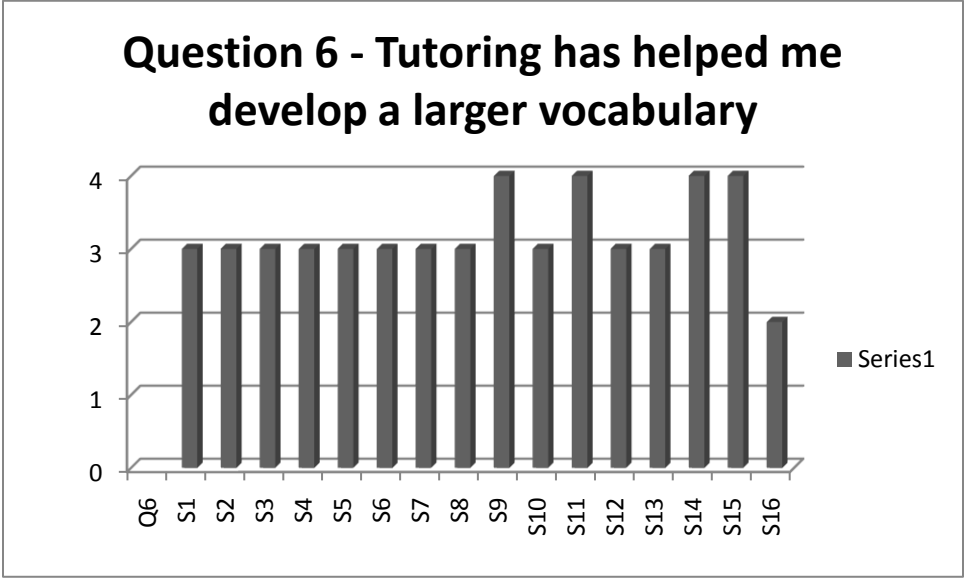


Figure 6

Question #7 asked students if they thought their tutor was knowledgeable with regards to teaching reading/language arts, and all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

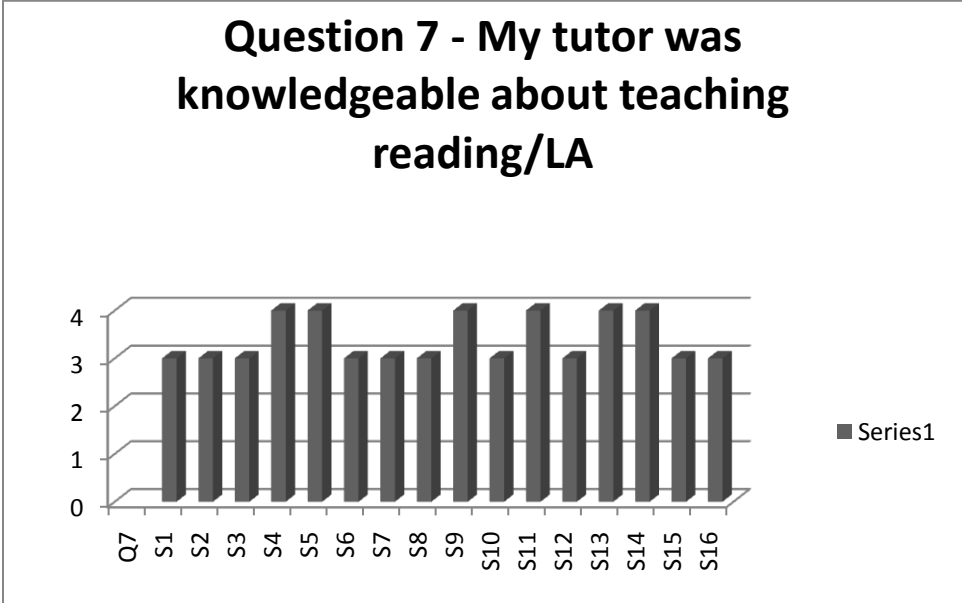


Figure 7

Question #8 asked students if their confidence in reading/language arts skills had increased as a result of tutoring, and the average response was 3. Only 2 students strongly disagreed with this statement, and 10 out of 16 responded that they agreed.

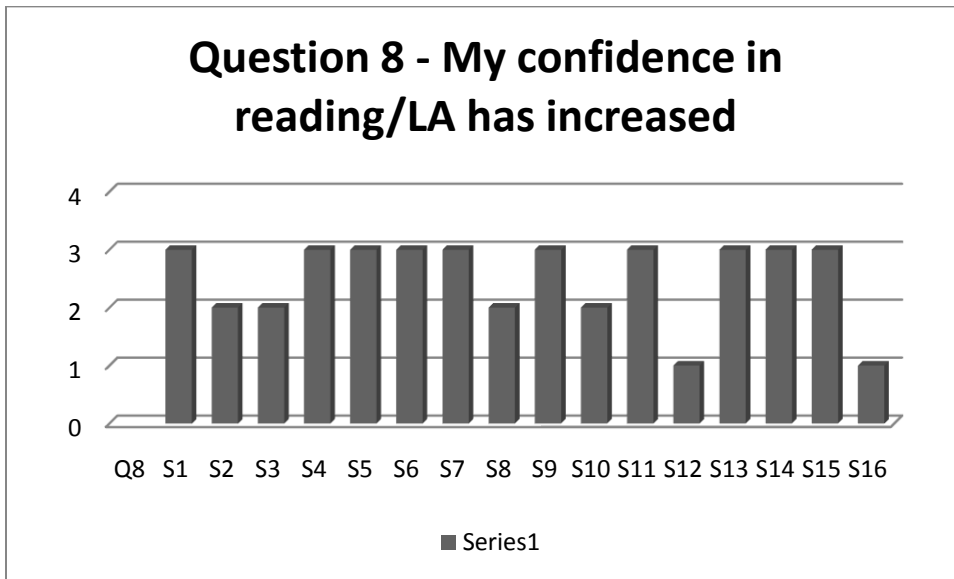


Figure 8



Question #9 asked students if tutoring helped them better understand class work and homework, and the average response was 3; with only one student disagreeing.

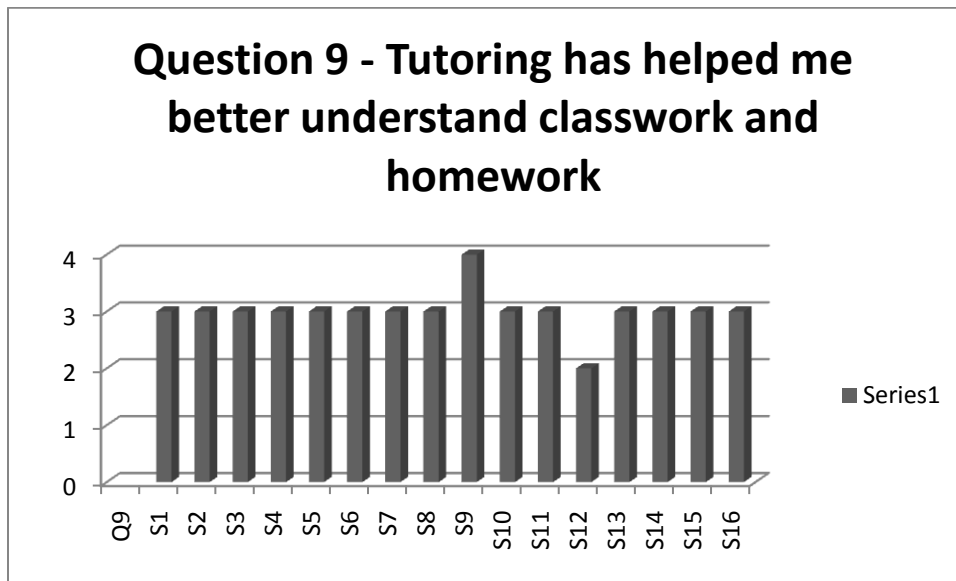


Figure 9

Question #10 asked students if their teacher had commented on their reading/language arts skills since they had started tutoring, and the average response was 2.6, thus indicating that over half of the students surveyed had received positive feedback from their classroom teachers.

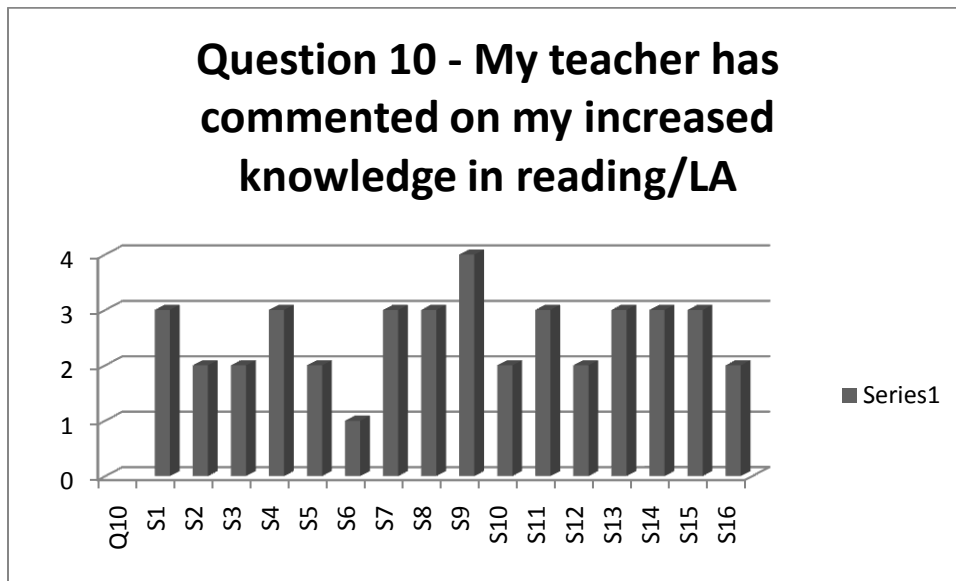


Figure 10

### Findings

After evaluating the data from the posttest and comparing them to the pretest, there was a significant increase in students' test scores in reading/language arts. Furthermore, over half the students tutored felt their understanding of reading/language arts had increased as a result of supplemental tutoring. Therefore, the researcher's hypothesis was supported, and 15 hours of supplementary instruction in this subject area was enough time for students to acquire the necessary skills in reading/language arts to do well on the posttest. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Findings also may indicate that students felt compelled to learn because they were receiving positive feedback from their classroom teacher, as indicated by 56% of the respondents.

The researcher also found a correlation between question numbers three and five. Where at least 94% of the respondents reported that they did not know a lot of words; and at least 75% of the students surveyed said they disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that they keep a journal. This observation reflects the authors of DARC's concern that there is a direct link between vocabulary development and students' perception about language arts, which includes writing.

### Summary

Chapter 4 was designed to analyze and describe the data collected in this research design. It was apparent from the findings that students felt they had gained the acquired knowledge in reading/language arts to do well on the post-test. The study confirmed the researcher's hypothesis, but did not support the null hypothesis.

## CHAPTER 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

This research project was designed to ascertain if approximately 15 hours of reading/language arts supplemental instruction was enough to significantly raise ELLs test scores on a post-test after administration of a pre-test. The researcher also sought to find if the students felt confident in the reading/language arts abilities after completion of the program.

#### Summary

The passage of NCLB allowed ELLs the opportunity to gain an equitable education with regards to them becoming proficient in reading/language arts. In addition, SES helped to provide the bridge way to ensure that gaps in learning could be solidified.

Fifteen hours of instruction proved to be adequate time for ELL students to gain the necessary skills needed to become proficient in English reading/language arts. And in comparing the pre-test with the post-test, students did in fact reap the benefits of tutoring outside of the regular school day.

It was also apparent from the responses from the students' surveys that their confidence had increased as a result of tutoring. Moreover, having a tutor that was knowledgeable about teaching reading/language arts, as suggested from the students' responses, had to benefit the students in their learning. This also most likely helped to motivate them to learn as well. Notwithstanding the results of the survey questions where students answered in the negative, the post-test diffidently showed academic gains.

## Conclusions

No Child Left Behind undeniably changed the way education and educators looked at the education of those students for whom English is not a first language. And with the advent of supplemental educational services, ELLs have no doubt reaped the benefits of these programs.

It is no surprise that educators are finding it hard to bridge the gap between the performance of poor students and that of their richer counterparts, given the fact that the United States is continually seeing a shift between the poor and the middle-class, especially in these hard economic times.

And there is no doubt that educational researchers will continue to improve upon assessments to accurately test the knowledge of ELLs, especially in regards to their native languages. Nonetheless, given the fact that schools with a high percentage of Hispanics continue to not make AYP under NCLB, more than just assessments need to be improved upon,. One area of improvement would be to provide teacher development especially in the area of vocabulary, as suggested by Blachowicz, et al.

## Recommendations

This study confirmed that 15 hours of instruction outside of the regular school day was enough time for ELL students to gain valuable knowledge in reading/language arts. The students selected were part of an after-school tutoring program selected by their parents to help them with proficiency in this subject area. The researcher would recommend that students who fail to meet proficiency levels on state exams be required by the school or LEAs to participate in supplemental educational services. The researcher would further recommend that this study be

conducted in other subject areas, and across other grade spans.

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## APPENDIX A

### Test Results



