

The Struggles of an English Language Learners program

---

A Special Project

Presented to

Dr. Josephine Dokes

Heritage University

---

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree of

Master of Education

---

Stephanie Elizalde

Fall 2010

FACULTY APPROVAL

The Struggles of an English Language Learners Program

Approved for the Faculty

\_\_\_\_\_, Faculty Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_, Date

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research study was to determine if a school district that had struggled in the past showed growth with the English Language Learners' programs that were being used within three elementary schools. To conduct this study, data from the Washington Language Proficiency Test-II and Measure of Academic Progress scores from 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years were collected. Although the researcher assumed the school district with an inconsistent English Language Learners' (ELL) program would not make gains, a t-test chart was calculated and determined the hypothesis to be rejected. The students had made gains, though not enough to meet the state mandated standards for each grade level.

PERMISSION TO STORE

I, Stephanie Elizalde, hereby irrevocably consent and authorize Heritage University Library to file the attached Special Project entitled, *The Struggles of an English Language Learners Program*, and make such Project and Compact Disk (CD) available for the use, circulation and/or reproduction by the Library. The Project and CD may be used at Heritage University Library and all site locations.

I state at this time the contents of this Project are my work and completely original unless properly attributed and/or used with permission.

I understand that after three years the printed Project will be retired from the Heritage University Library. My responsibility is to retrieve the printed Project and, if not retrieved, Heritage University may dispose of the document. The Compact Disc and electronic file will be kept indefinitely

\_\_\_\_\_, Author

\_\_\_\_\_, Date

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FACULTY APPROVAL.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
PERMISSION TO STORE.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
CHAPTER 1.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background for the Project.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Purpose of the Project.....	4
Delimitations.....	4
Assumptions.....	4
Hypothesis or Research Question.....	5
Null Hypothesis.....	5
Significance of the Project.....	5
Procedure.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	6
Acronyms.....	7

	Page
CHAPTER 2.....	8
Review of Selected Literature.....	8
Introduction.....	8
History of English Language Learners and NCLB.....	9
Educating English Language Learners in Washington.....	10
Importance of BICS/CALP.....	11
Instructional Models and Instructional Strategies used in Washington State.....	12
English Language Learners program in the school district being studied.....	16
Developing English Language Learners Programs.....	17
Summary.....	19
CHAPTER 3.....	6
Methodology and Treatment of Data.....	6
Introduction.....	6
Methodology.....	6
Participants.....	6
Instruments.....	6
Design.....	6
Procedure.....	7

Treatment of the Data.....	7
Summary.....	7
CHAPTER 4.....	8
Analysis of the Data.....	8
Introduction.....	8
	Page
Description of the Environment.....	8
Hypothesis/Research Question .....	8
Null Hypothesis.....	8
Results of the Study.....	8
Findings.....	9
Discussion.....	9
Summary.....	9
CHAPTER 5.....	11
Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.....	11
Summary.....	11
Conclusions.....	11
Recommendations.....	11
REFERENCES .....	12
SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES.....	13
APPENDICES .....	1

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1, Reading Map Test Scores.....	32
Table 2, Map Scores for 2008-2009.....	34
Table 3, Map Scores for 2009-2010.....	35
Table 4, Fourth Grade WLPT Scores.....	36
Table 5, Third and Fourth Grade WLPT Levels.....	38
Table 6, Map Scores for 2008/2009-2009/2010.....	39



## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

School districts found great difficulty in identifying a distinctive curriculum program that met the academic needs of English Language Learners'. Specifically, in the district examined by the researcher there was no consistent program for students that struggled with English language acquisition among three elementary schools. For example, when a new student assessment performance for grade level language proficiency was found to be insufficient, the individual was placed in a pull-out program. The program was not researched-based nor even proven successful over time. Therefore, the district sought to remedy the situation by implementing Reading First; with the intended purpose of positively impacting the learning process for English Language Learners'. The school district of the researcher had not met Annual Yearly Progress for the past five years and the majority of students attending the three elementary schools were minority students. School districts, in Washington State, are required to meet Annual Yearly Progress goals and the consequences for not meeting the goals could be as severe as funding cuts and loss of programs. In the school district of the researcher, each building's programs for English Language Learners' had been different based upon the needs of each individual student. Perceptions varied because no consistent program was in place for students that were frequently

pulled from the classrooms for a significant amount of time. During pullout time, individuals were given very little instruction in the native language. One consistent language curriculum that was used in the three elementary schools was Language for Learning. The program provided students with limited English as well as an opportunity to learn English skills at a much slower pace. The three schools had examined the student assessment data and noted that the English Language Learners' made only marginal progress. The resultant gains were definitely not significant enough for the schools to meet the Annual Yearly Progress. The school district studied had struggled for the past few years to find a consistent program with instructional strategies that would not only enhance language acquisition for the English Language Learners', but allow the district to meet the state's required Annual Yearly Progress goals.

A majority of the student population that attended the schools of the researcher not only lacked an adequate educational background but lacked fluency and comprehension of the English Language, speaking little or no English at all. The majority of the students were placed into classrooms where English had been the predominant language and the teacher was a non-Spanish speaking instructor.

English Language Learners' that enrolled in the school district being studied emigrated from various areas of southern Mexico, which consisted of Guerrero, Chapultepec, and Michoacán. A number of students attending schools in the district spoke a different dialect of Spanish known as Mixteco. A major

challenge the district faced was that of not providing the students with support in the native language of the individual. For families that did not speak Spanish, the schools were unable to provide the support needed for faculty members to communicate with families. For example, conferences throughout the years had a low success rate with families that spoke Mixteco. In the school district, two qualified staff members spoke the language. In order to get parents or guardians to attend conferences, the school district needed to provide enough support for families that spoke a different language. The researcher found that students struggled in school not only because the curriculum was not provided in the students' native language but also because the Spanish and English languages were introduced to students' vocabulary at the same time. Individuals were not provided with support from qualified teachers that could help the English Language Learners with the necessary instructional materials that would have positively impacted educational growth. Although children looked forward to attending school, each day brought struggles with the curriculum being taught.

#### Statement of the Problem

In Washington State, English Language Learners' encountered inconsistent state endorsed programs that showed significant evidence of growth. Many school districts did not meet the required Annual Yearly Progress due to the fact that English Language Learners' did not receive the sufficient education needed to meet annual assessments.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to show what a school district used to educate English Language Learners' but had found that none of the schools had been consistent with the programs being taught and also found students had not made adequate gains throughout the school year. The school district being studied needed to construct a program that would allow students to comprehend the curriculum taught and would show adequate growth on annual assessments.

### Delimitations

In May 2009, the student population for the district used in the study was 3,574. Male students consisted of 1,811 and female students consisted of 1,714. Hispanics were 80.9% of the student population, Caucasian 17.4%, Asian 0.5%, Black 0.4%, American Indian/Native American 0.3%, and Pacific Islander were 0.1%. Seventy seven percent of students were on Free or Reduced lunch, while 9.7% were in Special Education programs, 35.6% qualified for Bilingual Programs and 15.1% were Migrant students (Office of Superintendent of Publication, 2008).

### Assumptions

The researcher assumed the school district provided the students with a consistent English Language Learners' program and teachers had been highly qualified. The researcher assumed the students had been provided with appropriate materials and all instruction had been taught correctly. The writer also

assumed that the number of English Language Learners' enrolled in the program would reduce based on the programs taught in the elementary schools.

#### Hypothesis or Research Question

School districts that had consistent, prescribed curriculum or English Language Learners' programs showed progress on the annual Washington Language Proficiency Test and Measure of Academic Progress

#### Null Hypothesis

School districts that did not have a consistent, prescribed curriculum or English Language Learners' programs do not show progress on the annual Washington Language Proficiency Test and Measure of Academic Progress.

#### Significance of the Project

One significant issue was students had not received the specific help needed to become successful in school. Students attended school with no educational background and spoke little English. A majority of school districts had no set program in place where students could receive the information needed in the native language and then transition to learning the curriculum in a second language.

### Procedure

Observations and use of the data had shown that school districts had no consistent English Language Learners' program. The author used the Washington Language Proficiency Test scores to see if the students had made progress in the English Language Learners' program. The author also collected Measure of Academic Progress scores during the 2009-2010 school year.

### Definition of Terms

Annual Yearly Progress -Is a measurement defined by the No Child Left Behind Act that allows the U.S. Department of Education to determine how every school district in the country is performing academically according to results on standardized tests.

English Language Learners – are defined by state law as a student's primary language that is not English and had English language skills that impaired learning in regular classrooms.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills– Skills of listening and speaking that were acquired quickly by students' backgrounds that were similar to English and spent quite some time interacting with native speakers that developed within the first two years of immersion.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency – Refers to formal academic learning that includes listening, speaking, reading and writing. This usually takes five to seven years of a child's life.

Measure of Academic Progress A computer generated test administered three times during the school year. The test assessed instructional level and measures of academic growth.

Sheltered Instructional Strategies Learn the mainstream curriculum but often work with modified materials and extra supports to accommodate linguistic needs.

Washington Language Proficiency Test An annual assessment given to English Language Learners and designed to measure English language proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking.

#### Acronyms

AYP Annual Yearly Progress.

BICS Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills

CALP Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

ELL English Language Learner.

GLAD Guided Language Acquisition Design

HYS High Yield Strategy

LEP Limited English Proficient

MAP Measure of Academic Progress

NCLB No Child Left Behind

OSPI Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

SIOP Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol

TBIP Washington State Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program

WLPT-II Washington Language Proficiency Test



## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Selected Literature

#### Introduction

The researcher examined the history of English Language Learners' and the intended effects of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation that was designed to protect every child's right to an education (Thu, 2009). A study had taken place in different elementary schools to examine programs that had been provided for English Language Learners'. The researcher also looked at different English Language Learners' programs used in the state of Washington to help children make adequate yearly progress (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009). A study conducted by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) was reviewed by the researcher and the findings suggested the correct steps needed to take place in order to provide a consistent and productive English Language Learners' program ("Office of civil," 2005).

#### History of English Language Learners and NCLB

According to Paul McCold and Helen Malagon, English Language Learners' were students that had a primary language other than English (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009). In 2008-2009 a total of 97,021 English Language Learners' were served in Washington State with 202 different languages spoken statewide and Spanish was 67% of-that specific population. In 60 different school

districts, Spanish had been the dominant language spoken by at least 95% of the English Language Learners' population (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009). In Washington State, there was a great diversity of English Language Learners' (ELL). Some individuals were from foreign countries; others had been born and raised in the United States (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

According to Tran-Hoang-Thu, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act of 2001 had been signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. The importance of No Child Left Behind, "was to ensure that all children have the fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education" (Thu, 2009).

An important section in No Child Left behind (NCLB) was Title III, "Language Instruction for Limited English and Proficient Students". The title called for ELL students to have reached an academic achievement level compared to students of native language and also pinpointed the mandatory needs of a well founded ELL program, which included valid and reliable assessments. Title III created new and promising futures for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students that received sufficient attention, as well as quality instruction to help make adequate progress in education (Thu, 2009). Each school district that used Title III funding, was required to reach out to parents of the English Language Learners' children. School districts needed to inform parents with productive

activities to assist the children in learning English, and achieve at high levels in academics and state standards ("Programs of English," 2010). According to Paul McCold and Helen Malagon, No Child Left Behind had created numerous challenges for English Language Learners'. When students were not able to pass state assessments or at least gain adequate progress, school districts were required to report on whether or not Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) had been made for the current school year (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

#### Educating English Language Learners in Washington

According to Paul McCold and Helen Malagon, English Language Learners' required highly qualified teachers that were knowledgeable and skilled in first and second languages. Schools had faced a big challenge trying to find properly trained teachers to provide English as a Second Language and also sheltered instructional strategies for the students (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2209). The school district studied had a difficult challenge retaining English Language Learners' teachers to stay in the position and not obtain another teaching assignment or transfer to another school district. The district found that there was an abundance of English Language Learners', however there were not enough teacher assistants to provide the students with an adequate education.

Paul Mccold and Helen Malagon stated that two documents needed to be identified in order to qualify an individual for the English Language Learners'

program. The first document was to identify the students that had a primary language other than English and the next document was to determine the students' level of English by assessment (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2209). The specific assessment was known as the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT), which measured a student's English language proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The assessment was given to students in order to determine if the child qualified to receive services from a trained teacher and extra help the students needed in order to make progress on state assessments (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

Staffing and instruction were two issues that caused a major factor in providing English Language Learners' with a successful program. ELLs require highly qualified teachers that had been skilled in first/second languages (McCold & Malgaon, 2008-2209). One obstacle for providing an adequate educational experience for the English Language Learners' was the lack of properly trained teachers that presented effective ELL instruction. (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

#### What teachers should know about instruction for English Language Learners

According to Theresa Deussen, there were fourteen key principle ideas teachers of English Language Learners' should have known to provide quality instruction. In the study, five key concepts will be discussed that pertained to all

teachers in general. The principles were concepts about second language acquisitions and academic challenges English Language Learners' faced in school. The following principles stated what teachers should know about ELLs (Deussen, 2008):

- Principle One: Ells move through different stages as English is acquired and, at all stages, need comprehensible input.

Students faced different challenges based on the academic level and even language barrier. Regardless of the students' proficiency levels, all children needed comprehensible input. By providing the students with the technique, teachers ensured that students understood the concepts without knowing every word. In order to get students to understand the information, teachers needed to scaffold the instruction, assignments, and provide various representations of the concepts being taught (Deussen, 2008).

- Principle Two: Difference between conversational and academic language.

According to Deussen, language used in everyday communication was distinct from the language used in the regular classroom. Teachers could have misinterpreted students' communication abilities based on the conversational piece presented on the playground and in the classroom. In order for students to have distinguished between the two, teachers needed

to provide instruction in the use of academic language and also intensive vocabulary instruction with the focus of useful academic words (Deussen, 2008).

- Principle Three: ELLs need instruction that will allow them to meet state content standards.

It takes many years for English Language Learners' to learn English at a level proficient enough to perform with students that were native English speakers. In order to get ELLs to perform with other students, teachers needed to provide bilingual instruction which lead to better reading and higher outcomes in content areas. Teachers also needed to use sheltered instructional strategies to combine content area instruction with academic language proficiency (Deussen, 2008).

- Principle Four: ELLs have background knowledge and home cultures that sometimes differ from the U.S. mainstream.

English Language Learners' attend school with as much knowledge as other students, but the knowledge consisted of different histories, cultures, and places. The background knowledge the students contained had not been expected by schools and texts in the United States (Deussen, 2008). According to Theresa Deussen, teachers made instruction culturally compatible to build a gap between home and school.

Teachers also made expectations of the classroom clear and consistent (Deussen, 2008).

- Principle Five: Assessments measure language proficiency as well as actual content knowledge.

English Language Learners' were measured by the use of oral or written assessments'. The assessment was based on the English skills the ELLs comprehended and also the content the students had learned. In order for teachers to know what students understood, the test was accommodated to the students' appropriate level (Deussen, 2008).

English Language Learners', like all other learners, needed good quality instruction. All personnel involved in assisting ELLs needed to take into consideration that the students learned at a different pace and also that the knowledge of each individual student had been at various levels. The five principles presented by the author provided valuable information for teachers to take into account when working with ELLs.

#### Importance of BICS/CALP

According to Professor J. Cummins, Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) were two important language proficiency skills that could be used as a way to help minority students succeed in education (Shoebottom, 1996-2007). J. Cummins introduced

the two proficiency skills in 1979 and intended to help immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in a second language. If school districts failed to take into consideration the use of BICS/CALP communication skills, students could have faced late exit from a bilingual program (Paulston & Tucker, 2003).

The following explained the distinction between the two communication skills:

- Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills – Skills of listening and speaking which are acquired quickly by a student's language that could be similar to English and spend quite some time interacting with native speakers. This develops within the first two years of immersion.
- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency- The basis for a child's ability to use academic demands placed in various subjects. In this stage it takes a child five to seven years to work at a level with native speakers in academics.

The two communication skills were indented to draw attention to different time periods required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in a second language. If failed to take into consideration, students had late exit from language support programs into mainstream classrooms.

#### Instructional Models and Instructional Strategies used in Washington State

Other than the reliability of Language for Learning, a major struggle of the school district was a lack of program consistency in the three elementary schools.



The district had no clear vision of an ELL curriculum that would positively impact students in order to make adequate yearly growth. In addition, the programs used by districts throughout Washington State are listed below:

- Dual Language Program (Two-Way Immersion or Two-Way Bilingual Education) Provide integrated language and academic instruction for English speakers and native speakers of a different language with the goals of high academic achievement. The program could be staffed with bilingual teachers or a monolingual English teacher who had been paired with a bilingual teacher (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009). Materials were in both languages and two-way programs extend till the sixth grade (Freeman, 1998).
- Newcomers Program  
Program could be used to help students develop the beginning English Language skills, while also learning academic skills and knowledge. Some programs consisted of developing the English Language Learners' with the students' primary language skills and getting the child prepared for society (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).
- Transitional Bilingual Education  
This was the most common form of bilingual education for English Language Learners' which provided academic instruction for English

Language Learners' in the students' primary language (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

- Sheltered Instruction

The program could be used for teaching language and content based instruction to English Language Learners'. In this form of model students had been taught academic subjects, such as science, social studies, and math. English Language Learners' were a majority of the population in the classroom settings. Pull-out and push-in models also fell into the category (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

Instructional strategies provided not just Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) teachers with various strategies for English Language Learners' but also provided all teachers with strategies that would enhance the quality of educational instruction for all students (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009). The following instructional strategies were used throughout the district by teachers to enhance teaching and learning opportunities;

- Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD)

A research based theory that consisted of effective strategies for the development of academic language, literacy, and achievement of all English Language Learners' (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

- High Yield Strategies (HYS)

An instructional strategy designed by Robert Marzano to provide teachers with specific strategies that had positive effect on what students had learned. Nine strategies provided teachers with material to make sure students had learned to the best potential (Marzano, 2001).

- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

An observation tool that focused on both the academic and linguistic needs of English Language Learners'. The model was built on the idea that teachers would be prepared to provide English Language Learners' with a better learning environment (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

#### Star Protocol

Star Protocol is a student centered program that is built upon conceptual skills and knowledge. The curriculum focused on identifying effective teaching and helped teachers align instructional strategies (BERC Group, 2010). The effectiveness of the strategies has shown that more instruction was needed in order to improve the students' language and academic performance (McCold & Malagon, 2008-2009).

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, High Yield Strategies and Star Protocol were three instructional strategies the school district had adopted to help impact the education of not just English Language Learners' but all students in the district. According to the researcher, teachers had been trained in SIOP, HYS, and STAR Protocol and had been shown how each instructional tool should be

used in the classroom. The teachers began making adequate growth in the area of instructional skills and also student performance levels began to make significant gains as well. Students had an awareness of what had been taught and teachers understood whether the individuals learned the new information.

### Developing English Language Learners Programs

The Office of Civil Rights developed a program for school districts to design a plan for meeting the needs of English Language Learners'. School districts constructed a plan, by writing a goal that reflected specific and unique individual circumstances (Office of Civil Rights, 2005). According to OCR, a school district's first step was to develop a plan that meet all Ell students, at all grade levels, and at all schools in the district. The plan was to be specific in all areas so each staff member in the district understood what the plan-entailed and the actions that needed to be taken to complete this plan. OCR stated that a district's plan needed to answer the following questions:

- Who is responsible for the step?
- When is the step expected to be completed?
- What standards and criteria are to be applied to the step?
- How will the district document implementation of the step (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

School districts assessed the plan and found it beneficial to form a committee that included all persons involved with English Language Learners'. By forming a committee,

districts received valuable information from people throughout the district to help construct a program for English Language Learners'. The next step was to develop an outline of the district's plan for implementing a more successful ELL program. The plan was designed to organize and present a school district's program of services that would get students to make consistent gains (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

School districts needed to take a variety of actions when constructing the outline for an English Language Learners' program. The first step was the educational approach and in this area two questions were addressed;

- Did the ELL plan describe the district's educational approach for educating English Language Learners'?
- Was the educational approach chosen by the district recognized as a sound approach by experts in the field, or recognized as a legitimate educational strategy to ensure that ELL students acquire English language proficiency? Also, was meaningful access to the educational program provided for all qualified students? (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

The next step in the plan was to identify the individuals that should be in the English Language Learners' program. Once students had been identified, districts needed to assess the students and determine if the individuals qualified to receive ELL instruction. After all students had been tested and qualified, the districts needed to discuss which educational models and program services would best benefit the English Language Learners' (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

Once services were in place, staffing and resources needed to be taken into consideration by the committee. The committee provided English Language Learners' with the proper instructional staff, teaching assistants, instructional equipment and materials (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

The school districts included a transition section in the English Language Learners' plan. The transition section determined when students no longer needed ELL services and also methods used to help monitor students in regular educational classes. Special education, Title one gifted, talented programs, and extracurricular activities were other programs that English Language Learners' were able to receive in school (Office of Civil Rights, 2005). Evaluation was the last step in the English Language Learners' plan outline. The section allowed for the committee to view the progress on each section and determine whether the school district had met the needs of each planned section and if any changes needed to be made for the sections being covered. The process of planning an English Language Learners' program was constructed by the Office of Civil Rights. The program ensured equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation (Office of Civil Rights, 2005).

### Summary

According to the research studied by the writer there were many examples that demonstrated the difficulty English Language Learner's experienced in school because of no consistent program at each elementary school. Students had been assigned to classrooms with little or no help due to a language barrier and an

insufficient amount of assistance. Schools were faced with many difficult challenges of meeting the requirements of the No child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Specifically, explicit benchmarks of various types of assessments given throughout the school year were mandated in order to meet Annual Yearly Progress. Further, a majority of the students in the school district were learning three distinct languages compounding the difficulty for making adequate yearly progress in school.

After the writer reviewed the information from the Office of Civil Rights pertaining to how school districts developed an English Language Learners' program, the researcher found that every school district should take into consideration the specified steps in order to make a successful English Language Learners' Program.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology and Treatment of Data

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to present the struggles of one school districts' challenges to meet the demands of the state's mandated assessment criteria. Observations and use of the Washington Language Proficiency (WLPT) data had shown that the school district lacked a consistent English Language Learners' program. The author used the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT) scores to see if the students had made progress throughout the school year. The author also collected Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) scores during the 2009-2010 school year to show if students had made adequate gains in reading on this assessment.

The writer constructed a study on three elementary schools in a low income school district. The participants in this study included fourth grade students in one out of the three elementary schools. The participants qualified for the English Language Learners' program.

#### Methodology

The researcher conducted a casual-comparative study that utilized methodology based on a t-test chart. A t-test chart was used to determine if the means of the two independent samples were significantly different. Washington



Language Proficiency Test scores from the past two consecutive academic school years were used to determine if significant growth had taken place.

### Participants

Participants involved students that attended fourth grade in a low income school district. The students qualified for the English Language Learners' program. The study included fifty students who were of Hispanic or Mixteco origin. The students had either attended school since kindergarten or did not attend school until fourth or fifth grade.

### Instruments

For purposes of this study, the writer used WLPT-II scores from the past two school years. The scores were obtained by the English Language Learners' instructor. MAP scores were gathered from the elementary school computer lab instructor. The data consisted of fall, winter, and spring scores for the 2009-2010 school year. Data that had been used for this study was also used for administrative analysis as well.

### Design

The researcher used a casual-comparative study to determine if English Language Learners' made growth throughout the past two consecutive school years. WLPT-II scores and MAP scores were included in this study as part of the

data research. A t-test was constructed to determine if students made gains on the WLPT-II test that each individual student takes at the end of the school year.

### Procedure

The following procedures took place in order to conduct this study:

1. During the fall semester of 2008, the researcher met with the English Language Learners' instructors to discuss the need for effective teaching practices and procedures.
2. Following the discussion, data from the 2008-2009 WLPT-II scores and MAP scores were collected from the English Language Learners' instructor and MAP personnel from the school district being studied.
3. Personal classroom observations were given in order to analyze student performance in regular education classrooms and identify the struggles that individual teachers faced with students that were not making gains.
4. The researcher also collected data from the 2009-2010 school year that consisted of the WLPT-II scores, and fall and spring MAP scores for individual student.
5. The data was analyzed and organized it into charts in order to determine if the students had made significant growth during the past two consecutive school years.

### Treatment of the Data

A t-test chart was used with the STATPAK that was presented to the researcher during the course of this study. The t-test chart allowed the researcher to compare fourth grade WLPT-II test scores from the 2008-2009 and the 2009-2010 school years. T-test results determined if students had made consistent growth during the past two consecutive school years.

The researcher also utilized Microsoft Excel to formulate charts from the data collected on each participant. To preserve anonymity, numbers were used instead of names to represent each student in the data analysis charts. The charts showed individual student's MAP fall and winter scores from 2008 to 2010.

### Summary

The researcher analyzed the t-test and Microsoft Excel charts to determine if students had made consistent growth in the past two consecutive school years. The students used in this study qualified for the English Language Learners' program and the researcher met with several teachers to discuss the difficulty of helping students meet grade level expectations. As a result, the researcher found that students struggled to meet state standards in which the details of the data that showed this result will be discussed in the next chapter of study.

## CHAPTER 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

Although no state endorsed English Language Learners' program existed in Washington State, many programs were selected by school districts that showed evidence of growth. Still many school districts failed to meet the Annual Yearly Progress required by the federal government primarily because the English Language Learners' had not received sufficient educational support. The major problem facing schools was finding a program that best fit the needs of students with limited English proficiency.

#### Description of the Environment

The school district studied struggled to provide students with an adequate English Language Learners' programs. More than 80% of the student population in the district was Hispanic. Seventy-seven percent of the students qualified for free or reduced lunch. The three elementary schools in the district had only one English Language Learners' instructor. The buildings had close to 400 students that qualified for the English Language Learners' program.

#### Hypothesis/Research Question

School districts that had been consistent, prescribed curriculum or English Language Learners' programs showed progress on the annual Washington

Language Proficiency Test and any other annual assessments. Students showed annual gains when given state assessments based on the curriculum and instruction being used in the specific elementary school.

#### Null Hypothesis

School districts that did not have a consistent, prescribed curriculum or English Language Learners' program did not show progress on the annual Washington Language Proficiency Test or Measure of Academic Progress. The school district being studied did not have a consistent English Language Learners' program, which lead to students not showing adequate gains on the yearly assessments.

#### Results of the Study

Three tables were used to represent how fourth grade students performed during the past two consecutive school years. These tables indicated whether or not the students made adequate growth in the past two years with the use of the English Language Learners' program that was implemented by the school district.

Table one represents 45 students who had taken the Reading MAP test in 2008-2009 and 2009 and 2010 school years. This table indicated whether the student had passed or failed the benchmark assessment for that grade level. In order for students to have met benchmark in the 2008-2009 fall and spring school years, each student needed to have received a scale score of 190 for fall and 202

for spring. In the 2008-2009 school years, those students had been in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. This table also indicated the 2009-2010 fall and spring MAP scores. In order for these students to have met benchmark for fall 2009-2010 individuals needed to have received a scale score of 190 and for spring a scale score of 207 in order to move to the next proficiency level. A careful examination of the table indicated that students made only minimal growth throughout the school year. Out of 45 students only two students had met the spring MAP benchmark for the 2009-2010 school year.

Table 1:

Fourth grade students who had taken the Reading MAP test in 2008-2009 and 2009 and 2010 school years.

STUDENT NUMBER	FALL 2008-2009	SPRING 2008-2009	STUDENT NUMBER	FALL 2009-2010	SPRING 2009-2010
1	183	184	1	174	183
2	182	188	2	195	193
3	176	184	3	180	190
4	162	178	4	175	179
5	174	186	5	185	199
6	156	164	6	162	175
7	169	186	7	183	185
8	169	180	8	177	193
9	176	189	9	202	212
10	179	193	10	174	190
11	160	162	11	167	178
12	180	187	12	188	182
13	153	161	13	162	175
14	152	159	14	155	172
15	156	161	15	161	158
16	154	168	16	173	177

17	186	181	17	182	185
18	173	168	18	190	203
19	163	188	19	170	182
20	170	181	20	182	177
21	186	193	21	190	204
22	157	159	22	157	169
23	197	209	23	202	218
24	158	185	24	169	177
25	182	176	25	177	198
26	169	189	26	201	198
27	176	181	27	191	200
28	167	204	28	183	208
29	166	176	29	185	188
30	169	192	30	195	192
31	159	171	31	167	181
32	166	191	32	173	181
33	171	184	33	189	199
34	186	187	34	187	199
35	157	176	35	178	182
36	172	183	36	187	190
37	153	158	37	163	166
38	167	181	38	182	188
39	166	179	39	179	180
40	165	168	40	168	183
41	158	188	41	166	188
42	190	191	42	195	201
43	163	165	43	170	181
44	185	185	44	199	204
45	162	204	45	198	205

\*Note: Students had met benchmark for fall and spring of both consecutive school years have been highlighted.

The table two represents Group X and Group Y on MAP scores for 2008-2209. The test calculated the growth of 45 students in the third grade. The mean group X had a value of 169.40 and group Y had a value of 180.20. The degrees of freedom was 88 and the t-value was -4.31

Table 2:  
MAP scores 2008-2009

Statistics	Value
No of scores in group X	45
Sum of Scores in group X	7623.0000
Mean of Group X	169.40
Sum of squared scores in Group X	1296939.00
No. of Scores in Group Y	45
Sum of Scores in Group Y	8109.0000
Mean of Group Y	180.20
Sum of Squared Scores in Group Y	1468079.00
t-value	-4.31
Degrees of freedom	88



Table three represents Group X and Group Y on Map scores for 2009-2010. In this test 45 students were analyzed. The mean group X had a value of 179.78 and group Y had a value of 188.18. The degrees of freedom were 88 and the t-value was -3.13

Table 3: Map scores 2009-2010

Statistics	Value
No of scores in group X	45
Sum of Scores in group X	8090.00
Mean of Group X	179.78
Sum of squared scores in Group X	1461526.00
No. of Scores in Group Y	45
Sum of Scores in Group Y	8468.00
Mean of Group Y	188.18
Sum of Squared Scores in Group Y	1600614.00
t-value	-3.13
Degrees of freedom	88

Table four represents fourth grade students that had taken the WLPT-II in spring of 2009 and 2010. The WLPT-II assessment was administered by the English

Language Learners' instruction at each building. This test measured the reading, writing, listening, and speaking component for each individual student. In order for a student to receive a level four and exit out of the program, a score of 669 had to be obtained for third grade and a score of 686 for fourth grade.

Table four indicated students had made progress throughout the school year but only four students received a level three. The students represented in the study struggled to move from a level three to a level four. In discussing the research with the English Language Learners' instructor, the teacher stated that students had struggled with reading section due to the fact that students were to read several stories and answer questions based on what was read. Therefore, the majority of students were unable to comprehend the stories being read and answering questions correctly.

Table 4.  
WLPT scores from 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school year.

Student Number	WLPT-II Scores 2008-2009	Level	Student Number	WLPT-II Scores 2009-2010	Level
1	623	L3	1	653	L3
2	656	L3	2	673	L3
3	653	L3	3	663	L3
4	621	L3	4	633	L3
5	647	L3	5	663	L3
6	611	L2	6	620	L2
7	621	L3	7	640	L3
8	635	L3	8	660	L3
9	653	L3	9		L4
10	628	L3	10	636	L3
11	624	L3	11	633	L3

12	651	L3	12	651	L2
13	606	L2	13	603	L2
14	578	L2	14	600	L2
15	590	L2	15	593	L2
16	614	L2	16	625	L2
17	635	L3	17	644	L3
18	663	L3	18	655	L3
19	641	L3	19	636	L3
20	624	L3	20	669	L3
21	668	L3	21		L4
22	599	L3	22	598	L2
23	658	L2	23		L4
24	626	L3	24	649	L3
25	630	L3	25	649	L3
26	660	L3	26	670	L3
27	641	L3	27	663	3
28	653	L3	28	673	L3
29	660	L3	29	653	L3
30	665	L3	30	673	L3
31	626	L3	31	629	L3
32	624	L3	32	658	L3
33	645	L3	33	676	L3
34	660	L3	34	670	L3
35	653	L3	35	665	L3
36	651	L3	36	636	L3
37	592	L2	37	619	L2
38	644	L3	38	646	L3
39	623	L3	39	625	L3
40	633	L3	40	669	L3
41	635	L3	41	649	L3
42	665	L3	42	673	L3
43	619	L3	43	655	L3
44	644	L3	44	665	L3
45	649	L3	45		

\*Note: Students that had exited the program were no longer qualified to receive support from the English Language Learners' instructor.

Table five represents the number of students in each level during the third and fourth grade school year. The biggest problem the school district faced was getting students to move from a level three to a level four. Table four showed students had made gains but weren't significant enough for the individuals to move to the next level.

Table 5:

Number of students in each level from 2008-2009 and 2009-2010

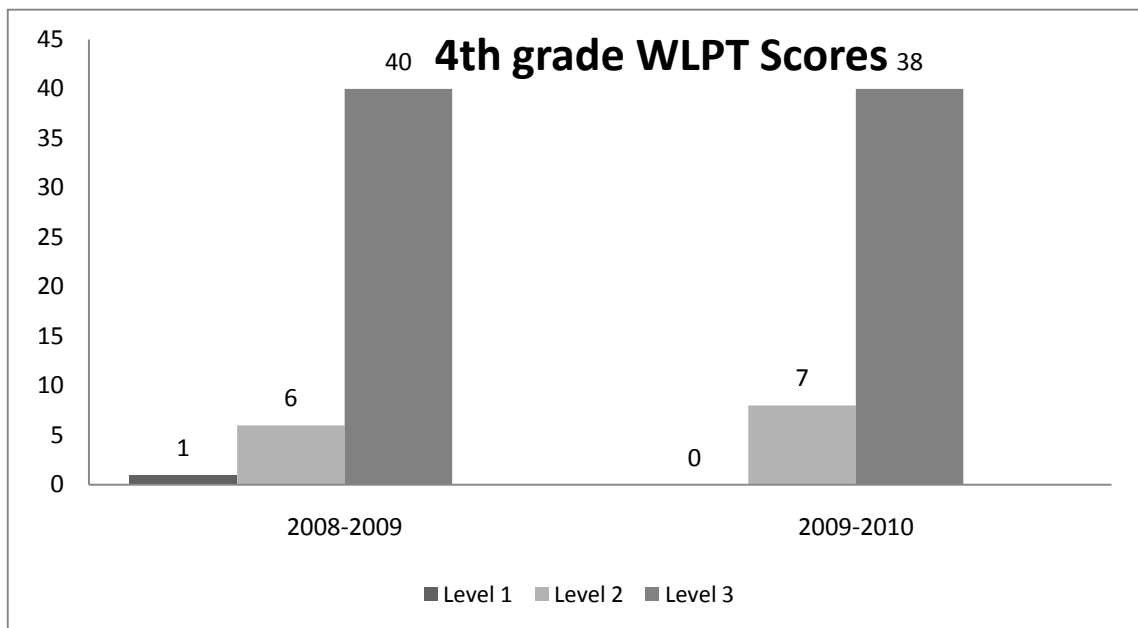


Table six represents Group X and Group Y on Map scores for the 2008-2009/2009-2010 school years. The test analyzed 41 total students. The mean of group X had a value of 633.39 and group Y had a value of 646.61. The degrees of freedom showed 80 and the t-value was 2.67.

Table 6:  
WLPT Scores: 2008-2009/2009-2010

Statistics	Value
No of scores in group X	41
Sum of Scores in group X	25969.0000
Mean of Group X	633.39
Sum of squared scores in Group X	16467083.00
No. of Scores in Group Y	41
Sum of Scores in Group Y	26503.0000
Mean of Group Y	646.41
Sum of Squared Scores in Group Y	17152239.00
t-value	-2.67
Degrees of freedom	80

The null hypothesis stated that if a school district did not have a consistent English Language Learners' programs, students would not make gains on the yearly assessments. After analyzing the data, the researcher found the null hypothesis was rejected.

### Findings

Given the analysis of the data and the results analyzed by the researcher, Table 2 indicated that students had made significant amount of growth in the past two consecutive school years in order to meet the state standards. The mean score for 2008-2009 Measure of Academic (MAP) score was calculated to 169.40 compared to 2009-2010 MAP score which was calculated to 179.78 in the fall. In the spring of 2008-2009 the mean score for MAP was calculated to 180.20 and in 2009-2010 the mean score was calculated to 188.10. In the Washington Language Proficiency Test II (WLPT II) tables indicated that students had made gains but the growth was not significant enough for students to exit the program. Table six showed the independent sample for Group X (2008-2009) and Group Y (2009-2010). The mean score was calculated to 633.39 for the group X and 646.41 for group Y. After the researcher analyzed the data and discovered increases had been made by individual students, however the growth was not significant enough to meet the benchmark and transitional requirements in order to exit the English Language Learners' program.

## Discussion

Prior to conducting this study, the researcher had been informed that no consistent English Language Learners' programs were set in place for students enrolled in the program. Individual students had been pulled from the daily classroom by an ELL instructor to receive instruction on a curriculum provided by the district. The researcher discussed the issue with school personnel regarding an effective ELL program that would ensure student success and meet the assessment requirements. The school personnel explained to the researcher that in years before reading first, the district did have an ELL program where students did receive instruction in the individuals native language.

As stated in Chapter One under delimitations, more than 77% students in the school district being studied qualified for free and reduced lunch. Hispanic students consisted of 80.9% of the student population and more than 400 students qualified for the English Language Learners program during the 2009-2010 school year.

## Summary

In chapter four, the researcher organized the data collected that was received from one of the schools studied. The data had been analyzed by comparing fall and spring MAP scores for two consecutive school years. The data had also been analyzed by using the WLPT-II test scores for the 2008-2009 and

2009-2010 Spring assessments. The researcher used a t-test provided in the STATPAK to compare two consecutive school years. Individual students from this grade level made gains but were not significant enough to meet state's assessments standards for MAP or for exiting the English Language Learners' program.

The researcher developed a study in which the hypothesis was tested in order to view if students made adequate gains on annual assessments. The researcher collected data and compared the assessments for two consecutive school years and determined that students showed gains but the progress was not enough to move to the next level on the Washington Language Proficiency Test. After analyzing the data, the researcher wrote recommendations that can help the school district construct a successful ELL program. The recommendations will be discussed in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Summary

The purpose of the project was to examine the struggles of English Language Learners' meeting Annual Yearly Progress. The findings of the study suggested that the school district needed to implement a program that allowed students to learn in the native language resulting in the ability to comprehend the instructional materials that were being taught. The three elementary schools in the district had constructed an English Language Learners' program based on the needs of the students who qualified for the program, but the course of study did not meet the needs of all students.

#### Conclusions

The author carefully examined the test results and concluded that students received support but were not enough to show adequate gains on the yearly assessments. Staff members throughout the district had been trained on specific strategies such as High Yield Strategies, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, and STAR protocol to help all students succeed, however consistency in the program was found to be lacking from school to school. The school district had followed the requirements to make sure that each student met the criteria for the WLPT-II assessment. Students that met the criteria were tested and received

support if the individual qualified for the English Language Learners' program. The researcher found the school district had implemented sections of the program that the Office of Civil Rights had designed but in order to make the program successful, procedures needed to be followed thoroughly. After analyzing the data, the writer found that students had struggled to move out of level three. Students made significant growth moving from level one to level two and to level three, but once students reached level three individuals struggled to exit out of the program.

### Recommendations

The writer proposed the following recommendations that could help the school district construct a more consistent English Language Learners' program and get students to meet state standards. The following recommendations are as follow;

1. The school district should follow the Office of Civil Rights recommendations for developing an effective English Language Learners program.
2. Programs for ELL's should consist of native language and then gradually add the English Language component.

3. When implement the various instructional strategies provided by the school district, teachers need to utilize these strategies into the daily instructional routine in order for students to make progress.
4. The school district should ensure consistency in the programs implemented at all three elementary schools by constructing a common English Language Learners' program.
5. Some flexibility should be tolerated within the guidelines of ELL programs. This would include grouping abilities based on the needs per grade level. The amount of ELL students per building would need to be taken into consideration.

## References

- (2008). *Closing the Achievement gap for Hispanic English Language Learners/Transitional Bilingual Students* (Research Report). Retrieved from Heritage University Library: [www.heritage.edu](http://www.heritage.edu)
- (1996-2007). *Language Learning theories Of Professional J. Cummins*. Retrieved from <http://esl/fis.edu/teachers/support/cummin.htm>
- (2005). *Developing Programs for English Language Learners: Plan Development*. Retrieved from <http://www.2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/plandev.html>
- (2010). *What is powerful teaching and learning?*. Retrieved from <http://powerfulteachingandlearning.com/star/what-is-ptl.aspx>
- BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills). (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.education.com/definition/bics-basic-interpersonal-communication-skills>
- Bilingual Education. (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.capaa.wa.gov/education/bilingualEducation.shtml>
- Developing Programs for English Language Learners: Introduction. (2005). Retrieved from <http://www.2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/developing.html>

- Freeman, Y. S., & Freeman, D. E. (1998). *ESL/EFL Teaching*. 361 Hanover Street Portsmouth, NH : Heinemann.
- History Of ELL Programs. (2000). Retrieved from [http://ell.spps.org/history\\_of\\_ell\\_programs.html](http://ell.spps.org/history_of_ell_programs.html)
- MAP-Measures of Academic Progress. (2010). Retrieved from [http://www.ph\[ta.org.MAP.htm](http://www.ph[ta.org.MAP.htm)
- McCold, P., & Malagon, H. (2008-2009, 2008-2009). *Educating English Language Learners in Washington State* (). Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- NCLB Action Briefs. (2010). Retrieved from [http://www.ncpie.org/nclbaction/english\\_language\\_learners.html](http://www.ncpie.org/nclbaction/english_language_learners.html)
- Paulston, C. B., & Tucker, G. R. (2003). *Sociolinguistics*. 350 Main Street, Malden, MA: Blackwell publishing Ltd.
- Thu, T. H. (2009, September 25,2009). *English Language Learners and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (Report). Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.















## APPENDIX

### North Library Databases and Electronic Support for Graduate Studies

The following are suggested electronic starting points for education research from the North Library website.

**Education Database from EBSCO** include: *Education Research Complete, ERIC, Teacher Reference Center, Professional Development Collection and Vocational and Career Collection*. Over 1,500 journals are indexed and more than 750 journals, 100 books and monographs, and numerous education-related conference papers are full text.

**Education Journals from ProQuest** include: *ProQuest Education Journals, ProQuest Psychology Journals, Education Module, ERIC and Teacher Journals*. Other databases to consider: *Alt-Press Watch, Ethnic NewsWatch, GenderWatch*, various newspapers and the *ProQuest Research Library ProQuest Education Journals* indexes over 760 journals and 600 are in full text. The *Psychology Journals* provide full text journals and 4000 dissertations.

**Encyclopedia of Education from Thompson Gale** plus print copy is available in the Library.

**PsycArticles and PsycInfo** through OVID

**Mental Measurements Yearbook** through OVID

**ERIC - the Education Resources Information Center** provides access to bibliographic records of journal and non-journal literature indexed from 1966 to the present. This collection contains bibliographic records for more than 1.2 million items indexed since 1966, including: journal articles, books, research syntheses, conference papers, and other education-related materials. ERIC currently indexes more than 600 journals and 115,000 full-text materials including conference papers and reports, rather than journal articles and books. Most materials published 2004 and forward include links to other sources.

All citations are given a number and type designation. **ED**123456 is a document. A link or information should be given regarding access to full text. **EJ**123456 is a journal. These items will be accessed through one of the full text databases (ProQuest, EBSCO, or PsycArticles) or via InterLibrary Loan. Access to documents before 2004 may be available on microfiche in the Library. Consult the Library for assistance.

**A to Z Heritage University Serials Holding List** is a list of all journals that are held by Heritage University Library in print or electronic format with the coverage dates.

**WorldCat from OCLC** is the world's largest network of Library content and services. This is the access point for **InterLibrary Loans (ILL)**. Please consult the InterLibrary Loan page at the Library website for detailed instructions or call the Library for assistance.

**Heritage University Library Catalog** is the access point for all materials held by the Library both electronic or an actual physical item. Items held in our collection may be borrowed. If the item you request is mailed, the borrower is responsible to pay for return postage before the date due. For renewals and further assistance please contact the Library.

**Citation information** is included on the Library Website Reference page.

**Toll free: 888.272.6190**

**Direct: 509.865.8521**