

Effectiveness of an ESL After-School Program  
on First Grade Student DIBELS Reading Scores  
Adams Elementary School, Yakima, Washington

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A Special Project

Presented to

Dr. Jack McPherson

Heritage University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Education  
Specialization in English as a Second Language

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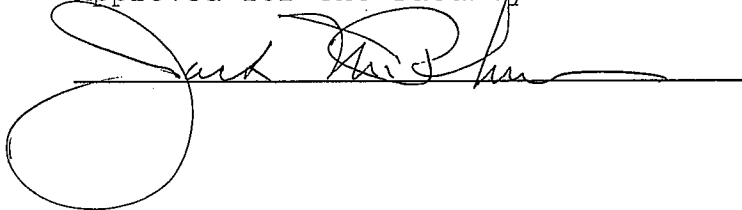
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Spring 2008

FACUTLY APPROVAL

Effectiveness of an ESL After-School Program  
on First Grade Student DIBELS Reading Scores  
Adams Elementary School, Yakima, Washington

Approved for the Faculty

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

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the effectiveness of an ESL after-school program at Adams Elementary School (AES) on DIBELS skills of participating first grade students. To accomplish this purpose, a review of selected literature was conducted. Additionally, pre- and post DIBELS assessments provided essential baseline data for which related inferences, conclusions, and recommendations were formulated. An analysis of data indicated that the hypothesis was supported at .05, .01, and .001 levels. Accordingly, first grade students who received Language for Learning/ESL remediation by attending the AES after-school ESL program showed significant growth as measured by DIBELS reading scores.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

According to Black (2004), Congress authorized nearly \$1 billion for the after-school 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program in January 2004. These funds for after-school programs supported 1.3 million students in 6,800 public schools in 1,587 communities across the country. Lauer et al. (2006) stated that since No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, many schools focused their attention to help children who have not reached proficiency in math and reading by implementing after-school programs.

According to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) (2007), Adams Elementary School (AES), located in the Yakima School District, has been labeled a high poverty school in Washington due to a student enrollment of 95.% in the free and reduced lunch program. As of 2005, the student population at AES was 683 and of those 44.1% were

identified as transitional bilingual, and 35.6% were migrant students. Many students at AES came to school daily faced with various challenges which made it difficult for them to meet grade level expectations such as: English being their second language, poverty, home environment, and migrant issues. ([www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us))

#### Statement of the Problem

Due to poor reading performance scores at AES, a change in after-school interventions was needed. By implementing an English as a Second Language (ESL) after-school program, AES would forgo strict governmental sanctions posed by not meeting annual yearly progress (AYP).

Phrased as a question, the problem which represented the focus of the present study maybe stated as follows: to what extent was the ESL after-school program at AES effective in improving first grade student Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) literacy skills.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the effectiveness of an ESL after-school program at AES on DIBELS skills of participating first grade students. To accomplish this purpose, a review of selected literature was conducted. Additionally pre and post DIBELS assessments provided essential baseline data for which related inferences, conclusions, and recommendations were formulated.

### Delimitations

The after-school ESL literacy program offered at AES was specifically targeted for first grade students diagnosed as at risk/some risk of failing the DIBELS reading assessment. First grade student participants selected were identified by their homeroom teachers who referred them for additional support in reading and to acquire the English language. The ESL after-school literacy program was conducted at AES from January, 2007 through May, 2007. Participants attended the after-school program three days (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) each week, from 3:30 -

4:30pm. The ESL program was taught by the researcher (Valeria V. Gonzalez). The ESL curriculum adopted for use with the after school DIBELS literacy program was entitled Language for Learning published by McGraw-Hill.

### Assumptions

Many students at AES had limited English skills. Interventions before and after-school had previously been offered to close the achievement gap and to help students meet state grade level standards. Many AES students failed the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) exam because of their limited English skills. The assumption was made that a permanent after-school ESL program would increase English language skills and raise test scores on state mandated tests.

### Hypothesis or Research Question

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) literacy skills of first grade students who participated in the after-school ESL program at AES will be significantly improved. The subtests used to

determine effectiveness of the ESL program on the DIBELS reading assessment were phoneme segmentation fluency and oral reading fluency.

#### Null Hypothesis

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) literacy skills of first grade students who participated in the after school ESL program at AES would not be significantly improved. Significance was determined for  $p \geq$  at .05, .01, .001 levels.

#### Significance of the Project

Many AES students did not pass the WASL exam because of limited English skills which resulted in the Yakima School District failure to meet (AYP). Accordingly, the state mandated the school improvement plan designed to address this problem.

The after school ESL literacy program inaugurated at AES has affected the school in many ways. First, students with limited English increased academic vocabulary due to repeated exposure to curricular materials with pictures and realia (i.e.: actual touchable objects). Second, students diagnosed as at

risk/some risk of failure in reading were given an opportunity to increase their English skills through enrollment in the after school ESL literacy program which was the subject of this research study. Students could benefit from extra remedial opportunities to make literacy gains essential for meeting and/or exceeding grade level expectations.

#### Procedure

The researcher received permission from the principal of Adams Elementary, Dave Chaplin, on November 15, 2007 to undertake the study and to use the DIBELS literacy scores of first grade students.

Students selected to participate in the after-school ESL literacy program were selected on the basis of their DIBELS scores and upon the recommendation of their homeroom teacher. All participating students were enrolled in the first grade attended AES in the Yakima School District. The after-school ESL literacy program was conducted for one hour, for three days (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) each week. Language for Learning (LFL) was the curriculum used for all

after-school ESL instruction. The LFL curriculum was provided by the school district as an approved supplemental ESL teaching curriculum. Before the curriculum was taught, students were administered a pre-test to assess their English skills. The average of the students' pre-test scores determined the first lesson that was taught from the curriculum.

The after-school ESL program at AES commenced January 4, 2007, and ended May 31, 2007. The spring DIBELS reading assessment was administered the first week of May 2007 and was used to compare the effectiveness of the ESL after-school program.

#### Definition of the Terms

Significant terms used in the context of the present study have been defined as follows:

benchmark. Indicates low-risk of reading failure of reaching end-of-year reading skill goals.

intensive. Indicates at-risk of reading failure, and need for additional support to reach end-of-year reading skill goals.



Language for Learning. Curriculum used for after-school English as a second language instruction.

quantitative research. Refers to the collection of numerical data to explain, predict and/or control phenomena of interest.

strategic. Indicates some risk of reading failure, additional support needed to reach end-of-year reading skill goals.

#### Acronyms

AES. Adams Elementary School.

AYP. Annual Yearly Progress.

CAL. Center for Applied Linguistics.

CALP. Cognitive academic language proficiency.

DIBELS. Dynamic Indicator Early Learning Success.

ELL. English Language Learner.

ESL. English as a Second Language.

LFL. Language for Learning.

NCLB. No Child Left Behind.

WASL. Washington Academic of Student Learning.

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Selected Literature

#### Introduction

The review of literature and research summarized in Chapter 2 was organized to address:

- The DIBELS Reading Assessment Program.
- English as a Second Language.
- Need for and Benefits for After School Programs.
- Other Selected Reading Strategies.
- Summary.

Data current primarily within the last five years were identified through an online computerized literature search on Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), the internet, and Proquest. A hand-search of selected research materials was also conducted.

#### The DIBELS Reading Assessment Program

DIBELS has gained widespread use in the United States as a measure of early reading skills to predict future reading difficulty and facilitate early and

accurate identification for students in need of intervention. A battery of tests, DIBELS has been used to: Assess more than 1,800,000 students from kindergarten to grade 6; to identify students who may be at-risk of reading failure; to monitor their progress; and to guide teacher reading instruction (Pressley et al, 2005).

As stated by Good & Kaminski (2005): DIBELS represents a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development. These tests have been designed to be short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills (p. 1).

The DIBELS assessment has been used to measure the following fluency areas: Initial sounds, letter naming, phoneme segmentation, nonsense words, oral reading, retelling and word use. These fluency assessments determined early literacy development of the student in phonological awareness, alphabetic understanding, accuracy in fluency reading connected

text, vocabulary and comprehension which were reading skills emphasized in the National Reading Panel report. The DIBELS assessments have been thoroughly researched and shown to be reliable and valid indicators of early literacy development. The DIBELS measures have provided feedback on intervention and to evaluate individual student development. (Good & Kaminski).

There has some been disapproval voiced concerning DIBELS reading assessments. Pressley et al. (2005) stated that "DIBELS mispredicts reading performance much of the time, and at, best is a measure of who reads quickly without regard to whether the reader comprehends what is read." (pg. 563) Kato & Manning (2007) contented that school administrators have given teachers directives spend more time on science and math, at the expense of social studies content that can prove more effective in building reading skills.

#### English as a Second Language

According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2003), non-English-speaking

students represented the fastest growing segment of the public school population with an annual increase of 10%. As a result, the greatest obstacle that teachers have confronted in education has been the increasing numbers of students with limited English skills.

As quoted in the article, "Research Base for CAL's Professional Development" ([www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)):

Research studies have documented that proficiency in academic English requires five to seven years of instruction for students learning English to reach parity with their native English speaking peers, skilled teachers are essential to schools' effort to close the achievement gap between English speakers and English language learners (p. 1).

The above cited article identified the three principles, as paraphrased below, for second language acquisition that teachers have used to adapt instruction for English Language Learners (ELL).

The first principle focused on increased comprehensible input intended to make meaning clear

through visuals, demonstrations, and other means. This principle requires the teacher to use language that is understandable for the learner.

Krashen (1985) agreed that comprehensible input was a prerequisite for language acquisition. Said Krashen:

The best methods are therefore those that supply comprehensible input in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are 'ready', recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production. (<http://www.sk.com.br/skkrash.html>)

Crandell et al. (2002) contended that comprehensible input may be increased by using a learners' prior knowledge to construct new knowledge, discussion, brainstorming, and graphic organizers as other modes can be used to build language.

The second principle called for increasing comprehensible output through student-to-student interaction by engaging students in using English to accomplish academic tasks. According to this principle, students can enhance their language acquisition through increased participation with peers by explaining their thought processes through the use of oral and written means.

According to Haynes, comprehensible output can also be demonstrated in small group settings which allow students to practice oral English skills. Group participation has allowed repetition of content information and opportunities for oral language discussions with peers to facilitate comprehension of the English language content. ([http://www.everythingsel.net/in-services/comprehensible\\_input\\_output\\_70140.php](http://www.everythingsel.net/in-services/comprehensible_input_output_70140.php))

The third principle focused on increasing higher-order thinking and study skills. Intentionally teaching thinking skills, study skills and learning strategies to help develop ELL students as effective, independent learners. This principle revolved around

the concept that academic language or Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) was the ability to use language for higher order thinking and communicating. Students must be given support and opportunities in academic areas to become proficient in academic language. For example, academic language became cognitively challenging to students because of new ideas, concepts and language that were taught concurrently. Skills such as: Comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring to support academic language must be taught by teachers to develop language in higher order thinking and communicating ([www.cal.org](http://www.cal.org)).

#### Need for and Benefits of After School Programs

The NCLB legislation has encouraged the development of after-school programs as a way to increase student achievement. According to Laur et al. (2006), "Six million of the 54 million K-8 children in the United States participated in after-school programs that were school based or community sponsored" (p. 276). Federal support for the 21<sup>st</sup>-



Century Community Learning Centers' (21CCLCs) provided nearly \$1 billion annually to provide supplemental programs to low performing schools in disadvantaged areas (Mahoney et al. 2005).

Kugler (2001) described three societal concerns that contributed to the growth of after-school programs: Lack of after school childcare at home; the idea that children who are economically disadvantaged can advance their learning given additional time and opportunities; the high frequency of teen crime that has occurred after school. As stated by Black (2004), "A 2001 report by the U.S. Department of Education estimated that about 8 million school age children, including 4 million between the ages of 5 and 12, are unsupervised after school (p.34)."

The consequences of unsupervised children at home has involved the increased risk of home injuries and poor nutrition. Many parents, especially those in low-income households, used TV as a substitute for after school care resulting in children spending 1,500 hours watching TV compared to 900 hours a year in school.

The implication of unsupervised adolescents and preteens has resulted in their involvement in dangerous activities such as experimental drug use and sexual activity. Enforcement officials have reported that the hours from between 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. represent the time when young children and teens are mostly likely to get into trouble (Black, 2004). According to Cosden, et al. 2004, unsupervised children were at greater risk of negative educational outcomes in contrast to students who participated in after school programs who had a significant positive impact on educational outcomes.

The needs of low income children have been a major influence on the implementation of after school programs. Cooper et al. (2000) noted the following:

Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was created in part because of data indicating that low-income children are at risk for academic failure and therefore need additional time in educational activities to

supplement what they experience during regular school hours (p. 73).

The main objective of many after-school programs has been to increase student achievement. As a result, studies have shown that students who attended after school programs often attained higher test scores, completed homework more often, attended school on a regular basis, were less likely dropped out of school and student conduct improved during the school day (Black, 2004). Pierce et al. (1999) were in agreement that children's experiences in after school programs may have implications for their development in other settings.

#### Other Selected Reading Strategies

The U.S. Department of Commerce (2004) reported that nearly one in five Americans spoke a language other than English at home. Due to the growth in numbers of ELL students every year, teachers have identified appropriate strategies for use in improving reading scores of struggling ELL students.

Brown (2007) suggested teachers assist ELL students by increasing their knowledge in the content area. Language was best acquired by ELL students when they understood the content being taught. Said Brown (2007):

With better comprehension of the textbooks, ELL students understand more content area knowledge. An added dividend is that activities designed to accommodate ELL students often benefit fully English proficient students whose reading is below grade level (p. 38).

According to Krashen, narrow reading and building background knowledge were two reading strategies that helped facilitate both language acquisition and comprehensible input. As stated by Krashen:

The narrow reading strategy consisted of texts by one author or about a single topic of interest, which helps ensure comprehension and natural repetition of vocabulary and grammar (p.2).

Narrow reading required exposure to a variety of literature but with a focus on a specific topic. The narrow reading strategy built academic language through repetition of specialized vocabulary and content knowledge using refined topic based literature (Krashen).

A second strategy that helped facilitate both language acquisition and comprehensible input was building background knowledge. Research has confirmed that background knowledge in the form of pictures, discussion, and easier reading has helped make texts more comprehensible. This authority observed that narrow strategy precedes the strategy of building background knowledge. Due to the refined topic-based literature, building background knowledge facilitated comprehending the text. This explained the rationale as to why series books remained so popular and effective in developing literacy (Krashen).

Brown contended that reading is considered one of the most important academic skills and is highly correlated with student achievement. Further reading

comprehension in content areas has become essential for successful learning.

Specific reading strategies have proven beneficial for ELL students who struggled to learn to read. Although teachers may not have spoken a students' native language, they were, nevertheless, successful in teaching students to read when shown respect and knowledge of the child's native culture. (Ornalles, 2007).

#### Summary

The review of selected literature and related investigation reported in Chapter 2 supported the following research themes:

1. DIBELS has gained widespread use in the United States as a measure of early reading skills and as a predictor of future reading difficulty needed to accurately identify for students in need of intervention.

2. Non-English speaking students have represented the fastest growing segment of the U.S.

public school population and have posed the greatest obstacle for teachers.

3. The NCLB legislation has encouraged the development of after-school programs as a way to increase student achievement.

4. Due to the dramatic growth in the number of ELL students, teachers have found it necessary to use a variety of instructional strategies to improve reading skills of struggling students.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology and Treatment of Data

#### Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study project was to determine the effectiveness of an ESL after school program at AES on DIBELS skills of participating first grade students. To accomplish this purpose, a review of selected literature was conducted. Additionally, essential baseline data were obtained and analyzed, and conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

Chapter 3 contains a description of the methodology used in the study. Additionally, the researcher included details concerning participants, instruments, design, procedure, treatment of the data, and summary.

#### Methodology

The researcher used a quantitative research design to determine the extent of which an after-school ESL program was effective in improving first grade students DIBELS literacy skills. A t-test for



nonindependent samples was utilized for data analysis to determine significance following pre- and posttesting. All students were administered two pre-tests at the beginning of spring trimester, 2007. Pre and posttests were assessed to determine any significant improvement in DIBELS reading skills. The research was conducted during the 2006-2007 school year. Participants included native English speakers and English Language Learners (ELL) within the mainstream classroom. All participants were administered posttests in May 2007.

### Participants

Participants involved in the study were first graders from AES during the 2006-2007 academic year. The population studied was comprised of both native English speakers and ELL's. Participants made the commitment to attend the after-school program a minimum of two days per school week. A minimum of two days attendance was required to determine the effectiveness and quality of the after-school program on student academic achievement.

### Instruments

The DIBELS reading assessment was adopted and used for pre- and posttests and to determine significance. The DIBELS measures have been adopted to assess first grade students at AES.

### Design

Pre and posttests for participating first students at AES were organized as follows:

Pre-test. First grade pre-tests were administered to determine student reading skills, January, 2007.

Posttest. First grade posttests were administered to determine student reading skills, May, 2007.

### Procedure

Procedures employed in the present study evolved in several stages, as follows.

1. The researcher received permission from the principal of Adams Elementary, Dave Chaplin, on November 15, 2007 to undertake the study and to use the DIBELS literacy scores of first grade students.

2. Students selected to participate in the after-school ESL literacy program were selected on the basis of their DIBELS scores and upon the recommendation of their homeroom teacher.
3. All participating students were enrolled in the first grade attended AES in the Yakima School District.
4. The after-school ESL literacy program was conducted for one hour, for three days (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) each week.
5. Language for Learning (LFL) was the curriculum used for all after-school ESL instruction. The LFL curriculum was provided by the school district as an approved supplemental ESL teaching curriculum.
6. Before the curriculum was taught, students were administered a pre-test to assess their English skills. The average of the students' pre-test scores determined the first lesson that was taught from the curriculum.

7. The after-school ESL program at AES commenced January 4, 2007, and ended May 31, 2007. The spring DIBELS reading assessment was administered the first week of May 2007 and was used to compare the effectiveness of the ESL after-school program.

#### Treatment of the Data

A t-test for nonindependent samples was used in conjunction with the Windows STATPAK statistical software program that accompanied the Education Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications, Sixth edition text (Gay, Mills, and Airasian, 2006). This allowed the researcher to compare pre-and posttest DIBELS scores. Significance was determined for  $p \geq$  at 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels.

To test the null hypothesis, which would indicate no significant difference using after school intervention compared to those who did not attend, a t-test for nonindependent samples was again performed.

The following formula was used to test for significance.

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

### Summary

Chapter 3 provided a description of the research methodology employed in the study, participants, instruments used, research design, and procedure utilized. Details concerning treatment of the data obtained and analyzed were also presented.

## Chapter 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

This quantitative research study sought to determine the effectiveness of after-school program at Adams Elementary School (AES) on ESL students reading skills as measured by the DIBELS reading assessment. The researcher compared pre and posttest scores of participating first grade students.

#### Description of the Environment

The study focused on the researcher's 2006-2007 first grade students at AES. The 8 students selected included 4 girls and 4 boys. The after-school ESL class served English Language Learners (ELL). At the discretion of the teacher (Valeria V. Gonzalez), the Language for Learning curriculum was integrated into the program. The teacher held a Washington State endorsement in Early Childhood Education. Student physical response activities and picture cards were incorporated into the Language for Learning curriculum. For example, students were asked to touch

or engage in a variety of objects and actions (e.g. touching classroom tables, chairs, etc; standing/sitting in front/beside/over/under classroom objects).

#### Hypothesis/Research Question

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) literacy skills of first grade students who participated in the after school ESL program at AES will be significantly improved. The subtests used to determine effectiveness of the ESL program on the DIBELS reading assessments were phoneme segmentation fluency and oral reading fluency.

#### Null Hypothesis

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) literacy skills of first grade students who participated in the after-school ESL program at AES would not be significantly improved. Significance was determined for  $p \geq$  at 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels.

#### Results of the Study

Table 1 displayed the 8 participants' DIBELS test scores. Pre-test raw scores for first grade reading

level tests were obtained in January, 2007. Posttest raw scores for first grade students were obtained in May, 2007.

Table 1

Pre and Posttests DIBELS Scores for Participating First Grade Students

Students Number	Pre-test January 2007 Phoneme Segmentation Fluency scores	Posttest May 2007 Phoneme Segmentation Fluency Scores	Pre-test January 2007 Oral Reading Fluency scores	Posttest May 2007 Oral Reading Fluency Scores
1	34	62	0	8
2	61	46	21	83
3	66	67	15	27
4	55	63	20	51
5	56	45	15	38
6	54	64	10	26
7	53	70	5	17
8	8	29	8	16

Table 2 displayed data collected from the DIBELS first grade reading level subtests of study. The *t*-test for nonindependent variables on the Windows



Table 2

DIBELS Mean and Standard Deviation Pre and Posttest Scores, 2007

	Pre-test January 2007 Phoneme Segmentation Fluency	Pre-test January 2007 Oral Reading Fluency	Posttest May 2007 Phoneme Segmentation Fluency	Posttest May 2007 Oral Reading Fluency
Mean	48.38	11.75	55.75	33.25
Standard Deviation	18.75	7.32	14.22	24.21

STATPAK (Gay, Mills and Airasian, 2006) Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications,

6<sup>th</sup> Ed, was used to calculate data statistics and values. The mean DIBELS pre-test score of January, 2007, phoneme segmentation fluency, was 48.38. The mean DIBELS pre-test score January, 2007, oral reading fluency, was 11.75. By comparison, the mean DIBELS posttest score of May, 2007, phoneme segmentation fluency, was 55.75. The mean DIBELS posttest score of May, 2007, oral reading fluency, was 33.25.

### Findings

There was a significant difference between participants' pre and posttest DIBELS reading subtest scores after participating in the AES after-school ESL program. These data indicated the null hypothesis was not accepted at  $p \geq$  at the .05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels. Accordingly, the hypothesis was supported at the 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels based on the nonindependent  $t$ -test.

### Summary

Chapter 4 focused on the analysis of the data. The researcher used a  $t$ -test for nonindependent samples to compare participants' pre and posttest DIBELS reading scores. An analysis of data indicated the hypothesis was supported at 0.05, 0.01, and 0.001 levels. Accordingly, first grade students who received Language for Learning/ESL remediation by attending the AES after-school ESL program showed significant growth as measured by DIBELS reading scores.

The chapter included a discussion of the environment, hypothesis, null hypothesis, results of the study, findings, and discussion.

## Chapter 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Summary

The purpose of this quantitative research project was to determine the extent to which attending ESL after school program improved student reading skills as measured by the DIBELS. To accomplish this purpose, a review of selected literature was conducted. Additionally, essential baseline data were obtained and analyzed, and conclusions and recommendations were formulated.

#### Conclusions

From research findings and analysis of data produced by this quantitative study, the following conclusions were reached:

1. DIBELS has gained widespread use in the United States as a measure of early reading skills and as a predictor of future reading difficulty needed to accurately identify students in need of intervention.

2. Non-English speaking students have represented the fastest growing segment of the U.S. public school population and have posed the greatest obstacle for teachers.
3. The NCLB legislation has encouraged the development of after-school programs as a way to increase student achievement.
4. Due to the dramatic growth in the number of ELL students, teachers have found it necessary to use a variety of instructional strategies to improve reading skills of struggling students.
5. An analysis of data obtained indicated that first grade students who received Language for Learning curriculum/ESL remediation showed significant growth by attending AES.

#### Recommendations

Based on the conclusions cited above, the following recommendations have been suggested:

1. To improve students reading skills, teachers should use data that is provided by DIBELS

reading assessments to identify students in need of remediation.

2. To address obstacles posed by non-English speaking students, educators should consider a variety of remedial, ESL-orientated curricula and instructional strategies.
3. To increase student achievement, educators should embrace the NCLB legislation.
4. Teachers should utilize a variety of instructional strategies to improve reading skills of struggling students.
5. To improve reading scores of first grade students at AES, the after-school ESL program should be on-going.
6. School personnel interested in the influence of after-school programs on primary level student reading scores may wish to utilize information presented in this study or, they may elect to undertake research more suited to their unique needs.

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