

The Impact of HU105 on Student Achievement in Reading in Fourth Grade at  
One Elementary School

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A Special Project

Presented to

Dr. Gretta Merwin

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FACULTY APPROVAL

The Impact of HU105 on Student Achievement in Reading in Fourth Grade at  
One Elementary School

Approved for the Faculty

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to determine the effectiveness of HU105 on students' achievement in reading. HU105, a field-based teacher preparation program, placed 3 teacher candidates in classrooms with mentor teachers to learn to be teachers by being teachers. The DRA2 was given in August 2012 and in May 2014 to measure student achievement. Co-teaching strategies were implemented to teach the components of the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum. The results indicated that the group of high needs 4<sup>th</sup> graders made greater than expected academic gains in reading with the implementation of HU105 as measured by the DRA2.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

HU105 was a federally funded residency-based teacher preparation program offered by a small, rural university located in central Washington State. The premise of the program was to have teacher candidates learn to become teachers by being teachers. HU105 placed 3 teacher candidates in each fourth grade classroom for their entire teacher preparation program. The target elementary school was located in a small rural town of approximately 2000 residents in central Washington State. The elementary school was 96.6% Hispanic, 47.6 Transitional Bilingual and 100% of the students qualified for free lunch. By placing candidates in classrooms, the project hoped to accomplish the goals of preparing highly effective teachers and reducing or eliminating the learning gap of students in project classrooms. The project was based on a team approach to teaching. A three-teacher candidate team with a certificated core teacher created a Teaching-Learning Team (TLT). The core teachers' responsibilities were to mentor, co-teach and co-plan alongside the teacher candidates who were placed in their classroom for their entire preparation program.

In the fourth grade classrooms at the subject elementary school, students' reading ability was measured by using the Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2). The purpose of this study was to determine whether the implementation of HU105 impacted reading achievement in fourth grade students at the subject elementary school as measured by the DRA2.

#### Statement of the Problem

Reading comprehension and fluency of fourth grade students were below grade level as per DRA2 test scores taken in the fall of 2012 in the subject elementary school. HU105 was used to reduce the student to teacher ratio and to provide reading instruction in small guided groups at the students' appropriate reading level as measured by DRA2 placement tests.

#### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the project was to determine if fourth grade students would make greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2 with the implementation of HU105.

#### Delimitations

The university in this study that oversaw the federally funded teacher preparation program was located on an Indian reservation in a small rural agricultural city in south central Washington State with a population of approximately 9,000 residents. The university was a non-profit, independent, non-

denominational, accredited institution of higher education that offered undergraduate and graduate education. The enrollment for the university at the time of this study was 870 undergraduate students and 280 graduate students. The diversity of the full-time undergraduate student population at the time of this study was: 52.8% Hispanic/Latino, 25.9% White, 10.1% American Indian or Alaska Native, 8.4% unknown, 1.4% Asian, 0.6% Black or African American and 0.2% Nonresident Alien (Heritage University, 2013). The university's mission was to provide quality, accessible higher education to multicultural populations who had been educationally isolated, by challenging students with mind-stretching, horizon-broadening experiences through class work, homework, and practical experiences in the workplace (Heritage 105, 2009).

The study took place in a small rural town with a population of 2,324 from the fall of 2012 to the spring of 2013. The only elementary school in this town where the data was collected had a student population of approximately 530 students with demographics of 3.2% White, 96.6% Hispanic and 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native. There were 100% of students receiving free lunch, which indicated a high population of low socioeconomic status students. Special Education was at 12.1%, Transitional Bilinguals at 47.6%, Migrant at 13.3%, Section 504 at 0.2% and Foster Care at 0.2% completed the demographics of the elementary school (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2013).

The 58 students in this study came from three separate fourth grade classrooms. Twenty-five of the students were male and thirty-three were female with demographics of 98% Hispanic and 2% White. All students received instruction in reading from the core teacher and various HU105 teacher candidates during a blocked schedule. Students were grouped by DRA2 scores administered in the fall of the year the study took place and were placed into three separate groups based on reading ability. Data for the study was taken from all three groups.

### Assumptions

The members of the fourth grade team were highly qualified teachers, as defined by the State of Washington. Two of the five members held Master's in Education degrees and one was a National Board certified teacher. The three members had worked together for two years. All three members of the team were core teachers for HU105. The three members of the fourth grade team received training from the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession on how to successfully co-plan and co-teach with the teacher candidates they would be mentoring.

In addition to the 3 members of the fourth grade team, 11 teacher candidates from HU105 were mentored to become teachers while working alongside core teachers to provide reading, math and writing instruction to the 58 students

participating in this study. Of the 11 teacher candidates 6 were male and 5 were female. Six of the teacher candidates held at least an Associates of Arts Degree and were studying towards a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with an English Language Learner (ELL) endorsement and five held Bachelor's degrees in varying areas of study and were studying towards a Master's in Teaching Degree with ELL endorsement.

HU105 teacher candidates needed to experience teaching in all subject areas to meet program competencies for graduation. Because fourth grade at the subject elementary school utilized a blocking schedule in which each core teacher was an expert in their subject area, candidates were unable to remain with the same core teacher throughout the year and different candidates were rotated into the reading block every 9 weeks.

All students participating in this study had equal opportunity regardless of race, sex or socioeconomic background to receive co-taught reading instruction from HU105. Finally all participants were properly placed into reading levels according to students' educational needs as measured by the DRA2 and were taught using the same reading instructional program.

### Hypothesis

With the implementation of HU105, fourth grade students made greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2.

### Null Hypothesis:

With the implementation of the HU105 project, fourth grade students did not make greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2.

### Significance of the Project

Many districts surrounding the subject elementary school were considering partnering with the university as a way to mentor teacher candidates and support student achievement. This project would help inform prospective core teachers and administrators to make a decision if the project was a collaboration they were willing to participate in.

### Procedure

After fourth grade students at the elementary school were tested in the fall of 2012, the core teachers placed students in appropriate instructional groups according to each individual's fluency and comprehension levels as measured by the DRA2. The high level block, which was referred to as Broncos, consisted of 19 students, the middle level block, Bull Dogs, was 24 and the low level, Huskies, was 15. Students were placed in ability groups and used the Good Habits, Great Readers Reading Curriculum. Good Habits, Great Readers was a two part

program which consisted of a 30 minute shared reading part and a 30 minute guided reading part. The Bull Dog and Husky blocks also employed the Reading Excellence: Word Attack and Rate Development Strategies (REWARDS) intervention curriculum for 20 minutes each day. The reading curriculum was taught to students in all blocks using various co-teaching strategies and various combinations of the core teacher and teacher candidates.

The reading and writing core teachers, with assistance from 2 of the 11 HU105 teacher candidates, administered all DRA2 tests for fall, winter and spring. Fourth grade core teachers divided the students in the classrooms into appropriate blocks, Broncos (High), Bull Dogs (Middle), or Huskies (Low) and then into their subsequent guided reading groups. The writing block teacher, where the students also received reading intervention, provided the Bull Dogs and six Husky students with REWARDS intervention to help those students decode multisyllabic words. Broncos received no REWARDS interventions and the remaining students from the Huskies received Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness, Phonics and Sight Words (SIPPS) intervention from paraeducators supervised by the school's reading coach, stationed in the intervention room, to improve their phonics. The final DRA2 test, given in late spring after state testing had concluded, was used to determine individual student achievement from fall 2012 through spring 2013.



## Definition of Terms

core teacher. Core teacher referred to the certified teacher in the classroom who mentored HU105 teacher candidates.

co-teaching. Co-teaching was defined as two teachers (core teacher and teacher candidate) working together with groups of students, sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space.

Developmental Reading Assessment 2. The Developmental Reading Assessment 2 was a standardized reading test used to determine a student's instructional level in reading.

guided reading. Guided reading was the small-group instruction strand of Good Habits, Great Readers. Guided reading lessons were used with small groups for each day, which allowed teachers to instruct small groups of students with similar learning needs, using a text that carefully matched their current instructional levels.

paraeducator. A paraeducator was defined as a school employee who worked under the supervision of teachers or other professional practitioners who provided instructional support and other direct services to children and their families.

Professional Competencies Assessment Instrument (PCAI). The PCAI was a tool used as both a formative and summative assessment of teacher competencies.

Professional Learning Communities. Professional Learning Communities were a

group of teachers who worked together to reach a common goal that centered on student achievement.

shared reading. Shared reading was the whole class strand of Good Habits, Great Readers in which the teacher demonstrated the strategies and skills she/he used to make meaning. During that time, the teacher scaffolded instruction, which helped students accomplish a reading strategy, skill, or behavior they could not yet do on their own.

teacher candidate. Teacher candidate referred to the adult learners enrolled in the HU105 teacher preparation project as an undergraduate or graduate student.

Teaching-Learning Team. Teaching-Learning Team referred to the set of adults in the classroom comprised of a combination of three pre-bachelorette or Masters In Teaching candidates and the core teacher, who acted as the lead team member, mentor and co-teacher (Heritage 105, 2009).

### Acronyms

DRA2. Developmental Reading Assessment 2

ELL. English Language Learner

IEP. Individualized Education Program

PCAI. Professional Competencies Assessment Instrument

PLC. Professional Learning Community

REWARDS. Reading Excellence: Word Attack and Rate Development Strategies

SIPPS. Systematic Instruction in Phoneme Awareness, Phonics and Sight Words

TLT. Teaching-Learning Team

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Selected Literature

#### Introduction

Recent studies had shown the benefits of co-teaching arrangements for students, teachers, and school organizations (Nevin, Cramer, Salazar, & Voigt, 2008). In light of this research, the elementary school and the university in this study created a partnership that allowed teacher candidates into classrooms to receive field-based training from core teachers, while implementing co-teaching strategies to deliver instruction to students. This study investigated whether implementing co-teaching strategies using a TLT had greater than expected results in reading in fourth grade as measured by the DRA2. The main subtopics chosen by the researcher in this literature study were the Good Habits, Great Readers reading program, the DRA2 assessment, the HU105 grant and the effectiveness of co-teaching and co-teaching strategies used to enhance student achievement.

#### Good Habits, Great Readers

Celebration Press Reading: Good Habits Great Readers was a research-based reading program published by Pearson Education in 2007, which focused on reading comprehension. The Good Habits, Great Readers program was designed so that reading instruction proceeded gradually from teacher modeling to

student partner practice to independent application of skills and strategies. To foster students' reading independence, the Good Habits, Great Readers program utilized a balanced literacy approach, which included whole group (shared reading) and small-group (guided reading) instruction. The shared reading component allowed teachers to introduce important strategies and skills, and the guided reading component gave teachers the opportunity to provide more customized reading instruction targeting students' particular developmental needs (Pearson Education, Inc., 2007).

The Good Habits, Great Readers program was premised on the notion that good readers utilized effective strategies and that teachers could help students learn and employ these strategies in their reading. A distinguishing feature of the program was that it provided explicit models for instruction in reading strategies and skills, which facilitated students' development of effective metacognitive strategies so they could actively make sense of text as they read (Pearson Education, Inc., 2007).

Research showed that good readers formed good reading habits and applied proven reading strategies. Paris, Wasik, and Turner (1991) described strategic reading as "a prime characteristic of expert readers because it is woven into the fabric of children's cognitive development and is necessary for success in school" (p. 609). Paris, Wasik, and Turner (1991) placed these reading strategies

into three clusters: before, during and after reading. The effective strategies they identified for use before reading were previewing the text and making predictions. During reading, strategies included identifying main ideas and details, making inferences and inspecting the text. Finally, strategies for after reading consisted of summarizing and reflecting (Paris, Wasik & Turner, 1991).

The Good Habits, Great Readers balanced literacy program was based on driving instruction through assessment, specifically the *DRA2*. The Good Habits, Great Readers presented a holistic approach that used the DRA assessment to place students at their own instructional reading level as well as measure achievement and mastery of skills as they progressed within their own level (Pearson education, inc., 2013).

#### Developmental Reading Assessment 2 (DRA2)

The assessment used in this study was called the Developmental Reading Assessment, Second Edition or *DRA2*. The purpose of the *DRA2* was to identify students' reading level, based on accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. (Celebration Press/Pearson Learning Group, n. d.). Additionally, Beaver and Carter (2003) stated that the *DRA2* was designed to measure how well students read fiction and nonfiction, monitored student growth and development on a variety of crucial skills and strategies successful readers utilized, and helped teachers diagnose student needs and plan for timely instruction. In addition, they

discussed how to prepare students to be successful at meeting classroom and testing expectations, and how to support teachers and school districts in keeping parents and other stakeholders informed about their students' level of reading achievement.

DRA2 assessments were given to students one-on-one and gave children specific selected texts. A series of leveled texts, which increased in difficulty, were used for the assessment. The DRA2 gauged the major aspects of reading that were critical to a students' success as a reader (Celebration Press/Pearson Learning Group, n. d.).

#### HU105 Grant

In 2009, the university in this study applied for a grant titled, The Heritage 105 Project, which would completely reform the way the university conducted teacher preparation (Heritage 105: Heritage University and ESD 105 Collaborative). The most important reforms were that teacher candidates began their pre-service preparation immediately upon the completion of their general education requirements and completed their course work in an entirely field-based model. Candidate preparation was enhanced through TLTs. TLTs chose learning priorities based upon the immediate needs of the K-8 students in the classroom and those needs served as a platform to prepare and train candidates on specific issues. To ensure candidates were progressing towards the goal of becoming

highly qualified, candidates participated in daily planning meetings of the TLT at the beginning and end of each day, which were used to identify daily student priorities and assessments. Weekly candidate meetings at the university on Fridays were used to deepen their content knowledge.

To assess candidates' performances, HU105 used state-created, content-specific, standardized tests for teacher certification such as the Washington Educator State Tests, the WEST-B for basic knowledge and the WEST- E for content specific knowledge. Additionally, core teachers and university faculty collected evidence of competencies. Lastly, candidates received additional competency in mathematics, sciences, bilingual education, and ELL so they would be better equipped teachers in high-needs, rural school districts.

### Co-teaching

Cook and Friend (1995) defined co-teaching as “two or more professionals delivering substantive instruction to a diverse or blended group of students in a single physical space” (p. 14). Co-teaching had been promoted as a service-delivery model that ensured all students with IEPs received whatever support was necessary for them to function successfully in general education classrooms (Kloo & Zigmond, 2008). Kloo and Zigmond (2008) also expected that, by placing the special education teacher in the room, educators would make a wider range of instructional practices available to all students in general education classrooms,



ensuring that students who were at risk also received support.

There were benefits to co-teaching in student teaching as well. New teacher candidates, who utilized co-teaching strategies, benefited from professional development during a field-based teacher-training experience. Collaboration that was instructionally relevant and sustained offered a powerful form of job-embedded professional development that held great potential to improve their teacher knowledge and practice (Desimone, Porter, Garat, Yoon, & Birman, 2002). Teacher candidates, when paired with cooperating teachers and trained in co-teaching, increased the academic achievement of students in the classroom (Bacharach, Washut Heck, & Dahlberg, 2010).

Professional educators agreed co-teaching was two or more individuals who worked together for the outcome of achieving what none could have done alone (Wenzlaff, Berak, Wiesman, & Monroe-Baillargeon, 2002). Research also showed that students who came from disadvantaged homes, who were culturally diverse or who received special education services, who were more likely to be low academic achievers, to be retained, to drop out of school, and to have limited access to postsecondary education, achieved more in a co-taught classroom (York-Barr, Ghore, & Sommerness, 2007). Additionally, past studies advocated that the presence of multiple teachers in classrooms fostered the development of student communication skills and improved student-teacher relationships (Dugan

& Letterman, 2008). More benefits for students had been found as well. Co-teaching used diverse areas of expertise to differentiate instruction, it enabled smaller group instruction that was coherent, and it provided a common instructional experience on which the co-teaching partners reflected and made subsequent improvements (Pardini, 2006).

Through their research at St. Cloud's University, Bacharach, Washut, and Dahlberg (2010) stated that there was a strong positive trend for English Language Learners in reading, where the findings approached statistical significance when they were placed in a co-taught classroom. There were six models for co-teaching developed by Cook and Friend (1995) used by St. Cloud University researchers, that helped yield a positive impact on student learning. These included one teach one assist, one teach one observe, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching. Each approach had its positive and negatives; educators determined which approach best met the needs of their students.

Co-teaching had many other benefits as well, including increased instructional options, improved educational programs, and reduced stigmatization for students. In addition, co-teaching provided support to the professionals involved (Cook & Friend, 1995). Students became better collaborators with their peers when they saw teachers modeling appropriate collaborative relationships.

Students profited from two teachers uniting their assets and professional knowledge. Also, students developed critical-thinking skills by synthesizing multiple perspectives and relating information to a larger conceptual framework (Dugan & Letterman, 2008).

### Summary

The main areas of research studied in this literature review were the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum, the DRA2 Assessment, the HU105 Grant and co-teaching. Good Habits, Great Readers was broken up into two parts, shared reading and guided reading. The DRA2 assessment was the tool used to assess the impact of the co-teaching strategies on students' reading scores. The HU105 Grant provided an understanding of the parameters the researcher, teacher candidates and students were working within. The research on co-teaching was included to show the positive impact it had on student teaching and student achievement. Bacharach and others (2010) clearly established in their research that teacher candidates, when paired with cooperating teachers and trained in co-teaching, increased the academic achievement of students in the classroom.

Furthermore, Barachach and others (2010) stated that:

Co-teaching is a promising practice in raising academic outcomes for at-risk youth... co-teaching will have a tremendous impact on the academic achievement of learners throughout the United States, and it has the potential

to unequivocally change the face of teacher preparation and student teaching.

(p. 13)

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology and Treatment of Data

#### Introduction

As a result of the partnership between the researcher's elementary school and the university to improve academic student performance and student teacher competency, the researcher wished to determine if fourth grade students who were enrolled in project classrooms would make greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2 with the implementation of HU105 over the period of one year. Co-teaching strategies were implemented to support student growth.

#### Methodology

The researcher used a quantitative research method. Quantitative research meant that methods were based on the collection and analysis of numerical data (Gay, Mills, & Airsian, 2009). According to the book *Education Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications*, "Quantitative research approaches are applied to describe current conditions, investigate relations, and study cause-effect phenomena" (Gay et al., p. 8). The researcher attempted to determine if there was a greater than expected increase in fourth grade students' reading performance as measured by the DRA2 with the implementation of HU105.

## Participants

The study was performed using 58 students from three separate fourth grade classrooms in an elementary school in central Washington State. A majority of the students came from Hispanic, low-income families where the primary language spoken at home was Spanish. This was the second year fourth grade teachers at the elementary school used the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum after it had been adopted at the elementary school. Teacher candidates from HU105 were mentored to become teachers while working alongside core teachers to provide instruction to the students enrolled in project classrooms. Of the 11 teacher candidates 6 were male and 5 were female. Six of the teacher candidates held at least an Associates of Arts degree and five held Bachelor's degrees in varying areas of study. The research sample consisted of 58 fourth grade students, 25 male and 33 female. The researcher performed the pre- and post-test using the DRA2 assessment. All students received instruction in reading from the core teacher and various teacher candidates during a blocked schedule. Students were grouped by DRA2 scores administered in the fall of the year the study took place and were placed into three separate groups based on reading ability. Data for the study was taken from all three groups.

### Instruments

The device used to gather data was the DRA2 assessment. The DRA2 was administered in project classrooms by the reading and writing core teachers, and with assistance from 2 of the 11 HU105 teacher candidates. The DRA2 was administered to all fourth grade students, under the same circumstances, and by the same teachers and candidates for fall, winter and spring. The DRA2 was used to identify students' reading level, based on accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. The researcher gathered DRA2 assessment scores from the fall, winter and spring testing dates.

### Design

This study used pre-test and post-test DRA2 scores. The fall DRA2 assessment was given to all 58 fourth grade students in late August, during the first two days of school, and was used to place students into ability groups according to each individual's fluency and comprehension scores. The spring DRA2 assessment was given in late May as the post-test. The DRA2 was also administered to students in mid-January, which provided core teachers with information they used to move students between ability groups. For each testing window, students were pulled out of their reading block to have the assessment administered to them one-on-one with one of the fourth grade core teachers or

with one of the two teacher candidates who were trained to administer the assessment.

### Procedure

At the beginning of the school year, students were administered the DRA2 which served as the pre-test for this study and was also used to determine each students' instructional level. The DRA2 gave fourth grade teachers a method for assessing and documenting students' development as readers over time. Students were placed in reading groups based on their appropriate DRA2 level and received intensive reading instruction in guided reading groups. The DRA2, along with various other assessments, was administered throughout the school year to document student progress. Once students had successfully progressed through each lesson at their instructional level they progressed to the next level. The DRA2 was administered again in mid-January and then based on their scores at that time students were moved up or down to a more appropriate ability group. A final DRA2 assessment was administered in late May as a post-test to determine each students' overall academic achievement in reading.

Throughout the 2012-2013 school year fourth grade students participating in project classrooms received 90 minutes of reading instruction each day by various HU105 project TLTs using the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum. The research-based reading curriculum included lessons in



comprehension, word recognition, spelling, writing, and grammar. The Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum was designed for the teacher to provide students the content whole group before breaking into guided reading groups. Guided reading groups were taught using a parallel co-teaching model. During this time, students received instruction from the core teacher or from one of the HU105 teacher candidates. The same concepts taught to them during shared reading were used, but students used text they could access that was at their appropriate reading level as measured by the DRA2. Shared reading groups were taught using a variety of the six co-teaching strategies developed by Friend and Cook (1995), which were one teach one assist, one teach one observe, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching.

Fourth grade at the elementary school was taught using a blocked schedule where each of the three teachers were experts in their field for math, reading and writing. In addition to the teacher, students also received reading instruction from HU105 teacher candidates under the mentorship of the core teacher. Candidates needed experience in all subject areas to fulfill the requirements for a K-8 teaching certificate at the university. All candidates assigned to fourth grade rotated through each block and spent a third of the school year with each core teacher learning the methodology in the three core subjects of reading, writing and math. Consequently, reading instruction in shared reading and in guided

reading was co-taught using a variety of co-teaching strategies and provided to students from various teacher candidates who were at varying levels of teaching competency, based on the Professional Competencies Assessment Instrument (PCAI) and who were at various stages of completion in the HU105 project.

At times throughout the school year, students were administered formative assessments that were used to inform instruction and student placement in ability groups within their assigned block. For the guided reading portion of the reading block, a modified parallel teaching model was used to teach each group the same concepts but using texts at each students' appropriate reading level.

Each teacher candidate was responsible to independently teach his or her own guided reading group during his or her stint in this reading block under the guidance of the core teacher. Each teacher candidate was responsible to plan and prepare his or her own lessons using the curriculum's guided reading texts, but was required to review his or her own lesson with the core teacher before implementing it with students. During shared reading, a variety of co-teaching strategies were implemented. After each lesson, candidates debriefed with the core teacher to improve learning and enhance their teaching ability for their next lesson.

### Treatment of the Data

The data analyzed was comprised of pre-test DRA2 scores and post-test

DRA2 scores. The testing was done on the first two days of school in late August and in late May after state testing had concluded. A mid-year assessment was given in mid-January, after the first semester had concluded. The primary purpose of the mid-year assessment was to inform core teachers of any changes that needed to be made in the organization of students in ability groups. After each DRA2 assessment was administered, the scores for each testing window were entered into an excel spreadsheet. The researcher organized the scores into 4 graphs; one for each testing window and one composite graph which showed student growth data for each student throughout the year. The pre-test scores from late August 2012 were then compared to the post-test scores collected from May 2013. The composite graph showed a comparison of pre-test and post-test scores, which allowed the researcher to review scores for the academic year. After using the data to create bar graphs, the researcher wanted to test for significance. To test for significance the researcher ran a paired t-test of the scores from August 2012 through May 2013.

### Summary

The researcher wished to determine if fourth grade students enrolled in fourth grade HU105 project classrooms would make greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2. The researcher used a quantitative research approach to test 58 fourth grade students' progress in

reading using the DRA2. Students took a pre-test in late August, a mid-year assessment in mid-January, and a post-test in late-May using the DRA2 to monitor their academic progress in reading. During the year, between the time of the pre and post-test, various co-teaching strategies were implemented to teach reading content to fourth grade students through the two components of the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum, which were shared reading and guided reading. The data was then analyzed using graphs created from using excel spreadsheets for each testing window of fall, winter and spring. A fourth graph was a composite of the fall, winter, and spring graphs which showed a side-by-side comparison for each student's academic progress in reading as measured by the DRA2. After analyzing the data using the bar graphs, the researcher wanted to test for significance. To test for significance the researcher ran a paired t-test.

## CHAPTER 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine if fourth grade students who were enrolled in project classrooms would make greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2 with the implementation of HU105 over the period of one year. Co-teaching strategies were implemented to support the reading development of 58 fourth students. Over the period of one year, fourth grade students received instruction in reading from the core teacher and various teacher candidates during a blocked schedule. Pre and post-tests were performed using the DRA2, which were used to measure students' academic growth in reading.

#### Description of the Environment

The elementary school where the data was collected had a student population of approximately 530 students with demographics of 3.2% White, 96.6% Hispanic and 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2013). There were 100% of students receiving free lunch, which indicated a high population of low socioeconomic status students. This study used a pre-test, post-test quantitative research design to determine if the 58 fourth grade students made greater than expected gains in reading as measured by

the DRA2. All students received instruction in reading from the same core teacher during a blocked schedule. Students were ability grouped by the pre-test DRA2 scores administered in late August of 2012 and were placed into three separate groups, Broncos (high), Bulldogs (medium) and Huskies (low). Data for the study was taken from all three groups. The DRA2, along with various other assessments, were used to monitor students' academic progress in reading from fall 2012 to spring 2013. Various co-teaching strategies were implemented to teach the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum during a blocked schedule, which had two components, a 30-minute shared reading component and a 60 minute guided reading component, which gave students access to text at their appropriate reading level as identified by the DRA2. Finally, a post-test was administered in late May of 2013, which used the DRA2 to determine students' academic growth in reading.

### Hypothesis

With the implementation of HU105, fourth grade students made greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2.

### Null Hypothesis

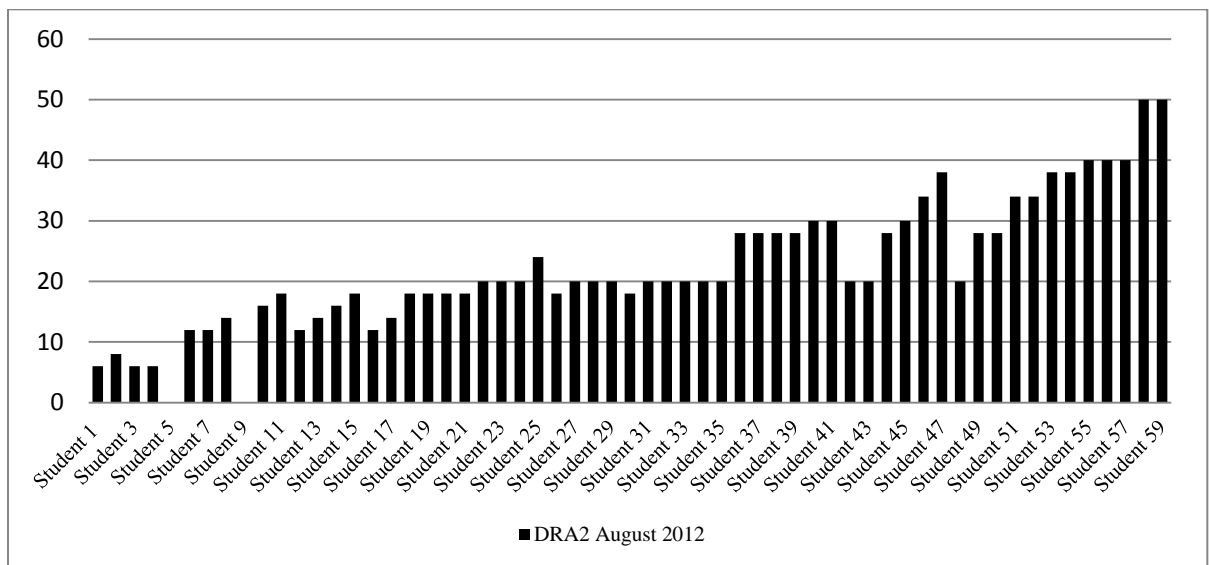
With the implementation of the HU105 project, fourth grade students did not make greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2.

## Results of the Study

The first graph from August 2012 showed the results of each student's pre-test. This information was used in reading to place students into ability groups. Three fourth grade students tested at the fourth grade level, 2 tested above grade level and 55 students tested below grade level as determined by the DRA2. Student 5 and Student 9 had not yet enrolled at the elementary school in fall of 2012.

Graph 1.

DRA2 Scores August 2012

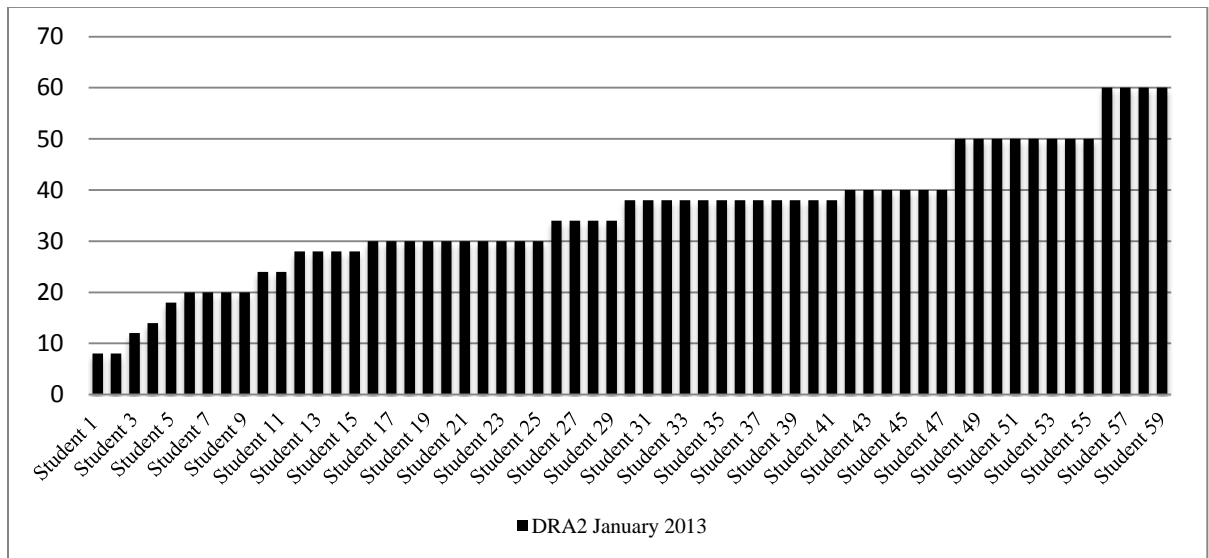


The second graph from January 2013 showed the results of each student's progress in guided reading according to DRA2. This information was used in reading to alter student placements into more appropriate ability groups midway

through the school year. Thirty percent of students tested at or above a fourth grade level with 6 students at the fourth grade level and 12 students above as determined by the DRA2. Seventy percent of students tested below grade level in January of 2013 as determined by the DRA2. Student 5 and Student 9, who had not yet enrolled at the elementary school in fall of 2012, were given a DRA2 assessment upon enrollment and were placed appropriately into an ability group. A total 15% of students made an increase of two grade levels in reading from August 2012 through January 2013.

Graph 2.

DRA2 Scores January 2013



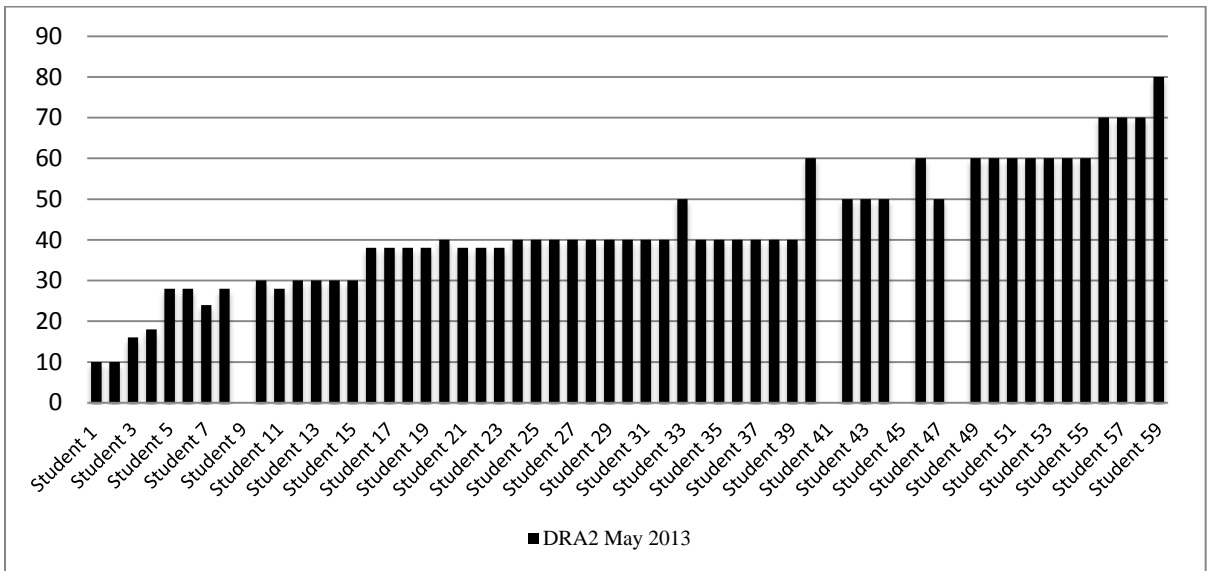
The third graph from May 2013 showed the results of each student’s progress in guided reading according to DRA2. This information was used as the post-test



to determine each student’s overall growth in reading from August 2012 through May 2013. Sixty-one percent of students tested at or above a fourth grade level with 15 students at the fourth grade level and 18 students above grade level as determined by the DRA2. Thirty-two percent of students tested below grade level in May of 2013 as determined by the DRA2. Student 9, who had not yet enrolled at the elementary school in fall of 2012, was assessed in January of 2013, and withdrew from the elementary school before the May 2013 DRA2 testing window. Students 41, 45, and 48 also withdrew from the school district before the May 2013 DRA2 testing window.

Graph 3.

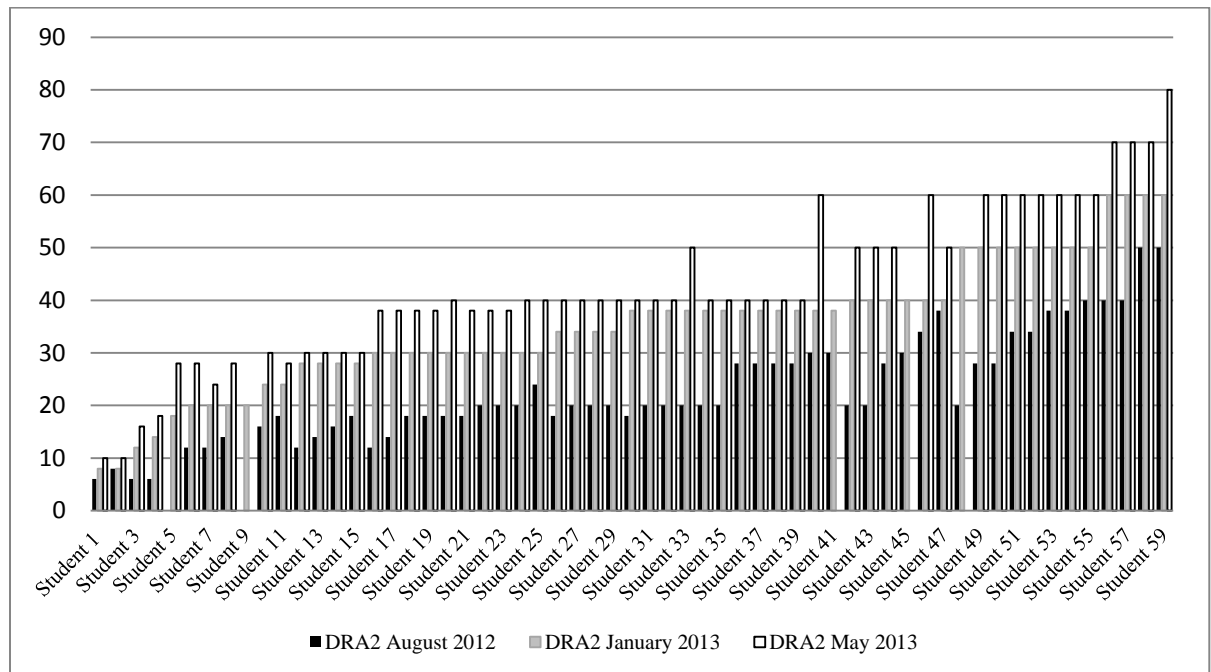
DRA2 Scores May 2013



The fourth graph showed the results of each student's progress in guided reading according to DRA2 from August 2012 through May 2013. A total of 78% percent of students made an increase of two grade levels in reading from August 2012 through May 2013.

Graph 4.

DRA2 Scores August 2012 through May 2013



After analyzing the data the researcher found that the hypothesis was supported based on the data gathered. The *t*-test (Table 1) showed that students made greater than expected growth in reading from August to May with implementation of HU105 as measured by the DRA2. The null hypothesis was rejected since there was significant growth greater than .05.

Table 1.

<i>t</i> -test of Pre-Post Test Results for 2012-2013 DRA2 Scores with HU105			
Test	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Pre	57	23.12	10.28
Post	55	42.29	15.11
df = 54		<i>t</i> = 18.34	p<.05

### Findings

After analyzing the data, the study proved to be conclusive. Students made greater than expected gains in reading with the implementation of HU105 as measured by the DRA2.

### Discussion

The researcher believed students would benefit with the implementation of HU105 to provide instruction using co-teaching strategies. By using the DRA to assess students, the researcher was able to see the academic growth students made in reading over time. The results of the study indicated that fourth grade students increased their DRA2 assessment scores with the implementation of HU105. Using the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum along with implementing various co-teaching strategies with HU105 teacher candidates yielded positive results on DRA2 scores. Furthermore, the *t*-test conducted on the

pre-test scores from August 2012 and the post-test scores from May 2013 showed significance beyond the .05 probability level.

### Summary

The data showed positive results through the increased academic reading achievement of students as measured by the DRA2 assessments throughout the school year. The program had positive effects on student achievement as measured by DRA2 data with the most conclusive evidence confirming that 78% of fourth grade students enrolled in HU105 project classrooms demonstrated significant academic growth of two years as measured by the DRA2.

Additionally, 33% of the students made 1 year of progress as measured by the DRA2.

## CHAPTER 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

HU105 was a residency-based teacher preparation program whose premise was to have teacher candidates learn to become teachers by being teachers.

HU105 placed 3 teacher candidates in each fourth grade classroom for their entire teacher preparation program and implemented co-teaching strategies in the fourth grade classrooms at the subject elementary school. The reading ability of students in the project classrooms was measured by using the DRA2. The purpose of this study was to determine whether the implementation of HU105 impacted reading achievement in fourth grade students at the subject elementary school as measured by the DRA2.

#### Summary

The researcher wanted to know if fourth grade students would make greater than expected academic gains in reading with the implementation of HU105 as measured by the DRA2. Students were using the DRA2 from August of 2012 to May of 2013. Co-teaching strategies including one teach one assist, one teach one observe, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching were used to teach the shared and guided reading components of the Good Habits, Great Readers reading curriculum in a blocked schedule to fourth graders at the elementary school.

The researcher used a pre-test/post-test design to determine growth in reading levels as measured by the DRA2. The researcher first organized the data into an excel sheet and created four bar graphs which displayed each student's progress; fall, winter, spring respectively, and a composite graph of each testing window which showed each student's academic growth from August 2012 to May 2013. After analyzing the data using the bar graphs, the researcher wanted to test for significance. To test for significance the researcher ran a paired t-test. The results from the t-test showed that students made greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, the implementation of HU105 showed greater than expected academic gains in reading as measured by the DRA2 from August 2012 to May 2013. Seventy-eight percent of fourth grade students enrolled in HU105 project classrooms demonstrated significant academic growth of 2 years as measured by the DRA2. While it was expected that fourth grade students would make progress in reading over the course of a school year, the results stated in this study showed that with the implementation of HU105 students made greater than average academic gains in reading.

### Recommendations

The project evaluated in this study included many successful components that demonstrated its effectiveness. Based on the findings of this study, several

recommendations have been suggested. While students enrolled in fourth grade classrooms experienced greater than expected gains in reading with the implementation of HU105, the researcher would recommend testing a control group using the DRA2 scores of students from a school with similar demographics who did not receive support from HU105. The results of the group in this study would then be compared to a group of students who were not part of HU105.

Another recommendation for further research using this study would be to test a group of students from a school district with different socioeconomic demographics. The last recommendation the researcher would make would be to perform the study on students at a different grade level where it would be appropriate to use the DRA2 as the means of assessment.

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## 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.

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