































Name \_\_\_\_\_

I like reading.			
Reading is easy.			
I like working in small groups.			
I am learning when I play games.			

Name \_\_\_\_\_

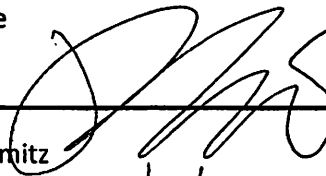
# How I think I am doing...

I enjoy independent reading time.			
I enjoy reading with a partner.			
I can choose a "just right" fit book.			
I can tell about pictures.			
I can name a strategy to tackle the trouble.			
I know a lot of words.			

Heritage University Special Project Permission to Conduct Research

Permission has been given for Olivia Rossenbach by John Schmitz, principal, to conduct an action research project as part of the Heritage University Masters Degree Program entitled Focused Vocabulary Instruction Impact. The Hypothesis of this study is Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner specialist will have significantly higher growth on the OLA than students who did not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist. Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction will report they enjoy reading. The results of the study will be shared with the Principal and other building departments as appropriate.

Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_

John Schmitz

Date

5/3/16  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### Conclusions

The purpose of the project was to determine if students who received focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist would have significantly higher growth on the OLA. The students who participated in the focused vocabulary instruction would report that they enjoyed reading.

According to the results of the t-Test, with the focused vocabulary instruction the experimental group was able to perform at near the same level as those who did not participate. While the OLA scores were not significantly higher for the students who participated in focused vocabulary instruction, their scores were equitable, although not higher, to the students who did not participate in the focused vocabulary instruction.

### Recommendations

Going forward, it is recommended that a classroom teacher collaborates with the school ELL specialist to provide focused vocabulary instruction to students who are performing below their peers on the OLA. Six weeks of instruction, twice a week is recommended.

After the six week intervention, all students should be given the OLA again to assess progress. Once the six weeks are finished, it is advisable to continue the focused vocabulary instruction once a week to the end of the school year.

## CHAPTER 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

This chapter has been organized around the following topic: (a) introduction, (b) summary, (c) conclusions, (d) recommendations.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if students who received focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner (ELL) specialist would have significantly higher growth on the Oral Language Assessment (OLA). Students who received focused vocabulary instruction would report they enjoyed reading.

At the start of the study, all 25 students were given the OLA and their scores were recorded. From the data, students were selected to participate in the focused vocabulary instruction.

There was a control group of 19 students that did not participate in focused vocabulary instruction. Six students did participate in focused vocabulary instruction delivered twice a week for six weeks by the ELL specialist. The six students made up the experimental group.

After the six weeks of instruction, all students were given the OLA. The OLA scores were recorded and analyzed. All 25 students were also given a survey. Those results were also recorded and analyzed.

The mean scores for the t-Test showed equal growth between the experimental and control groups. This was consistent with the t-Test results. The mean score of the experimental group was 1.17. The mean score of the control group was 1.11.

The survey results in response to the hypothesis “Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction will report they enjoyed reading” from the question “I like reading” showed that 17 students agreed to the statement while four students somewhat agreed. Four students had disagreed with the statement supported the hypothesis.

### Discussion

The experimental group consisted of ELL students while the control group did not. Research notes that without extra focused vocabulary instruction these students would tend to fall behind on the OLA scores. With the focused vocabulary instruction the ELL students were able to perform at near the same level as those who did not participate. Their scores were equitable, although not higher, to the students who did not participate in the focused vocabulary instruction.

To the statement “I am learning when I play vocabulary games” 19 students agreed to the statement while four students somewhat agreed. There were two students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.68.

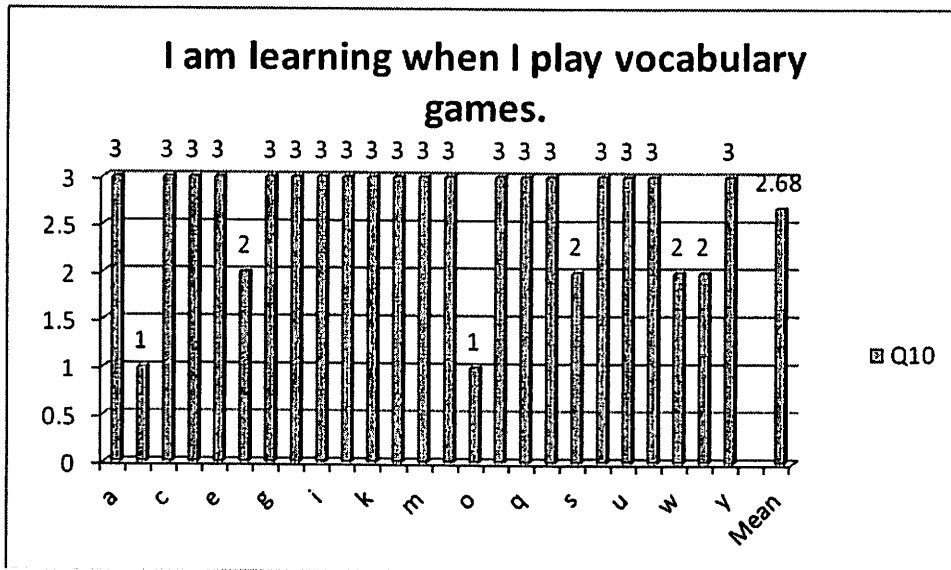


Figure 10

### Findings

The results of the Independent t-Test showed the number of scores for the experimental group was 6, the mean score was 1.17 while the number of scores for control group was 18 with a mean score of 1.11. The t-Value was .06 with a degrees of freedom of 22. To show significance at  $P=.05$  a t-Value of 2.074 was required with a degrees of freedom of 22. The results of this study showed a t-Value of .06 with a degrees of freedom of 22. Therefore, the Independent t-Test showed that the null hypothesis could not be rejected and the hypothesis could not be supported.

To the statement “I like working in small groups” 17 students agreed to the statement while six students somewhat agreed. There were two students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.60.

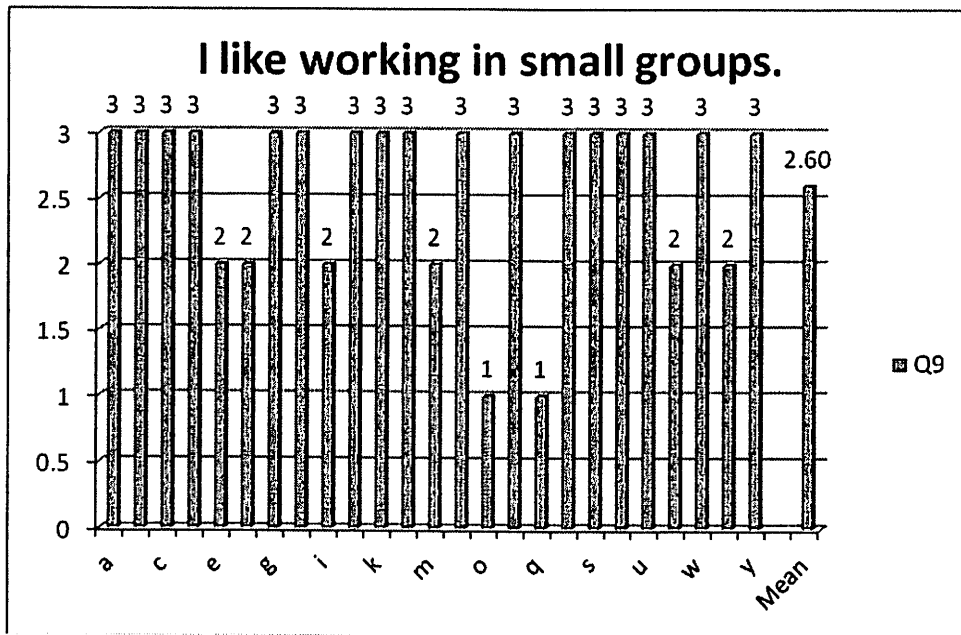


Figure 9

To the statement “reading is easy” 14 students agreed to the statement while seven students somewhat agreed. There were three students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.48.

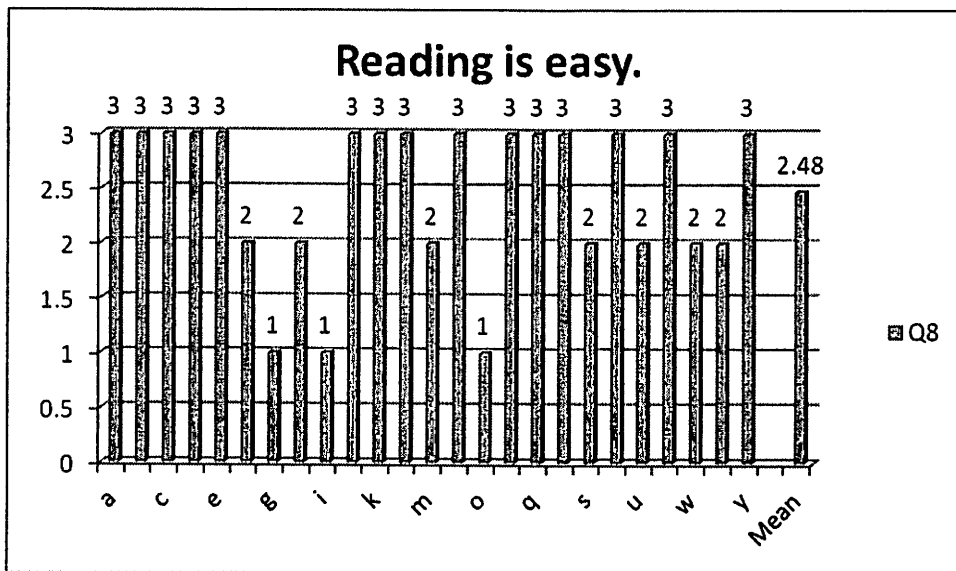


Figure 8

To the statement “I like reading” 17 students agreed to the statement while four students somewhat agreed. There were four students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.52.

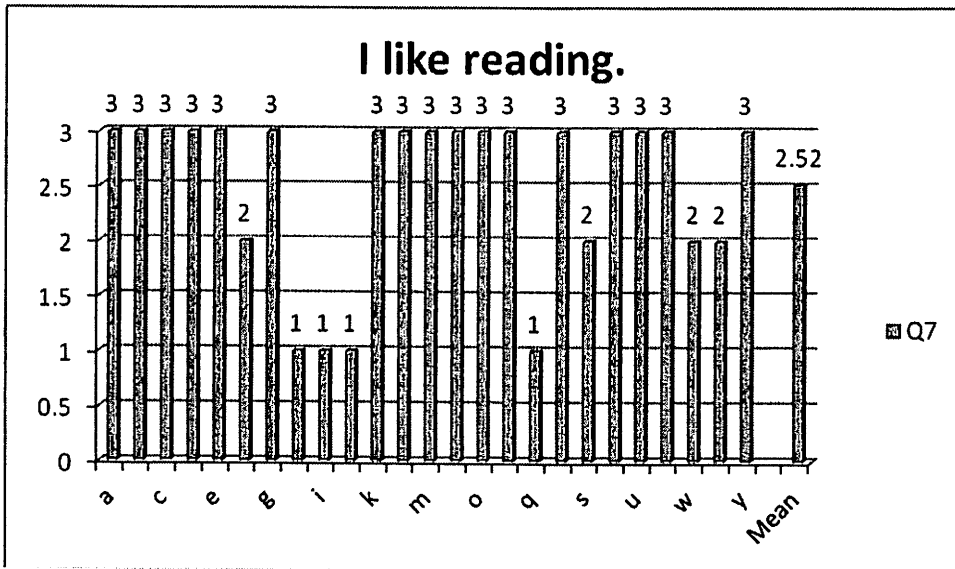


Figure 7

To the statement “I know a lot of words” 20 students agreed to the statement while two students somewhat agreed. There were three students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.68.

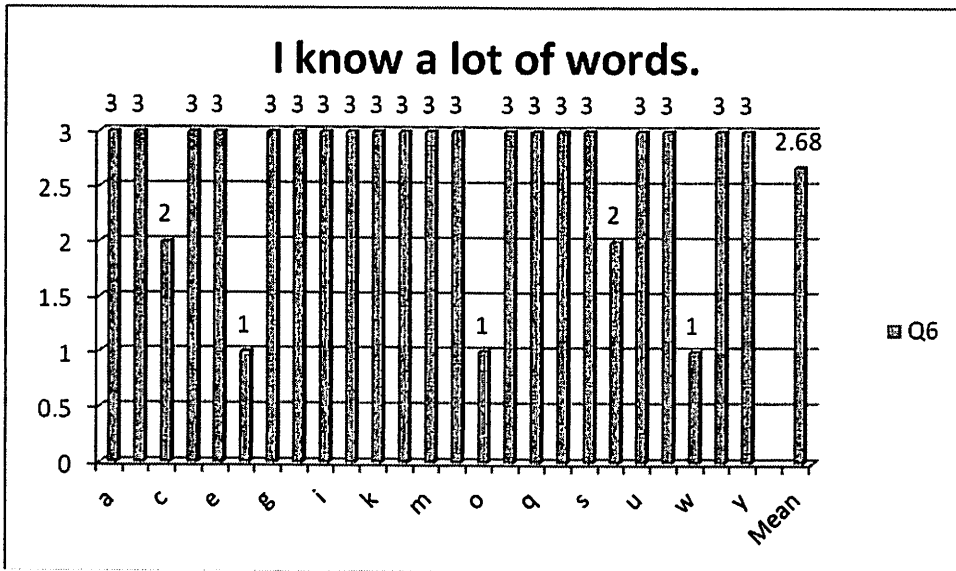


Figure 6

To the statement “I can name a strategy to tackle the trouble” 16 students agreed to the statement while seven students somewhat agreed. There were two students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.56.

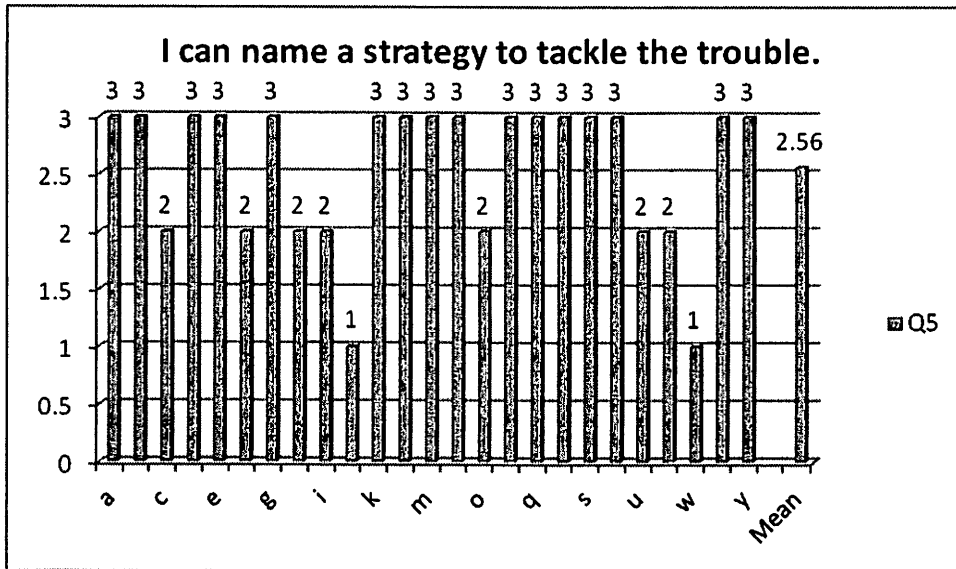


Figure 5

To the statement “I can tell about pictures” 14 students agreed to the statement while seven students somewhat agreed. There were four students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.40.

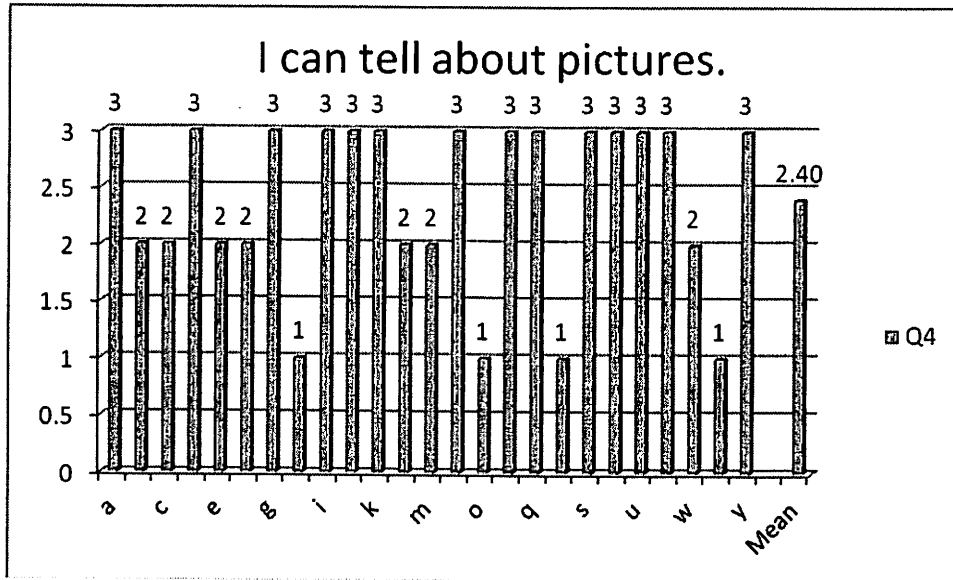


Figure 4

To the statement "I can choose a 'just right' fit book" 20 students agreed to the statement while five students. There were no students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.80.

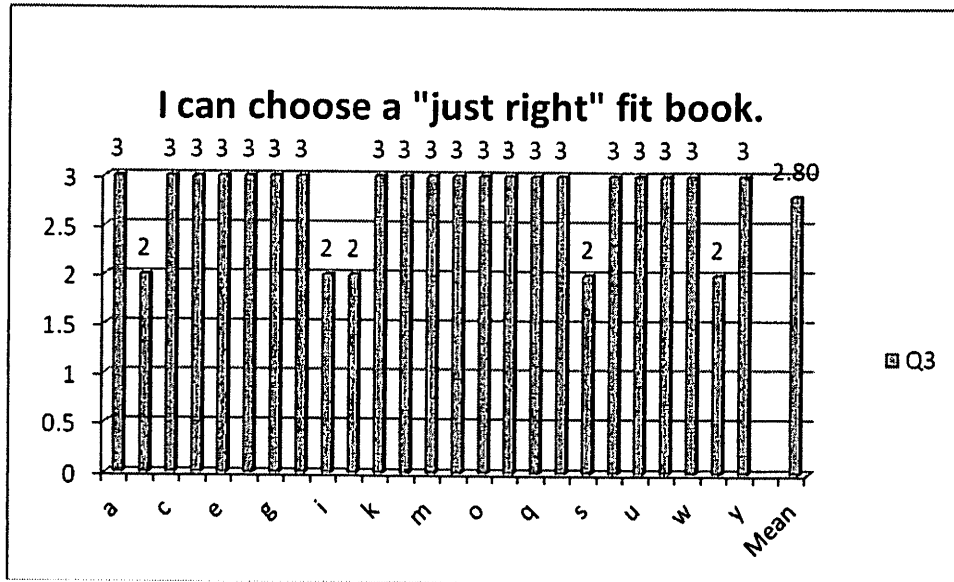


Figure 3

To the statement “I enjoy reading with a partner” 21 students agreed to the statement while four students somewhat agreed. There were no students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.84.

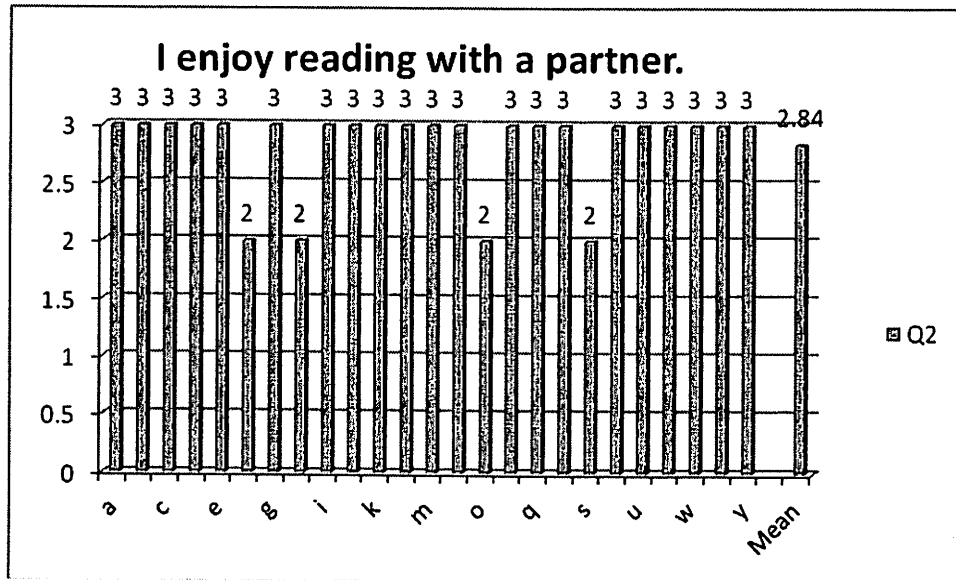


Figure 2

showed that the null hypothesis could not be rejected and the hypothesis could not be supported.

The mean scores for the t-Test showed equal growth between the experimental and control groups. This was consistent with the t-Test results. The mean score of the experimental group was 1.17. The mean score of the control group was 1.11.

A survey to answer the hypothesis “students who receive focused vocabulary instruction will report they enjoy reading” was conducted. Graphs were developed to visually display the data.

To the statement “I enjoy independent reading time” 15 students agreed to the statement while five students somewhat agreed. There were five students who disagreed with the statement. The mean score was 2.40.

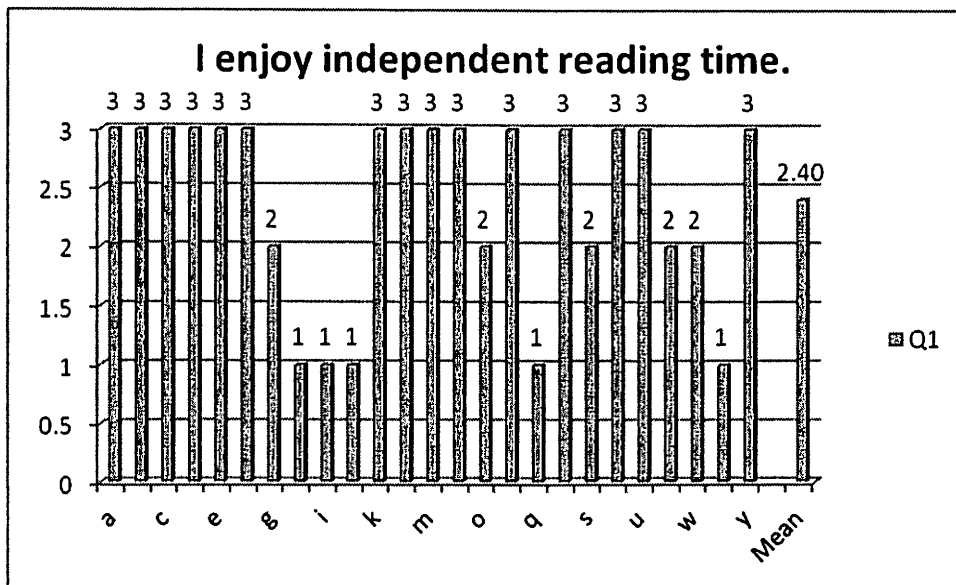


Figure 1

specialist. Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction will report they enjoyed reading.

#### Null Hypothesis

Students who do not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner Specialist will not have significantly higher growth on the oral language assessment than students who did participate in focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist. Students who do not receive vocabulary instruction did not report they enjoyed reading.

#### Results of the Study

Using the statistical calculator program Stat Pak, a statistical t-Test, was performed to determine whether there was significance at the  $p = .05$  confidence level. To determine significance of the hypothesis that students will have significantly higher growth on the OLA than students who did not receive focused vocabulary instruction, the researcher used an Independent t-Test.

The results of the Independent t-Test showed the number of scores for the experimental group was 6, the mean score was 1.17 while the number of scores for control group was 18 with a mean score of 1.11. The t-Value was .06 with a degrees of freedom of 22. To show significance at  $P = .05$  a t-Value of 2.074 was required with a degrees of freedom of 22. The results of this study showed a t-Value of .06 with a degrees of freedom of 22. Therefore, the Independent t-Test

## CHAPTER 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

Chapter 4 has been organized around the following topics: (a) description of environment, (b) hypothesis, (c) results of the study, (d) findings, and (e) summary. This section provides a paraphrased statement of the research concern which the study has addressed.

#### Description of the Environment

This study was conducted during the winter of 2015-2016 school year, in one kindergarten classroom at Kennydale Elementary, in Renton School District, located in Renton, Washington. The study consisted of 25 students, 17 girls and eight boys. The experimental group consisted of six participants in a small intervention group, two girls and four boys.

The participants met twice a week for a six week period. During this time, the ELL specialist came to the classroom to provide focused vocabulary instruction. The specialist introduced games that focused on developing students' vocabulary.

#### Hypothesis

Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner specialist will have significantly higher growth on the OLA than students who did not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL

responses were rated on a scale of 1-3. Excel was used to create graphs to present data findings from both the OLA and the survey.

The data gathered from the pre and post OLA test was collected and recorded in Microsoft Excel. StatPak was used to find the mean and t-score of the pre and post-tests. The chart for t-test was utilized to determine the level of significance of change.

### Summary

This chapter was designed to review the methodology and treatment of data related to the study to determine if students who participated in focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner specialist would have significantly higher growth on the OLA than students who did not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist. The findings of this study are found in Chapter 4.

would take place twice a week for 25 minutes per visit. The intervention was scheduled to last six weeks.

The researcher and ELL specialist collaborated to determine which vocabulary games and activities would be a part of the intervention. The ELL specialist created and prepared the games and materials.

The researcher created a 10 question survey. The survey was used to evaluate the students' beliefs and feeling towards reading. This survey was given after the six week period had been completed.

The researcher also administered the OLA after the six week period. This allowed the researcher to gather data on student growth.

The scores of the OLA were recorded and analyzed. The student belief survey was also totaled and recorded. The scores of both the OLA and the belief survey were compared between students who participated in the intervention and those who did not.

After recording, analyzing and comparing all scores a conclusion was made regarding the impact of focused vocabulary instruction. The researcher identified the significance of the project following the conclusion of the impact of focused vocabulary instruction.

#### Treatment of Data

The researcher used Microsoft Excel to keep OLA and survey results on tabulated spreadsheets. The data for the OLA scores is recorded 0-15. The survey

whether or not students who participated in the focused vocabulary instruction would report they enjoyed reading.

To begin the project, the researcher discussed the study with the principal at Kennydale Elementary. They were then granted permission to conduct the research.

The researcher gathered and reviewed literature that pertained to the study. This research was conducted at Renton School District, Heritage University, Highline Community and by using internet search engines.

At Kennydale Elementary, students from a selected kindergarten class were given the Oral Language Assessment before the study began. The assessment was given during one day's time to all 25 students. The scores were tallied and recorded in Microsoft Excel.

The students who were going to participate in the intervention were chosen. They were the ELL students in the kindergarten class. They were identified as the experimental group. The remaining students in the class were identified as the controlled group.

The researcher met with the ELL specialist. During this time, the researcher and specialist discussed the goal of the focused vocabulary instruction and activities that would need to be facilitated. They also coordinated the days and times the intervention would take place. It was agreed upon that the intervention

The OLA is a standardized test. The OLA was administered one-on-one with each student from both the experimental and control group. The test was given in one day's time.

The survey was created by the researcher in Microsoft Word. The researcher tried to set an educational environment to administer the survey to ensure validity and consistency. At the end of the six week intervention, the survey was read to the students. Stat Pak was used to determine the significance of the results.

### Design

The 25 participants of the study were preselected. The study was experimental; the researcher used a pretest and posttest.

A survey was administered after the end of study. The purpose of the survey was to show how the students' confidence and attitude had changed after participating in the focused vocabulary instruction small group compared to the confidence and attitude of the students who did not participate in the small group instruction.

### Procedure

The researcher wanted to determine whether or not students who received focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist would show significantly higher growth on the OLA than students who did not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist. The researcher also wanted to determine

The data was collected from November of 2015 to June of 2016. The collected data was entered into a statistical calculator and a t-test. The results of the t-test were then compared to distribution of the t table to ascertain if the treatment did provide a significant change in lesson delivery.

### Participants

Participants of the study were selected at Kennydale elementary based on enrollment. Experimental group participants were based on Limited English Proficiency (LEP) enrollment status. All participants were enrolled in Kindergarten. The group consisted of 17 girls and eight boys. Six of those students were identified as ELL. The experimental group consisted of six students. Four were Asian and two were Hispanic.

The control group participants consisted of 19 students, 15 girls and four boys. None of the students in the control group were identified as ELL or Special Ed. Five students were Asian, two were Black or African American and 12 were White.

### Instruments

The data gathering devices that were used were the Oral Language Assessment pre-tests and post-tests, and the participant surveys. Absences and enrollment data were collected through Skyward. Microsoft Excel was used to maintain accurate data collections and create graphs. The data collected was entered in the statistical calculator, Stat Pak.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology and Treatment of the Data

#### Introduction

This chapter has been organized around the following topics: (a) Methodology, (b) Participants, (c) Instruments, (d) Design, (e) Procedure, (f) Treatment of the Data, (g) Summary.

#### Methodology

The researcher determined that the best method for this study was the Quasi-Experimental design. Based on action research, the study was conducted in Kennydale Elementary School. Quasi-Experimental design according to Gay 2012 in *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Applications* consists of the following components. Two or more treatment groups were pretested, administered a treatment and given a post-test.

The purpose of the study was to determine if students who received focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner (ELL) specialist would have significantly higher growth on the Oral Language Assessment (OLA). Students who received focused vocabulary instruction would report they enjoyed reading.

The researcher discussed the study with the principal. Permission to conduct the study was given to the researcher by the principal of Kennydale Elementary school.

Collaboration between teacher and the ELL specialist was key to the success or failure of effectiveness of services provided. It was determined that the focused vocabulary instruction would have the most success if delivered in the small group setting within the classroom.

The academic language chosen to target during the small group instruction time had to be thoughtful and intentional. Language development in the early years of a child's life was crucial to their success in education. It either helped close the achievement gap or widen it further if not supported properly.

The focused vocabulary instruction delivered by the ELL specialist, if successful, would have increased the oral language skills of the students and reduce the gap in achievement between ELL students and their peers.

Vocabulary Instruction, (c) Early Childhood ELL (d) Achievement Gap (e) Oral Language Assessment. The methodology and treatment of the data are reported in Chapter 3.

The No Child Left Behind Act was implemented in order to give all students a chance to succeed. Its main goal was to focus on students not performing at grade level. A student's oral language skills had a significant impact on their learning. This was one cause of the achievement gap in education.

Focused vocabulary instruction delivered by the ELL specialist was a strategy used to encourage the development of oral language skills of the ELL students. Students were identified as an ELL student if they came from a home that spoke a language other than English. Students who were identified as ELL typically underperformed compared to their peers from the middle class.

Using the appropriate assessment tool to identify the student need for focused vocabulary instruction was key to the success of the students. All students were assessed on their oral language skills using the district mandated assessment, the Oral Language Assessment.

The goal of providing vocabulary instruction through games was to boost student's performance on the OLA. The other purpose of this type of small group instruction was to find whether or not it positively impacted the students' feelings towards reading.

an observer and helping teachers know where their kids were (2014). Assessment within education was necessary in the early childhood setting.

Assessments ranged from informal to formal observations, teacher created assessments and district mandated assessments. In order for instruction to be effective, the need had to be identified. The appropriate tool had to be used to assess the need. In this case, the need was to identify a child's oral language skills.

As Butler and Stevens put it, "Children listen and speak before they read and write. Their ability to communicate orally in effective and appropriate ways with family members, peers, and teachers often impacts their self-image"(1997). Finding an appropriate way to assess students' oral language skills was imperative to figuring out how to best serve the students through focused vocabulary instruction.

The Oral Language Assessment (OLA) used was a district mandated assessment. It was typically used to identify students that were going to be served through the oral language program in their schools. The OLA scores were typically reported to the district.

### Summary

The focus of this chapter was to address the available evidence to the topics of (a) NCLB Laws and Requirements & ELL Laws and Requirements, (b) Focused

The attainments they referred to as indicators were high school diplomas, employment or even college degrees.

The achievement gap was made more obvious when the NCLB act was put into place. The NCLB act allowed states to record and track the progress of all students but it highlighted the deficiencies that impacted the success of the ELL students. Since then, states had been working to close the achievement gap.

States had been addressing the issue of the achievement gap. Some assessed more frequently to monitor the progress of their students and to provide crucial intervention.

According to Zehr, there was an increase in proficiency scores in reading and math at the elementary, middle and high school levels. It was more apparent at the elementary school and middle school levels compared to the high school level. (2010). The gap became more difficult to close as the students reached higher grades.

As stated earlier, ELL students entered kindergarten at varying degrees of language acquisition. This widened the gap in academic success if not properly supported. This was one reason Title I money was used to fund the ELL specialist position. Educators had been working to close the achievement gap.

#### Oral Language Assessment

When assessment was discussed it often carried a negative connotation. However, Ms. Doggett noted that assessment was just measuring the progress by

A child from a minority language home entered kindergarten at varying levels of acquisition. Some children “develop as monolingual speakers of their parents’ heritage language until they begin preschool or kindergarten” (Hoff, 2012). Hoff also noted, other students from language minority homes developed as bilinguals but continued to show lower level language skills compared to English-speaking children.

Regardless of their level of acquisition upon entering kindergarten, ELL students needed support in developing their language skills. It was the teacher and ELL specialist task to provide such support.

### Achievement Gap

According to the National Education Association (NEA), the achievement gap is “defined as the differences between the test scores of minority and/or low-income students and the test scores of their White and Asian peers. But achievement gaps in test scores affect many different groups” (2015). The different groups included, but was not limited, to racial and ethnic minorities and English language learners.

NEA listed performance on tests, access to key opportunities and attainments as indicators of achievement gaps (2015). Tests as indicators were noted as statewide tests and SATs along with other similar assessments. NEA referred to access to advanced mathematics, higher education, etcetera, as key opportunities.

Students from lower socioeconomic status (SES) and students that came from homes that first language was not English underperformed compared to the students from the middle class (Hoff, 2012). Students from lower SES and language minority children entered school with different language skills than other students their age. Hoff believed that the differences in language skills were seen as a reason for the achievement gap.

Research had shown that SES played a role in a child's language development skills. Hoff explained, "a substantial body of evidence has argued that differences in language experience are the primary cause of SES-related differences in children's oral language skills. Compared with mothers with more education, mothers with less education talk less to their children, and the nature of speech they address to children is less supportive of language development than is the speech of more educated mothers" (Hoff, 2012). Hoff continued by stating that a study found that a mother's speech mediated an SES-related difference in 2-year-olds' vocabulary (2012).

It was also noted that student vocabulary acquisition was impacted by teacher input. "Children whose teachers provide more language-advancing input progress more in their language over the course of a school year than do children with teachers whose language use is less supportive (Hoff, 2012). In other words, a student was more successful in developing their oral language skills when the teacher provided more opportunities to use language within the classroom.

Focused vocabulary instruction was most useful when academic language that was targeted to be taught was applicable across content areas. (Feldman & Kinsella, 2005). Choosing what academic language to teach presented a challenge. Teachers had to be intentional about what words to focus on during vocabulary instruction. Collaboration between the classroom teacher and ELL specialist was key to the success of the students receiving focused vocabulary instruction.

According to Sedita, focused vocabulary instruction promoted an interest and awareness of words, also known as “word consciousness” (2005). This encouraged students to engage in learning new words. For example, when delivering the focused vocabulary instruction, a concept was chosen such as antonyms and then the students were asked to participate by thinking of their own antonym of the example given. This allowed the student to have a better understanding of words and they were able to apply it to their reading skills.

### Early Childhood ELL

Students were identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) if they came from a home that spoke another language other than English at home. These students were then serviced based on their English Language Proficiency level (ELP). There was a need to provide English language learner students with consistent and intensive vocabulary instruction (Manyak, 2009).

### Focused vocabulary instruction

When addressing the concept of vocabulary, Stahl and Nagy believed it to be important since words are what students use in order to express their ideas, make connections and learn new concepts. “Vocabulary knowledge is cumulative” (Stahl & Nagy, 2006). Vocabulary was one of five key components of reading. Sedita believed students’ word knowledge was linked strongly to academic success because students that had large vocabularies would understand new concepts faster than those who did not (2005).

In order to provide students with the ability to have in-depth word knowledge, focused vocabulary was necessary to the classroom instruction. (Feldman & Kinsella, 2005). Sedita emphasized the need for vocabulary instruction by all grade level teachers. She commented on the number of words students must learn on average. Sedita quoted Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2002 stating, “students should add 2,000 to 3,000 new words per year to their reading vocabularies.”

Focused vocabulary instruction was implemented into classrooms to provide students with strategic support. Vocabulary played an important part in students’ lives and future. There was a difference in vocabulary knowledge between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. (I. Beck, M. McKeown, 2007).

One component was accountability. Schools were rewarded for improving student achievement and held accountable for failure to do so. According to President Bush, this was one way to close the achievement gap (2001).

Another component implemented due to the NCLB act was annual academic assessments. Each state was able to select the assessment they would use to implement. These assessments were used to inform parents of their child's progress. The assessments were also used to assess how the school was doing to educate all students, including the disadvantaged students. According to Bush, schools that failed to show progress to educate disadvantaged students would first receive help. If they continued to fail to show progress they would receive corrective action (2001).

After failing to show progress 3 years in a row, Title I funds were available to students to use to move to a higher performing school. Title I funds were used to provide extra services and interventions to ELL students. The English Language Learner Specialist was a position funded through title funds.

The ELL specialist was a resource to be used to improve the academic achievement of the ELL students. The ELL specialist role in the classrooms looked different from building to building, and even classroom to classroom.

Often, the ELL specialist would pull students out to provide services. Districts preferred the push-in model, where an ELL specialist spent time in the classroom providing support.

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Selected Literature

#### Introduction

This chapter has been organized around the following topics: (a) NCLB Laws and Requirements & ELL Laws and Requirements, (b) Focused Vocabulary Instruction, (c) Early Childhood ELL (d) Achievement Gap, (e) Oral Language Development and (f) summary.

#### NCLB laws and requirements & ELL laws and requirements

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act was a law that updated the previous Elementary and Secondary Education Act. According to Klein, NCLB was implemented to increase the role of the federal role in holding schools accountable for student growth (2015).

The Bush administration's priorities for NCLB included increased accountability for student performance, federal dollars spent on effective research programs, expanding flexibility and reducing bureaucracy and empowerment of parents. The overall goal was to improve education for all students.

The NCLB act had key components that were implemented to close the achievement gap.

supports classroom teacher with their ELL students based upon the individual needs.

Focused Vocabulary Instruction. Students are taught or given support with vocabulary, one of the five components of literacy development.

Small Group Instruction. A teacher meets with 2-4 students to provide support based on student need.

#### Acronym

ELL. English Language Learner.

ELP. English Language Proficiency.

KDE. Kenndale Elementary

LEP. Limited English Proficiency

NCLB. No Child Left Behind.

NEA. National Education Association.

OLA. Oral Language Assessment.

OSPI. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

RSD. Renton School District.

SES. Socioeconomic status.

8. Games were created and prepared.
9. The focused vocabulary instruction intervention was held for six weeks on Monday and Wednesdays.
10. A 10 question survey was written by the teacher (see appendix B)
11. After the six weeks, all students were given the OLA to evaluate growth in oral language.
12. The OLA scores were analyzed and recorded.
13. All students were given a survey to evaluate how they felt about the program (see appendix B).
14. Surveys were totaled.
15. Scores were compared between students who participated in the intervention group and those who did not. (see figures 1-10)
16. A conclusion was made regarding the impact of focused vocabulary instruction.

### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following words are defined:

Differentiated Instruction. A teacher modifies a lesson or task to fit the student's learning needs.

English Language Learner Specialist. A certified teacher who specializes in providing support needed for English Language Learners. This person often

whether focused vocabulary instruction delivered by the English Language Learner Specialist would improve ELL students' OLA scores and impact their interest in reading. The results of this study were shared with staff members at Kennydale Elementary School in order to show student growth in the area of oral language skills. After participating in a six week small group focused on vocabulary instruction students reported they enjoyed reading more than student who did not participate in focused vocabulary instruction.

#### Procedure

1. Permission to conduct research at Kennydale Elementary was granted by Principal John Schmitz (see appendix A)
2. A review of selected literature was conducted at Renton School District, Heritage University, Highline Community College, and internet search engines.
3. All students were given the Oral Language Assessment (OLA) before the study began.
4. Teacher met with ELL specialist to discuss focused vocabulary instruction groups.
5. English Language Learner (ELL) students were placed in an intervention group.
6. Intervention days and times were coordinated with ELL specialist.
7. ELL specialist and teacher collaborated on vocabulary games.

### Assumptions

For this study it was assumed that the students and ELL specialist participated in the focused instruction twice a week and teachers administering the OLA followed protocol. Another assumption was that the students actively participated in the group time and students attended school on a regular basis. Students also were honest when answering the survey questions.

### Hypothesis

Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner specialist will have significantly higher growth on the OLA than students who did not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist. Students who receive focused vocabulary instruction will report they enjoy reading.

### Null Hypothesis

Students who do not receive focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner Specialist will not have significantly higher growth on the oral language assessment than students who did participate in focused vocabulary instruction from the ELL specialist. Students who do not receive focused vocabulary instruction did not report they enjoyed reading.

### Significance of the Project

The purpose of this project was to provide a factual base of information regarding focused vocabulary instruction. Data was collected to determine

Language Learners (ELL). Focused vocabulary instruction for the ELL students was needed to improve the students' language development and reading.

### Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this study was to determine if students who received focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner (ELL) specialist would have significantly higher growth on the Oral Language Learners (OLA). Students who received focused vocabulary instruction would report they enjoyed reading.

### Delimitations

This project was delimited to one kindergarten intervention group at Kennydale Elementary, in Renton School District, located in Renton, Washington. The project was conducted during the winter of the 2015-2016 school year, with 25 students. There were 17 girls in the study group and eight boys. Kennydale Elementary had an enrollment of 620 students in the Spring count of 2015. The ethnicity of Kennydale Elementary was White: 39.2%, Hispanic: 18.4%, American Indians/Alaskan Native: 0.3%, African American: 5.6%, Asian: 29.0% and Multi-racial: 6.9%. Free and reduced lunch was 33.7%. Special Education: 8.8%. Bilingual ELL 21.5%. There were 36 classroom teachers, of which 66.7% had their master's degree; however 100% of the teacher were highly qualified. (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction 2015)

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

With the No Child Left Behind Act, all students were expected to be given the opportunity to succeed in education. In order to do so, funds were designated to provide extra support to students that were underperforming compared to their peers.

Students that came from homes that spoke a language other than English entered school with a different language skill set. This created a gap in achievement.

Language development was crucial to the success of students in the early years. In order to best serve the students the teacher needed to find a way to increase the students' language skills.

Focused vocabulary instruction was a method chosen to help students develop their language skills. The English Language Learner specialist was a resource in the school. They facilitated the small group activities to potentially increase the scores of the identified students Oral Language Assessment scores.

#### Statement of the Problem

A Kennydale Elementary kindergarten teacher looked at her student data and decided there was a need for focused vocabulary instruction for her English

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PERMISSION TO STORE

I, Olivia Rossenbach, hereby irrevocably consent and authorize Heritage University Library to file the attached Special Project entitled, Focused Vocabulary Instruction, 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.

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Olivia Rossenbach, Author  
July 15, 2016, Date

## ABSTRACT

### Focused Vocabulary Instruction

Researcher: Olivia Rossenbach, B.A. in Early Childhood EDU, ASU

M.Ed. in Teacher Leadership, Heritage University

Chair Advisory Committee: Robert P. Kraig, PhD.

The purpose of this study was to determine if students who received focused vocabulary instruction from the English Language Learner (ELL) specialist would have significantly higher growth on the Oral Language Assessment (OLA).

A classroom of 25 students was given the OLA to determine the participants of the focused vocabulary instruction. The intervention was delivered for six weeks. After the six weeks, the students were given the OLA a final time.

The scores of the students who participated were compared to those who did not and were analyzed. Students who participated performed at near the same level as those who did not. Without the intervention, research notes, the students would have fallen behind on the OLA scores.

FACULTY APPROVAL

Focused Vocabulary Instruction

A Master's Special Project

by

Olivia Rossenbach

Approved for the Faculty

Robert P. Kraig, Faculty Advisor

Dr. Robert P. Kraig

7/14/2016, Date

**Focused Vocabulary Instruction**

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**A Special Project**

**Presented to**

**Dr. Robert P. Kraig**

**Heritage University**

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**In Partial Fulfillment**

**of the Requirements for the Degree of**

**Masters in Teacher Leadership**

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**Olivia A. Rossenbach**

**July 15<sup>th</sup> 2016**