COMPARING AND CONTRASTING WHOLE LANGUAGE AND PHONICS
READING METHODOLOGIES WITH BILINGUAL EXIT RATES

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to compare exit data from English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to whole language or phonics based reading methodologies employed by second and third grade teachers of ESL students.

The literature review will examine the history of bilingual education, the exiting criteria for ESL students in the state of Arizona, teacher training, and the main findings and disputes of preeminent researchers in the areas of whole language and phonics based reading methodologies.

In 1968 bilingual education began as a response to Limited English Proficient students entering United States public schools. The purpose of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was to teach English to Limited English Proficient students. Students are assessed for English language proficiency and placed accordingly into bilingual programs. Once the student has attained English proficiency and met exit oral, written and reading criteria of the state and district the student is then mainstreamed into a regular English speaking classroom. Reading and writing are essential for school success. Teacher training influences what method of reading instruction an ESL student receives. Whole language advocates believe the teacher is a facilitator in the learning process and the direct teaching of phonics skills are never taught. Phonics advocates believe children need the critical ability to break the alphabetic code.

In order to determine why the majority of schools in the state of Arizona have an ESL exit rate below 5% teachers reading methodologies were surveyed in two Schools A and B. This data was compared to data in School C which had
an exit rate of 89%. Eighteen teachers were provided a closed or forced choice questionnaire designed to assess reading methodologies. The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions in a variety of formats. Four questions were randomly arranged checklists, two questions used the Likert Scale, two questions were multiple choice, and three questions pertained to time spent on specific areas of instruction.

The data was analyzed and the overall findings were inconclusive pertaining to classroom practices involving phonics or whole language instruction. Other factors appear to work together to increase the percentage of ESL students who exit ESL programs. These factors included the educator who state their role is that of teacher rather than facilitator; the emphasis of the teacher's professional development was phonics based, on a daily basis students read in small groups, and the teacher also heard each student read aloud more than three minutes per day.
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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the ESL curriculum, English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, and the placement of English only classrooms in the state of Arizona. According to the Arizona Department of Education, over 5% of the 1998-1999 school year's 112,522 students in Arizona's 1,125 school districts are classified as limited English proficient. Of those students, only 5.6% of the students are enrolled in ESL programs, which is below the state and national average. This is because many students do not meet the exit criteria of the ESL programs, which involves the student demonstrating the ability to read and write in English. These criteria are needed in order to determine why so few students are enrolled in ESL programs. This study will examine the current ESL curriculum, instructional strategies, and strategies that addresses all aspects of learning. The purpose of this study is to identify the prevention of students from meeting exit criteria of the ESL programs and to determine why so few students are enrolled in ESL programs.

For the purpose of this study, the predicate will be examining the English Proficient (EP) and English Language Learner (ELL) programs. Limited English

Performance as defined by the Arizona legislature as "having a primary language other than English and who is not proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehending, speaking, reading, or writing the English language..." (A.R.S. §15-716.01. Initial identification and placement of ESL students occurred with a survey of the student's home language. Parents
CHAPTER 1
THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The low percentage of students exiting bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs into mainstream English only classrooms and the link to teacher's reading methodology is problematic the majority of Arizona school districts. In the 1997-1998 school year, only 4% of Arizona's 112,522 students enrolled in bilingual, ESL programs met the exit criteria of the state and their district. From that 4%, only 75.3% of the students exited within four years (Keegan, January, 1999, p.5). In the 1998-1999 school year, only 5.5% of 132,806 students enrolled in bilingual, ESL programs met the exit criteria of the state and their district. These figures led one to question why so few students were exiting bilingual, ESL programs. There is a link between the current emphasis on whole-language reading instruction that "embraces all aspects of language, but rejects the explicit teaching of decoding" (Goodman, cited in Husen & Postlewaithe, 1994, p. 4945) and the failure of students to meet exit criteria set for bilingual, ESL programs.

For the purposes of this study the researcher will be examining Limited English Proficient (LEP) students enrolled in ESL programs. Limited English Proficient as defined by the Arizona State legislature as "having a low level of skill in comprehending, speaking, reading, or writing the English language because of being from an environment in which another language is spoken" (www. azleg.state.az.us/ars/15/751.htm). Initial identification and assessment of LEP students begins with a survey of the student's home language. Parents
complete a survey to indicate whether there is a Primary Home Language Other Than English (PHLOTE) spoken in the home. If there is a PHLOTE other than English spoken in the home an oral language proficiency test is administered. The assessment process ends at this point for kindergarten and first grade students. Second through twelfth grade students are administered reading and writing assessments in addition to an oral language proficiency test. (Keegan, 2000, p. 3) From this process students are declared Limited English Proficient (LEP) and placed into a variety of programs. These programs may be Transitional/Bilingual, Secondary Bilingual, Bilingual/Bi-cultural, and Individual Education Program (IEP), or English as a Second Language (ESL). (Keegan, 2000, p. 6) English as a Second Language programs, as defined by Title 15-754 of the Arizona Revised Statutes (ARS) consists of:

"(a) Daily instruction in English language development including:

(i) Listening and speaking skill
(ii) Reading and writing skills
(iii) Cognitive and academic skill development in English.

(b) A plan to develop an understanding of the history and culture of the United States, as well as an understanding of customs and values of the cultures associated with the primary home language of the pupils in the program" (www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/15-754.htm).

Development of the Problem

Historically, bilingual education began in the late 1960s as a program for Mexican-American children who could not speak English upon entering first grade. According to Conley & Baumamn (1993); Spring (1994) the largest proportion of new immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s were Hispanic. The Hispanic population increased seven times as rapidly as other ethnic groups between the decade of 1980 and 1990. According to 1998 figures, more than
half Mexican (67%) other Hispanic (62%) and other Asian (51%) children live in households linguistically isolated, where no one who is 14 years old or older can speak English very well. (cited in Rong, 1998)

The first federal bilingual law explained its intent which was "to make children literate in English" (Chavez, 1995; p.9). In the state of Arizona's 1997-1998 school year fewer than 12% of the number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students who were reassessed were declared proficient in English (Keegan, 1999, p.1). Arizona's 1998-1999 school year the number of students who were reassessed that were declared English proficient rose to only 15% and less than 6% of the total number of LEP students were declared proficient in English (Keegan, 2000, p. 1). The Arizona Department of Education states it feels "very strongly" that bilingual program reform is necessary (Keegan, 1999, p.1).

Reform in reading instruction is necessary for ESL students to become competent enough to exit bilingual programs. "American children have been introduced to fewer and fewer words per year because of the prevailing method of whole-word memorization..." (Ponnuru, 1999, p. 36 ). The problem with whole-word memorization is exacerbated because textbooks contain 'quality children's literature' rather than textbooks with everyday words. (Ponnuru, 1999):

"Assumptions that some whole language advocates make about language and writing systems appear to fundamentally wrong. Any instructional system that ignores the alphabetic principle and the critical role it plays in learning how to read has the potential for creating failures" (Husen & Postlewaithe, 1994, p. 4944).

Many English as a Second Language (ESL) students begin their formal education without any proficiency in the English language. "In the early 1940s Dr. Robert H. Seashore of Northwestern University made one of the most
sensational discoveries in the history of psychology. He found that the average six-year-old enters school with a speaking and listening vocabulary of over 24,000 words" (Flesch, 1981, p.100). Therefore the monolingual Spanish speaking student entering the American school system would be 24,000 English words behind their English speaking counterpart.

**Need for the Study**

The researcher's motivation to pursue the study was initiated by working to exit students from the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. At the beginning of the 1997-98 school year the researcher administered the Silvaroli Reading Assessment and the second grade class consisted of seventeen non-readers; nine pre-primer and primer readers, and one student reading at a sixth-grade level. Seventeen non-readers and nine middle kindergarten level and ending kindergarten level readers added up to twenty six students out of twenty seven who were beginning second grade below a first grade reading level. The students primarily had been taught using a whole language approach to reading with little or no emphasis on phonics.

To exit a bilingual program the Arizona Department of Education requires that students must be tested and have scored above the 38th percentile on a standardized English test. Christine Rossell of Boston University calls this a Catch-22. She states, testing guarantees enrollment in these programs because "by definition, 40% of all students who take any standardized test will score at or below the 40th percentile" (cited in Chavez, 1995, p.11).

Some schools delay teaching English to younger students until they become proficient in Spanish which increases the time spent in bilingual programs. The prevailing theory in bilingual education according to J. Cummins (1994) is that English language learners should be taught for no fewer than five
years in their native language and preferably for seven years in order the student may benefit from the mainstream English only classroom (Gersten, 1999). In the 1997-1998 school year only 3,395 students exiting Arizona's bilingual programs did so within four years.

In January 1999 Lisa Graham Keegan, Arizona School Superintendent stated "we cannot sit idly by and accept results like these. We must empower our parents, provide equal access to an extraordinary education for our students and reform these programs now" (Keegan, 1999, p. 18) In the January 2000 report L.G. Keegan stated "if we believe in providing an extraordinary education for all students and that raising student achievement levels is important, we must put some action behind these words" (Keegan, 2000, p. 1) The fact that only 5.5% of 1998-1999 Bilingual and ESL students were deemed proficient enough in reading, writing, and oral skills to exit bilingual programs points to a need for reform.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to compare exit data from English as a Second Language programs to the whole language or phonics based reading methodologies of second and third grade teachers with English as a Second Language students.

Research Question or Hypothesis

What is the relationship between whole language and phonics based reading methodologies and bilingual programs exit rates?
Significance of the Study

Reading success is important to students, parents, teachers, principals, districts, communities, and the society as a whole, because it is one of the strongest measures of future success. According to 1998-1990 PHLOTE figures 22% of students entering the Arizona school system speak Spanish in the home. (Keegan, 2000) The entire country may be affected if 22% of a state's population succeeds or fails in the educational system.

In order to increase opportunities for the ESL student's reading success a teacher may consider changing instruction to emphasize phonics. Many districts reward successful teachers with financial incentives. Students reading and testing well below the national average could impact teacher salary and the reputation of the district as well. On the other hand, districts and individual schools lose funding when a student exits a successful English as a Second Language program.

Reading scores for Arizona's ESL second grade students on the 1999 Stanford 9 Achievement Test was in 27th percentile, third grade ESL students scored in the 20th percentile. (Keegan, 2000) Arizona's ESL students are falling well below the national average set at the 50th percentile.

Reading failure may affect the ESL student's family that could be dependent upon the success of their child with the English language and reading to help them financially. Student failure could possibly deliver the family a financial blow. With the rapid increase in the Hispanic population in the United States, society needs to be concerned if these students are being properly educated. The student will either move into the work force with a poor education and achieve a lower standard of living or with a good education and raise our country's standard of living. According to Littman (1999), the median income for a Hispanic in March 1997 without a high school diploma was $10,290 per year.
The same 18-25 year old with a high school diploma would earn $14,777 per year. Communities can either gain a successful literate graduate or a student who has failed and been failed by the educational system.

Definitions

**basal reading program** - "a comprehensive, integrated set of books, workbooks, teacher's manuals, and other materials for developmental reading instruction, chiefly in the elementary and middle school grades. (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 31).

**choral reading** - "group reading aloud, usually to an audience" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 54).

**decoding** - "Translating for symbols into words or into speech sounds" (McGuinness, 1997, p. 366).

**encoding** - "Translating words or sounds in speech into symbols" (McGuinness, 1997, p.366).

**invented spelling** - "A spelling method in which the child creates own spelling system based on knowledge of letter names and /or words" (McGuinness, 1997,p.366).

**LEP** - Limited English Proficient "means having a low level of skill in comprehending, speaking, reading, or writing the English language because of being from an environment in which another language is spoken" (www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/15-751.htm, p. 1).

**phoneme** - "The smallest unit of sound in a word that people can hear" (McGuinness, 1997, p, 366).

**phonemic awareness** - "The ability to hear and remember the order of phonemes in words" (McGuinness, 1997, p.366).
phonics - "an approach to reading instruction in which the student is taught to recognize the relationships between graphic symbols (letters or letter combinations) and speech sounds they represent" (Mitzel, 1982, p. 431).

recode - "to change information from one code into another, as recode writing into oral speech" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 272).

round-robin reading - "the practice of calling on students to read orally one after the other, suggesting the image of a nest of baby birds wherein the one gets fed next is the one holding its head highest and making the most noise" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 283).

shared reading - "an early childhood instructional strategy in which the teacher involves a group of young children in the reading of a particular big book in order to help them learn aspects of beginning literacy, as print conventions and the concept of word, and develop reading strategies, as in decoding or the use of prediction" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 223).

silent reading - "reading without saying aloud what is read. In silent reading, one reads to oneself, not others" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 296).
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is a literature review of the history of bilingual education; the Arizona state and three Arizona school districts exiting criteria for bilingual programs; teacher training; and the comparison and contrast of phonics and whole language reading methodologies.

The student of Mexican heritage will be the focus of this study due to the high percentage of Spanish speaking students in the districts examined. Increases in the enrollment of Hispanic students raises questions about the type and quality of education they are receiving. (Rong & Preissle, 1998)

History of Bilingual Education

The history of bilingual education began in 1968. The first federal legislation was passed by Congress under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was the first acknowledgment by the United States of the needs of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students (Ovando, & Collier, 1985).
According to Teitelbaum & Hiller (1977), the Lau vs. Nichols decision
gave impetus to the movement for equal educational opportunity for
students who do not speak English. Lau raised the nation’s
consciousness of the need for bilingual education, encouraged additional
federal legislation, energized federal enforcement efforts, led federal
funding of nine regional general assistance Lau centers, and aided the
passage of state laws mandating bilingual education... (cited in Ovando,
1985, p. 34).

In 1975 the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) along with the Office of Education
issued the Lau Remedies which were meant to coerce districts into implementing
meaningful instruction for English language learners. These actions did not
mandate bilingual education but acted to encourage action to be taken through
federal funding. The Lau Remedies were directed toward elementary and
intermediate schools with total school enrollment at a minimum of twenty non-
English speakers.

Exit Criteria for Bilingual Programs

According to Title 15-756 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, one of the
powers and duties of the superintendent of public instruction is to set the criteria
to determine whether or not a student is considered limited English proficient
(LEP). Title 15-753 contains the exit criteria for the English as a Second
Language (ESL) students for the 1999-2000 school year. The student will be
reassessed every school year to determine the level of English proficiency using
the following criteria:

(a) "A teacher evaluation of the pupil's English language proficiency and an
assessment of the pupil's readiness to succeed in an English language course of
study.

(b) An objective assessment of the pupil's oral language proficiency, writing skills
and literacy skill in English.
(c) Parent opinion and consultation.

(d) An examination of the pupil's scores on a nationally standardized norm-referenced achievement test adopted by the state board of education pursuant to section 15-741, subsection A, paragraph 3.

The superintendent also sets the minimum requirements for oral English proficiency and standardized reading and writing exams. (www.az.leg.state.az.us/ars/15/756)

**District Exit Criteria for Bilingual Programs:** School A and School B are K-6 elementary schools located in a metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona. School A and School B had the following exit criteria in place in the 1998-1999 school year the Arizona State Achievement Proficiency (ASAP) with a minimum score of 75%, the Oral portion of the Language Assessment Survey (LAS) with a minimum score of 4, the reading and comprehension portion of the Stanford 9 with a minimum score in the 40th percentile. Parent consent and a positive teacher evaluation were also required for reclassification. School A exited 10 of their 293 ESL students in the 1998-1999 school year or 3% of the ESL population (Keegan, 2000). School B exited 12 of 286 ESL students or 4% the ESL population (Keegan, 2000).

School C is a AA accredited K-5 elementary school located approximately 40 miles from central Phoenix. The exit criteria of School C are as follows; the reading portion of the Stanford 9 with a minimum score in the 36th percentile, the oral and writing portion of the Language Assessment Survey (LAS) with a score of 5. These criteria are also in addition to parental consent and teacher approval.

School D is a rural K-6 school located approximately one hundred and twenty miles southwest of the metropolitan city in a rural area. School D had the following criteria for exiting; a score set at a minimum of the 41th percentile for the reading portion of the Stanford 9, the oral, writing, and reading portions of the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT) with a score of FES or fluent English speaker and
Star Testing. Star Testing was described as a computerized reading test that was taken after reading a text. The criteria were in addition to parental consent and teacher approval.

**Reading Methodologies**

"Reading and writing are probably the most crucial skills for school success" (Ovando & Collier, 1985, p.92). The researcher concentrated on investigating two methods of reading instruction; the first method was a phonics based approach to reading and the latter reading instruction with a whole language emphasis.

The definition of reading has changed over the years. Moustafa asserts that traditional assumptions were that reading was pronouncing written words. The definition of reading has changed to "making sense of written messages" (Moustafa, 1997, p. XIV). Professor Kenneth S. Goodman at the University of Arizona defines reading "as a psycholinguistic process, one in which thought and language interact" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. vii). The reader seeks meaning and the reader is "engaging in comprehending, constructing meaning through interaction with print" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. vii). Beck (1977) "argued that decoding instruction and comprehension are not mutually exclusive and that reading programs can teach both decoding and reading for meaning simultaneously" (cited in Mitzel, 1982, p. 1539).

" According to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Bilingual programs must meet the following criteria: any ability grouping or tracking system employed by the school system to deal with the special language skills need of national origin-minority group children must be designed to meet such language skill needs as soon as possible and must not operate as an educational dead-end or permanent track (Ovando & Collier, 1985, p. 225)."
Reading education as it pertains to the English as a Second Language student in the United States appears to be on a educational dead-end or a permanent track because of the high drop out rate. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 1994, nearly one in three Hispanics between the age of 16 and 24 leave high school without a diploma or without receiving an alternative certificate such as a GED. (www.ncbe.gwu.edu) It appears that ESL students of Mexican heritage do not meet the criteria set by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act because they are receiving inadequate reading instruction. Also the number of students who are functionally illiterate is on the rise. Functional illiteracy is often related to basic writing (coding) and reading (decoding) skills that allow people to produce and understand simple texts" (Williams & Snipper, 1990, p. 1). Numerous researchers define functional illiteracy as final academic achievement between fourth and eighth grade level. (Williams & Snipper, 1990)

The ultimate goal of any reading program is that it should be good enough to make every child competent (McGuinness, 1997). According to Dechant, the almost total reliance of teaching universities upon the whole language methodology in reading has been "one of the major deficiencies in reading education in the last twenty years" (Dechant, 1993, p. 179). By analyzing ESL teacher reading instruction and the successful exit rate of students from bilingual programs the researcher will summarize a method of reading instruction that produces a competent child.

Teacher Training. "Teachers are not trained in how to teach reading..." (McGuinness, 1997, p.15). Many first year teachers discover they have no idea how to teach reading when finally facing that first class (McGuinness, 1997, p. 210). According to Dechant (1993), college facilities and textbooks often neglect to educate teachers on what is needed to break the alphabetic code and teachers in turn fail to convey this knowledge to their students.
Many colleges and texts take the philosophy of top-down theorists and whole language advocates and dismiss the importance of rules and phoneme-grapheme correspondences.

A whole language teacher looks at their position as being one of facilitator rather than a dispenser of knowledge. They teach by model and example rather than drill and practice (Dechant, 1993). The direct teaching of phonics skills are never taught.

The traditional teacher's philosophy often differs with whole language texts and colleges espousing whole language tenets. The traditional teacher reacts "negatively to suggestions that they somehow are less intelligent, caring, hard-working, or philosophically driven than pure whole-language teachers and that whole-language teachers have the corner on truth and wisdom" (Decant, 1993, p. 332).

That fact that 30 percent to 60 percent of all school children are diagnosed with an inherent or 'brain-based' deficit that leads to reading failure is difficult to fathom (McGuinness, 1997). Students are being labeled learning impaired and placed into special education programs when it is teachers who are not properly trained to do their job in teacher education programs (McGuinness, 1997).

**Phonics:** Dechant's (1993) solution to the high number of student who are experiencing reading failure is to give each child direct phonics instruction after gaining an understanding of the alphabetic code. Adams (1990) research showed that instruction in letter-sound correspondences lead to greater skill in word recognition in the primary grades particularly for slower and students of a lower socio-economic status (cited in Dechant, 1993). Ponnuru (1999) states there is currently a push back to mandated phonics instruction. According to Ponnuru (1999) research, logic, and history suggest phonics instruction is more
effective in fostering literacy than whole language instruction. In addition, two
recent reports published by the National Academy of Sciences and the Learning
First Alliance recommend phonics instruction.

The aim of phonics; the direct, sequenced, predictable science of speech
sounds as applied to reading (Betts, 1954; Carbo, 1997), is to lead the reader "to
automatic, semantic, activation, to internalization of the alphabetic principle, to
proficiency in word identification in reading, and ultimately to better
comprehension" (Dechant, 1993, p. 342).

The following researchers have found bottom-up or phonics based
instruction was the most effective method of teaching reading. Juels (1980)
found that second and third graders taught from the bottom-up were better
readers than the top-down or context-driven readers supported by whole
fifty-one studies found that children need to go through a stage involving mastery
of word recognition and learning to recode fluently and automatically through
direct phonics instruction (cited in Dechant, 1993). Professor Jeanne Chall of the
Harvard University of Graduate School of Education (1967) in reviewing fifty
years of research concluded "that 'code-emphasis' approaches (emphasis on
sound-letter relations at the beginning) produced better achievement both in
word recognition and comprehension than 'meaning emphasis' approaches
(emphasis on meaning from the beginning)" (Mitzel, 1982, p. 1539).

Students must be made aware from the start the importance in
recognizing individual phonemes of the English language. Stanovich (1991)
stated English is definitely an irregular alphabetic orthography but it is misleading
to state that English is not sufficient to support the teaching of grapheme-
phoneme correspondences (cited in Dechant, 1993). The ability to analyze and
manipulate phonemes into words, to segment and blend isolated phonemes in
words, is the basis for unlocking an alphabetic writing system" (McGuinness, 1997, p.40). The internalization of these grapheme-phoneme correspondences assist the beginning reader in recognizing the connection between the spoken language and the printed word. Perfetti, Liberman, and Stanovich agree that the more competent decoder taught with a code-emphasis approach spends less time on decoding and can devote more time to comprehension (cited in Mitzel, 1982).

Comprehension and quality literature can coexist with phonics instruction. "Whole language did not invent good children's literature. There is no reason why good skills training cannot coexist with quality literature ... "(McGuinness, 1997, p.213). "The initial fear long-existing that an initial code-emphasis produces readers who do not read for meaning or enjoyment is unfounded" (Flesch, 1981, p. 28). According to Fountas and Hannigan (1989) educational materials are only as good as the teacher who uses them. (cited in Dechant, 1993)

**Whole-Language Advocates' Response** Whole language theorist Kenneth Goodman drew an analogy between reading and speaking. Teaching children to read written language using phonics methodologies is like teaching the spoken language by putting infants through a process where they were first taught sounds, then the blending of sounds into sound sequences, then the production of words, then phrases, and then sentences, after which they were permitted to engage in meaningful purposeful discourse. Such a program would not foster language learning; it would yield large numbers of children who were candidates for remedial talking classes. (cited in Gollasch, 1982,p.48)

Goodman attacked the back-to-the basics phonics movement for two fundamental reasons. "One is the fundamental humanistic one that schools really exist for kids and not for a technology of learning. But I'll also attack it on
the scientific basis that it simply is wrong: that's not the way people learn to read" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p.327). According to Goodman reducing the complexity of reading to sorting out letters or word parts increases the complexity of learning by substitutes "abstract language elements for meaningful language" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p.47). "Take the common emphasis on phonic skills when you isolate a letter or sound, you make it more abstract, and you also change its relative value. Then I'm saying that each letter has a value - a meaning. That's not true" (Gollasch, 1982, p. 7). Goodman and Smith proposed the main reason for reading was to get meaning and that emphasizing "decoding distracts children from the purpose of reading and produces word callers."

"Smith (1978) has argued that phonic rules have too many exceptions for efficient use by students" (Mitzel, 1982, p.1540). Smith (1973) states, there are no rules of reading that are sufficient to teach a child. "All proficient readers have acquired an implicit knowledge of how to read, but this knowledge has been developed through the practice of reading, not through anything taught at school" (Feitelson, 1988, p. 68). Goodman (1982) believes most children learn in spite of fragmented phonics programs. He would like to see signs displayed all over the walls of the exhibit areas of professional conferences "which say: 'Caution: instructional materials displayed here may be injurious to the mental health of your pupils'" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. 45-46).

**Whole-Language:** The whole word method is "word analysis without the physical separation of the word into its phonetic or structural elements" (Betts, 1954, p. 734). The top-down model of whole-language "emphasizes the importance of higher processes - such as the reader’s prior knowledge in controlling the reading process, with lower-level processing utilized only when necessary" (Mitzel, 1982 , p.1532). Another fundamental part of whole language is a large dose of humanism. "Humanism has more concern for the lives of
children than for education in a narrow sense. It believes in humanizing the teaching-learning process. It values thinking and feeling rather than acquisition of knowledge" (Dechant, 1993, p. 11). McCaslin (1989) state that whole language teachers "reject the view that teachers are merely authoritarian transmitters of knowledge to a passive learner" (cited in Dechant, 1993, p. 39). The curriculum is not district mandated in the whole language classroom; it is student negotiated. (Dechant, 1993)

According to Goodman & Goodman (1976) reading is a natural process which most students can readily acquire in a classroom environment that uses the natural reading activities surrounding the child (cited in Ovando, 1985). Roe (1990) and Templeton (1990), whole language advocates, "believe language learning takes place largely through immersion and participation in a linguistically rich, oral-language environment and through social interaction" (cited in Dechant, 1993 p. 13). Whole language advocates state that oral language occurs naturally through contact with English speakers. Advocates believe that children acquire reading through interaction with fellow students and by exposure to an environment rich with real literature (Dechant, 1993). Kenneth Goodman explained that "teachers can help kids learn skills, not by directing every step, but by saying, 'OK, let's read,' and then letting the kids figure out how to do it. Giving help where it's needed but letting the kids make mistakes" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. 7). "Keep teaching procedures for later, don't let them interfere with the child's attempt to get to the right area of meaning" (Gollasch, 1982, p. 8). Goodman feels all children should become effective in digesting materials that they need and are of interest to them. (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. 48). Goodman believes the teacher should encourage risk-taking in reading. The teacher can say "You may not know exactly what this word is, but what do you think it might be? What would make sense here? This is the way to help kids get
into the right area of meaning" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. 6). Goodman believes the key to reading is minimizing the graphic information. "Learning what not to pay attention to" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p. 7). Goodman describes reading as a "psycholinguistic guessing game" (Gollasch, 1982, p. 8) The reader uses their prior knowledge, personal experience, knowledge of the language, the context in which the word appears, and the graphic clues given to make an educated guess about the text. Goodman continues to say "accuracy, correctly naming or identifying each word or word part in a graphic sequence, is not necessary for effective reading since the reader can get the meaning with accurate word identification" (cited in Gollasch, 1982, p.48). Teaching that focuses on errors or miscues is not the goal of whole language. The goal is "teaching that focuses on overall story meaning invites children to use their knowledge of language and the world to figure out print" (Moustafa, 1997, p. 26).

Whole language advocates believe that spelling or invented spelling is a process of discovery. "The teacher believes she should never interfere, or never ask the child to correct anything that is written" (McGuinness, 1997, p. 227).

"Children who do well in whole-language programs tend to have visual, tactile, and global reading styles" (Carbo, 1997, p. 25).

**Phonics Advocates' Response:** "Whole language can feel disorganized and haphazard to analytic learners" (Carbo, 1997, p.26). The belief of whole language advocates that children learn to read naturally and spontaneously is a major fallacy (Dechant, 1993).
Hillerich (1990) wrote, one theorist claimed that babies acquire language through using it, not through practicing its separate parts and then putting them together. However, even this is not exactly true. Infants first practice babbling and cooing, move to language intonation patterns of all languages, then as a result of reinforcement, to sounds of their native language, and finally to words. (Dechant, 1993, p. 272)

Dechant states there is great evidence that a child will not learn to speak when left alone and to suggest that the child can learn to read by providing a rich environment is a mistake. Interest in a book can be a powerful motivating factor, but not motivating enough to make a difficult book easy to read. Hillerich (1991) notes, few educators will select a difficult book to read for pleasure. Children are often given books that are too difficult to read, thus causing the frustration level to rise (cited in Dechant, 1993). Stanovich (1980) notes that better readers rely more on automatic word recognition during reading and poor readers depend more heavily on context or guessing to determine words. Stanovich states prediction or educated guessing "is less efficient and requires cognitive processing resources that would otherwise be used for comprehension, accounting for the difficulties of poor readers" (Mitzel, 1982, p. 1540). Lesgold & Rayner and Pollatsek (1989) found "as children gain more experience in reading, and as their word recognition processes become more automatic, their reliance on content decreases" (cited in Dechant, 1993, p. 195). Dechant (1999) notes that it is common practice for whole language teachers to downplay the importance of errors or miscues as long as the approximate meaning is taken from the text. Dechant states that an author chooses words carefully and small change in that text can result in a total misunderstanding (Dechant, 1993).
Bellare (1986) observed that it is a totally negative approach when the teacher treats miscues as acceptable thereby condoning and allowing carelessness; and it is unrealistic and misleading when the instructor presupposes that readers can react to the message if they are not able to identify, and generally to recode, the words. The reader must read what is on the printed page not what he thinks is there. (Dechant, 1993, p. 110)

Perfetti (1985); Just & Carpenter (1987); Rayner & Pollatsek (1989); and Nicholson (1986) state that psycholinguistic guessing-game hypothesis has been proven false by research (cited in Dechant, 1993) Adams adds "that the process of guessing itself requires time and attention; the product is liable to error and incompleteness; and guessing the infrequent from the frequent will not do" (cited in Dechant, 1993, p. 178). If word recognition takes too long the consequence is, comprehension lost. The psycholinguistic guessing-game thesis has "let both teachers and pupils down the path to failure" (Dechant, 1993, p. 179). "Expecting children to learn to read by simply reading results in the nonteaching of a critical component of developing literacy; namely, the ability to break the alphabetic code" (Dechant, 1993, p. 272).

"One consequence of sight word approach to word recognition is that youngsters frequently confuse words which have the same letters in them" (Anderson & Dearborn, cited in Feitelson, 1988, p. 44). "The simple truth should be obvious to everyone but it isn't to thousands of people in the American educational Establishment" (Flesch, 1981, p. 53). "We are actually holding back the progress of our students by employing instructional methods and materials which are based upon a limited vocabulary representing only a fraction of the potential learning abilities of the students" (Flesch, 1981, p. 101).

Masonheimer (1984) supports Anderson & Dearborn with the study of 102 three to five year olds. Ninety-six percent of the children were found to be expert
in reading environmental print but when the logotype was removed they were unable to read the same word. Masonheimer also found these children would read the word the same if a beginning letter had changed such a Pepsi to Xepsi. According to Ehri this study shows experience with environmental print without decoding skills is not enough. (cited in Dechant, 1993, p. 275) Gough's (1991) study showed that children "learn to recognize initial words by selecting and extraneous cue that has nothing to do with the word itself" (Dechant, 1993, p. 263).

Children must be taught how each of these sounds can be spelled in a carefully sequenced way (McGuinness, 1997). Whole-language advocates believe that spelling, or invented spelling is a process of discovery. "There is no evidence that it's better to 'discover' the code unaided than to be taught the code directly and there is considerable evidence to the contrary" (McGuinness, 1997, p. 227). "The main thing that 'pure' invented spelling offers the child is the certainty that he will spend hours practicing errors, because there is no way the child can self-correct his mistakes" (McGuinness, 1997, p. 277). The mission is to develop a child who can read, spell, and write, "then your first goal is to create efficient and automatic subroutines..., such as encoding and decoding." The student cannot "get to meaning unless everything else is efficient and automatic. This is why whole language doesn't work. The important subskills are never put into place" (McGuinness, 1997, p. 155).

Summary

The literature review examined the history of bilingual education; the Arizona state and three Arizona school districts exiting criteria for bilingual programs; teacher training; and the comparison and contrast of phonics and whole language reading methodologies.
Historically, bilingual education was begun with the intent to teach English to Spanish speaking students. Title 15-753 of the Arizona Revised Statutes is in place to assure that students exit bilingual programs and enter mainstream English speaking classrooms with a designated degree of oral, reading, and writing proficiency. The emphasis of this literature review was reading ability.

The very definition of reading has changed over the years. The traditional definition of reading was that it was merely pronouncing or decoding written words. The definition has evolved in the year 2000 to one of comprehension of the written word. Decoding instruction and meaning are not however mutually exclusive of each other. Decoding instruction and comprehension can both be a part of reading instruction however many of today’s universities and academic texts emphasize the whole language approach to reading instruction and either totally dismissing phonics or relegating phonics to a small corner of teacher education. Whole language advocates believe reading is a natural act and that schools do not exist for the technology of learning. Many whole language advocates believe decoding and phonics rules distract from the true purpose of reading. The true purpose being comprehending. Universities are therefore not training teachers how to instruct children in the grapheme-phoneme correspondences necessary for reading success. Numerous researchers have concluded that children need to internalize the grapheme-phoneme correspondences in order to understand that reading and writing are the spoken word in print.

According to Ovando and Collier (1985) reading is the most important skill needed for school success. The debate over how to impart reading skills to students was and continues to be debated among educators and lay persons.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to compare exit data from English as a Second Language programs to the whole language or phonics based reading methodologies of second and third grade teachers with English as a Second Language students.

Assumptions and Limitations

Research Design

Descriptive research was used for the purpose of this project. A cross-sectional procedure was used to gather data. The most common technique for gathering data in descriptive research is the survey (Merriam & Simpson, 1995, p. 70). This procedure allowed the researcher to gather information from a wide source of subjects. The strengths of descriptive research are not usually as rigorous as the experimental research method and it allows the researcher to study real life scenarios and the relationship between the scenarios. Variables can be "studied that indicate probable cause, but additional variables may be discovered that shed light upon the phenomenon" (Merriam & Simpson, 1995, p. 71).

Source of Data

This study was directed at second, and third grade primary teachers of English as Second Language (ESL) students in School A, School B, School C, and School D in the state of Arizona. The majority of the ESL students in the four
schools examined were of Mexican heritage. More detailed percentages were unavailable. Schools A and B were selected because the researcher was employed as a second grade teacher in the district for the 1997-98 and 1998-99 school years. Schools A and B had ESL enrollment greater than 100 students with exit rates of under 5%. Schools C and D were selected because the ESL enrollment was over 100 students with exit rates greater than 66%. Schools A, B, C, and D provide a comparison of high and low reclassification rates. The teacher sample involved answered a questionnaire concerning reading methodologies for their ESL students.

Assumptions and Limitations

A limitation of this study is that the population surveyed is limited to three districts and the results cannot be generalized. Another limitation is the assumption that all respondents uniformly understood the questions and answered honestly. The study also only depicts the results from the 1998-1999 school year, as longitudinal data beyond one year was unavailable.

Procedure

The researcher made personnel contacts with the Principals at Schools A, and B in March, and April respectively about the possibility of surveying second and third grade teacher's of ESL students on their reading methodologies. Schools C and D were contacted by telephone. Verbal permission was given by all principals to survey second and third grade teachers of ESL students. A cover letter (Appendix A), questionnaire (Appendix B), pen, and a self-addressed stamped envelope were placed inside an envelope. A small candy bar was attached to the outside of the envelope and the materials were hand delivered to Schools A and B. The questionnaire was faxed to School C and School D. A fax
number was supplied to Schools C and D in order to return the survey. The researcher then tallied the data into two groupings. One group contained Schools A and B whose ESL exit rates under 5% and the other group contained Schools C and D whose ESL exit rates were over 67%.

**Instrumentation**

The closed or forced choice questionnaire was designed using descriptions gained from the researcher's readings on whole language and phonics reading instruction. The forced choice questionnaire "allows the researcher to guide participants along pertinent lines of thought associated with the phenomenon" (Merriam & Simpson, 1995, p. 145). The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions presented in various formats. Four questions were randomly arranged checklists, two questions used the Likert Scale, two questions were multiple choice and three questions pertained to time spent on specific areas of instruction. The questionnaire would have greater focus if longitudinal data was available. The questionnaire was approved by Dr. John Mansour of Ottawa University.

**Method of Analysis**

Data was extracted from the reading questionnaire and placed into like answer categories according to low and high exit rates to determine patterns connected to the ESL program's exit rates. The data from Schools A and B which ESL exit rates were low was compared to the data from Schools C and D whose ESL exit rates were high. The data was analyzed to determine if any patterns arose.
CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents data gathered by submitting a reading methodology inventory to second and third grade teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Schools A, B, C, and D. The study was an attempt to isolate four schools with phonics or whole language reading instruction and correlate that information to the school's exit data for ESL students. A survey was sent to 23 teachers of ESL students in second and third grades.

The overall findings of the study showed that teacher training, the teacher's role in the classroom, minutes per day the teacher heard each student read, and the use of small groupings for reading instruction all contribute to higher ESL exit rates.

Demographics

A brief profile of the four schools follows. School A is located in metropolitan Phoenix, Arizona district with seventeen non-accredited elementary and middle schools. All teachers with ESL students are ESL certified. School B is a K-6 school located in the same metropolitan district and also employs ESL certified teachers. Schools A and B are mandated by the district to employ whole class instruction in reading. Instruction in reading is not to be through ability grouping. Student reading materials are whole language based with supporting phonics texts. School C is a AA accredited K-5 elementary school located approximately 40 miles from central Phoenix. All teachers with ESL students are ESL certified. The principal stated that all primary grade teachers are trained to implement the
Spalding reading program. The Spalding reading program begins by teaching a set of phoneme-letter units or phonograms. When the phonograms are mastered spelling instruction begins. After 150 words are entered into a spelling book, reading begins (Spalding R. & Spalding W.T., 1990). The principal stated the phonics based program was implemented last year in order to compete with a local charter school to which School C was losing students. The principal also stated that 90% of the ESL students were in a Title 1 reading program in addition to class reading. School D is a non-accredited K-6 elementary school in a rural, unified Arizona district. The district does not employ any ESL certified teachers in the elementary school. The principal stated the first grade teachers used a phonics based reading approach. However, second and third grade teachers reading methods were a mixture of whole language and phonics. School A, B, C, and D’s ESL population and percentages for reclassification is represented in the following table.

**1998 -1999 School Demographics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>ESL Population</th>
<th>Number of Students reclassified</th>
<th>Percent of students reclassified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The preceding table clearly illustrates the large difference in exit rates between schools A and B and C and D. Schools C and D have a minimum of 64% higher ESL exit rate than Schools A and B. The following table shows the absolute number and the percentage of teacher surveys returned for data collection.
### Teacher Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Possible Participants</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percent of Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Four telephone contacts were made to School D for the return of teacher questionnaires with no positive response. The data was compiled without information from School D.

### Findings and Results

Statistical findings for each eleven questions of the inventory are presented in the following sections by percentage. A variation of greater than 24% was considered as representing a significant difference in the data analysis. In the analysis of question one 71% of teachers from School C consider their reading methodologies to be mostly phonics with whole language support. Sixty-four percent of teachers in School A and B consider their reading methodologies to be mostly phonics with whole language support. There is not a significant enough difference in these percentages to merit a connection to higher exit rates in School C.
1. Check one answer that you believe best describes the teaching of reading in your classroom.

**Schools A and B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Exclusively whole language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Exclusively phonics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td>Mostly whole language with phonics support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64%</td>
<td>Mostly phonics with whole language support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Exclusively whole language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Exclusively phonics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Mostly whole language with phonics support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71%</td>
<td>Mostly phonics with whole language support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question two shows a 45% difference between teacher's self-perceptions in Schools A and B and School C. Fifty-five percent of Schools A and B respondents described their role in the classroom as teacher. One hundred percent of School C's respondents considered their role in the classroom to be that of teacher. Whole language advocates believe a teacher's role is that of facilitator rather than teacher. There appears to be a connection between teacher perception of their role and higher ESL exit rates.

2. Please circle one answer. Would you describe your role in the classroom as being one of a **facilitator** or a **teacher**?

**Schools A and B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55%</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Did not respond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Facilitator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question three showed that round-robin reading, shared-book experiences, and choral class reading practiced by Schools A and B adversely affect the exit rate of ESL students. There was 25% or greater difference between schools in these categories. Sixty percent of School C's respondents implement small group reading in their classroom. This is a 24% greater use of small group reading than Schools A and B. The data shows a
correlation between small group reading and School C’s higher exiting rate for ESL students.

3. Check EACH CATEGORY that occurs on a daily basis in your classroom.

**Schools A and B**

100% Reading aloud to children  
45% Round-robin reading  
82% Sustained silent reading  
36% Shared-book experiences  
36% Small group reading  
45% Choral class reading

**School C**

100% Reading aloud to children  
20% Round-robin reading  
100% Sustained silent reading  
0% Shared-book experiences  
60% Small group reading  
20% Choral class reading

The analysis of question four shows one significant difference. A 31% greater number of teachers in School C responded that they spent between 1-10% of their language arts time on grapheme-phoneme (sound/letter) correspondences than respondents in Schools A and B. A greater percentage of Schools A and B respondents devoted more time to grapheme-phoneme correspondences. Forty percent of teachers in School C spent 21% or greater language arts time on grapheme-phoneme correspondences compared to 54% of teachers in School A and B. There appear to be no correlation between the increase use of grapheme-phoneme correspondences and ESL exit rates.
4. Please check one answer. What percentage of your language arts time is spent on grapheme-phoneme (sound/letter) correspondences?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools A and B</th>
<th>School C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0% responded 0%</td>
<td>0% responded 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% responded 1-10%</td>
<td>40% responded 1-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36% responded 11-20%</td>
<td>20% responded 11-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18% responded 21-30%</td>
<td>0% responded 21-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27% responded 31-40%</td>
<td>40% responded 31-40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% responded 41-50%</td>
<td>0% responded 41-50% of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% responded 50% or more</td>
<td>0% responded 50% or more of time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question five shows 60% of respondents from School C spent 11-20% of their language arts time on whole word memorization compared to 36% of respondents from Schools A and B. Seventy-two percent of School A and B's teachers responded they spent 20% or less of their language arts time on whole word memorization. Eighty percent of School C's teachers responded that they spent 20% or less on whole word memorization. This data does not support the study's connection to increase use of whole language practices equals a decrease in ESL exit rates.
5. Please check one answer. What percentage of your language arts time is spent on whole word memorization?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools A and B</th>
<th>School C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18% responded 0%</td>
<td>0% responded 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18% responded 1-10%</td>
<td>20% responded 1-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36% responded 11-20%</td>
<td>60% responded 11-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% responded 21-30%</td>
<td>0% responded 21-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% responded 31-40%</td>
<td>0% responded 31-40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% responded 41-50%</td>
<td>0% responded 41-50% of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18% responded 50% or more</td>
<td>20% responded 50% or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% did not respond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question six showed no significant difference in data.

School A and B’s teachers responded that they often or sometimes responded to reader error 81% of the time. School C’s teachers stated that they often or sometimes responded to reader error 80% of the time. There appears to be no correlation between exit rate and teacher miscue response.

6. How often do you respond to a reader’s miscues or errors when they are reading aloud?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools A and B</th>
<th>School C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36% Often</td>
<td>20% Often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45% Sometimes</td>
<td>60% Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% Occasionally</td>
<td>20% Occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% Never</td>
<td>0% Never</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question seven shows no significant difference of teacher response from School A and B to School C. Seventy-two percent of School A
and B’s teachers responded they often or sometimes correct a writer’s invented spelling. Eighty percent of School C’s teachers responded they often or sometimes responded to a writer’s invented spelling.

7. Please check one answer. How often do you correct a writer’s invented spelling?

**Schools A and B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**School C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question eight showed only one significant difference between Schools A and B and School C. Eighty percent of respondents in School C used content words in their weekly spelling words compared to 54% in Schools A and B. However an interesting phenomenon did occur in both school’s responses. One response option was the Ayres list. The Ayres list are the most commonly used words in the English language formulated into a list. The Spalding program is based upon the Ayres list. Twenty-seven percent of teachers in School A marked other and elaborated that they used Spalding. Twenty percent of School C’s teachers marked other and also wrote in Spalding. This phenomenon leads the researcher to question the degree of familiarity these respondents have with the Spalding program. One teacher responded that a Reading/Language program was used but did not elaborate.
8. Do your students have weekly spelling words? ___Y ___N If you marked yes, where do those words come from? Please check those that apply.

**Schools A and B**

100% Yes
54% Content words
9% Student generated
45% Spelling text
0% Dolch list
9% Ayres list
27% Other Spalding

**Schools C**

100% Yes
80% Content words
0% Student generated
60% Spelling text
0% Dolch list
0% Ayres list
40% Other Spalding and Reading/Language Program

The analysis of question nine shows that 80% of School C's teachers spent 3 minutes or more listening to each individual student read compared to only 63% in School A and B. Upon closer look at these numbers a 16% greater number of Schools A and B respondents answered they spent only 0-2 minutes per day listening to the individual student read. A 24% greater number of School C's respondents answered they spent 3-5 minutes per day listening to students read than Schools A and B. There appears to be a correlation between an increase in hearing a child read aloud and their capability of exiting an ESL program.

9. Please check one answer. How many minutes per day on the average would you say you have the opportunity to listen to each individual student read?

**Schools A and B**

36% 0-2 min.
36% 3-5 min.
27% 6-8 min.
0% 8-10 min.
0% 11 or more min.

**Schools C**

20% 0-2 min.
60% 3-5 min.
0% 6-8 min.
20% 8-10 min.
0% 11 or more min.
The analysis of question ten shows that 64% of teachers from Schools A and B would like to see improvement in their beginning students in comprehension. While 80% of School C's teachers would like to see their beginning students improved in the area of comprehension. Teachers in neither Schools A, B, or C responded the one area of improvement in their beginning students should be in decoding and recoding skills.

10. Please check one answer. What one area of reading or writing would you like to see an improvement in your beginning students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools A and B</th>
<th>Schools C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>64% Comprehension</td>
<td>80% Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18% Grammar</td>
<td>0% Grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% Punctuation</td>
<td>0% Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% Contact with quality literature</td>
<td>0% Contact with quality literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% Decoding and recoding</td>
<td>0% Decoding and recoding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0% Spelling</td>
<td>20% Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% Did not respond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of question eleven shows a 42% difference between Schools A and B and School C in their professional development at a university. Sixty percent of School C's teachers responded the majority of their university classes emphasized phonics instruction while only 18% of School A and B's teachers responded the majority of their university classes emphasized phonics instruction over whole language methods.
11. Please circle one answer. In your professional career as an educator did the majority of your university classes emphasize:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools A and B</th>
<th>Schools C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73% whole language methods</td>
<td>40% whole language methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18% phonics instruction</td>
<td>60% phonics instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% Gave alternate answer other than two provided.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One teacher responded "total reading instruction including basal readers and phonics and language activities integrated with the basal readers and literature studies." Another teacher wrote "I believe students can not comprehend written material until they have the ability to decode words and read fluently. Whole language teachers frequently miss important skills that students need to increase comprehension, teaching these skills in a haphazard way with little organization. Good literature is important and student should be read to from many books that they do not have the skills to read themselves. However, listening and reading are two different skills."

The overall findings of the study showed that the following factors work together to increase the percentage of ESL students who exit ESL programs; the educator perceives themselves to be a teacher rather than a facilitator; the emphasis of the teacher's professional development was phonics rather than whole language, on a daily basis the teacher has students read in small groups, and the teacher hears each student read daily for more than three minutes.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of the study was to compare exit data from English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to whole language or phonics based reading methodologies employed by second and third grade teachers of ESL students. The literature review examined the history of bilingual education, the exiting criteria for ESL students in the state of Arizona, teacher training, and the main findings and disputes of preeminent researchers in the areas of whole language and phonics based reading methodologies.

In 1968 bilingual education began as a response to Limited English Proficient students entering United States public schools. The purpose of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was to teach English to Limited English Proficient students. Students are assessed for English language proficiency and placed accordingly into bilingual programs. Once the student has attained English proficiency and met exit oral, written and reading criteria of the state and district the student is then mainstreamed into a regular English speaking classroom.

Reading and writing are essential for school success. Teacher training influences what method of reading instruction an ESL student receives. Whole language advocates believe the teacher is a facilitator in the learning process and the direct teaching of phonics skills are never taught. The reading process is a psycholinguistic guessing game. The reader uses prior knowledge, personal
experience, knowledge of the language, the context in which the word appears, and the graphic clues given to make an educated guess about the text. This process is described as a psycholinguistic guessing game. Phonics advocates believe that the psycholinguistic guessing game theory is a major fallacy and has led to student failure. Children need the critical ability to break the alphabetic code. Research has shown that students of lower socio-economic status in particular benefit from instruction in letter-sound correspondences.

In order to determine why the majority of schools in the state of Arizona have an ESL exit rate below 5% teachers reading methodologies were surveyed in two Schools A and B. This data was compared to data in School C which had an exit rate of 89%. Eighteen teachers were provided a closed or forced choice questionnaire designed to assess reading methodologies. The questionnaire consisted of eleven questions in a variety of formats. Four questions were randomly arranged checklists, two questions used the Likert Scale, two questions were multiple choice, and three questions pertained to time spent on specific areas of instruction.

The data was analyzed and the overall findings were inconclusive pertaining to classroom practices involving phonics or whole language instruction. Other factors appear to work together to increase the percentage of ESL students who exit ESL programs. These factors included the educator who state their role is that of teacher rather than facilitator; the emphasis of the teacher's professional development was phonics based, on a daily basis students read in small groups, and the teacher also heard each student read aloud more than three minutes per day.
Conclusions

The connection between phonics reading instruction and high ESL exit rates was not clearly shown in the analysis of the questionnaire's data. There was not a significant difference between teacher's descriptions of their reading instruction in Schools A and B with low exit rates and School C with a high exit rate. The majority of all teachers described their reading instruction as mostly phonics instruction with whole language support. The practices of round-robin reading, shared-book experiences, and choral class reading appear to adversely affect students. These were practices employed by Schools A and B with lower exit rates.

The practice of small group reading by School C appears to benefit student reading ability. Schools A and B with lower rates responded they spent more time on grapheme-phoneme correspondences. This is contrary to expected connection between phonics and higher ESL exit rates.

Seventy-two percent of School A and B's respondents spent less than 20% of their time on whole word memorization. Eighty percent of School C's respondents spent less than 20% of their time on whole word memorization. These were also unexpected results. School A and B were expected to respond they spend more time this whole language practice.

Contrary to expectations teacher response to readers miscues and student invented spelling showed no significant difference from Schools A and B to School C. There was a significant difference between Schools A and B and School C in regards to the amount of time spent listening to the individual student read per day. School C's respondents spent more time per day listening and therefore responding to reader miscues than teachers with lower ESL exit rates in Schools A and B.
No respondents answered they would like to see an increase in decoding and recoding skills of their beginning students. Nine percent responded they would however like to see increased contact with quality literature.

The majority of university classes of respondents in Schools A and B were whole language based. While the majority of respondents in School C stated their classes were phonics based. The type of university instruction the respondent received appears to have a connection to the classroom instruction and lower or higher ESL exit rates.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that this study be repeated with a larger number of respondents in order to draw conclusive results. A different survey could question teachers on whether they believe their ESL students as readers possess prior knowledge, personal experience, knowledge of the English language, knowledge of the context in which the word appears, and knowledge of the graphic clues given to make an educated guess about the text as stated by whole language advocates. Teachers could also be questioned on whether they believe breaking the alphabetic code is necessary to the reading process. Interviews and observations could be alternative methods of gathering more conclusive information. Professional course work may be of greater influence on classroom practices than realized by this study's respondents.

Other recommendations are a study could be completed on class size and the connection to ESL exit rates; the amount of time spent listening and responding to a reader could be assessed; differences between district's exit criteria assessments could be analyzed. There may be significant differences in language levels that are required of students on various assessments, and that district test administrators could be assessed for their personal level of English
proficiency. This may affect the numbers of students being judged proficient enough to exit ESL programs. One further recommendation is that analysis could be completed on a district's willingness or unwillingness to exit students from bilingual programs.
APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER
Jo Linda R. Hardy  
3216 Comanche  
Glendale, AZ. 85307  
April 25, 2000

Dear Colleague:

My name is Jo Linda R. Hardy. I am an ESL elementary school instructor and a Master's Degree candidate attending Ottawa University, Phoenix, AZ. I am seeking information to complete a thesis, and I hope you can assist me. The purpose of my thesis is to examine reading methodologies in association with student exit rates from the English as a Second Language program. I realize that you are very busy at this time of year. You can assist by taking a minute of your time and complete the attached questionnaire and returning it in the enclosed, self-addressed envelope.

Please be assured that your results will remain confidential. They will be compiled in a general format data sheet. I am hoping to receive your responses by April 30, 2000 in order to complete the program for summer of 2000. If you wish a copy sent to you, please send your name and address in the return envelope. Thank you in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

Jo Linda R. Hardy
APPENDIX B

READING METHODOLOGY INVENTORY
READING METHODOLOGY INVENTORY

Please answer the following, and return this survey in the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your professional cooperation.

1. Check one answer that you believe best describes the teaching of reading in your classroom.

___ Exclusively whole language
___ Exclusively phonics
___ Mostly whole language with phonics support
___ Mostly phonics with whole language support

2. Please circle one answer. Would you describe your role in the classroom as being one of a facilitator or a teacher?

3. Check EACH CATEGORY that occurs on a daily basis in your classroom.

___ Reading aloud to children
___ Round-robin reading
___ Sustained silent reading
___ Shared-book experiences
___ Small group reading
___ Choral class reading

4. Please check one answer. What percentage of your language arts time is spent on grapheme-phoneme (sound/letter) correspondences?

___ 0%
___ 1-10%
___ 11-20%
___ 21-30%
___ 31-40%
___ 41-50%
___ 50% or more

5. Please check one answer. What percentage of your language arts time is spent on whole word memorization?

___ 0%
___ 1-10%
___ 11-20%
___ 21-30%
___ 31-40%
___ 41-50%
___ 50% or more

6. How often do you respond to a reader’s miscues or errors when they are reading aloud?

___ Often
___ Sometimes
___ Occasionally
___ Never

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS
7. Please check one answer. How often do you correct a writer's invented spelling?

_____ Often  _____ Sometimes  _____ Occasionally  _____ Never

8. Do your students have weekly spelling words?  _____ Y  _____ N  If you marked yes, where do those words come from? Please check those that apply.

_____ Content words  _____ Dolch list

_____ Student generated  _____ Ayres list

_____ Spelling text  _____ Other (please elaborate)____________________

9. Please check one answer. How many minutes per day on the average would you say you have the opportunity to listen to each individual student read?

_____ 0-2 min.  _____ 3-5 min.  _____ 6-8 min.  _____ 8-10 min.  _____ 11 or more min.

10. Please check one answer. What one area of reading or writing would you like to see an improvement in your beginning students?

_____ Comprehension  _____ Grammar

_____ Punctuation  _____ Contact with quality literature

_____ Decoding and recoding  _____ Spelling

11. Please circle one answer. In your professional career as an educator did the majority of your university classes emphasize:

   a. whole language methods
   b. phonics instruction


www.azleg.state.az.us/ars/15-754.htm.