

THE EFFECTS OF REPEATED READINGS OF POETRY ON THE FLUENCY
OF FIRST-GRADE STUDENTS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of
California State University, Stanislaus

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Education

By
Andrea Sanchez
November 2015

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

THE EFFECTS OF REPEATED READINGS OF POETRY ON THE FLUENCY
OF FIRST-GRADE STUDENTS

Signed Certification of Approval page is
on file with the University Library

by
Andrea Sanchez

Dr. John Borba
Professor of School Administration

Date

Dr. Chet Jensen
Professor of Education

Date

© 2015

Andrea Sanchez
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Thomas and Rebecca Dixon, both of whom showed me at an early age what it means to balance work and family. As a nine year old, my mother was an inspiration watching her pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies, working as a full time homemaker, and providing a nurturing and caring environment for my sister and me. I did not fully understand her journey until I began my own. My father who taught me grit, determination, and sacrifice as I watched him give selflessly to his country while in the United States Air Force.

This work is dedicated to my husband Michael Sanchez and my children Myles and Addison. Michael's love, encouragement, and support have been instrumental through this process. His determination while completing his Bachelor of Arts degree while coaching, working and taking care of family served as a reminder to pursue your dreams no matter what your current circumstances are. Myles and Addison, thank you for your patience, love and support through this endeavor. I hope witnessing it serves to be as much of an inspiration as your father and grandmother were to me.

Finally, this work is dedicated to my sister Stefanie Bauman; without her, this would not have been a reality. Her support was essential, both mentally and physically.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would specifically like to thank Dr. John Borba for his encouragement, guidance, and sense of humor while seeing me through the completion of this journey. Dr. Chet Jensen, thank you, for your guidance, suggestions, and professionalism throughout this process and for serving with Dr. Borba on my thesis committee.

To the administrators and teachers of the Merced City School District, thank you for your support. I would like to specifically thank Suzanne Silva-Fagundes and Tammy Fischer for their guidance and support.

To my first grade students and colleagues Debbie Harden, Carol Timmerman, and Anna Buttrey whose support was a constant reminder of the purpose behind this work, and thank you for the great Professional Learning Community where I felt confident enough to venture out on this journey. First Grade Rocks!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
Background of the Problem	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Research Question	3
Null Hypotheses.....	3
Significance of the Study.....	4
Limitations and Delimitations.....	4
Definition of Terms.....	5
Summary.....	6
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	7
Introduction.....	7
Research Studies	8
Summary.....	17
III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES.....	18
Introduction.....	18
Sample Population	18
Treatment	18
Instrumentation and Data Collection	20
Statistical Analyses	20
Summary.....	20
IV. RESULTS	21
Introduction.....	21
Analysis.....	21
Findings Related to the Hypotheses.....	22

Summary.....	22
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	23
Introduction.....	23
Conclusions.....	23
Implications.....	24
Recommendations for Further Research.....	25
REFERENCES	27

ABSTRACT

With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were developed in 2010, an emphasis on reading for information, applying what is learned in the classroom to real world situations, using higher level critical thinking skills and improving problem solving underscore reading fluency as one of the foundational skills needed to access the core curriculum (Rothman, 2012). Educators have always searched for ways to adapt their curriculum to best suit the needs of their students and improve reading fluency. One way to elicit fluent readers is repeated reading. This approach can be used with any adopted textbook program, and research has shown readers theater and specific repeated reading interventions produce significant gains in reading fluency (Corcoran & Davis, 2005). The data selected for analysis were derived from first-grade students who participated daily in Repeated Readings of Poetry. This supplemental activity was used outside of the reading core and occurred each week over a 4-month period. Each poem was introduced and practiced in the prescribed manner within a 5-day span before the introduction of another poem. A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre and posttest Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) assessment. An alpha level of .05 was used to determine statistical significance. The results of the analysis suggest that participation in Repeated Readings of Poetry does have a positive impact on reading fluency.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background of the Problem

All students deserve equal opportunities; therefore, federal statutes ensure all do not experience discrimination because of gender, race, religion, and disabilities (Kemerer & Sansom, 2013). Improving programs for girls, minority children, poor children, children with disabilities, and children with limited English was the mindset of the federal government in the 1960s and 1970s, as the Civil Rights movement eliminated race-based discrimination. However, Gardner (1983) reported that the education system in the United States was failing.

Content standards and expectations, instructional time, teaching, leadership, and fiscal support were among the areas addressed by the report. Implementation of the report's recommendations began with standards-based reform in the late 1980s. The rationale behind these academic standards was to delineate the skills, concepts, and ideas that should be mastered at each grade level. The standards-based movement was the precursor of test-driven accountability (Jennings, 2012).

On the heels of California's adoption of academic content standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics, the California Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999 was passed to hold educators accountable for their students' achievement via the Academic Performance Index (API). Three years later, the passage of The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 added federal

mandates to California's accountability system that delineated student achievement goals as reported by Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP; California Department of Education [CDE], n.d.). Progress regarding student achievement by district, school, and significant subgroup was reported. States were federally mandated to monitor student progress by significant subgroups based on race, income level, English language proficiency, and learning ability. Schools and districts and their significant subgroups were required to meet annual growth targets (CDE, 2014).

The reform movement that involves the preparation of students for college and career is the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were developed in 2010. The CCSS delineate skills, concepts, and ideas that are expected to be mastered at each grade level. Initially these standards were adopted by 46 states; however there are fewer states to date because some have opted out. The creation of these standards was in response to individual states not being consistent with high level academic standards. The new standards emphasize reading for information, applying what is learned in the classroom to real world situations, using higher level critical thinking skills, and enhancing problem solving (Rothman, 2012).

With the movement toward CCSS, a more efficient way of measuring growth was needed. The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) was developed. This assessment is aligned to the CCSS. The SBAC is administered to students via computers; therefore, results are calculated in a timelier manner than previous assessments. Finally, the SBAC is adaptive, meaning the test adjusts to each

student's previous response and therefore, the difficulty of the subsequent question is based on the previous response.

Statement of the Problem

Research and theory suggest that students need instruction and teacher guidance in order to navigate efficiently through the stages of reading to improve fluency. Most reading programs build on a foundation of oral language skills, phonemic awareness, familiarity with letter forms, and efficient decoding strategies (Pikulski & Chard, 2005). Rothman (2012) noted, "About 40 percent of entering college students are required to take at least one remedial course before enrolling in credit-bearing coursework" (p. 14). If a reader does not develop fluency, the process of making sense of text becomes more difficult. The process by which a student acquires fluency becomes extremely important across curriculum areas where academic language and vocabulary are taught. The brain needs sufficient power to comprehend the complex text (Pikulski & Chard, 2005).

Research Question

What are the effects of Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first grade students?

Null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the reading fluency of first grade students after participating in Repeated Reading Poetry activities over a 4-month period.

Significance of the Study

Common Core State Standards have brought the importance of reading to the forefront. With the new CCSS and technology, fluent readers need foundational skills to access core curriculum and instruction. Students who are not meeting grade level expectations struggle in reading and other content areas (Kauerz, 2002).

Educators are under more pressure than ever to produce college or career ready graduates. Attaining a college degree or job requires superior reading skills as students of today become the adults of tomorrow. Students must read fluently to access core content material, complete performance tasks, and pass computer based adaptive assessments to showcase all they have learned. Kindergarten-, first-, and second-grade students do not take the computer based assessment known as the SBAC. Taking that into consideration, educators must teach foundational reading skills to prepare all students for future content material, performance tasks, and computer based adaptive learning and jobs that require critical thinking and problem solving.

Limitations and Delimitations

Archival data were analyzed from two classes of first grade students using repeated reading of poetry at one elementary school in the Central Valley of California. Gender, ethnicity, English proficiency level, and socioeconomic status of the students were not factors in this analysis. Individual differences of the classroom teachers were not a factor. However, this researcher was one of the teachers who participated in this study.

Definition of Terms

Automaticity. The ability to recognize words quickly without having to put mental effort on smaller details, such as decoding. Automaticity is also known as automatic processing.

Cold Read. A passage not read or practiced by a reader and is typically used to obtain an accurate account of words correctly read per minute.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS). A set of academic standards that provide a clear and consistent understanding of skills, concepts, and ideas students are expected to master throughout the school year.

Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). A set of procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through sixth grade.

Fluency. The ability to read text quickly and accurately.

Oral reading fluency (ORF). The number of words read correctly during a one minute period.

Poetry. Literature in metrical form that evokes feeling.

Repeated reading. A reading fluency strategy that requires students to read the same passage multiple times.

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). An assessment that is aligned to the CCSS.

Words correct per minute (WCPM). The number of words read correctly in one minute. The WCPM is calculated by taking the number of words the student reads in one minute and subtracting the number of errors that were committed.

Words per minute (WPM). The number of words read in one minute.

Summary

This chapter explained the purpose of this study, which is to determine if repeated readings of poetry has an effect on the reading fluency of first-grade students. This study focused on how the use of repeated readings of poetry in the classroom can help to improve students' reading fluency. Chapter II examines literature on repeated readings, automaticity, and fluency. Chapter III presents the methods and procedures used in this study, including the sample population, data collection methods, and data analysis. Chapter IV shows the statistical analysis as it relates to the research question. Chapter V presents conclusions, implications, and any recommendations for future research on the topic of repeated reading of poetry as it relates to a reader's fluency.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first grade students. For this literature review, the effectiveness of interventions and specific reading strategies were examined. Over the course of the past 25 years, progressive changes have been made to instruction regarding reading proficiency. From *Dick and Jane* to Phonics, from Phonics to Whole Language, and from Whole Language to the current Balanced Literacy approach have underscored the changes over the years (Brown, 2006).

Huang, Nelson, and Nelson (2008) recognized that comprehensive literacy programs often neglect fluency. Most traditional reading instruction provides adequate redundancy for most children; others require a greater level of redundancy to understand the relationship between written and spoken language (Bell, Markley, & Yonker, 1990). Research based supplemental material and best instructional practices in addition to a district's core reading program will ensure each student is receiving the best quality education for student success (Bell et al., 1990).

Chapter II will review literature and present studies on the effects of repeated readings on reading fluency.

Research Studies

Vadasy and Sanders (2008) conducted a study to examine the skills readers acquire when using repeated reading as an intervention. The study was conducted with second- and third-grade elementary students in Seattle, Washington. Vadasy and Sanders established two groups of students based on set criteria along with teacher referral. Students who performed in the 10th to 60th percentile range in reading at their grade level qualified for participation. There were 96 students in the treatment condition who received repeated reading within their assigned dyad for 30 minutes per day, 4 days per week, for 15 weeks (November to March). The intervention was implemented by 22 tutors; all of whom held a high school diploma or higher. Each tutoring session had six steps: letter/sound practice, first passage reading, second and third passage reading, fourth passage reading, comprehension, and the reading of a new passage or rereading of previous passage(s). The control condition was comprised of 92 students who received reading instruction with no supplemental support.

During the course of this intervention, participants were given a pre and posttest to measure growth. The data were analyzed and reported descriptively. The results showed higher posttest gains in reading accuracy and fluency for participants in the treatment condition when compared to participants in the control condition. The findings suggested there is a benefit from oral repeated reading of the same text (Vadasy & Sanders, 2008).

Ates (2013) conducted a study on the effectiveness of repeated reading intervention with performance-based feedback. The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of repeated readings with performance based feedback on fluency. The study involved a 10-year-old participant at a public elementary school in Ankara, Turkey. The participant was chosen through criterion sampling that involved preliminary measurements. She was an upper grade elementary student with no physical or mental disabilities. She was a struggling reader who had not received remediation. A combination of corrective feedback and repeated readings were used to increase the student's confidence, fluency, and overall achievement in reading.

Data were collected over a 38-hour intervention using a video camera and computer software. The participant received the intervention 2-3 times a week in a silent room. The intervention was comprised of three kinds of feedback including the number of words read correctly, and corrected reading miscues. A running record was used to account for the number of words read correctly per minute during each intervention session (Ates, 2013).

Ates (2013) found that the number of words correctly read per minute increased from 37 to 52 after the implementation of repeated readings paired with specific feedback. The researcher also found a decrease in the number of errors from eight to two. The student also went from the frustration level of word recognition to the instructional level of word recognition.

Huang et al. (2008) conducted a study that focused on an intervention to help students who were not responding to regular classroom (Tier 1) reading instruction.

The purpose of the study was to examine if a research based tutoring method using repeated readings would increase reading fluency. The study was conducted during the spring with two second-grade students at a K-12 charter school in northern Colorado.

In this study, each student was assigned a volunteer tutor. Before the tutoring sessions, the initial reading level was calculated for each participant using the Flynt-Cooter Reading Inventory. Each tutor was trained by the researchers as to specific method and procedures that included the use of the Instructional Method Checklist for Treatment Integrity. The treatment lasted for a 10-week period and used three different literature based books: *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, *Toad and Frog are Friends*, and *Ameila Bedelia*. Huang et al. (2008) referenced the “importance of the five reading subcomponents identified by the National Reading Panel: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension” (p. 34). According to Huang et al., “Fluency is defined as the ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to the mechanics of reading such as decoding” (p. 34). Pre and posttests were given to each student. The test focused on words correct per minute, sight words, and comprehension. Each repeated reading session was monitored and adjusted based on a set criteria. If a book was deemed too difficult, an alternate text was used.

The results of the assessments in oral reading fluency (ORF) and sight word recognition were presented descriptively. One student correctly read 69 words per minute on the pretest and 86 words per minute on the posttest, while site word

recognition went from 114 words read correctly to 264 words read correctly. The other student correctly read 41 words per minute on the pretest and 57 words per minute on the posttest, while site word recognition went from 115 words read correctly to 256 words read correctly. On the Flynt-Cooter Oral Reading Accuracy and Comprehension assessment, both students went from a criterion level 1 on the pretest to criterion Level 2 on the posttest (Huang et al., 2008).

Positive growth was measured in all areas. The most growth was with sight word recognition. High levels of sight word recognition have a positive effect on reading fluency and comprehension. The intervention suggests that struggling readers may make positive growth when they participate in repeated readings and systematic intentional interventions (Huang et al., 2008).

Swain, Leader-Janssen, and Conley (2013) conducted a single case study of the effects of repeated reading and listening passage preview on ORF. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of three fluency interventions: repeated reading, audio listening passage preview, and teacher modeled listening passage preview. The study was conducted at Midwestern University's clinic in Nebraska for students with special learning needs.

The researchers selected the participant for the study based on teacher referral to the clinic. The participant was a fifth-grade boy who enrolled in the 60-minute twelve-week intervention held at the clinic. Forty-five minutes of each session were dedicated to the intervention and 15 minutes were allocated to complete homework. During the intervention time, the multi-element treatment included three

interventions: repeated reading (RR), audio listening passage preview (Audio LPP), and listening passage preview (LPP). During each session, the same order of interventions was followed. Progress monitoring data and words correctly read per minute (WCRPM) were collected and used to analyze the results of each intervention.

At the end of the interventions, the data collected were analyzed descriptively. The participant had a baseline score of 82 WCRPM and 104 WCRPM after the intervention. Five months after the intervention, the post evaluation score were 105 WCRPM (Swain et al., 2013). Each intervention showed positive growth in oral reading fluency by the end of the twelve week intervention. The results suggest that using repeated reading and listening passage preview may be an effective method of increasing reading fluency (Swain et al., 2013).

Corcoran and Davis (2005) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of a reader's theater fluency program. Surveys, observations, and running records were used to examine the effectiveness of the reader's theater program. The study was conducted at an elementary classroom located in central Florida. Corcoran and Davis established an intact group of 12 students in a self-contained combination second and third grade, learning disabled and emotionally handicapped classroom. Before treatment began, students completed a survey to determine their attitudes toward reading. A pretreatment running record also was completed to establish a baseline oral reading fluency rate for each student.

Based on their reading ability and oral reading fluency scores, all students were placed in one of three reader's theater groups. Each group performed for a pre-

kindergarten class, three different plays during the 8-week treatment period. Each play performed was practiced approximately two weeks. A set of norms were taught to all participants as to how a reader's theater practice was to be conducted. Groups met with the teacher and on their own as part of practice. During the first week, the researchers established a routine for the introduction and practice of each play. The researchers modeled reading throughout the week as students were practicing (Corcoran & Davis, 2005).

At the end of the 8-week readers' theater fluency program, students completed a survey to determine their attitudes toward reading. A final running record was administered to generate an oral reading fluency score for each student. The data were analyzed and reported descriptively (Corcoran & Davis, 2005).

The survey regarding student comfort levels showed positive growth of at least 2% to 16% on each question. The data suggested that participants felt more comfortable reading aloud in school after engaging in readers' theater as 52% felt comfortable in the pre survey and 68% in the post survey. Eighteen percent of the students felt reading was their favorite subject before participating in readers' theater; after participation, 37% of students felt reading was their favorite subject. Ninety percent of the students indicated they would like to participate in readers' theater in the future (Corcoran & Davis, 2005).

A running record was used to calculate each student's oral reading fluency. The number of words read correctly per minute increased overall by 17 words. Individual increases varied from three words more per minute to 41 more words per

minute. The data from this study suggest that a participant's confidence when reading aloud and the oral reading fluency rate may increase after participating in repeated reading during readers' theater (Corcoran & Davis, 2005).

Juul, Poulsen, and Elbro (2014) conducted a study on separating speed from accuracy in beginning reading. The purpose of this study was to identify skills that correctly predict development in accuracy or speed, or both. Juul et al. conducted a longitudinal study over a 3-year span using 172 students from four schools in Copenhagen; all stated Danish is their preferred language. Participants were seen a total of 11 times for testing. At the end of Grade 0 (kindergarten), participants were tested on a variety of skills that were known or possible predictors of later reading success. Phoneme awareness, letter name knowledge, Rapid Automatized Naming (RAN), and word reading accuracy were the subsets of the test. Regression analyses were used to analyze the data. The data suggest that RAN is a strong predictor of speed, and phoneme awareness is a strong predictor of accuracy ($p < .001$) (Juul et al., 2014).

Lo, Cooke, and Starling (2011) conducted a study on the effects of using a repeated reading program to improve oral reading fluency. The purpose of this study was to examine to what extent an adult-delivered repeated reading intervention package including preview and practice of isolated passage words, unison reading, performance cueing and feedback, and error correction increase the participants' oral reading rates on the grade level end of year assessments. The study was conducted in a Title 1 elementary school located in the southeast region of the United States.

The authors selected three participants based on a predetermined set of criteria. Correct words per minute (CWPM) was calculated using the DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency subtest (DORF). Predetermined benchmarks were aligned with the DORF. To evaluate whether there was a functional relationship between the repeated reading intervention and the dependent variables, a multiple probe across participants was used. All participants received core reading instruction for 90 minutes per day. Repeated reading of passages followed an 8-step method followed throughout the intervention (Lo et al., 2011).

Data analysis for each participant was entered and a performance trend line was created using a multiple probe across participants. Results suggested a repeated reading program combining several research-based components is predictive of improvement in the reading fluency of second graders. The probability value established for the statistical analysis was not reported (Lo et al., 2011).

Wexler, Vaughn, Roberts, and Denton (2010) conducted a study to examine the efficacy of repeated and wide reading practice intervention for high school students with severe reading disabilities. The study involved 96 students with reading disabilities in Grades 9-12 in Texas. Wexler et al. randomly assigned each student to one of three groups. Repeated reading and wide reading were conducted in the intervention groups. Repeated or wide reading practices were not conducted in the control group. During the course of the 10-week intervention, students who were placed in the repeated reading or wide reading group received 15-20 minutes of daily intervention. During repeated reading intervention, students were exposed to the

same passage six times through readings by their partner and themselves. In the wide reading intervention, students did not read the same passages but were exposed to different passages at their level. The control group received instruction without repeated or wide reading practices.

Data were collected and analyzed statistically to evaluate the overall group differences in the posttest. Analysis of Co-Variance tests were conducted. The results showed no overall statistically significant differences for any condition. The results suggest that neither repeated reading nor wide reading have an impact on high school students' (with disabilities) oral reading fluency (Wexler et al., 2010).

Wheldall (2000) conducted a study to determine the effects of supplementing a core reading program with another intervention called Rainbow Reading. The purpose of this study was to determine if the Rainbow Reading intervention strengthened the overall intervention. The study was conducted in Sydney, Australia with children ages 2-7.

In the study, there were 40 low-progress readers attending a literacy intervention program held at Macquarie University. There was an intervention program already in place. The study lasted 9 weeks. The researcher randomly assigned students to the treatment and control groups (Wheldall, 2000).

During the study, the two groups of students received the intervention program used at the clinic. However the students in the treatment group received an additional intervention using repeated readings from the Rainbow Reading Program which uses narrative and expository text for repeated reading. The reading is

completed in the form of audio cassettes, teacher modeling, and students reading aloud. All students were administered pretests and posttests consisting of the Neale Analysis of Reading, Burt Reading Test, and Wheldall Assessment of Reading Passages (WARP; Wheldall, 2000). Data were collected and analyzed statistically. The results suggest there were no statistically significant differences between the treatment and control groups (Wheldall, 2000).

Summary

The review of literature in Chapter II presented studies on the effects of repeated readings on reading fluency. Research has shown repeated readings of an authentic nature may benefit students with regard to fluency. Research also proved that speed does matter with regard to reading. Students who are average or above average in fluency rates are able to read more text than a struggling peer of the same age. In Chapter III, this author will describe the methodology of the present study including the sample population, instrumentation, data collection, and statistical analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first grade students. Chapter III will describe the methodology of this study including the sample population treatment, instrumentation and data collection, and statistical analysis of the data.

Sample Population

The school selected for this study served students in grades K-5 and consisted of a diverse population of approximately 749 students during the 2014–2015 school year. The ethnic composition of the school included 50.5% Hispanic or Latino, 30.4% Caucasian, 11.5% Asian, 1.5% Black or African American, 1% Filipino, 0.1% Native American, and 5.1% other. Approximately 55% of the total student population participated in the free and reduced price meal program (Ed-Data, 2015). Two first-grade classes consisting of 49 students who received Repeated Readings of Poetry participated in this study during the 2014–2015 school year.

Treatment

The first-grade students who were selected for this study participated in repeated readings of poetry over a 4-month period from January to May 2015. Students were given a spiral bound 70-page notebook, for the purpose of creating their poetry notebook as they received new poems. Day 1 students were

introduced to a new poem. The poem was reproduced on paper for the students. Students wrote the title of the poem in the table of contents of their poetry notebook and glued it to the appropriate page. The teacher read the poem; after each line, students would chorally repeat the line that had been read (echo reading). The teacher modeled correct speed, intonation, and accuracy while reading the poem. Day 2 began with echo reading and then progressed to students chorally reading the poem with correct speed, intonation, and accuracy. If a mistake was made, the teacher modeled the correction and the students began reading from the beginning of the poem again. On Day 3, students were given an alternate copy of the poem. The lines of the poem were written in a mixed-up order. Students cut the lines of the poem into strips and glued them in the appropriate order on the page facing the original poem. After students were finished gluing, they independently read the poem until time was called. Students were then given one minute to read the poem aloud to themselves. When time was called, they would mark the word to which they progressed with a line. That process of timed one-minute reading was repeated three times. Students were encouraged to read quickly and accurately. On Day 4, students chose a partner with whom to read. With their partner, they each read the poem aloud individually while the other person followed along, and then they read together. They timed each other using 1-minute timers. Day 5 began with choral reading as a class. Students were randomly chosen to select a poem to be read aloud by the class. The poem in the notebook could be chosen from anyone.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

The assessment instrument chosen for this study was the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). For this study, ORF was administered in January and May. The students took the pretest in January 2015. They took the posttest in May 2015. Each time, the test was administered by a team comprised of a resource teacher, instructional aide, and three other instructional assistants on campus who pulled students from the classroom to a separate testing area. During the assessment, each student was individually required to read a set of three passages to determine the midrange oral reading fluency score. The person who administered the test maintained a running record to document the oral reading fluency score.

Statistical Analyses

The pretest and posttest ORF scores were used for the statistical analysis. Data were entered into the Statistics Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant change in scores between the pre and posttest. The level of significance was set at .05.

Summary

Chapter III presented and described the sample population, treatment, instrumentation and data selection, and method of statistical analysis. Chapter IV will report the results.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first-grade students. This chapter will present analysis of the data collected and report the statistical results of the effects of using Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first grade students.

Analysis

Scores from two first-grade classes at one elementary school that used Repeated Readings of Poetry daily were analyzed in this study. During the 2014–2015 academic year, 49 students were administered a pretest and posttest which provided data for the analysis. Of the 49 students, 22 were female and 27 were male.

This study used the district’s Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) assessment for the purpose of generating pre and posttest data. Pretest scores from the January 2015 district DIBELS assessment and posttest scores from May 2015 district DIBELS assessment were entered into the Statistics Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between students’ pre and posttest scores. An alpha level of .05 was used to determine statistical significance.

Findings Related to the Hypothesis

There is a significant difference in the reading fluency of first-grade students after participating in Repeated Readings Poetry activities over a 4-month period. The results of the analysis indicate that there was a significant difference between the means of the pre and posttest scores (see Table 1). The mean posttest score was significantly higher than the mean pretest score.

Table 1

Student Pre and Posttest DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) Scores

Variable	<i>N</i>	M	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Pretest	49	49.02	35.565	-9.545	.001*
Posttest	49	67.51	36.414		

* $p < .05$

Summary

Chapter IV presented an analysis of the data collected and reported the statistical results of the effects of Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first-grade students. Chapter V will present the conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of Repeated Readings of Poetry on the reading fluency of first-grade students. This quantitative study used data from the school district's winter and spring Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) assessments. Chapter V presents conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Conclusions

With the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which were developed in 2010, an emphasis on reading for information, applying what is learned in the classroom to real world situations, using higher level critical thinking skills and enhancing problem solving underscores reading fluency as one of the foundational skills needed to access the core curriculum (Rothman, 2012). Educators have always searched for ways to adapt their curriculum to best suit the needs of their students and improve reading fluency. One way to elicit fluent readers is repeated reading. This approach can be used with any adopted program text, and research has shown reader's theater and specific repeated reading interventions produce significant gains in reading fluency (Corcoran & Davis, 2005). The data selected for analysis were derived from first-grade students who participated in Repeated Readings of Poetry. Participating students engaged daily in the Repeated Readings of Poetry. This

supplemental activity was used outside of the reading core and occurred each week over a 4-month period. Each poem was introduced and practiced in the prescribed manner within a 5-day span before the introduction of another poem. A paired sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the means of pre and posttest ORF scores. The scores were entered into the SPSS and analyzed through the application of a paired sample *t*-test. An alpha level of .05 was used to determine statistical significance. The results of the analysis suggest that participation in Repeated Readings of Poetry does have a positive impact on reading fluency.

Implications

The results are supported by Ates (2013) and Huang et al. (2008) who noted in their studies similar fluency gains after students participated in repeated reading sessions. An important component to the repeated reading process was that each poem was introduced and repeatedly read in a consistent predictable manner each time. The current study ensured this process was established and maintained throughout the 4-month period. This activity may have helped increase the oral reading fluency rate for each student.

For teachers, using the strategy of repeated reading can be extremely appealing due to its simplistic nature and no new materials are required. Also, this strategy provides students with the opportunity to develop a positive attitude and greater sense of self confidence in reading (Corcoran & Davis, 2005). This researcher concurs that this observation is particularly true with students who are

considered nonreaders. Nonreaders are extremely excited to participate in this practice because they feel successful within the parameters of repeated reading practice. Considering the results of this study and other research findings that support repeated readings strategies, educators at the school selected for this study will continue to supplement reading instruction with repeated poetry readings across the entire first grade to enhance each student's oral reading fluency.

Recommendations for Further Research

- Conduct a qualitative study that examines the perceptions and opinions of elementary school teachers who implement repeated reading programs.
- Conduct a quantitative study comparing the differences in reading fluency achievement between an experimental group that is using repeated readings of poetry and a control group that does not use repeated readings of poetry.
- Conduct a quantitative study on repeated readings of poetry with a larger sample size and across grade levels to determine if significant statistical differences exist.
- Conduct a longitudinal study on repeated readings of poetry to determine if positive effects on reading fluency continue over time.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Ates, S. (2013). The effect of repeated reading exercises with performance-based feedback on fluent reading skills. *Reading Improvement, 50*, 158-165.
Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ1023479)
- Bell, D. M., Markley, B. K., & Yonker, R. J. (1990). *The effect of repeated readings on elementary students' attitudes toward reading*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED326844)
- Brown, E., (2006). *History of reading instruction*. Retrieved from <http://www.thephonicspage.org/On%20Phonics/historyofreading.html>
- California Department of Education. (n.d.). *The Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999: CalEdFacts*. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/pa/cefpsaa.asp>
- California Department of Education. (2014). *2014 Adequate yearly progress report information guide*. Retrieved from www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ay/documents/aypinfoguide14.pdf
- Corcoran, C. A., & Davis, A. D. (2005). A study of the effects of readers' theater on second and third grade special education students' fluency growth. *Readers Improvement, 42*, 105-111. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ725382)
- Ed-Data. (2015). *Home page [Database]*. Retrieved from www.ed-data.k12.ca.us

- Gardner, D. P. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform. An open letter to the American people*. A Report to the Nation and Secretary of Education.
- Huang, L. V., Nelson, R. B., & Nelson, D. (2008). Increasing reading fluency through student-directed repeated reading and feedback. *California School Psychologist, 13*, 33-40. doi:10.1007/BF03340940
- Jennings, J. (2012). *Reflections on a half-century of school reform: Why have we fallen short and where do we go from here?* Retrieved from <http://www.cepdc.org/displayDocument.cfm?DocumentID=392>
- Juul, H., Poulsen, M., & Elbro, C. (2014). Separating speed from accuracy in beginning reading development. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 106*, 1096-1106. doi:10.1037/a0037100
- Kauerz, K. (2002). *No child left behind policy brief literacy* [NCLB Policy Brief]. Retrieved from <http://education.ucf.edu/mirc/research/nclb%20policy%20brief%20-%20literacy.pdf>
- Kemerer, F., & Sansom, P. (2013). *California school law* (3rd ed.). CA: Stanford University College.
- Lo, Y., Cooke, N. L., & Starling, A. P. (2011). Using a repeated reading program to improve generalization of oral reading fluency. *Education and Treatment of Children, 34*, 115-140. doi:10.1353/etc.2011.0007
- Pikulski, J. J., & Chard, D. J. (2005). Fluency: bridge between decoding and reading comprehension. *Reading Teacher, 58*, 510-519. doi:10.1598/RT.58.6.2

- Rothman, R. (2012). A common core of readiness. *Educational Leadership: College, Careers, Citizenship, 69*(7), 10-15. Retrieved from ERIC database. (EJ988712)
- Swain, K. D., Leader-Janssen, E. M., & Conley, P. (2013). Effects of repeated reading and listening passage preview on oral reading fluency. *Special Education and Communication Disorders Faculty Publications, 50*, 12-18. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/spedfacpub/9>
- Vadasy, P. F., & Sanders, E. A. (2008). Repeated reading intervention: Outcomes and interactions with readers' skills and classroom instruction. *Journal Of Educational Psychology, 100*, 272-290. doi:10.1037/0022-0663.100.2.272
- Wexler, J., Vaughn, S., Roberts, G., Denton, C. A. (2010). The efficacy of repeated reading and wide reading practice for high school students with severe reading disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 25*, 2-10. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5826.2009.00296.x
- Wheldall, K. (2000). Does rainbow repeated reading add value to an intensive literacy intervention program for low-progress readers? An experimental evaluation. *Educational Review, 52*, 29-36. doi:10.1080/00131910097388