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**THE EFFECTS OF ORTON GILLINGHAM SUPPLEMENTAL
INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES DURING SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION
IN A FIRST GRADE INCLUSION CLASSROOM**

by

Kathleen G Tiver

A Thesis

Submitted to the
Department of Interdisciplinary and Inclusive Education
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Master of Arts in Special Education

at

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Thesis Chair: S. Jay Kuder, Ed.D.

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Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to my daughters Addyson and Alexa, for their understanding while I completed countless hours on research, writing, and completing this study. To Andrew, for your unwavering support and unconditional love during the school year. To my family, for helping with our girls when our schedules needed an extra set of hands.

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Abstract

Kathleen G Tiver
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SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION IN A FIRST GRADE INCLUSION CLASSROOM
2015-2016
S. Jay Kuder, Ed.D.
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The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of leveled literacy through guiding reading and leveled literacy reading in conjunction with supplemental small group instruction utilizing *Orton Gillingham* techniques. This study was completed in a first grade inclusive classroom. This study was created by results from beginning of the year (September) independent reading assessments. Students who were incorporated into this study as part of the instructional group read at least three grade below excepted level, and were not classified students. Students were monitored and formally assessed at each marking period of the school year to measure successes. Students in the control group met during guided reading only utilized small group Level Literacy provided through *Fountas and Pinnell*. The instructional group met daily and received both small group instruction utilizing the *Orton Gillingham* techniques as well as the Level Literacy provided by *Fountas and Pinnell*. Overall, the students reading levels increased at a minimum of three levels. The study showed students who were given the instructional techniques provided by both programs were more successful and improved more than students who only have one resource.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the beginning of the school year, elementary students are assessed on their individual reading level. The students are called up to the teacher one by one, given a random book based off their level from June and expected to read it and then answer comprehension questions. Students are expected to read at their level from June or higher. Most students are able to read, but generally they cannot read at the level at which they were reading at the end of the previous school year. The students often struggle through the reading of the text, give answers that they are thinking are correct. The younger students generally think they did well and always want to impress their teachers. The older elementary students, will know and remember if they did not do well or had to read a story that they have done already and will become frustrated. This test is incredibly important for students reading levels, and what direction their services will go in for the school year. The students who are below grade level will be placed into different tiers and/or categories. They will be given and provided more support, more resources, and more direct instruction than the students that are on current grade level.

When students are assessed, they are required to read at a certain percentage or better and with a certain level of accuracy pertaining to their comprehension responses. The percentage needs to be at least at 90% accuracy or better in order for a student to be able to be on that level for comprehension. Students cannot read the pictures as they have learned to do as a reading strategy, and they cannot add their own thoughts into the sentences. The student must read the words exactly as written on the page, and answer the questions as close to the text as possible. Often, especially in lower socio economic

areas, reading levels are below grade level. (Kajsa Yang Hansen, 2001) The caregivers do not have the resources to give the students the extra support needed.

There are services provided by school districts that are funded by New Jersey. Response to Intervention was started to help struggling students who are not classified with any disability, but cannot function at the appropriate grade level without support. There are different tiers in this system. Tier 1 is for the highest students that are struggling, but are just below grade level or struggling just in one area. Tier 2 is for those that are struggling more, but will not be seen by a RTI teacher more than 2 times a week. Tier 3 is the students that are below grade level, struggling in every aspect and needs to be seen in a small group setting (no more than 4 students) and worked with at minimum 4 days a week (Dickman, 2015).

Once a classroom teacher has completed their reading assessment (such as Fountas and Pinnell (F&P)) the scores are put into a database to be kept in the school. Once all the scores are inputted, the RTI team will begin their assessments on the lowest scoring students to determine what tier to place students in. Generally speaking, all of these assessments and meeting with students are not completed until the end of September or the beginning of October when valuable instructional time is being utilized, but those who are struggling are not receiving the services as of that moment.

The traditional way of teaching literacy is utilizing a literacy block, and breaking down that block into different pieces. The block could be broken into an eighty minute period that incorporates whole group, small group, guided reading and writing. During that literacy block, guided reading is implemented in a center rotation fashion. The teacher meets with groups of students and reads with them, teaching new reading

strategies, on their actual reading level. This is completed for every student in the classroom. Most school districts require that students who are reading at three levels or more below grade level must be met with each day in small group setting. There is the whole group lesson, which is the focus and target skill for the entire class each week and then each small group has their own skills they are working on. Small Group Guided Reading has already proven to work (Wortman, 2010) and that is not in question. What is in question is does small group instruction in the classroom during guided reading and in conjunction with RTI services allow for the students to make grade level reading expectations versus the students who are only receiving everyday small group instruction.

In this study, I will examine the effectiveness of utilizing both strategies versus just one. I intend to look at the differences in testing results when students receive RTI services as well as Guided Reading in the classroom versus the students that are below level but only receive in classroom support utilizing guided reading. I believe that the students who are being offered both techniques will increase their performance on assessments and possibly even attain grade level.

The group that is only receiving guided reading instruction is receiving this only in the classroom. Through the district protocol, students who are reading below grade level must be met with for a minimum of 15 minutes each day. Students who are reading on level or only one level below have to be met with at least 3 times a week. The students who are reading more than 1 grade level below are also receiving RTI services. RTI utilizes a program called Orton Gillingham which is a direct instruction reading program. During our weekly meetings, the RTI teacher assigned to my class and myself, as well as my co teacher discuss the students and progress or setbacks that have occurred

in the last week. The students that are grouped with RTI scored more than 2 grade levels below the current expectation for grade level using Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment.

Orton Gillingham is a new program being utilized by the school district. The RTI teachers were just trained in the program over the summer, and most classroom teachers have been trained or at least one teacher in each classroom has been trained. It is a direct instruction multi-sensory approach to teaching reading. It continuously “trains” the student by introducing different letters and sounds, along with hand motions to remember the key topics. It has an ongoing assessment built into the program. The program is built on the dynamics of step one (phonemic awareness) in reading, and builds only when concepts are mastered. The downfall to this program in the district, is it is not aligned with the current literacy curriculum. Therefore, teachers are teaching two different topics and have separate objectives that do not align together potentially confusing children.

I have been a classroom teacher for many years, as both a general education teacher and also a special education teacher. I have been afforded many opportunities to utilize strategies and techniques to help students and guide them in the direction needed. I utilize Guided Reading (to be known as GR) instruction each day. I meet with my groups for 15 minutes daily, and work on techniques that match what the whole group target skill is that week. I have the ability to pull at all my different resources and trainings to supplement where needed to attain goals.

Guided Reading works in small groups. Since class sizes are increasing therefor, grouping is becoming more and more difficult each day. It is harder to manage the independent groups as we (teachers) are working with small groups. It is hard to plan for

every group that you will be working with for the week. I believe that this difficulty in the classroom will be supplemented with RTI instruction as a pull out method. This will make the class smaller during the literacy block allowing for more student focused time, and possibly even longer small groups.

The Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) guided reading system was created in 2006. It was started to replace the basal literacy series that was proving not to work for many students. Although, the basal series is a great whole group instructional tool students cannot master tasks, skills, and goals with just that one resource. GR gives each student the opportunity to learn at their own individual level, and be paced at their readiness. It is also allows for learners of all levels to utilize this instruction.

My research questions that I intend to examine and answer are:

Do students who are serviced with RTI instruction (utilizing Orton Gillingham curriculum) as well as classroom guided reading instruction have the ability to increase at least three reading levels while mastering the tasks and skills needed based on the reading curriculum currently used (Journeys)?

Do students who are only being serviced with guided reading have the ability to increase at least three reading levels while mastering the tasks and skills needed based on the curriculum currently used (Journeys)?

This study will be conducted in the classroom, which is an inclusive setting. There are currently 26 students in this classroom, 8 students have been tested into RTI services on a 3 times a week schedule. There are 2 groups that are involved in this study: 18 students are only receiving guided reading instruction and 8 students are receiving

RTI and guided reading instruction based off their performance of Fountas & Pinnell in the beginning of September. There are also 6 students who are currently classified, those students do not get RTI services and will be grouped with the only guided reading instruction students.

The students that are classified have a mix of classifications. It is important to note that 2 of these students have severe Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and often have meltdowns that are uncontrollable. These meltdowns often lead to non-compliance, and refusal to complete assignments during the time allotted. They generally will scream and cry when having a moment, and inhibit the other students from getting the direct instruction they should be receiving. The other students are classified as Other Health Impaired, Autistic, and Specific Learning Disability. They are all in the inclusion classroom full day, and expected to meet the same goals as their peers but modified as needed. I expect each student to be able to increase levels with GR.

The variable for this study is utilizing RTI services that are using Orton Gillingham Reading Curriculum and Guided Reading Level Literacy. Orton Gillingham is new to the district, and does not match the current Literacy Curriculum *Journeys* by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. We are able to tweak and cater our GR lessons to match the *Journeys* curriculum generally. Orton Gillingham (to be known as OG) is a strict direct instruction program that has been proved to work in other school districts. OG is being used in Kindergarten classrooms right now, and also by the RTI team. The program is designed to teach a lesson, then reteach a lesson by spiraling. The concepts are always being introduced and reviewed by spiraling.

The downfall of the Orton Gillingham program is it does not match the curriculum we utilize in the classroom. This study will show if utilizing both techniques are beneficial for the students. I am believing that it will be, but also concerned that teaching different topics to struggling learners may only make progress not obtainable and the students may be too confused.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Reading and reading comprehension along with the skills that go with them are learned beginning at an early age. Reading is not just reading words on a page, but also using pictures to help tell the story, utilizing strategies to read, and adding extra detail to a story. Numerous studies have shown that reading at an early age is beneficial for language development, reading development, speech development and overall academic excellence. (Roskos, 2005) Introducing reading skills early in childhood can help determine if a child will need more help while in school or even if a child has a learning disability or another disability not yet determined.

Early interactions with literacy helps develop better learners overall (Jordan, 2000). According to the National Reading Panel (2000), reading has five main components. These components are: text comprehension, fluency, phonics, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary development. Each component needs to be mastered and worked on in order to have success overall with reading. One area cannot be lacking, or the overall literacy package will be incomplete. Early development and interactions with literacy can and will help a child grow academically (Jordan, 2000). A child needs to know how to read and understand what they are reading in all areas of academics. Through active engagement in the reading process, children learn ways to use their growing knowledge and skills flexibly and in combination with all domains of development. (Brown, 2014)

Reading Disorders

A person who has difficulty in an aspect of reading, has some type of reading disorder (Jacobs, 2007). A reading disorder is when a person has trouble processing any

part of the reading process (Jacobs, 2007). There are different types of reading disorders. There are three main types: dyslexia, alexia, and hyperlexia (Gough, 1986). There are sub types of each of these disorders though, and these can often overlap. These reading disabilities can result in the inability to understand what is read, inability to decode letters and/or words, or a combination of both. (Gough, 1986)

Dyslexia was once generalized as having difficulty identifying letters as they are. This could be reading the letter “p” as the letter “b.” After more intense research has been sought after and reviewed, the research has shown that dyslexia is not prone to reversing letters or words and that the cognitive deficit responsible for the disorder is related to the language system (Shaywitz, 1996). More specifically, dyslexia reflects the deficiency in processing of phonemes that make up all spoken and written words. Current models of reading and dyslexia now provide an explanation of why some very intelligent people have trouble learning to read and performing other language-related tasks (Shaywitz, 1996).

Often, dyslexia goes unidentified until late elementary school years (2nd-3rd grade) because identifying letters backwards is common in kindergarten and 1st grade. It is also age appropriate to write letters backwards until 1st grade. The diagnosis of dyslexia is not an intellectual disability, and should not be compared to one. Dyslexia is a disability that can be worked with and with proper trainings, can be overcome.

Hyperlexia can be associated with Autism but is rarely diagnosed. One with hyperlexia will have the ability to read at a higher level that is expected for their age, but struggles with reading comprehension, understanding and using language, and struggles

with social interactions (Kozak M.A., 2007). These components and characteristics are often found with an autistic child therefore they are generally diagnosed together.

Alexia is much different than the other forms of disorders. Alexia is a disorder that occurs after trauma to the brain has occurred. When a person has alexia, they have already been able to read literally but some type of trauma occurred to the brain. Due to this trauma, a person will not be able to be literate again. There are different sub types of alexia, but they all generalize together with the same disabilities. Although interesting, a person will still be able to write and spell. (Friedman, 2012)

Literacy Beginnings

Literacy begins with learning the sounds of letters, and very early on child learn the letters of the alphabet followed by the sounds (phonics) of each letter (Schmitt, 2004). Introducing early literacy strategies and techniques is critical in child development. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (2003), suggests providing children with early literacy development to encourage and promote a richer learning environment. The study suggested different teaching strategies that are listed below to utilize in the classroom beginning with preschool (Roskos C. a., 2003). It is also suggested to connect play time with literacy learning center to promote retention of knowledge. This is a significant finding and relates to Orton Gillingham Instruction which promotes multi-sensory based instruction. Overall, the instructional strategies listed are multi-sensory to incorporate all students needs and learning preferences.

There are eight strategies that are suggested by Roskos (2003). The first is a teacher rich environment, followed by storybook reading, phonics based activities, alphabet activities, supporting emergent reading, supporting emergency writing, share a

book, and finally content based activities. These areas that are promoted are crucial pieces of evidence to my study. In my study, one piece of curriculum uses some of these areas listed. The other piece of curriculum utilizes a combination of each strategy noted. Most importantly, as noted in the study is the strategy to utilize role play as much as possible when teaching. The theory behind this is children will retain more knowledge when they are actively engage and involved in an activity (Roskos C. a., 2003). Children are more willing to work and “learn” if there is something fun incorporated.

Once these skills are introduced and worked on in preschool, a child has more readiness for kindergarten. From my experience as a former kindergarten teacher, the teacher is challenged with many different tasks during the school year. There are children that have been to preschool and are kindergarten ready, there are children that have never been to school and do not have the basics for kindergarten. There are children that do not know how to hold a pencil, and then there are students that are so advanced they are getting into trouble because things are not up to their speed or they are not being challenged enough.

Kindergarten teachers have a very difficult year ahead of them every September. They have to walk a fine line, and determine a balancing act early on. This “balancing act” will involve finding the correct curriculum to use, curriculum interventions, developing literacy centers and incorporating all the other objectives that need to be met daily in the classroom. If students have not been exposed to the literacy goals that correspond to kindergarten, then the student is already behind for the school year in comparison to the students that have had exposure. That is when the general “basal series” literacy will not work for the entire class, and students will be left behind.

The basal series literacy has been the “go to” series for school districts to buy and create their curriculum. Most series include phonics, vocabulary, writing, reading and comprehension sections of each reading piece. Unfortunately, these series are directed for one level of learners and one type of learner. These learners are all on level. All educators know, the classroom has so many different learners and has many different levels of learners in the class. The basal series does not meet the needs of every type of learner in the classroom, and the level of each learner.

The way students learn has changed in recent years. No longer can teachers just assign book work, give assignments to work in small groups, put a movie on and take notes, or teach the class whole group the entire day. Students learn differently, students are on different levels, and the resources that were once available to teachers are no longer available. Teachers used to be supported by “resource room” teachers or basic skills teachers, and most school district due to budget cuts and funding have eliminated these positions. Once these positions were eliminated, testing scores from the state assessments had a rapid decline (ALEX, 2011). Now that these scores have been released and budgets have been cut, it was time for school districts to go back to the very beginning and create a plan that would make all students be successful despite the lack of funding available.

Fountas and Pinnell History and Instruction

Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Instruction is a literacy program that is designed to be a supplement to the basal series currently used in the classroom. It was developed by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell originally to supplement teaching in grades kindergarten through second. The authors found (through their own research and

teaching experiences) that teachers needed more help and support to service their students struggling with literacy. There was a severe need for a literacy program that could be catered towards each individual learner through differentiated instruction. Individual reading levels have been used for many years as Irene Fountas created them over thirty years ago (Heinemman, 2012) using a gradient level system indicating letters as grade levels.

Fountas and Pinnell created a few text resources for teachers to help with different reading levels in the classroom and creating small groups for different instructional levels. From that point, they then created the Leveled Literacy Intervention system. It was then that they partnered with their publisher to write and publish books that were highly attractive, interactive and fun books. As these stories were written, lesson plans were also created to match the stories and become a guide for teachers. After that, the authors realized they would need a new way of completing assessments that would allow the teachers to put students on different levels, and also complete running records each time a group met.

Through more studies and research, they created the Benchmark Assessment System levels one and two. The assessments have books for each level that are fiction and nonfiction but stories that students have not read yet. The student picks which story he wants to read, does so and then answers questions relating to comprehension of the story. The testing monitor listens for accuracy and fluency when the student is reading. The monitor has been trained to listen closely and knows when to terminate the test when needed. The monitor is also trained to use the scripted responses when prompting a student for answers if needed. It should be noted that during the research of this program,

it is useful to students that are in kindergarten through second grade, but also struggling third and fourth grade learners as well as student classified special education.

(Heinemman, 2012)

The Fountas and Pinnell reading was created originally as a resource for teachers that had students that were struggling in literacy. It was for all teachers of all grade levels to utilize, and then became more fine-tuned with a series that was just for kindergarten through second grade. After completing more research, they expanded their resources to third through eighth grade. They also realized that this was a multi-sensory approach to teaching literacy, and students who were classified were making strides and successes as well (Ransford-Kaldon, 2010).

The Leveled Literacy System created by Fountas and Pinnell follows a creative and unique reading system that helps students become better readers. The system has different strategies that are used and built into each text on each level. There are three strategies: effective readers think within the text, effective readers think beyond the text, and effective readers think about the text (Patricia L. Scharer, 2005). Each story that goes with the system has these 3 components built into it. Readers are able to think about the text by understanding the basic content knowledge. Readers are able to think past the text by making outside connections to the story. Readers are able to think about the text by reviewing the text and the story itself. All of these concepts are taught to build on comprehension skills.

Many school districts widely across New Jersey utilize some type of leveled reading system, and most commonly it is Fountas and Pinnell because this series has not only leveled reading assessments, but also guided reading guides and resources. Most

importantly though, it can be used for every student. Due to the nature of how it was written, created, laid out, and published it can be used for students in each grade and on each level. This system is expensive to purchase for every teacher and that is a downfall on the program.

In 2009-2010, a study was completed to determine the effectiveness of Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) (Ransford-Kaldon, 2010). This study concluded that students that are given instruction based on LLI increased their reading levels by 1.5 to 5.5 benchmark levels (Ransford-Kaldon, 2010). The overall conclusion was that LLI is an appropriate small group reading instructional method, and has success with students. Students that were not in the LLI control group did also make progress, but not as successful only making it to 3 benchmark levels.

Another study was completed to Dr. Stephen Ross to determine the effectiveness of LLI in regards to teacher preparation, engagement, and implementation of the program. The findings of this study showed that almost 80% of the teachers in the control group had training of up to 20 hours in literacy instruction (Harrison, 2006) all coming from various schools. This is important to note because the trainings of the teachers were all different and in different locations, yet there was progress made and teachers felt comfortable with the program. There were also negative remarks about the program. A relatively high number felt the program was too cumbersome, and hard to organize at times (Harrison, 2006).

One problem with the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention Program is the expense of the entire program. Each teacher needs a full kit if they are working with students and literacy. This includes the pull out teachers, Response to Intervention

teachers, resource teachers, inclusion teachers and more. Once the kit is bought, the only cost to the districts will be the consumable materials each year. Teachers cannot just share a kit because teachers are generally working on the program at the same time. There is also training that goes into Fountas and Pinnell each year that is expensive, but Master Literacy teachers can attend the workshops and turn key the materials lessening the cost of training. A Master Literacy teacher is a teacher in the school building that holds a Masters Degree or higher, and is the direct contact for literacy. He/She conducts the trainings, implementations, workshops, helps facilitate different strategies within the literacy scope of the curriculum.

In the Fountas and Pinnell system, small reading groups (guided reading) are created in a classroom once the initial testing is completed. Students are grouped based on their independent reading level and most often, based off of their behaviors as well. The behavior piece is incredibly important when working with small groups because the students will rotate around the classroom and will be without an adult for most of the time period. Groups must be responsible to complete the work without adult supervisor, and be respectful of each other. It is important to establish routines early on during the school year that allows the students to know exactly what is going on and what is expected during small groups.

Once the groups have been made and determined, daily planning needs to be made to ensure success of the groups. Each group should be working on something related to the teacher guided reading center. If word work (sight words) are what is being focused on with the teacher, than each center should focus on the same thing but if different ways and avenues for the students to understand and grow. Students should not

be given work they do not understand nor can complete for the first time. Work should not be given that is a new topic and has not been taught yet. These centers should not be utilized as opening and closing for lessons, but as the heart of the lesson that can be created as student driven work.

As previously stated, students with disabilities have had success with reading interventions (Hsuying C. Ward, 2005). The language presented with the instruction can be altered and modified for the struggling reader. That is because students are given the opportunity to be left behind, and have lessons that are created to their specific needs (Education, 2010). Each student is different, and a student who is classified is no different. This type of instruction can be considered multi-sensory approach to learning. Multi-sensory learning is literally using the different senses during instruction (Kids, 2015). It incorporates the auditory learning (hearing and speaking), along with visual learning (seeing and perceiving) and finally kinesthetic and/or tactile learning (touch, movement, and doing) all together. Research shows when a teacher combines more than one teaching style, students will have more success because they are more engaged in the topic (Kids, 2015).

Orton Gillingham Approach to Reading Instruction

There are many literacy resources available to school districts. It is the districts' responsibility and goal to narrow down which program(s) are best for the students and the schools. It is important to look at the school climate as well as testing scores to make these determinations. One option that school districts have for students with significant reading

difficulties is the Orton Gillingham reading program. It has been used since the 1930's and was created by Samuel Torrey Orton and Anna Gillingham.

The program is phonics based since research shows that is an important component of literacy development. It is an intensive, sequential phonics-based system teaches the basics of word formation before whole meanings. The method will accommodate challenged learners and utilizes the three learning models, through which people learn—visual, auditory and kinesthetic. Unlike some scripted and rigid reading programs, the Orton-Gillingham approach is a system that allows for flexibility to accommodate each learner. (John, 2010)

Their approach to learning is concentrated in five areas: the areas are language based, multi-sensory, cognitive, flexible, and structured, sequential, and cumulative approaches. A key component to the Orton Gillingham method is the multi-sensory way of teaching. Multi-sensory is not the typical way of providing information to students. Multi-sensory incorporates all facets of teaching. Multi-sensory is designed to have the student involved and active in each lesson, as well as utilize the typical bookwork and teacher teaching materials. For example, when teaching the phonetic component to a word like “cat,” there is a hand motion/movement along with just sounding out the letters. There are also movement that go with short vowels and long vowels. These hand motions and/or movements provide a different way of remembering the concepts.

The kinesthetic way of teaching is really maintained in Orton Gillingham's style. It gives students a new avenue of comprehending and recalling the materials. The program also does not allow a student to move forward until the lesson is mastered. Although it does not hold them back, the program is designed to spiral through when a

concept is not mastered. For example, if the phonemic constituents of “cat” were not mastered at lesson 29, then the manual might give you the format to go to lesson 35 which reviews “cat” again instead of introducing a new topic in lesson 30. This allows for the student to still feel like they are making success, and will not become discouraged along the way. It also shows progress to the student, and is easily tracked.

The program is not student driven and cannot be completed in a center independently. The program is direct instruction. The manual is completely scripted and the student must work with a trained adult to complete the tasks each day. A minimum of thirty minutes is needed per rotation daily although a full lesson will take close to sixty minutes to complete.

Orton Gillingham is a very comprehensive and intense program that involved a lot of training for educators. The training is an intensive week long program or approximately thirty hours, and after that involves sessions of professional development. The program is a spiral based direct instruction program. It has many studies proving the successes. The downfall of this program is the training time, as well as the correlation between the program and current literacy programs being used.

Orton Gillingham is not to be taught as whole group instruction and is not to be used as the sole literacy curriculum. It is a supplemental program that should be utilized in small group or one on one instruction. It has many successes in literacy, but has also been used in mathematics and is successful too. The program builds on a student’s strength, and the curriculum presentations revolves around the students.

In a research study with seven control groups, six of the seven found that the Orton Gillingham reading approach had positive results and only one group did not find

positive results (John, 2010). Overall, the study found positive results and improvements in the areas of word attack, decoding, word reading, comprehension and spelling (John, 2010). Another study showed that first graders utilizing the Orton Gillingham approach made significant progress in the areas of phonological awareness, word attack, and reading comprehension (Giess, 2005). The control group noted improvements only in the area of reading comprehension.

There are also several reading supplementation programs that are derived from the Orton Gillingham approach. Some of these programs are, but not limited to: Alphabetic Phonics, Project Read, or Wilson Reading System (Hughes, 2014). It is believed that having a student involved in a multi sensory way allows for better instruction and ultimately, more retention on the objectives. These theories will allow for a student to make more academic progress.

The negative aspects of this program are the timing it takes to train professionals, and also the correlation between the program and the current literacy program being used. The current literacy program “Journeys” and “Orton Gillingham” program do not meet each other, and are not working on the same pieces of standards and/or objectives. An example of this is a kindergarten classroom may be working on the letter Tt based on the literacy whole group curriculum (Journeys), but the Orton Gillingham program may be introducing the letter Rr in the lesson. This can cause confusion for young learners. This can also cause concern and confusion for students who are classified with learning disabilities.

Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is grouping of teachers that work with students who are currently below grade level but have not qualified for special education services.

Response to Intervention is done in small groups, generally pull out instruction. The students are working on the same materials as the whole class, but at a different pace and work may be modified. These students are also assessed by their Response to Intervention teacher.

There are steps that have been developed for RTI to be successful. The first step is testing the student in question of struggling with literacy. The second step is proven strategies and techniques are implemented with the students, followed by step three which is tracking the progression of the strategies. Step four is modifying the instruction for those students who are still struggling. This step works hand in hand with step three, as the progression of each student must be followed closely. Step five is making the decision to continue with the program as planned, or move forward with referring the student to the special education team in the building (Eric Mesmer, 2008)

Response to Intervention teachers may utilize different curriculums or modify the current curriculum being used. They will often utilize supplementations to the curriculum instead of changing everything. This will lessen the confusion for the student, and keep a solid bond between work stations. The classroom teacher and the RTI teacher always collaborate with each other, and discuss progress or setbacks weekly. This school year, the supplement curriculum Orton Gillingham was purchased for RTI teachers to utilize for literacy instruction.

Students with a disability are not eligible to receive. Students who are classified are placed in a classroom that is least restrictive and will be the best setting for their needs. The classroom can be an inclusive setting where the student on with the general education class and has two teachers. The one teacher is a general education teacher, and the other teacher is a special education teacher. Students could also be placed in a self-contained classroom. This classroom has one special education teacher and an instructional aide. This classroom will utilize supplemental instructional materials as well as district wide curriculum materials. Students in the inclusive setting will not have access to Orton Gillingham programs. The materials are already modified for them as well as grading if needed therefore, supplemental instruction is not given. Students in the self-contained classroom may use Orton Gillingham, their needs are more severe.

Orton Gillingham has been known to be very successful with the dyslexic student (Hughes, 2014). It also has many successful studies with all students that have been classified with a learning disability from lower elementary through high school (Goeke, 2006). Studies showing the results have been backed by the National Reading Panel in 2000. Students are currently provided with small group modified instruction, in conjunction with guided reading and Journey's curriculums. Students are making success and progress thus far.

Orton Gillingham & Fountas and Pinnell

Students that have been classified already are not receiving services from the RTI teachers. Students are assessed in the beginning of the school year using leveled readers from Fountas and Pinnell and also benchmark math assessments. Students who read on grade level are considered on grade level and will not need further instructional

assistance. Students who read below expected grade level are put in a “tier” system.

There are three tiers. Students who read one grade level below are put in tier one, the tier that will need the least amount of assistance. Students reading two grade level below are placed in tier two, and students in three or more grade levels below are placed in tier three. These students are performing grossly behind grade level, and are the most academically severely challenged students in class. Every student receives small group literacy instruction.

In September, the students in my school read individually and independently to their teacher and also answer comprehension questions and are graded on fluency. If students are reading below grade level, then they are placed into RTI services. After that, the RTI team will meet with each child and decide which tier to place each student. Students that do end up qualifying for RTI will receive services from Orton Gillingham in small group pull out instruction, classroom guided reading from Fountas and Pinnell, and also whole group instruction using the literacy curriculum “Journeys.”

A study was completed by Michael Harvey in 2011, in which he compared Fountas and Pinnell’s Leveled Literacy Intervention to another reading instruction program Reading Recovery (Harvey, 2011). He wanted to find which instructional program was a better choice for supplementing reading instruction to the struggling learner. He learned that Reading Recovery produced higher results (greater reading level increases) than LLI (Harvey, 2011). It is important to note that the huge variation in instruction could be a factor in why the Reading Recovery program had better results. The mode of instruction is not a small group setting, but it is a one to one setting with the teacher and just one student (Harvey, 2011).

The possible negative attribute is the students could possibly be getting too much instruction at too many different intervals. The student that is qualifying for RTI is a struggling student. It is most appropriate to ensure this student is getting every available resource possible to make success occur. It is also most appropriate to make sure these resources are all aligned together and being most beneficial to the student. I strongly believe the struggling “RTI” student will benefit from all the services provided in some way.

Summary

The struggling student must make success. The teachers working with all the students must be successful. The students must be given every opportunity possible to be successful. The students that are not struggling will still be successful, but just utilizing one setting, one teacher, and one focused program.

Students all learn differently, different settings and have different needs. Students that are offered a balancing literacy program will have more success than those that are not. Students that are offered more support and services will most often have more success than those that are only offered a traditional method.

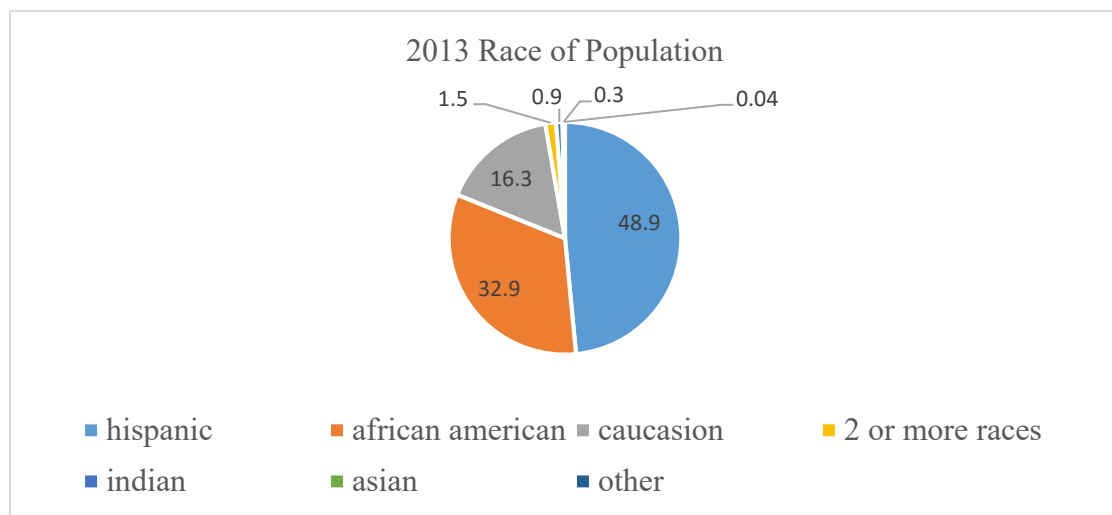
This study will show that students that are struggling who are currently aligned with Orton Gillingham as well as classroom guided reading will have more success than those that are only offered guided reading through Fountas and Pinnell. Through meetings with teachers that are designated to teach Orton Gillingham as well as colleagues who are only teaching using Leveled Readers through Fountas and Pinnell data will show the difference between the two programs and grouping of students.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Setting and Participants

This study was, set in a first grade inclusion classroom. The school district is urban with 93% of the population receiving some version of state assistance. The school has approximately 200 students in it, ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade. The school sits back on a corner property in a quiet location of the township. The school will open its new building come September 2016, which will also have a direct wide “redirect” of students.



(City Data, 2016)

Figure 1. Race distribution of the School District

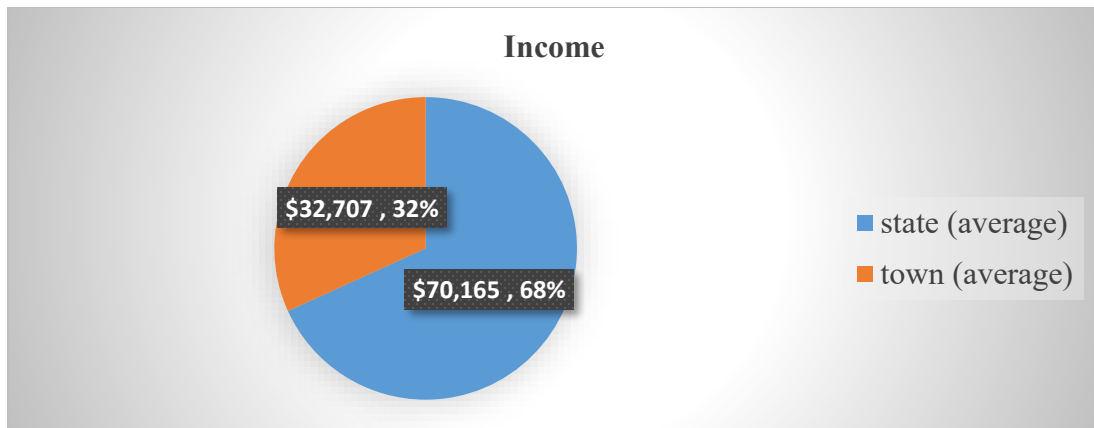
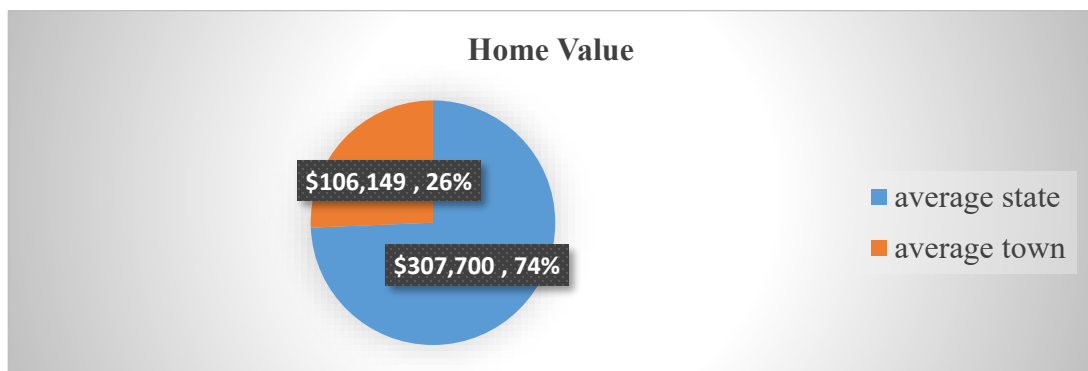


Figure 2. Income distribution



(City Data, 2016)

Figure 3. Home Value Comparison

The school includes: three kindergarten classes, one of them is inclusion, two first grade classes, one is inclusion, two second grade classes, one is inclusion, two third grade classes, two fourth grade classes, two fifth grade classes, and a mix of classes in the middle school with a special education teacher to follow inclusive students. There is also a self-contained special education classroom that has kindergarten through second

grade. The inclusion classrooms contain two teachers, a general education teacher and a special education teacher. These classrooms have students that are classified, but can meet the grade level expectations with support from the special education teacher. These students are expected to perform at current grade level, but with assistance and modifications.

The staff is comprised of two administrators and a master literacy coach, as well as twenty classroom teachers, thirteen special area teachers and/or support teachers, and five paraprofessionals. There are also other support staff in the building that were not listed.

This study was completed in the first grade inclusion classroom. The number of students has changed slightly since first being introduced in October. There are five students in the classroom who receive special educational services out of a total of twenty four students. There are eight students that have tested into Response to Intervention services with a minimum of three times a week. Those students were determined by their beginning of the year Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessment level. They fall into the tier 3 category, which shows they need the most support. They received pull out instruction in a small groups at a minimum of three times per week. Those students are were being seen in classroom guided reading groups. The remainder of the students in the classroom do not receive specialized services, including those that are classified.

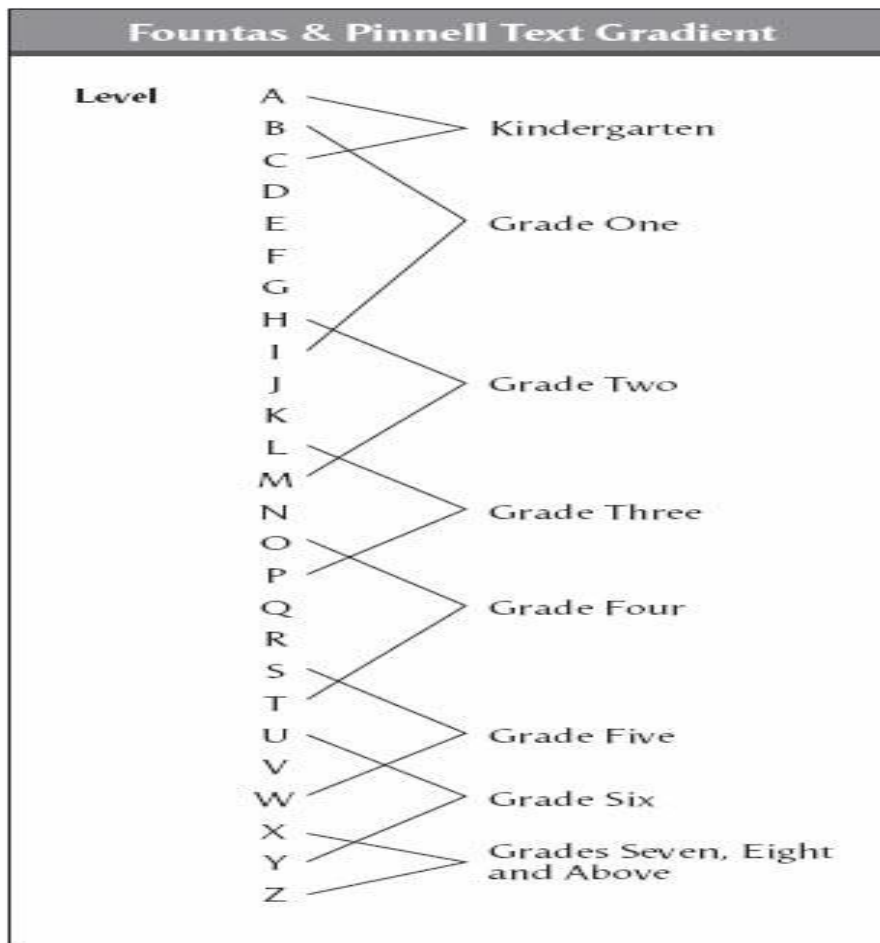


Figure 4. Fountas and Pinnell Gradient

In total, there are twenty four students in the classroom. Eight of those students receive both guided reading classroom instruction and response to intervention instruction through Orton Gillingham - the remaining sixteen students only receive guided reading instruction. These numbers were determined based off beginning of the year instructional reading level assessments through Fountas and Pinnell. These students read at an “A” or below “A” level. Those students were at a pre reading level. The above figure shows the gradient with which levels students should be on at which grade

level. It should be noted there are different levels for each grade, symbolizing beginning, middle and end of the year.

The students that are classified as eligible for special educational services have a mix of classifications, and those classified have changed since the beginning of this study. There are now five students classified and one student has recently obtained a 504 plan. The students have been classified with the following diagnosis: two students with Other Health Impaired, one students with Specific Learning Disability, one student with Autistic, and one student with Communication Impaired. The student that has obtained the 504 is due to her severe attention deficit hyperactivity (ADHD) diagnosis. Each student is expected to achieve grade level standards with extra help and support.

There are two teachers in the classroom, and six centers during literacy that rotate every two days. The lowest reading group receives guided reading instruction from a classroom teacher daily as well as supplemental instruction under the response to intervention (RTI) model. The first teacher (the general education teacher) works on the guided reading piece with each group. The special education teacher works with each center as well, but supports the RTI instruction and also the phonics skills that are being taught in the reading curriculum. During weekly team meetings, the RTI teacher confers with the classroom teachers to discuss progress that has been made or skills that are still struggling with. The special education teacher prepares her small group lessons for the week based off the conferring with the RTI teacher. The general education teachers also bases her lessons off the RTI instruction for the lower readers.

There are twenty four students in the classroom currently, but for the purposes of this study will only be recording the results on eighteen of the students. The justification

for this reasoning is the remaining students are classified, and follow different parameters in the classroom. Their instruction is modified, and overall their instruction is catered to their individual goals and/or objectives. Since they are classified, they do not have access to the Orton Gillingham instruction. The district is just utilizing Orton Gillingham this school year, and made the decision that only students who are in the Tier Three setting will be using Orton Gillingham. Next school year, it will be utilized for each student in the primary grades kindergarten to second. For the purpose of this study, students with IEP's will be in the group just using classroom guided reading. There are eight students who are currently receiving supplemental instruction by the Response to Intervention team.

Participant A- is a first grade Hispanic girl. She began the school year at an AA reading level which correlates to a pre-reading ability. She is from a strong Hispanic culture. She is a very quiet child, but is a pleasure to have in class and tries her best at all times. She struggles with reading and also math. Her parents declined ESL services last year when she was tested and could not qualify. She has been referred to Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) for academic support.

Participant B- is a first grade Hispanic boy. He also receives ESL services. He struggles with reading, but excels in math. He started the school year at an AA, pre-reading abilities. He is well liked by his classmates, and a joy to have. He has been referred to I&RS for academics.

Participant C- is a first grade African American girl. She is very defiant with her behavior and has meltdowns daily. When she does not get her way, she will have behavior issues. She will throw objects, kick things, start screaming and other behaviors.

These meltdowns also occur when she does not understand a concept immediately. She struggles at home with her Mother and sisters. She rarely completes her homework, and is late to school daily. In September, she was reading at an AA level. She has been referred to Intervention and Referral Services I&RS (team) for academic concerns.

Participant D- is a first grade African American girl. She has a 504 and has also been referred to I&RS (and the Child Study Team (CST) for more academic support as well as behavior support. She is very defiant, will have meltdown and outbursts during class. She also has these inappropriate behaviors in all other classes. She was at an A reading level in September.

Participant E- is a first grade Hispanic girl. She is an absolute pleasure in the classroom, although very chatty. In September, she would not speak to anyone and it took a few months for her to warm up to people. Seeing her communicate now is a welcome surprise! She has been referred to the I&RS team for academic concerns. She does receive ESL services, but also struggles with math and writing. She was at an AA reading level in September.

Participant F- is a first grade African American girl. She is very young, and one of the smallest children in the class. She is a pleasure in class, and tries her best. She struggles tremendously with reading, and also in math but when working in a small group during math she will understand and retain the concept taught. Her beginning reading level was an AA. She was referred to the I&RS team for academic concerns.

Participant G- is a first grade African American boy. He is very young and immature. His behavior impede his learning and those around him on a daily basis. His

mother has been contacted regarding behaviors, and states she is having the same issues at home. He struggles with math, reading, and writing. He has been referred to the I&RS team for academic concerns. His September reading level was AA.

Participant H: is a first grade African American boy. He is very artistic and thoughtful. He struggles in all areas. He is very sensitive, and has behavior outbursts at times. He works best as a one on one instructional technique, and also when he sits away from any distractions. He is generally late to school as are all of his siblings. He is a behavior concern at times, and will shut down when corrected due to his sensitivity. He was referred to the I&RS team for academic concerns.

The remaining participants are non-classified students that were not referred to the I&RS team for academic support. These students meet with the classroom teachers through a weekly rotation schedule only. The “labeled” participants receive guided reading from the classroom teachers, as well as supplemental instruction via the Orton Gillingham curriculum and approach in small groups daily. These students are participants A-H.

The State of New Jersey has created a “grouping” of districts based on statewide assessments on student performance. The District Grouping Factor goes from A, B, CD, DE, FG, GH, I, and J. The highest performance is labeled a J whereas the lowest performing districts are classified as an A. The DFG gives an approach for classifying school districts using their socioeconomic status as the main information supporter. The state first created the DFG in 1975 using census data from 1970. It has been updated since then periodically. This information is imperative in understanding of student

performance on state assessments, “Abbott” district classification, and giving of state funding for education (District Factor Group, 2014).

In Cumberland County, there are fifteen townships and one vocational school that was not included in this number. The most recent DFG was in 2000, and the townships ranged from A-D, showing most school districts are in the “lowest” performing area. The cities of Cumberland County include Bridgeton, Vineland, and Millville. All three cities received an A in this study. Those numbers (letters) show the lower the socioeconomic households hold the lowest scores. According to the latest scaling, this district has received an A.

Variables

The independent variable for this study is utilizing the Response to Interventions (RTI) team that are using Orton Gillingham Reading Curriculum and Guided Reading Level Literacy. Orton Gillingham is new to the district, and does not match the current Literacy Curriculum *Journeys* by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. We are able to tweak and cater our Guided Reading (GR) lessons to match the *Journeys* curriculum generally. Orton Gillingham (to be known as OG) is a multi sensory instruction that focuses on phonics based approach to reading. OG is being used in Kindergarten classrooms right now which replaces the *Journeys* phonics portion, and also by the RTI team. The program is designed to teach a lesson, then reteach a lesson by spiraling. The concepts are always being introduced and reviewed by spiraling.

The dependent variable for this study is guided reading instruction and reading on their current instructional level. I have kept running records on each student and have

monitored their progress. Each week, I have met with each student in each group and have assessed their current levels. To this date, every student has made progress.

Procedure

The instruction took place in the morning literacy block of the day. As a class, we complete the whole group lesson then break out into small group centers. Guided Reading is completed daily with students who have reading levels below that expected for students of their age. Although reading may not occur daily, it is supplemented with word work, rhyming words, blending, decoding, comprehension skills, and/or sight word study.

In order to obtain baseline data, students were individually tested on their ability to read a passage or story and answer comprehension questions from the Fountas and Pinnell benchmark system. The reading level of the passage was determined from their June testing recorded level. Students read and answered questions to a 90% accuracy for fluency and comprehension questions to show their independent level, and instructional level. During the course of the school year, running records and anecdotal notes are taken to show improvement, growth, set backs, and goals achieved or not achieved for each student.

Design

There are three phases in this study. The first part is the initial baseline statistics and reading level. The second part is the guided reading in the classroom daily based off of the initial information. The third part is the pull out instruction with supplemental

Orton Gillingham instruction in small groups or even one on one settings to supplement literacy.

Chapter 4

Results

Summary

This study examined whether small group instruction in the classroom during guided reading in conjunction with the use of the Orton-Gillingham reading program enabled students with reading difficulties to make grade level reading expectations versus students with reading difficulties who are only receiving every day small group instruction. One class participated in the study, with students receiving general classroom instruction (control group) and students receiving general classroom instruction as well as supplemental small group instruction. The small group supplemental instruction was provided by using Orton Gillingham instructional models and lesson plan templates

Baseline Results

Table 1 shows the baseline scores for the control and intervention groups. The intervention and control group teachers graded their student's assessments but used the same rubric to do so. The table shows their reading levels in September.

The data shows that the entire control group was entering this grade at below A, which also shows the students exited their previous class below reading level. It is important to note the variation of the initial data and end of subject data. There has been movement of students with transfer in and transfer out. A student in intervention group transferred out during mid-year. The student was present at mid-year assessment, therefore that data will be included. The student was not present for the end of subject assessment. There has also been 2 other students in the control group that were part of

the initial assessment, but that is it. That data shows there have been 2 other students that transferred in at mid-year assessment, their data will not be reflected as I do not have a baseline score for each of them.

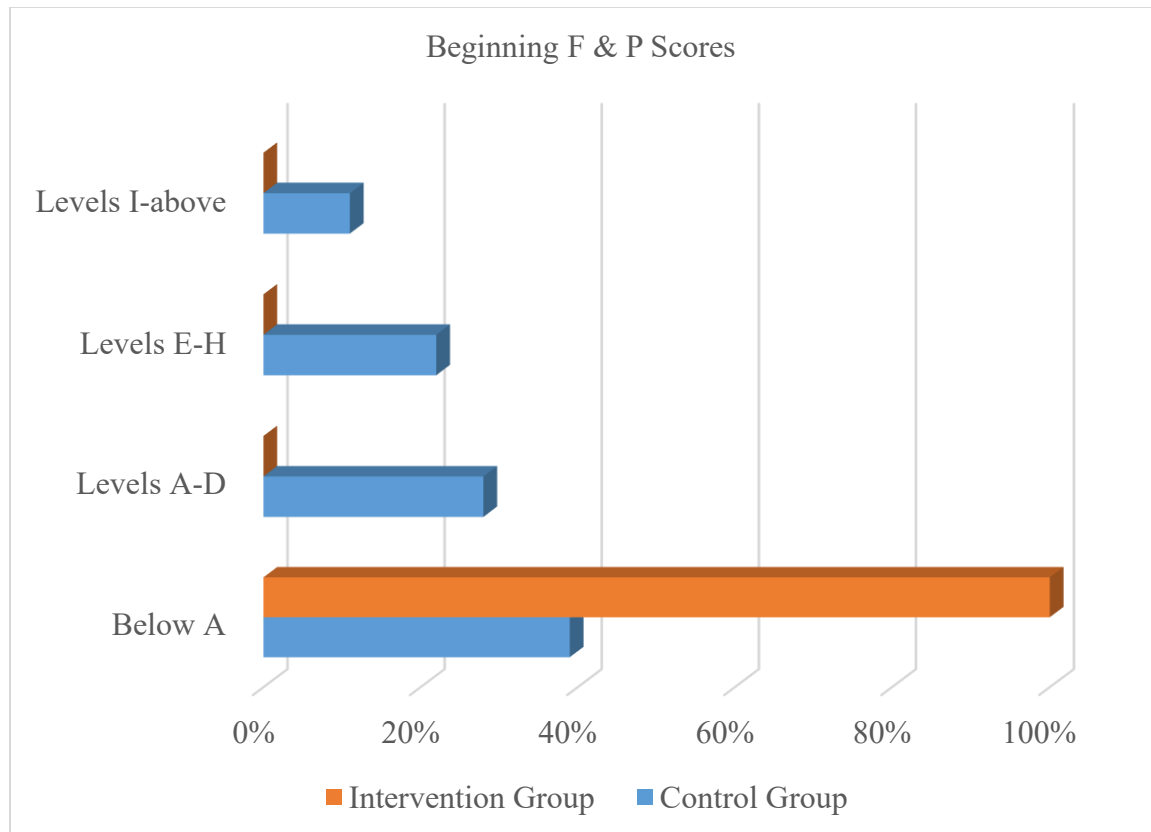


Figure 5. Baseline Results

Intervention

After September, the intervention began utilizing the Orton Gillingham program in small group instruction as well as Guided Reading at student's current reading levels

during small group instruction. The intervention group met each day with the Orton Gillingham teacher, and every other day with the Guided Reading teacher. The students in the control group rotated through meeting with teachers at least twice a week. The intervention group worked primarily on phonemic awareness skills in small group, and then rotated to reading. At the end of each week, students completed an exit slip from the target goals that week to assess mastery. Students were assessed at the end of January for mid-year levels. This also corresponded with the end of the marking period.

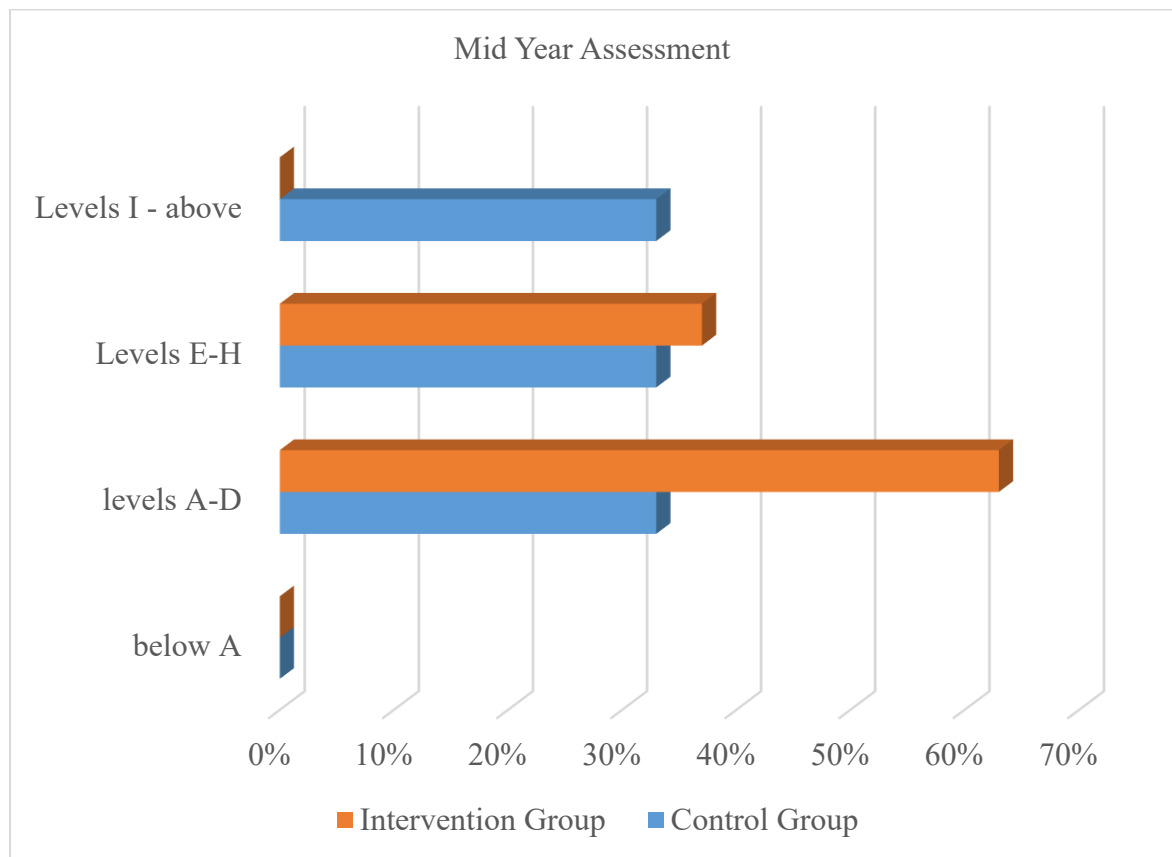


Figure 6. Results of Mid-Year Assessment

The total number of students who completed their mid-year assessment decreased from 26 students to 23 students. Two of the students transferred out of the district, and another student was transferred into a smaller classroom. The intervention group total stayed the same, however the control group decreased by 3. Both groups have shown growth up to this point. As shown in figure 2, there were not any students currently at a below A reading level. The most significant increase was in the intervention group leaping to 63%.

Final Results

In the final phase of this study, the total number of students increased to 24. 1 student in the intervention group transferred out bringing that number to 7, and two students transferred in. Their reading levels are not being used for this study. For this final phase, figure 3 shows that the most improvement occurred with the intervention group.

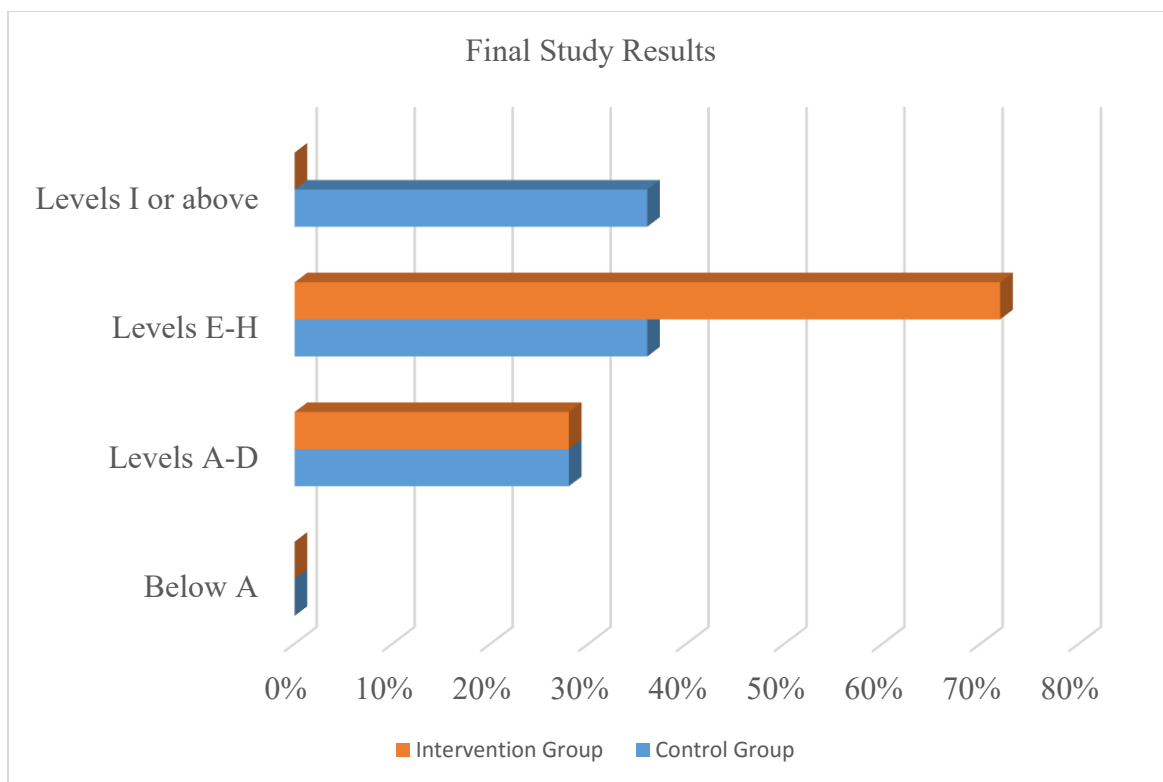


Figure 7. Final Study Results

Individual Student Results

Table 1

Individual Students Results from Baseline to Middle to Final Scoring

Student	Beginning of Study	Middle of Study	End of Study
A	Below A	D	E
B	Below A	E	F
C	Below A	C	Student transferred
D	Below A	G	H

E	Below A	B	D
F	Below A	D	E
G	Below A	F	G
H	Below A	C	C

Overall, students in the intervention group increased at the set goal. The intervention group was given extra supports using the Orton Gillingham program during classroom small group instruction and also during pull out resource instruction combined with small group guided reading instruction. There are five students that completed the study. Each of those students started this school year reading at a below A level, which corresponds to a preschool/pre primer level.

The percentages were calculated out of 100%, using the total of 7. 7 students were the end of study total of students, which dropped from 8 in the beginning of the study. At the final results, there were 0% of students reading at a below A level. There were also 0% of students reading at an I or higher level. At the end of 1st grade, students should be reading at a J level. 28% of this group was reading at a A-D reading level, which is equal to 2 of the students. 72% of this group was reading at an E-H reading level, which is equal to 5 of the students.

The control group also had significant improvements. That group has 6 students which are classified with an IEP. Those students also had Orton Gillingham supports, due to their reading levels being so far below current grade level. These percentages were also calculated out of 100%. The total number for that group was 18 total students in September, the total for mid-year assessment in January was 15, and in end of study

assessment the total number of students was 15. At the end of the study, 36% of the students in this group were reading at the currently grade level which is equal to 5 students reading on grade level.

The group that had the most significant improvement was the intervention group. As a whole, they made the proposal of at least three levels. Although they are not on expected grade level yet, they have made significant improvements in their scores. This study proves that the use of Orton Gillingham in conjunction with small group guided reading does promote better reads, and higher level readers.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The goal of this study was to examine the effectiveness of utilizing both guided reading and the Orton Gillingham program versus using guided reading for improving the reading of eight first grade students with reading difficulties. The students were divided into two groups. One group (control group) received just guided reading instruction. The other group (intervention group) received guided reading along with small group Orton Gillingham instruction and pull out Orton Gillingham instruction by the RTI team.

All of the participants in the intervention group improved their levels by at least three levels. Scores for the control group also increased overall. There are some students that are not reading at or on level according to the reading level gradient provided by Fountas and Pinnell. Each student made positive gains to understanding the phonics and phonemic awareness skills. Each student now has the ability to decode a word, or utilize their skills they have acquired to attack an unknown word. As well as students also have the ability to sound out words, and write words down. Students also increased their ability to work independently during center work, and during math instruction.

The control group also had significant improvements. Overall, the students in this group increased a minimum of two levels. Those students in the control group utilized strategies in guided reading, as well technology centers and free library center time to build their reading levels.

In addition to improving their reading, during the course of this study each participant appeared to gain more confidence in themselves. During the course of this

study, each participant increased in their reading level and gained confidence in themselves. In the beginning of the study, students that were reading below expected grade level also struggled with self confidence. Although I did not do a study on the self confidence students showed, it is also very obvious. Each students reads with expression, excitement, tracks, recalls information, and does not have an emotional breakdown.

In the beginning of the school year, students who could not read at expected level would become upset because they were reading books that were not a “big” or not as many words as another student’s book. There were often behavior meltdowns because of it. In the fall, this continued as the year continued. The meltdowns would become aggressive at times, and students would shut down at reading time. Now that students are reading at higher levels, their confidence continues to grow. Although not every student is on expected grade level, students are all able to book their books on their current level and turn to talk to classmates about the book.

The National Reading Panel (2000) has identified five areas that are needed to be understood and mastered in order for reading to be successful. It identifies fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, and phonemic awareness as key components. As I continue to educate, I am reminded how much students need a concrete foundation of phonemic skills to be successful with literacy. This also was true with Orton Gillingham. Students are taught the phonics and how phonics work. That is a key component to building successful readers. This study also links to the NRP summary. Once students understood the phonics portion of reading, they were able to read.

Research has shown that, “the effects of training phonological awareness and learning to read are mutually supportive. Reading and having a strong phonemic

awareness background are reinforcing and work together. Understanding phonics is necessary for reading, and building on reading skills and knowledge improves phonemic awareness. (Shaywitz, 2003) I have found this to be true with this study. In the beginning, students were not able to blend or decode sounds within other subjects. The students now are able to read directions, follow wording, attempt to blend and decode sounds. This does not just apply to literacy, but also in math and science too.

There are different levels and theories that involve phonemic awareness. There are labels that are involved with each phonemes and their terminology. The phoneme is a speech sound, and it broken down as the smallest unit of language. Phonics are sounds, able to recognize words. Phonemic Awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds in words. It is also the understanding that words are sequence of speech sounds. (Yopp, 1992) Phonological awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate the sounds. (Yopp, 1992)

Limitations

The problems that were found with this study was the dynamic of the curriculums. As previously expressed, in earlier chapters the problem that may occur surrounded the literacy curriculum “Journeys” and the mix of the Orton Gillingham phonics. Unfortunately, the curriculums do not align and at present time, the district has the teachers utilizing both. What this means is the “Journeys” curriculum would be teaching for example, long e and ea sounds while students are not at the mastery point in Orton Gillingham. The students have to master each letter in order of their appearance in Orton Gillingham. This caused massive confusion for some of the lower functioning students.

This needs to be rectified for next school year. The phonics curriculum and the Orton Gillingham programs needs to be aligned together. This would only benefit the students. This would allow the students to be learning the sounds to be studied in order during literacy, small group guided reading, and small group Orton Gillingham instruction. This could also potentially allow students to be taught Orton Gillingham in whole group instruction, and then broken down into small group instruction to focus more on struggling students, and differentiate instruction based on academic needs.

The study could have been improved if the study went a full school year. The study could have also been improved if more pull out instruction could have been focused on in a quiet setting. Additional instructional time, such as daily pull out along with daily small group in the classroom could focus more on the skills to be mastered.

Implications for Future Research

In the current study, the intervention group was seen in the classroom daily for guided instruction, but also received pull out instruction working on the same skills. In order to determine how much students would have progressed using only pull out instruction, a study comparing the effectiveness of in-class versus pull-out instruction would need to be completed. This student would have to include all the students who receive supplemental instruction due to low testing scores. Continued work with the students to build success and build reading levels will need to happen. Every day practice makes a fluent reader.

Another study could be completed in the motivational techniques used to encourage students to be successful. As well as a study on self concept, self correction and self motivation.

Future studies could be completed on these processes listed above. It could include an entire school and each grade level. On a wider and much larger spectrum, it could also analyze how the entire district compares from previous non OG scores and levels and scores using OG. Future research would have to entail many researchers working on one team to gain the results and studies needed. This future study would need a control group and an intervention group, making it a multiple study case.

I would also be curious to see what the implications and results would be with just special education students in this study. That study could show if OG truly works for every student, or only those that are mildly struggling. This study would be encourage with each child with a current IEP or 504, that allows for modifications. I would encourage this study to take place in inclusion classrooms as well as self contained classrooms. If a study was completed with these settings, there would be two control groups.

Conclusion

This study attempted to find out if Guided Reading through Leveled Literacy alone could enable students with reading difficulties get on grade level for reading, or if the addition of a supplemental curriculum (Orton Gillingham) would be required.

Although students in both groups were able to make progress, students in the intervention group made more progress. These students began the school year at a below A or a preschool reading level. They are now reading at a kindergarten level or even first grade level for some. These students are also utilizing their skills taught in other subjects during the course of the day. These students generally struggle, but with the different

curriculums, different teaching strategies, and receiving more individualized instruction has made their reading levels increase.

Overall, students in the intervention group increased at the set goal. The intervention group was given extra supports using the Orton Gillingham program during classroom small group instruction and also during pull out resource instruction combined with small group guided reading instruction. There are five students that completed the study. Each of those students started this school year reading at a below A level, which corresponds to a preschool/pre primer level.

The group that had the most significant improvement was the intervention group. As a whole, they made the proposed movement of at least three levels. Although they are not on expected grade level yet, they have made significant improvements in their scores. This study proves that the use of Orton Gillingham in conjunction with small group guided reading does promote better reads, and higher level readers.

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