



National Institute for Direct Instruction

Studies of Direct Instruction with Substantial Proportions of ELL Students –

March 29, 2015

This document has a number of citations of studies of Direct Instruction programs that included substantial proportions of ELL students. One of the most important set of studies is the 3 reports by Gunn, et al (2000, 2002, 2005). This was a very carefully designed, federally funded randomized control trial that involved both Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in several school districts. Students were selected for inclusion if they were more than one grade level behind on at least two of the baseline measures of reading skills. They were given either *Reading Mastery* or *Corrective Reading*, depending upon their age. The intervention lasted for 1.5 school years. By the end of the intervention the average effect size for Hispanic students (across 5 different measures) was .49 of a standard deviation. This effect is strong enough to predict that a student who began the program scoring at the 30th percentile would, at the end of the intervention, be scoring at the 49th percentile. The researchers reported statistically significant results in favor of the DI programs for two years after the cessation of the program.

These results are very similar to those found in many other studies. One particularly noteworthy study is the one by Gersten, et al, which reports the long-term impact of the use of Direct Instruction programs with ELL students. While Gunn et al did not include data from more than two years post-intervention, other studies have reported significant effects extending through the end of high school. The list below includes a number of case studies published by SRA/McGraw Hill. An article by Stockard in the journal *Quality and Quantity* in 2013 reported effect sizes for these case studies, differentiating results for schools with different characteristics. The average effect for reports including 30% of more ELL students was .40 of a standard deviation, only slightly less than that in the Gunn et al reports. Finally, it is important to note that the results with *Corrective Reading* and *Reading Mastery* are very similar. Both programs appear to be equally effective. The major influence on the impact of the programs on students' learning appears to be the fidelity with which they are implemented and the extent to which teachers are properly trained and supported.

The listing includes only studies that specifically mentioned English Language Learning (ELL) students. There are large numbers of other studies with high proportions of Hispanic students or students with other ethnic backgrounds, which are available on the NIFDI data base of DI studies.

1: Most students (75 percent or more) identified as ELL or LEP

Gersten, R. (1985). Structured immersion for language minority students: Results of a longitudinal evaluation. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 7 (3), 187-196 (republished in 1997 in *Effective School Practices*, 16(3), 21-29.

Slocum, T. (2000). Brief report on performance of students whose first language is Spanish: Direct Instruction and a comparison school. Unpublished paper, Utah State University

2: Majority (50 to 74 percent) ELL or LEP

Greenberg, D., Wise, J., Morris, R., Fredrick, L., Nanda, A.O., & Pae, Hye-K. (2011). A randomized control study of instructional approaches for struggling adult readers. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*. 4(2), 101-117.

Gunn, B., Biglan, A., Smolkowski, K., & Ary, D. (2000). The efficacy of supplemental instruction in decoding skills for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in early elementary school. *The Journal of Special Education*, 34(2), 90-103.

Gunn, B., Smolkowski, K., Biglan, A., & Black, C. (2002). Supplemental instruction in decoding skills for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in early elementary school. *The Journal of Special Education*, 36(2), 69-79.

Gunn, B., Smolkowski, K., Biglan, A., Black, C., & Blair, J. (2005). Fostering the development of reading skill through supplemental instruction: Results for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students. *Journal of Special Education*, 39 (2), 66-85.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2005). Phoenix inner-city students strive toward national reading average. Retrieved from SRA Web site:

https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/wilson_di.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2005). Oregon Reading First project uses Reading Mastery Plus as core reading program. Retrieved from SRA Web site:

https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/MiltonFreewater_DI.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2008). Special education students at California elementary school achieve AYP with Direct Instruction.

3: Substantial proportion of ELL/LEP Students (25 to 49%)

Goldman, B. (2000). A study of the implementation of a Direct Instruction reading program and its effects on the reading achievement of low socioeconomic students in an urban public school. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Loyola University, Chicago IL.

Lovett, M. W., Palma, M., Frijters, J., Steinbach, K., Temple, M., Benson, N., & Lacerenza, L. (2008). Interventions for reading difficulties: A comparison of response to

intervention by ELL and EFL struggling readers. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 41, (333-352).

O'Brien, D. M., & Ware, A. M. (2002). Implementing research-based reading programs in the Fort Worth Independent School District. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk*, 7(2), 167-195.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2005). Reading Mastery Plus helps Colorado school achieve AYP for first time. Retrieved from SRA Web site:
https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/ivywild_di.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2006). Florida school moves from D grade to A with Reading Mastery. Retrieved from SRA Web site:
https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/AltaVista_DI.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2006). DIBELS scores advance to grade level with Reading Mastery. Retrieved from SRA Web site:
https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/Edgewood_DI.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2005). Reading Mastery helps Florida students advance two grade levels in reading. Retrieved from SRA Web site:
https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/gulf_di.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2005). Miami elementary school boosts FCAT scores with Reading Mastery. Retrieved from SRA Web site:
https://www.sraonline.com/download/DI/EfficacyReports/parkway_di.pdf.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2005e). Direct Instruction helps Kentucky blue ribbon school attain record reading scores. Columbus, OH: The McGraw-Hill Companies.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (n.d.m). Phoenix inner-city students strive toward national reading average. Columbus, OH: The McGraw-Hill Companies.

SRA/McGraw-Hill. (2009). A report on the effects of SRA/McGraw-Hill's Reading Mastery, Signature Edition: A response to intervention solution. Desoto, TX:

Stockard, J. (2010). "Promoting Early Literacy of Preschool Children: A Study of the Effectiveness of Funnix Beginning Reading." *Journal of Direct Instruction*, 10 (Winter):29-48.