

From: beth.laduca@state.or.us
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 10:51 AM
To: info@whatworks.ed.gov
Subject: IES Website: Contact Us: Publications, Quick Reviews,
Reference ID
Number: 1879324836

info@whatworks.ed.gov, this email was automatically sent through the
Contact
link on the WWC website.

From: beth.laduca@state.or.us

Message: I don't understand the following paragraph in your Quick Review
of
"Reading and Language Outcomes of a Five-Year Randomized Evaluation
of
Transitional Bilingual Education." If differences between the
groups are
all statistically insignificant, why are you citing effect sizes for two
of
the outcomes? My interpretation is that you are citing differences which
may
be due to error. Why are you highlighting these effect sizes with so
little
justification? "When the students reached fourth grade, they only
received English instruction. At this time, differences in English-
reading
skills between the groups were all statistically insignificant. Two of
the
four outcomes, though, showed large enough differences favoring
structured
English immersion that the WWC considered them noteworthy: the effect
sizes
were roughly equivalent to the skill difference between the 50th and 61st
percentiles of English reading achievement."

From: WhatWorks
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2010 1:37 PM
To: 'beth.laduca@state.or.us'
Subject: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 2421)
Dear Ms. LaDuca,

Thank you for contacting the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). When reporting a study's effects, the What Works Clearinghouse considers both the statistical significance and the substantive importance of the effect. As noted in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Appendix E http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/wwc_procedures_v2_standards_handbook.pdf), a substantively important positive effect is considered to be a qualified positive effect—and therefore is noteworthy—even though it may not reach statistical significance in a given study. The threshold for determining substantive importance for effects mentioned in quick reviews is a student-level effect size greater than or equal to 0.25. The effect sizes for the two results mentioned in the paragraph you referenced in the quick review were greater than 0.25.

The intuition is not that large differences may be due to error; rather, it is that there may not be enough statistical power to detect the differences, even though they are quite large. This is often a result of small sample sizes. In the case of this particular study, the results for the 4th graders were based on a sample size considerably smaller than that used for the other analyses.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us again. You may reply to this email.

Thank you for your interest,

What Works Clearinghouse

The What Works Clearinghouse was established by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to provide educators, policymakers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education. For more information, please visit <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>.

-----Original Message-----

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