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Comparing the Use of Book Clubs and Repeated Reading in Terms of Gains in Fluency and
Reading Attitudes in 5th Grade Struggling Readers

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An Action Research Project Presented
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Education

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November 22, 2019

Abstract

This classroom action research project compares the impact of repeated reading fluency intervention and book clubs, using partner reading and listen while reading intervention strategies, to build fluency in Tier 2 5th grade Response to Intervention (RTI) groups. The project also looks at the impact of these two reading fluency intervention strategies on the reading attitudes of 5th grade students using McKenna and Kear's Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) created in 1990. While scores varied drastically between individual students, the action research project shows that the repeated reading intervention led to greater gains in fluency as compared to partner reading and listen while reading in this group of students. Reading attitude scores varied between individual students and fluctuated between the interventions, however there was not a statistical difference in the fluctuation between the two interventions. Based on this study, if the goal of the intervention is strictly fluency improvement, repeated reading will lead to greater gains as compared to partner reading and listen while reading. Based on the data from this research project there is not a statistical relationship on reading attitudes with either intervention, even though some individual students showed significant changes in reading attitudes after participating in the reading interventions.

Comparing the Use of Book Clubs and Repeated Reading in
Terms of Gains in Fluency and Reading Motivation in 5th Grade Struggling Readers

In the past two years just over a third of 4th graders and 8th graders in the US were considered proficient in reading based on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), according to The Nation's Report card (2019). This means that well over half of our nation's 4th and 8th graders were not reading at a proficient level. Reading is a small but complex word. In order to read students must be able to give meaning to printed symbols. This is a complex decoding process involving phonemes and phonetics (the letter "sound" combinations that build words), vocabulary (meaning of the words), fluency (the ability to read words smoothly and easily), and comprehension (putting all the parts together so that the reader has the ability to understand what has been read). Rasinski defines fluency as the combination of the ability to recognize and decode words accurately and without effort and the use of expression which demonstrates an understanding of the author's intent (2014).

Fluency is important because it lays the foundation for comprehension. According to Armbruster, Lehr, & Osborn (2001), the ability to read accurately and effortlessly frees up the brain to focus on comprehending what the text means instead of what the text says. Students that struggle with fluency tend to read slower because they must spend time decoding what the text says which makes them less efficient (Armbruster et al., 2001). Natural human tendency is to avoid difficult tasks. Students that struggle with reading tend to spend less time doing it, creating a cycle that puts them further behind in their reading ability (Armbruster et al., 2001).

Slower readers also have a harder time in upper grades when there is are greater demands in the volume of reading required.

The Iowa Department of Education requires Iowa schools to monitor the skill of fluency with Fastbridge Curriculum Based Measurement for Reading (CBMR) which measures the number of words correctly read from a grade-level passage in one minute. Students are screened three times a year to determine if they are proficiently fluent. In order to be considered fluent, students must meet oral reading fluency norms. FastBridge publishes a list of these norms based on grade level and time of year and these scores help support intervention (Christ et al., 2018, p. 7). Hasbrouk and Tindal (2006) explain that while norms do not give a full picture of a child's reading ability it can be a tool to help diagnosis problems comparing reading norms to a thermometer which can be a useful tool for diagnosis certain but not all illnesses.

According to Christ and Colleagues, if a student score is below benchmark on a specific skill suggests that an intervention is needed. This is confirmed by a support team that includes the students teacher determine necessity of interventions (2018, p. 27). One method to improve fluency is the use of repeated reading. In this strategy, students read a passage multiple times trying to improve their fluency as they practice. This strategy for building fluency was developed by Jay Samuel in the 1970s. Samuel believed that fluent readers are able to comprehend more because their cognitive energy is spent on comprehension instead of decoding text (Samuel, 1997). This method is similar to the method musicians or athletes use to practice a skill repeatedly to perform the skill or section of a musical piece more fluently.

When looking at fluency may identify the degree to which a child is fluent but it does not tell us about a student's motivation or attitude about reading. According to Wang (2000, p. 120), a child's negative attitude about reading will impact their reading performance. According to

Lukhele (2013), reading attitudes are formed from one's reading experiences and can be impacted by a person's cultural experiences. According to research from Raskinski (2014), if students increase the volume or amount they read, it will lead to increases in the student's ability to read fluently and which will positively impact other reading proficiency measures as well. If students like to read, they will read more, reading more will make help them become better readers, starting a cycle of success in reading. While teachers cannot go back in time to change a student's past reading experiences, they can assess how current classroom practices impact a student's reading attitude.

The goal of this research project is to see what happens to student's attitudes about reading if teachers listen to the advice of the 5th grade students interviewed by Barone and Barone (2015) and create a motivating classroom culture, where students read for real purposes, have time to read the books they want, and are able to discuss their books collaboratively. This project investigates the impact on reading attitudes and fluency using the goals stated by Barone and Barone (2015). Throughout this action research project the teacher researcher will investigate:

What is the impact of repeated reading on students' fluency scores as measured by FastBridge CBMR?

What is the impact of repeated reading on students' reading attitudes as measure by the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey developed by McKenna and Kear?

What is the impact of Book Clubs on students' fluency scores as measured by FastBridge CBMR?

What is the impact of Book Clubs on students' reading attitudes as measure by the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey developed by McKenna and Kear?

Response to Intervention (RTI)

RTI is a data based method for identifying or defining students' academic or behavioral difficulties with the goal of preventing academic failure or identifying students with disabilities so instruction can be differentiated and/or intensified as needed to meet this goal (Murakami-Ramvalho & Wilcox, 2012; Little 2012). RTI attempts to meet students' needs and close the gap between current student performance and peers in the timeliest manner. RTI is a school wide approach to using data to respond to student achievement (Murakami-Ramvalho & Wilcox, 2012; Little, 2012). Action research can be used to guide the RTI process (Little, 2012). Teachers identify a problem in students' learning or behavior. The teacher develops and implements a plan using sound evidence-based instructional practices. Throughout the implementation of the plan, the teacher collects and analyzes data on the impact the plan is having on the problem. This data is then shared and used to identify if the plan was successful or if the plan needs to be altered.

RTI was initially developed to help provide early reading intervention for students at risk and is now the framework for integrating policies from Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and scientific research (Mellard, Stern, & Woods, 2011). The concept grew from just focusing on early reading to other content areas. It is now used to address behavior issues as well as addressing student needs throughout all elementary, middle, and high school.

RTI is a multi-tier system (Murakami-Ramlho & Wilcox, 2010; Mellard et. al 2011; and Little, 2012). Mellard et al. (2011) looked at seven RTI models and found that they all had a three-tiered intervention structure. Tier 1 in all seven models included general effective classroom instruction. In all models Tier 2 instruction was indicated for students that did not respond to the general instruction of Tier 1. Tier 2 instruction is more intense but may not necessarily require different curriculum. Some models of Tier 2 instruction include slight modifications to curriculum and instruction for students, while others still consider this Tier 1. Some students at the Tier 2 level may just need additional time to practice concepts, more in-depth explanations of concepts, or more repetitions of an activity at this level in order to have success. In all models Tier 3 interventions are more intense and may require different curriculum. Some models define this as special education or highly individualized instruction.

The role of assessment in RTI is critical. Wixson and Valencia (2011) looked the role of assessment in RTI. There are multiple purposes for assessment, beginning with screening. Screening shows where students fall in relationship to a benchmark or goal but not why they miss that target. According to Mellard et al., (2011), screening is the foundational level of RTI. If more than 80% of students fall out in screening, students' needs are not being met by core instruction and the general education curriculum needs to be addressed. When 20% or less of students fall out in screening, diagnostic assessments are given to those students (Wilson and Valencia, 2011). These are used to help identify the cause of the discrepancy in meeting the benchmark target. Diagnostic assessments can be used to identify both strengths and weakness. Diagnostic assessments are often individualized which means they are more costly and time intensive their administration, but are critical for the proper identification of intervention needs.

One assessment feature common to all models of RTI is the inclusion of progress monitoring to insure that students are responding to interventions (Mellard et al., 2011; Wixson & Valencia, 2011; Little, 2012). There are two forms of progress monitoring- benchmark progress monitoring and formative progress monitoring (Wixson & Valencia, 2011). Formative progress monitoring is the data that is collected during instruction to identify how students respond to instruction and if instructional revisions are needed. Formative progress monitoring measures include teacher made assessments, work samples, book logs, observation notes from conferences, and anecdotal records. These measures can be used to guide the individual instructional needs of a student. Benchmark progress monitoring refers to data that is gathered to judge if a student is making adequate progress towards a benchmark and are used to gauge the effectiveness of an intervention. Both forms of assessment can be used to determine if changes are needed in an intervention. If progress is being made no change in the intervention may be needed. If a student is not progressing an intervention change may be needed. In five of the seven RTI models studied by Mellard et al. (2011), if a student makes adequate progress towards benchmarks under the intervention, the interventions are gradually reduced with continued progress monitoring to ensure that the student growth continues without the more intense level of intervention.

Interventions

Interventions are when teachers work with a small group of students on a set skill or concept that has not been mastered. Because of the complexity of reading in upper elementary, the intervention needs for these grades are different than those of lower elementary students. According to Schugar and Dreher, (2016) and Sanacore and Palumbo (2009), in upper grades, there is a shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Students read to learn information for

content areas which is a skill needed as they continue through school and the in work force (Schugar & Dreher, 2016).

Shabgar and Dreher (2016) looked at factors that may impact a student's success during learning to read to reading to learn reading process shift. They found that there are a variety of factors, including some that occur outside the setting of school, that can impact a student's ability to read informational text. A student's access to reading material, exposure to vocabulary building experiences through the talk of caregivers, and the influence of peer groups impact their ability to read informational text. Experiences with informational text and opportunities to engage in academic, high order thinking discussion outside of school may also effect student achievement. Differences in the variety of comprehension strategies that a student has been exposed to in school may also impact a student's success during the reading process shift. Because of this, there is a belief that the intervention needed in upper grades are different from those in the younger grades.

Wanzek, Wexler, Vaughn, and Ciullo (2010) looked at numerous studies on interventions used with 4th and 5th graders. Based on the research studied, the authors found positive gains for interventions that addressed comprehension and vocabulary development. They also recommend the use of repeated reading and continuous reading in reading interventions, evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention by monitoring students' progress.

Ritchey, Silverman, Montanoro, Speece, and Schatschneider (2012) began looking at the unique intervention needs of upper elementary students. They used RTI to identify 123 4th grade students that were at risk of have reading difficulties. After identifying those students, they used a combination of interventions based on science texts, targeting fluency through repeated reading, explicit comprehension instruction, vocabulary instruction, text instruction, and

motivational components involving sticker reward charts. The results of the interventions were mixed. The targeted students increased in their knowledge of science concepts and comprehension strategies but had little growth in fluency.

Hart and Stebick (2016) analyzed data on the RTI process to target comprehension for 121 third grade intervention students in New Jersey. The data was collected over a two year time period and the results showed an increase in comprehension using modeling and scaffolding but there were no improvements in fluency. These findings are similar to observations made by the teachers in the researcher's district. The topic of conversation at several grade level professional learning community meetings (PLC's) was the fact that RTI tier 2 students do not seem to be gaining enough fluency to move out the "some risk" range to the low risk or proficient range despite the use proven fluency strategies.

Reading Fluency

The International Literacy Association (2018) defines fluency as the combination of rate, expression, and read that is "reasonably accurate reading" leading the reader to comprehension and motivation to read further. Reading Rockets, a national public media initiative, emphasizes the importance of fluency in upper grades because of the volume of reading that is required. As students age they will have a difficult time meeting the reading demands if they are slow readers. (Zorfass & Brann, 2019). The Iowa Core standards for Fluency in 5th grade state students need to "Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension" (Reading Standards: Foundational Skills RF.5.4, Iowa Core Standards, 2019) meaning students can read grade level text with understanding, self-correcting and rereading as needed to comprehend the text.

Over the past 30 years, evidence has shown a strong link between prosody, or expression, automaticity, and proficient reading (Raskinski, 2014). Raskinski believes that students learn to

read fluently much like the stages of learning to drive a car. The first step is through observation of a fluent model, which is like a child watching parents drive. The next step is guided practices which is like when a driver has a learner's permit. As students become comfortable and they are able to start out on their own, but they aren't fluent with all passages which is similar to driving only one car and being nervous about driving other cars. Eventually, students are comfortable and fluent with all passages just as fluent drivers are willing to get behind the wheel of any car. Pardo (2004) also agrees with the need for modeling emphasizing that teacher need to read aloud so students understand what fluent reading sounds like. Samuels (1997) compares learning to read with learning to play an instrument or a sport, in which music phrases and notes are repeated until they are error-free or a move is practiced until it can be performed error-free.

Because of the recognized importance of fluency, many organizations require the monitoring of fluency. Reading fluency is measured by scoring the combination of rate, or the words read per minute, and accuracy, or the number of words correctly read per minute. Other measures use a rubric or rating system to score aspects of reading prosody such as those used by Arens, Gove, Abate (2018) and Caluris (n.d.). A challenge with measures that focus on speed only is the loss of connection between reading fluency and comprehension (Raskinski, 2014). Another challenge identified by Raskinski (2014) that has not been addressed is the impact of stamina, or the ability to stay focused and connected over a longer period of time, on reading fluency.

Reading attitudes

Reading attitude is the degree to which a person enjoys or has positive feelings about reading. In order to assess reading attitudes a measurement system is needed. There are a variety of ways to measure reading attitude- interviews (Wilfong , 2015), reading studies (Nonte,

Hartwich, & Willems, 2018), Likert scales (Kashef, Pandian, & Khameneh, 2014; Broeder & Stokmans, 2013), and reading reflection logs (DeVries, 2015, p.462). McKenna and Kear (1990) addressed the need for a norm referenced and reliable test to accurately evaluate the academic and leisure reading attitudes of students. They created a public domain, 4 point scale Likert survey, using images depicting the comic book character Garfield showing emotions from very happy to very upset. This survey, released in 1990, continues to be used by researchers around the globe (Linder, Mueller, Gibbs, Alper, & Freeman, 2017; Ubbes, Dillhoff, & Maldonado, 2018); Kızıldaş, 2018; and Al-Adwani, A., & Al-Fadley, 2017).

There are a variety of aspects that can impact reading motivation. Nonte, Hartwich, and Willems (2018) looked at individual and home-related factors and differences that are manifested in reading attitudes in France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands measuring both reading attitudes and reading behaviors. Despite the common idea that a high parent educational level would correlate to a positive reading attitude, they found that the number of books in a home is more positively linked to positive reading attitudes.

Differences in students' attitudes towards reading based on gender, grade level, and social media usage were studied by Al-Adwain and Al-Fadley (2017). Like many previous studies, they found that girls had a more positive reading attitude towards recreational reading. They also found that younger students had a more positive attitude compared to older students. Another interesting correlation affecting popular culture was the finding that students without smart devices had a more positive attitude towards reading compared to those that had smart devices. The use of Snapchat and YouTube had a significant impact on the student's attitudes towards recreational reading. The authors stated that to create lifelong readers in schools, a culture of reading must be created by setting aside time for reading and provide

access to literature through classroom libraries, online opportunities, and exposure to different authors, genres, and text types.

The topic of how teachers can motivate disinterested students so they become readers has plagued educators for years. Edmunds and Bauserman (2006) interviewed 831 students in pre-K through 5th grade and found that reading motivation improved when students were personally interested in what they reading, had choice in what they read, and the books had engaging plots with lots of action or the books were humorous. Worthy (2002) found that engaging instruction, choice, and variety in reading material were instrumental in increasing motivation, which affects engagement and reading achievement. According to Pachtman and Wilson (2006, 684), when students are given the opportunity to take advantage of the reading items they have selected they read more because they enjoy reading, which leads to strong reading ability. After determining that attitudes can be impacted, the researcher wondered if reading interventions positively or negatively impact reading attitudes.

Reading Intervention- Repeated Reading

In the researcher's school, teachers are encouraged to use the PRESS: Path to Reading Excellence in School Sites Intervention Manual (University of Minnesota & Minnesota Reading, 2017) for reading interventions. Many of the fluency interventions are based on the long standing strategy of repeated reading (RR) (University of Minnesota & Minnesota Reading, 2017, p.99). Jay Samuels created the theory in the mid 1970's. His article was originally published in the *Reading Teacher* in January 1979 and led to much research in the 1980s and 1990s (Samuels, J, 1979, 1997). In this strategy, students read a set passage multiple times, for one minute each time under the guidance of a coach. The goal is that they get farther each time. Kostewicz (2012) explains that in order to have good practice students must have supervision, a

goal which is either a word goal or a set number of times that the passage will be practiced, correction of mistakes, and a model of reading. The students must have feedback while practicing and progress monitoring so they know where they stand towards their goal.

Another component of the RR strategy is the modeling of fluent reading of the passage. Taguchi, Gorsuch, Lems, and Rosszell, (2016) stated that based on the study of second language learners, they found this modeling of the reading of the text beneficial in helping them understand text. In the PRESS manual version used by the researcher, students read a passage for one minute being scored on accuracy and rate. This first read is their cold read and documented in blue on a progress graph. Students then listen to the passage, as it is read by the teacher. The students read the passage for one minute, two times. At the end of each reading they are coached as to what they have done well as well as guided in the correction of any errors they made. Errors are practiced correctly before they read the passage the next time. The final, 4th time the students read the passage is considered a hot read and the score is graphed in red on the progress monitoring graph.

There is a large variety in the way RR is currently being researched. There is research on the use of the RR strategy focusing on the use computer assisted instruction in terms of implementing the intervention through computer programs (Keyes, Cartledge, Gibson, Jr, & Robinson-Ervin, 2016; Council, Cartledge, Green, Barber, & Gardner, 2016) and using technology as a method of recording so the student and teacher can assess the quality of the students reading during the intervention (Parenti & Chen, 2015). Others researchers have looked at the use of RR in learning to read a second language (Shimono, 2018; Taguchi et al., 2016). Still other studies have compared the use of repeated readings to other strategies such as choral reading (Kodan, & Akyol, 2018) or combining it with other strategies (Lynn, 2018). Lynn

(2018) combined the use of timed reading, repeated reading, and silent reading to implement a repeated reading intervention. While this is an interesting theory based on the amount of silent reading that is required in upper grades, the researcher did not present data demonstrating the effectiveness of the intervention.

A challenge of the RR strategy can be student engagement and motivation. Kodan & Akyol (2018) realized during their use of repeated reading that the student was becoming bored during repeated reading, requiring breaks and added to the strategy to make a game out of the RR activity. The student in their study preferred the paired reading strategies. Their research found that the inclusion of strategies such as RR, paired reading, and readers theater reduce anxiety in students with dyslexia, which can be an issue for students that struggle with reading. Rasinski (2014) and Caluris (n.d.) recommend using strategies such as readers theater to make the task of repeated reading more meaningful. For focus of this study the researcher is utilizing the district recommended implementation of RR.

Reading Intervention- Book Clubs

Book club, or literature circle, is the use of authentic literature to encourage student discussion on various aspect of text to get to the deeper aspects of the author's purpose (Pardo, 2004). Barone and Barone (2015) had fifty 5th graders of varying academic abilities write about the skills and strategies that were needed to teach reading. Interesting findings from their project were the importance of students' choices in what they read, the reflection of their interests in reading topics, and student's self-perceptions about their reading during Book Clubs. The students expressed the belief that, in order to become better readers, students need time to read and that literacy circles (Book Clubs) had a positive impact on their reading. The students believed literacy circles improved their comprehension, their motivation to read, and they

credited it for their perceived success as fluent readers. While the students perceived themselves as being fluent there was no data in the study to demonstrating student skill growth in with these opportunities.

Worthy, Paterson, Salas, Rater, and Turner (2002) studied the effects of an after-school “reading club” literacy tutorial program finding that the program increased voluntary reading and a minimum of one grade level of growth per semester in the reading program. Certo, Moxley, Reffitt, & Miller (2010) found that students preferred the use of book clubs to the use of traditional reading text and that it led to greater depth in the student’s selection of books to read. Stevens (2016) studied the implementation of book clubs in a 6 and 7 grade language arts program finding that student responses showed that student choice, long periods of time to read, and the opportunity to discuss books with peers positively impacted students. Based on this teachers researcher’s positive student feedback during the previous year in the researcher’s classroom and research showing positive student feedback during book clubs, the researcher wondered if the use of book clubs could lead to positive changes in student reading attitudes as well as student gains in fluency.

In the use of Book Clubs as in intervention as utilized in this research project, the researcher used two variations of tested theories applied at the same time- listening while reading (LWR) and paired or buddy reading which is an adapted “peer-assisted learning” (PALS) style of intervention. In LWR strategy students read, silently or out loud, as a text is read aloud by a fluent reader. Wilfong (2008) used LWR to with poetry to build confidence, word recognition, and fluency in struggling readers. Hawkins, Marsicano, Schmitt, McCallum, & Musti-Rao (2015) compared the use of repeated reading and LWR to improve fluency and comprehension,

finding that for 3 of 4 students LWR led to better fluency gains than repeated reading and did so in less time.

According to U.S. Department of Education What Works Clearinghouse WWC Intervention Report (2012), PALS is a peer-tutoring program used as an addition to reading curriculum. This program was developed by Lynn and Doug Fuchs in 1997. It can be obtained from Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development. In this program, students work in pairs using specifically structured routines during which time they are both the tutor and the person being coached. After partner reading, students take turns “paragraph shrinking” or retelling a summary of the passage in 10 words or less. According WWC there is evidence that this strategy improved comprehension for students in grades 2-6 and improved reading achievement in English language Learning students, but there was only one study that looked at the effects of the program on reading fluency and the results were inconclusive. That study was done with beginning readers which is not the same group as struggling 5th grade readers.

Paige and Magpuri-Lavell (2014) describe a variation of the PAL program, “Paired or Buddy Reading” (p.88). In this PALS style strategy students are grouped into two lists- stronger readers and weaker readers. The strongest strong reader is paired with the strongest weak reader and the weakest strong reader is paired with the weakest weak reader. This provides a model for the weaker student and prevents the strong student from becoming too frustrated by too large of a gap between the abilities. While making the pairings the teacher must also take into account students with severe struggles and personality differences. The teacher decides on routine issues such as how long each partner reads (paragraph, page, set amount of time, etc.), how and when should partners step in and help with decoding, how to check for understanding, and determining

how long each session should last, the teacher models the specific process in front of the class. During each session the students take turns reading the text to each other using the modeled process.

During Book Clubs students discuss each “buddy read” chapter with their partner, using paragraph shrinking. They also share their summaries with the larger group. After the LWR chapters students are part of both whole class and small group interactions. Small group work is supported by Sabin (2015) who found that student engagement increases with small group instruction. In addition, as students engage with the books, they build relationships by sharing the connections through literature. In addition, as students engage with the books, they build relationships by sharing the connections through literature. Discussion, which is a social activity, has been shown to increase motivation. According to Worthy et al. (2002) students’ reading choices are influenced by their peers, families, teachers, and popular media. Books provided opportunities for discussion, which was motivating, and students also enjoyed sharing what they were reading with others. Pachtman (2006) found that when the ending activity for a book was discussion, the amount of time spent reading increased, reaffirming students desire to have a social aspect with reading. Book Clubs as an intervention provides an opportunity for students that are struggling with reading to experience these positive aspects of reading.

After studying the effects “concept-oriented reading instruction” and traditional instruction for 12 weeks in low-achieving 5th grade readers, Guthrie, Wigfield, Huenick Perencevich, Toboada, & Barbosa (2006) found that students’ comprehension, word recognition, and content knowledge were positively impacted showing that reading can be impacted by both bottom up (skill based) and top down (content based) instruction at the upper elementary level. Reading fluency is often taught as an independent, bottom up skill. Repeated reading is bottom

up, or skill based focusing solely on the subject of fluency. There is no content or top down instruction. Book Clubs can be a combination where the skills of fluency and comprehension are practiced during partner reading but the teacher led chapters and discussions tend to be content driven instruction on vocabulary development, specific comprehension strategies, and story elements.

According to Barone and Barone (2015) students in their study believed that literacy circles, which is a form of Book Clubs, have a positive impact on reading. The creation of McKenna and Kear's reading attitude survey, ERAS, (McKenna and Kear, 1990) provided a norm referenced way to measure reading attitudes. While RTI provides the structure to respond to students that may be struggling, (Murakami-Ramalho & Wilcox, 2012; Little, 2012) there has been no research that measures the impact of interventions used in the course of RTI on the reading attitudes of students. There is no research that looks at the impact of interventions such as repeated reading or partnered reading on students reading attitudes.

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study were 5th grade students in an intervention classroom. The students attend a public intermediate school in a community of 10,225 that had a Median Income of \$71,137 (Iowa.gov, 2017). The school houses all public school students ages 4th through 6th grade for the community. According to the Iowa School Report Card, in 2017, the student population was 92.3% white, .2% Native American, 2.3% black, 2.5% Asian, 1.7% Hispanic, and 1.1% multiracial. 11.7% of the students had an IEP and .9% were English Language learners (ELL). According to the Iowa Department of Education 19.2% of the students received free or reduced lunch, 54.3% of the students were male, and 45.7% female (2019). There is one principal, one guidance counselor, two part-time gifted and talented teachers, 1 shared ELL teacher, 3 reading interventionists, 5 full time and two part-time special education teachers. The first round portion of the study, intervention with the use of repeated reading, had 13 students, 9 girls and 4 boys. The second intervention, Book Clubs, had 16 students- 7 boys and 9 girls. Three of the boys and six of the girls were in both the repeated reading and Book Club intervention groups. The students were part of 4 different homeroom and reading classes. No other demographic information is collected on students participating in interventions.

RTI

Every year students in Iowa are monitored for fluency three times- fall, winter, and spring using the FastBridge CBMR test. Students read three grade level passages for one minute each while the teacher scores the reading for accuracy. Students are scored based on the number of words read correctly in that minute (WRC). The median score is used to determine a student's results for that reporting period. Criterion-referenced benchmarks are set to determine the

minimum score needed to be considered a proficient reader. The benchmark fluency score changes throughout the year to reflect expected reading growth that should take place during the school year. The 5th grade minimum benchmarks scores to be considered out of risk are 132 WRC in the fall, 149 WRC in the winter, and 162 WRC in the spring (Fastbridge, Benchmarks and Norms, 2019).

The CBMR test is norm-referenced to determine a student's rank in their class, school, district, and nation. Using national norm percentiles, FastBridge (2019) identifies students at risk of reading difficulties based on these scores. Students below the 15th percentile are labeled as being "high-risk" for having reading difficulties. Students scoring between the 15th and 40th percentile are considered to be "some risk". Those students at or above the 40th percentile are considered "low-risk. Advanced students are identified as well using this system. If the majority of students in a school, district, or class are not meeting benchmarks, general classroom instruction needs to be changed. If the majority of students are meeting benchmarks but some students do not meet minimum proficiency standards RTI process begins using district or school norm-referenced scores.

Measures

Fluency Reading fluency, or the rate a student reads, was measured using the state mandated Fastbridge Progress Monitoring which is an evidence-based reading assessment (Christ, Et al. 2018). The progress monitoring feature was administered weekly to all students in the intervention. To measure fluency, students are given 5th grade level passage which they read aloud for 1-minute while the teacher scores the reading for accuracy. The score is reported as Words Read Correctly (WRC). Scores were tracked and graphed each week using

FastBridge's graphing and the teachers own excel spreadsheet to determine week to week progress.

Reading Motivation Reading motivation is the attitude of a student towards reading. Reading motivation was measured using the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) by McKenna and Kear, 1990. Students filled out the Likert scale at the beginning of the year to establish a baseline and after each intervention to measure any changes in self-reported opinions on reading. These scores were recorded in an excel spreadsheet and the comparisons between the two scores was made using a paired sample t-test. The ERAS was selected due to its length, the aspects measured, and the test's reliability and validity. The use a valid and reliable measure reduces the potential of researcher bias by the unintentional use of leading questions.

Procedure

This study took place as part of the school's typical intervention process and all data collected was used to guide the teacher researcher's classroom decisions regarding the use of interventions for Tier 2 students making it exempt from needing review from the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

In the fall of 2019, this school had 187 5th grade students in 7 classrooms that worked in a team format. Students rotated between their team teachers for various subjects. There was one group of three teachers where one teacher taught language arts, one math, and one science/social studies to all classes called "The Triad". There were two sets of pairs in which one teacher taught 2 sections language arts and social studies and the other taught two sections of math and science called "The Quad". During this study, one of the pair positions was a job shared by two teachers, each teaching one section of language arts/social studies. Individual classroom demographics vary.

In the researcher's school, the majority of the students meet proficiency levels with general classroom instruction. Some students need additional support beyond classroom instruction or reading interventions. This is referred to as RTI Tier 2 or Tier 3 instruction. In this school, interventions needs are addressed with the use of "*plus time*". Tier 2 students work in a small group on a set reading skill under the guidance of a general education teacher. Students that don't make significant gains under this structure or those whose scores are significantly deficient from their peers qualify for more intensive support. They are in a Tier 3 level of intervention. These students work with a specialized reading teacher on interventions during this school set "*plus time*". Students qualifying for gifted and talented math and language arts enrichment receive their services during this "*plus time*". All students not receiving reading interventions or extensions received science or social studies enrichment.

The reading interventions studied in this project took place during "Plus Time". The Tier 2 interventions were led by one of the split position language arts teacher for students in "The Quad". "The Triad" language arts teacher led the interventions for the three classrooms that were teamed together. Information from interventions used in that classroom was not collected or analyzed during the study.

At the beginning of the year, participants were placed into their "*plus time*" groups based on their 4th grade placements, 4th grade CBMR scores, or one minute fluency probes using 4th grade Fastbridge progress monitoring probes for students new to the district. Students that fell below the fluency benchmark for two consecutive screening periods must have their fluency progress monitored weekly using the progress monitoring feature of the Fastbridge test. Those students were automatically placed in the intervention. For example, if a student missed the 4th grade benchmark during the fall and winter testing windows, but met the spring benchmark, they

were still included in the intervention group because they had not met the required two goal met periods. Students from the district that were not proficiently fluent during the spring 4th grade testing window were selected to be part of the fluency intervention even though they did not need to be monitored by state standards. Students new to the district that did not meet the fall 5th grade benchmark of 132 using the 4th grade progress monitoring passage were selected to be part of the first intervention group. A teacher may decide to progress monitor other students to ensure that they are making adequate fluency gains as needed. Students that made the fluency goals for 4th grade by five words or less were selected to join the fluency intervention group. Based on this criteria, there were 9 girls and 4 boys during the initial fluency intervention group that used the Repeated Reading method to improve fluency.

After the initial screeners were administered and students were identified using 4th grade data, baseline fluency data was collected using FastBridge progress monitor and reading attitude data was collected using the ERAS form. All students completed the same 1 minute Fastbridge progress monitoring reading and completed an ERAS reading attitude survey before participating in any interventions. Repeated Reading was selected as the first strategy to be used because of district recommendation of a strong fluency emphasis at the beginning of the year.

In the RR procedure, as articulated in the Press Manual (University of Minnesota, 2017, p. 106-109), the teacher first gathers the materials that will be used. The reading materials used need to be word numbered passages for graphing purposes. The students are paired and the goal and activity are explained to the students. One student reads the passage for 1 minute while the teacher or other student tracks their progress, recording errors. This first read is a “cold read,” meaning the students have not read the material before. This score is recorded on a student graph in blue. After the first student completes their cold read, the second student reads while

first becomes the coach, tracking progress for one minute. When both students complete their cold read, the teacher models reading the passage fluently. After teacher modeling, the turn taking procedure is repeated two more times for both students. After completing each turn the students graph their practice scores, seeing if they can read farther than they did before. If errors are made, students correct the errors following an error correction procedure. A final fourth read is completed by both students. This is referred to as a “hot read” and the score is recorded in red. To insure fidelity in the procedure the steps can be followed using Tier 2, Intervention Fidelity Checklist (University of Minnesota, 2017, p. 122-123).

After completing baseline testing, the students were taught the Repeated Reading intervention method. The teacher modeled the strategy explaining how each child would have a turn being the coach and being the reader each day. The students practiced being the coach for the teacher and using the correct methods for complimenting and the error correction procedure. Student were taught as coaches their job was to first tell the reader something they specifically did well during the reading such as good expression, good rate, good volume, etc. If there was an error students were taught to tell the reader the error word, ask the student what the word was, and then have the student read the entire sentence in which the error occurred, telling the student good job at the completion of the task.

The students were paired for the intervention using the base line data. The partners were paired by the top 50% of the fluency scores being partnered with the bottom 50% within the group. The top person was labeled partner A and the student with the weaker fluency score was partner B for the intervention. The partners alternated who read first each day. One day partner A was the reader first and B was the coach first, the following day B read first and A coached first. Because of the odd number of students in the intervention, the teacher worked with the

lowest scoring student when all students were present. On days when students were absent, that student filled in for the absent student and the teacher floated throughout the room. For the intervention, the students read 4th and 5th grade level passages from the district utilized Read Naturally passages. Because there were two passages each day, the teacher read both passages out loud to model fluency and proper pronunciation of words in the passage. The Repeated Reading Intervention Press Manual protocol was followed for a period of three weeks. Each week, students were progress monitored to determine their fluency gains. At the end of the three week period the fluency scores were compared to the baseline. The students completed the ERAS again to measure changes in reading motivation after three weeks of reading intervention.

There was a one and a half week break between the Repeated Reading intervention and Book Club interventions due to anticipated changes in the intervention group. During this gap time, the original 13 students self-selected Read Naturally passages to for use in a modified Repeated Reading format. The pattern of coaching/reading and the number of repetitions stayed the same during the modified intervention week, but since the teacher could not model reading the passages fluently because each child selected a different passage for practice, the teacher provided a chance for the students to read both passages silently and ask for help on word pronunciation.

After collection of 5th grade fall CBMR testing data, FastBridge aReading data, progress monitoring scores, and observations of teachers, the language arts team determined that some students needed to change placements in their “plus time” locations. Some students did not make enough fluency gains in the short period between the intervention starting and the fall screen period. Other students’ scores fell significantly from their 4th grade spring scores to their 5th grade fall scores qualifying them as needing interventions. This caused a change in the group

members for the second intervention period. One student moved to a Tier 3 intervention. Three moved out of intervention and into science and social studies enrichment. It was also determined that there was a need for an added comprehension focus for the group. Nine students stayed in their current Tier 2 placement to continue working on fluency with the added component of comprehension. Seven students joined the Tier 2 intervention group. Two students that joined the intervention group moved from Tier 3 intervention to Tier 2. Five students moved from no intervention to Tier 2 intervention. There were a total of 16 students in the Book Club intervention group, seven boys and nine girls. Three of the boys and six of the girls were in both the repeated reading and Book Club intervention groups.

Before beginning the Book Club the teacher introduced titles of potential books to the students to try to insure that selected books had not been read before, if possible, and to insure that the students had not seen movies based on the book. After this, the teacher gave a book talk for all the acceptable books. Students completed a Google Form, checking at least three titles of books they would be interested in reading as part of the Book Club group based on the book talks. Students then discussed and came up with an agreement to what partner reading would look like. They came up with group norms on how long each partner would read, how to help when a student was struggling with a word, and how to handle mistakes made in reading. After collecting the interest data, the teacher researcher attempted to use a book that was selected by as many students as possible because of research showing the positive impact of student choice on engagement (Kashef, Pandian, & Khameneh, 2014; Worthy, 2002; and Pachtman & Wilson, 2006).

Once the book was selected, the Book Club intervention was started. For the Book Club intervention the teacher read a chapter of the book aloud while the students followed along to

model fluency. Modeling was found to be an important aspect of fluency by Pardo (2004) and is an important portion of using Book Clubs as an intervention. The teacher stopped as needed to discuss vocabulary, ask questions to provoke thinking, and modeled comprehension strategies. The next chapter was read using an adapted version of the Partner Reading with Paragraph Shrinking Model from the Press Intervention Manual (University of Minnesota, 2017), applying the group decided norms for procedure.

According to the University of Minnesota (2017, p. 106-109) the first steps of Partnered Reading with Paragraph Shrinking are to gather the materials and partner the students. To partner the students for the partner reading times, the teacher used the same partnering method as used with the Repeated Reading strategy. After the materials were prepared, the goal and activity was explained to the students. Part of explaining the activity were setting the rules of keeping the conversations to the reading, using low voice, cooperating, trying your best, and following the directions. During the activity, the students took turns reading for a set period of time or reading amount, while the other partner coaches on error correction. After the set period of time, the students switched roles, repeating the procedure. At the end of each reading period the students shrank the content to 10 words. Before beginning the process the teacher checked for understanding and models the activity. During the activity the teacher provided guided practice and specific feedback. Fidelity checklist for this activity are available from the Press Manual (University of Minnesota, 2017, p. 126-127).

After partnered reading, students regrouped for an all class discussion about what had occurred in partner read chapters with the teacher reinforcing vocabulary and literature elements such as plot and setting, character development, and theme to enrich the literature experience and to check for continued student understanding of the text. The Book Clubs continued three days a

week for three weeks following this format. One day each week fluency was measured for all students using FastBridge progress monitoring, with the teacher recording the score in WRC. After three weeks of Book Clubs the students filled out the ERAS to measure their reading attitudes.

Results

At the end of the Repeated Reading intervention students' results fluctuated. Some students' fluency increased while other students' scores decreased. There were fluctuations week to week in students' scores as compared to the baseline. In Table 1 the scores in green represent a score that shows growth compared to the baseline while the red scores are a decrease compared to baseline. To measure growth during the intervention the all scores in the week following the conclusion of the intervention were compared to the student scores before the intervention was conducted (baseline). The highest gain by any student was 23 wpm while the greatest decrease by any student was 30 wpm. The average change was an increase of .92 WPM for all 13 students in the intervention. Table 2 shows the fluency scores for the nine students that were part of both interventions. The average growth after the RR intervention for the nine students that participated in both interventions was 6 WPM per student.

Reading attitudes scores varied. The data was collected before the RR intervention and after the RR intervention. For the thirteen students that participated in the RR intervention, three students had no changes in their attitudes towards reading. Four students had improved scores in their attitudes toward reading. However, six of the thirteen students had reading attitudes that went down over the course of the three week intervention period. The smallest drop was 3 points and the largest was a drop of 10 points. The gains ranged from an increase of 1.5 points to a gain of 8 points. The average change was decrease of 1.19 points over the course of this three week intervention for all thirteen students. When looking at the nine students that participated in both interventions that data varied slightly. The average drop increased to 2.1 points per student. Four of the nine students had a negative change in their reading attitudes, three had no change and only two of the nine had a positive change in their reading attitude.

When comparing the changes in both reading fluency and reading attitude of all the individual students that participated in RR, five of the thirteen students had scores that were changed positively or negatively in both measures. Three student had both negative changes in both fluency and reading attitude and two student had positive changes in both measures. Four students had both a positive and a negative change in either their fluency or reading attitude. For the students whose reading attitude did not change, one had a decrease in fluency by 1 WPM while the other two students had growth in their fluency scores.

When looking at only the students that participated in both interventions, the results were more mixed. Only two students had scores that both increased or decreased in both measures. Four students had both a positive and a negative change in either fluency or reading attitude. In the three students whose attitude stayed the same two showed fluency growth while the third dropped very slightly in fluency after using repeated reading.

During Book Clubs it appears that there was a significant drop in fluency compared to gains made during the use of RR. The net difference in scores from the beginning of intervention to post intervention show a decrease of 17 WPM across the children that participated in both interventions but a only a gain of 4 WPM for all 16 students in the intervention.

In reading attitudes scores varied. The data was collected before the starting Book Clubs and after completion of the Book Club intervention. For the 16 students that participated in the Book Club intervention, all students had at least slight changes in their attitudes towards reading. Seven students had improved scores in their attitudes toward reading. However, 9 of the 16 students had reading attitudes that went down over the course of the three week intervention period. The smallest drop was 1 point and the largest was a drop of 12 points. The gains ranged

from an increase of .5 points to a gain of 10 points. The average change was decrease of 2 points over the course of this three week intervention for all 16 students. When looking at the nine students that participated in both interventions that data varied slightly. The average drop decreased $\frac{2}{3}$ of a point per student. Five of the nine students had a negative change in their reading attitudes, and only 4 of the nine had a positive change in their reading attitude.

However, when looking at the data comparing the increases and decreases in both ERAS and Fluency scores for the individual students that participated in both interventions, there is an interesting pattern after book clubs that was not present after the RR intervention. For seven of the nine students that participated in both interventions student scores match, either both went up or both went down. However, that same trend is not reflected in the data comparing the ERAS and fluency scores of all students that participated in the intervention where there is only a correlation for one half of the students.

When comparing the data using a t-test, the results were once again mixed. A dependent groups *t* test confirms that there was a statistically significant difference in test scores for intervention #1, Repeated Reading, on reading fluency ($M = 18.78, SD = 31.98, n = 9$), as compared to test scores for intervention #2, Book Clubs, on reading fluency ($M = -2.33, SD = 31.98, n = 9$) following a reading intervention with moderate effect size, $t(8) = 1.87, p < .05, d = .66$. On average there was a 21 point difference between the groups.

When looking at reading attitudes, a dependent groups *t* test revealed that there was not a statistically significant difference in attitude scores for intervention #1 ($M = -1.78, SD = 4.51, n = 9$), as compared to attitude scores for intervention #2 ($M = -0.67, SD = 5.16, n = 9$) following a reading intervention with weak effect size, $t(8) = -0.42, p < .05, d = .23$. On average there was a 1.11 point difference between the groups.

Discussion

Summary of Major Findings

While some students had significant positive and negative changes in reading attitudes, nothing from this study shows that these changes in attitudes were statistically related to the intervention being used. While it is interesting that all students in the book club portion of the study that had gains in fluency during that intervention also had positive gains in reading attitude and that all students that showed decreases in fluency scores also had decreases in their reading attitudes, it is not statistically supported. This study does show that the use of repeated reading is more effective in promoting fluency gains in 5th graders at this school as compared to a combination of partner reading and LWR. Based on this study it would appear that if the goal is improving fluency, book clubs with partner reading and LWR is not the most effective strategy and that while reading attitudes fluctuate, these interventions do not seem to be statistically related to the fluctuation.

Limitations of the Study

There are numerous limitations to this study.

Sample size. This study had a relatively small sample size. Large swings in scores can skew the data because there were not be a large number of participants that were included in the research study, as is the case with many intervention studies.

Participants. The results of this study could be unique for the age of these participants, and older or younger students could have different results using the same interventions. The community may also impact the study. The results could be different in a larger community or a community with a different socio-economical make up. The variety of teachers that the students

have for their regular language arts instruction is a limitations that cannot be accounted for. Teachers vary in the extent and the way they teach reading in their individual classrooms which changes what the students in this combined group are exposed to. As Ross and Begeny (2015) found, any intervention compared to none impacts the scores of students, so if one teacher was working on fluency in the general classroom setting more than others this could significantly impact the student scores. The one thing these students all had in common is the fact that they all struggle with reading fluency, to some degree, despite general reading instruction.

Time Limitations. The time frame of the study limited in the number of intervention strategies that could be studied. A longer study would allow the evaluation of more intervention strategies as well the longer use of each intervention, instead of limiting it to 3 weeks.

Testing Measures. While the ERAS has been used in studies by Linder et al., (2017), Ubbes, et al., (2018), Kızıldağ, Y. (2018), and Al-Adwani, A., & Al-Fadley, A. (2017), McKenna and Kear was created and standardized the 1980s (as cited in Worrell et al., 2007). Worrell et al., (2007) looked at the reliability and validity of ERAS scores in 575 academically talented students finding results consistent to other studies that looked at the tests validity. However, students in this research study commented during the initial assessment that the survey was “weird”. Numerous students created their own score of neutral by circling the complete middle of the options, not selecting the one with any positive or negative connotations. One student commented that she wouldn’t feel angry like Garfield looks in the pictures when asked to read out loud in class. She state she would feel “nervous” and “scared” in the margins of her survey. Several students left items blank and had to be followed up with. They reason given for the blank responses were because “I’ve never been to one” and “I didn’t know what this was,” when answering the question, “How Would you feel about going to a bookstore?” This leads the

researcher to question if some of the ERAS survey questions are dated for children growing up in a technology rich culture. The survey asked questions about going to a bookstore but there were no questions about reading on computers, tablets, or phones which are common ways some students read. It also doesn't ask any questions about looking for books on-line which is a common shopping avenue in our current culture. This researcher proposes that a new way to measure reading attitudes is needed that takes into account and reflects advances in technology.

In addition, there are other aspects reading that were not measured with the tools of this study. An important component of reading ability is comprehension which was not measured in this study. Other aspects of fluency such as expression and volume are not measured by Fastbridge. This test only measures accuracy and rate leaving holes in truly assessing a student's reading ability. Some of these attributes of reading could be assessed using fluency rating scales such as those used by Caluris (n.d.) in the study of the use of Readers Theater or Arens et al. (2018) study on the use of iPods to improve fluency.

Also, Fastbridge only measures a student's narrative reading fluency, not their informational reading fluency, which can differ greatly in the skills needed to be a successful reader as the students get older. The ability to read information (nonfiction) content also impacts a student's reading ability as they read to learn in content areas such as science, social studies. The passages from Read Naturally were all informational in nature which was different than the texts used in the weekly progress monitoring assessment.

Further Study

Further studies could look at the impact of student opinions on the books that they are reading and their reading attitudes. Another aspect to consider is the possible impact of student

enjoyment of a book and their rating of their reading enjoyment to determine if there is a correlation between the two. Also, it could be interesting to see if students with lower reading attitude scores fluctuate more in their attitudes on reading based on responses to their enjoyment of a book more or less than students with a higher reading attitude scores. There are various aspects of student choice that could impact the reading attitude of students. For example, the impact of using the Repeated Reading intervention in a manner that allowed for more student choice could be measured to see if fluency rates were impacted. The impact of other fluency interventions on reading fluency scores, such as supported Cloze reading (when students take turns alternating between reading every other word), choral reading, or intensive practice with sight words such as Fry word lists could be studied to see if one of these led to greater gains in fluency for students.

Conclusion

Based on this study it would appear that the use of repeated readings instead of partner reading and LWR should be continued to support fluency growth. Other interventions or programs could be considered to improve reading attitudes of 5th grade struggling readers to determine if they have a greater impact on fluency. As far as impacting reading attitudes, either positively or negatively, it would appear that specific reading strategies don't seem to statistically affect students reading attitudes one way or another. If the goal is changing reading attitudes, strategies geared towards improving fluency don't impact reading attitudes based on this study. Improving at the skill of fluency does not seem to help the students rate their reading attitudes higher. Other strategies for improving students attitudes towards reading need to be considered besides simply improving their fluency.

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