INSTRUCTIN IN THE FAST LANE: THE IMPACT OF ACCELERATED

INSTRUCTION THROUGH THE STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVE ON STUDENT

ACHIEVEMENT

by

Jenifer Kirby Anderson, MEd

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ABSTRACT

INSTRUCTION IN THE FAST LANE: THE IMPACT OF ACCELERATED
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High-stakes testing has been the dominant method for holding schools
accountable since the implementation of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002. The
Every Student Succeeds Act, enacted in 2015, continues to build on accountability
policies created by NCLB to ensure that all students receive a quality education. This
sustained focus on accountability makes it evident that states will continue to implement
high-stakes accountability measures to ensure that every effort is being made to improve
student achievement. This study examined the Student Success Initiative (SSI), a Texas
high-stakes accountability measure that required students to go through accelerated
instruction after failing to meet passing standards on the State of Texas Assessments of
Academic Readiness (STAAR).

The purpose of this study was to examine two models of accelerated instruction provided in a summer school program through SSI to determine which model had the greatest impact on student achievement. This study utilized the explanatory sequential mixed methods design to examine the implementation models of accelerated instruction and each model's impact on student achievement. Quantitative data collected consisted of scores from the second and third administrations of the Grade 8 STAAR reading exam from students who participated in accelerated instruction in the summer school program. Qualitative data was collected through face-to-face interviews with teachers who had taught accelerated instruction in the summer school program.

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis determined that the amount of time a student spent in accelerated instruction and Limited English Proficient status (LEP) significantly predicted students' ability to achieve academic growth on the third administration of the Grade 8 STAAR reading exam. In other words, the more time a student spent in accelerated instruction equated to more growth on the third administration of the Grade 8 STAAR reading exam and LEP students scored 15 points lower than their non-LEP peers. During the interviews, these findings were shared with teachers to gain a deeper understanding of the impact accelerated instruction had on students during the summer school program. Teachers shared the benefits of the accelerated instruction curriculum and identified student struggles.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, the practice of using high-stakes tests as measures for accountability purposes has become an integral part of the educational system and will become more important as test scores guide policy and shape public opinion (Madaus & Clarke, 2001). The rationale behind the NCLB reform is that the act of publicizing detailed accountability reports linked to high-stakes test performance will improve the productivity of public schools (Dee & Jacob, 2011). Another belief behind high-stakes accountability approaches is that students and teachers will be motivated to work harder if significant rewards or serious threats are tied to student test scores (Brown, 2007; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012). Policymakers frown on the idea that policies tied to high-stakes accountability issue punishments and threats; instead, they frame such policies as tools that help educators improve the academic achievement of all students by targeting strengths and weaknesses (Brown, 2007).

Despite how policymakers frame accountability, students often respond negatively to the pressures of high-stakes testing by disengaging from school (Tepper Jacob, & Stone, 2005). Low academic achievement and behavioral difficulties are the two biggest factors that lead to student retention and, since the implementation of NCLB, the number of students being retained has had an annual increase of an estimated 7 to 15% (Jimerson, et. al, 2006). There is no evidence that supports the use of grade retention as a successful academic remediation; in fact, students who are retained are more likely to continue to struggle and, eventually, drop out of school (Jimerson, et.al , 2006; Picklo & Christenson, 2005). One of the contributing factors to the increase in grade retention practices is the emphasis of high standards and accountability brought on by NCLB (Jimerson et al., 2006). Holmes (2006) argues that retention policies based on test scores

require students to go through individualized instruction after they have been retained, instead of using prior test scores to provide struggling students with support before retention. When using grade retention as an intervention to help struggling learners, the assumption is that student achievement will increase when students are provided the same material a second time (Picklo & Christenson, 2005). However, struggling students become frustrated, because the material is being presented in the same manner which relies heavily on whole-group instruction (Hester, Gable, & Manning, 2003). Grade retention as an intervention does not address the academic and emotional needs of struggling learners, nor does it target areas for improvement (Jimerson, eta., 2006).

Picklo and Christenson (2005) found that early identification of students who are at risk for failure and the implementations of academic interventions throughout the year are more effective ways to boost student achievement than grade retention. The decision to retain is made at the end of the year, which makes it more of an acknowledgement that the student struggled, rather than an effective intervention that addresses student needs. Jimerson, et al. (2006) contend that educators should focus on improving instructional strategies that target specific student needs to increase student achievement.

Texas was one of the first states to create and implement accountability systems based on statewide testing (Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). To strengthen the state accountability system, the 76th Texas Legislature enacted the Student Success Initiative (SSI) in 1999. The goal of the SSI is to ensure that all students receive quality instruction on grade-level in order to be academically successful in mathematics and reading (TEA, 2014). In response to NCLB and the increase of grade retention practices, a major component of SSI emerged in 2003. Students in third grade were required to pass the reading portion of the state assessment, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), in order to be promoted to the fourth grade. These grade promotion

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requirements were extended to include the mathematics and reading portions of TAKS for fifth graders in 2005 and for eighth graders in 2008. Students are given three opportunities to pass the required portions of the state assessments; one in March, the second in April, and the third in June. While grade promotion requirements still exist for students in grades 5 and 8, the 81st Texas Legislature decided to eliminate the third grade promotion requirement in 2009.

In the 2011-2012 school year, the state of Texas replaced the TAKS with a new state assessment, the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR). The STAAR is more rigorous than TAKS and is more aligned with national college and career readiness standards (Williams, 2013). In order to allow school districts time to align curriculum and prepare students for the more rigorous demands, SSI was not enforced the first year of STAAR. SSI was reinstated in the 2012-2013 school year and students in grades 5 and 8 were once again facing grade promotion requirements.

Another major component of the SSI is to provide targeted, accelerated instruction to students who are struggling in math and/or reading (TEA, 2010). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) outlines when required instruction should take place, but allows individual school districts to determine how accelerated instruction should be provided to struggling students. Accelerated instruction must be provided to students during the school day after students fail the first administration of the Grade 8 STAAR reading and/or math. The first administration of the Grade 8 STAAR reading and math assessments occur in March and are given to all students. The second administration of the STAAR reading and math assessments are given in April and only to students who do not meet the passing standard on the first administration. If students fail the second administration of the Grade 8 STAAR reading and/or math, then they must go to summer

school to complete the required accelerated instruction before taking the third administration.

Need for the Study

The implementation of high-stakes accountability under NCLB requires students to meet specific performance criteria in order to move on to the next grade, thus eliminating practices like social promotion. Brown (2007) argues that social promotion is the fatal flaw in the U.S. education system, because this practice allows students to move through the education system simply because they turn one year older. With high-stakes accountability, students who do not meet the performance criteria are retained. Retention practices like this allow high-stakes tests to be the dominant method for measuring school effectiveness and student achievement (von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Brown (2007) suggests that retention is a consequence of the implementation of high-stakes accountability in the education system. Retention becomes a method of measuring the effectiveness of the accountability system. Russo (2005) states that retention policies are justified based on outcomes for individual students, instead of the broader effects retention has on all students and families. Individual students who are retained due to failure to meet the standards outlined in state statues become evidence that the system of accountability is working, because all the responsibility is placed on the individual student instead of the accountability system (Brown, 2007; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012; Russo, 2005).

On the contrary, Altshuler and Schmutz (2006) argue that the use of individual assessments place all the responsibility on the student and high-stakes accountability systems that put these policies into place are not assessed for effectiveness and have no burden of responsibility. The main objective of NCLB was to close achievement gaps by improving student performance across race and socioeconomic status. Unfortunately,

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national and state student performance data reflects little to no progress in these efforts (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012; von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Dee and Jacob (2011) suggest that this lack of progress can be attributed to the notion that schools alone are responsible for overcoming the socioeconomic disparities that impact student achievement.

While high-stakes accountability measures raise concerns regarding negative impacts on instructional practices (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, &, Berliner, 2012), NCLB and the renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2002 have made it evident that high-stakes testing is the dominant method for holding schools accountable (Brown, 2007; von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Therefore, states will continue to implement high-stakes accountability measures, like retention policies, to ensure that every effort is being made to improve student achievement.

In Texas, SSI was implemented with the goal of ensuring that all students receive quality instruction on grade-level in order to be academically successful in mathematics and reading (TEA, 2014). The implementation of SSI also brought about a retention policy that addresses high-stakes accountability and eliminates social promotion. Holmes (2006) argues that retention policies based on test scores require students to go through individualized instruction after they have been retained, instead of using prior test scores to provide struggling students with support before retention. SSI attempts to address that issue by providing students with accelerated instruction. Examining the implementation and success of accelerated instruction could provide valuable insight on how to effectively provide accelerated instruction in order to positively impact student achievement.

Purpose of the Study

Ideally, high-stakes accountability measures are tools that help educators improve the academic achievement of all students (Brown, 2007). Accelerated instruction through SSI, if implemented effectively, can be a tool to help teachers support struggling learners. The focus of this study was on the implementation two models of required accelerated instruction after the second administration of the STAAR reading exam at two summer school sites in one large, urban Texas school district. The models of implementation included: four-hours of accelerated instruction provided through direct instruction from a teacher and two-hours of accelerated instruction provided through direct instruction from a teacher. The purpose of this study was to identify strengths and weaknesses of these two models of accelerated instruction through SSI to determine which model had the greatest impact on student achievement. By identifying the most effective model of accelerated instruction, this study was able to provide valuable insight to education stakeholders at the district level to assist in an effective implementation of accelerated instruction that will positively impact student achievement.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory was used as a theoretical framework to guide this study. The basic idea behind social learning theory is that human learning is impacted by cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Taylor (1997) states that school is an environmental factor that shapes what learning behaviors are and are not socially accepted. The logic behind retention policies, like the one implemented through SSI, is that students will work harder to achieve state standards so that they will not have to repeat a grade (Brown, 2007). Therefore, failure to perform well on a high-stakes test becomes socially unacceptable. Further, social learning theory states that people learn through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1977). Edwards (1997) states

that teachers can positively impact student learning through modeling strategies like direct instruction and self-talk. These methods provide students with an appropriate social model, the teacher, who can talk them through critical cognitive skills. For students to be successful with observational learning and the modeling process, they must pay attention and avoid distractions, retain the information, and have the motivation to reproduce or imitate what was learned (Bandura, 1977; Taylor, 1997). In looking at accelerated instruction provided through SSI through the lens of social learning theory, students should experience gains in achievement with the learning opportunities provided by accelerated instruction.

Research Questions

This was a mixed-methods study that entailed two phases of data collection and analysis. The first phase was the quantitative data collection and analysis. The following research questions guided the first phase of this study:

1. Which implementation model of accelerated instruction yields the highest percentage of student achievement on the third administration of the Grade 8 reading STAAR exam: four-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher or two-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher?

2. Are there differences between four-hour and two-hour instruction by subpopulations (demographic groups)?

The quantitative data collection and analysis revealed that accelerated instruction was improving student scores; however, English Language Learners (ELLs) were scoring lower on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam as compared to students who were not labeled as ELLs. The second phase of the study required qualitative data collection and analysis to add depth to the quantitative data, specifically the discrepancy between scores on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam for students who

were identified as ELLs and all other students. The following questions guided the second phase of this study:

3. How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of accelerated instruction through SSI in the summer school program at the intermediate school level of instruction?

4. How can accelerated instruction through SSI better meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) at the intermediate school level of instruction?

Operational and Constitutive Definitions

Terms that were used in this study are defined below.

Accelerated Instruction. For the purposes of this study, accelerated instruction will be defined as targeted, enhanced instruction provided to students who failed the second administration of the Grade 8 reading portion of the STAAR. This instruction will be created and delivered based on requirements set forth by the Student Success Initiative.

Student Achievement. The degree to which students display mastery of the state academic standards as measured by standardized assessments claimed by the Texas Education Agency to be accurate and valid measures of student learning (TEA, 2008). For the purposes of this study, the Grade 8 reading portion of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STARR) will be the standardized assessment used to determine student achievement.

Student Success Initiative (SSI). Adopted by the state legislature in 1999 and modified in 2009, the law ties promotion from grades five to six and grades eight to nine to students passing STAAR in reading and mathematics. According to TEA (2014), the

goal of SSI is to provide all students with a structured support system and instruction that

is designed to ensure academic success in reading and mathematics.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the literature pertinent to this study. The literature review begins with an overview of high stakes testing and the rationale behind these practices. Next, literature surrounding the impact accountability has had on student achievement and closing the achievement gap is presented. Since students involved in this study are at the middle school level, effective middle school instruction is discussed to provide insight into best practices for the implementation of accelerated instruction. Current intervention strategies are also discussed to provide further insight. The review of the literature concludes with retention policies, a major component of the Student Success Initiative (SSI).

High Stakes Testing

From the report of a Nation at Risk to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, monitoring student achievement through accountability systems has been the primary focus of the educational system. Educators are charged with ensuring that students are making academic progress. Academic progress has been measured in many ways. One of the most controversial means of measuring progress has been through the implementation of high-stakes testing. Texas was one of the first states to create and implement accountability systems based on statewide testing (Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Picklo and Christenson (2005) define high-stakes testing as the use of test scores being the sole criterion to make important educational decisions. The practice of using high-stakes tests as measures for accountability purposes has become an integral part of the educational system and will become more important as test scores guide policy and shape public opinion (Madaus & Clarke, 2001). With increased accountability,

public schools were under scrutiny to prove that they were delivering quality education to all students, thus resulting in high-stakes testing becoming the single source of measuring academic achievement.

The rationale behind high-stakes accountability approaches is that students and teachers will be motivated to work harder if significant rewards or serious threats are tied to student test scores (Brown, 2007; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012). Policymakers frown on the idea that policies tied to high-stakes accountability issue punishments and threats; instead, they frame such polices as tools to help educators improve the academic achievement of all students by targeting strengths and weaknesses (Brown, 2007). Another belief behind the NCLB reform is that the act of publicizing detailed accountability reports linked to high-stakes test performance will improve the productivity of public schools (Dee & Jacob, 2011).

On the other hand, pressure to perform well on high-stakes tests enforced by accountability systems may influence administrators and teachers to engage in practices that are destructive to students' education (Bracey, 2009; Madaus, 1988; Madaus & Clarke, 2001; Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Vasquez Heiling and Darling-Hammond (2008) conducted a study on one large urban school district in Texas to see if gaming strategies were used to make it appear as though there were gains in student achievement for high school high-stakes tests, namely the tenth grade exit level test. The study examined gaming practices like grade retention, student exclusion from testing and school, and misreporting drop-out rates and other indicators that are valued in the accountability system. Results showed that retention in the ninth grade was a heavily used strategy to prevent students from taking the tenth grade exit level tests (Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Furthermore, the strategy of excluding students provided loop holes for the district to report high graduation rates. The use of these

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strategies prevent low-achieving students from being successful in school; in fact, these types of practices often lead to disadvantaged students giving up on the educational system and dropping out (Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Accountability and Student Achievement

High-stakes testing accountability practices do not accurately reflect student learning and achievement, as these practices focus on district and campus scores, not individual student progress (Madaus & Clarke, 2001; Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Vasquez Heilig and Darling-Hammond (2008) contend that accountability measures based on test scores benefit governmental agents, not students, as they are allowed to transfer the consequences of failure on individual schools. Altshuler and Schmutz (2006) argue that the use of individual high-stakes assessments place all the responsibility on the student and high-stakes accountability systems that put these policies into place are not assessed for effectiveness and have no burden of responsibility. Altshuler and Schmutz (2006) go on to say that the correlation between achievement on high-stakes tests and ethnic status proves that the use of these mandated tests allows for the public to scrutinize individual efforts, instead of focusing on the system itself. This creates a system in which low-income, low-achieving, often minority, students continue to struggle, because the schools they attend focus efforts and limited resources on test preparation, rather than on improvements in quality instruction (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). According to Jones (2007), high-stakes tests have a negative effect on students from low SES backgrounds due to limited access to resources that would prepare them for certain standardized tests. Furthermore, Madaus and Clarke (2001) found that teachers in high-minority classrooms report that more emphasis is placed on test preparation and test taking skills than on other areas of the curriculum.

Nichols, Glass, and Berliner (2012) conducted a study to examine the relationship between high-stakes testing accountability pressure and student achievement. Nichols, Glass, and Berliner (2012) developed an index to measure this pressure using a three step process. First, they created portfolios that contained legislative documents, state-generated accountability reports, and newspaper articles regarding public perception of high-stakes testing policies. Then, they had 300 graduate students review these portfolios and rate them based on which state put more pressure on policies implemented. Lastly, the researchers used the graduate students' ratings to create a scale. Texas had the highest rating, meaning that policies and practices implemented in Texas are viewed as creating the most high-stakes testing accountability pressure as compared to the 24 other states involved in the study (Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012). The results of the study suggest that high-stakes test pressure negatively impacts students living in poverty and minority students, specifically African Americans and Hispanics. Results also indicate that, over time, pressure may work to increase reading achievement. Nichols, Glass, and Berliner (2012) conclude that this finding shows a need to examine the influence of high-stakes testing policies on classroom instructional practices across contents.

Brown (2007) conducted a case study to analyze how and why key policymakers in Wisconsin developed and implemented a high-stakes accountability policy at the state and district level. Brown (2007) was particularly interested in how policymakers justified the relationship between retention and improved student achievement. During the 2002-2003 school year, Wisconsin implemented a retention policy that stopped social promotion and required students to meet certain proficiency standards before moving to the next grade level. Despite district administrators' concerns regarding policymakers' understanding of issues related to poor student performance and the use of retention for improvement, they aligned district practices to reflect state objectives to avoid the

consequences of failing to meet state standards (Brown, 2007). The results of the study indicate that education stakeholders at the district level, despite their questions or concerns, are forced to focus their efforts on problems with poor student achievement and implement solutions based on definitions created by state policymakers. Brown (2007) argues that a greater awareness of the politics surrounding the implementation of high-stakes accountability policies is likely to help educational stakeholders provide input and support positive changes in student academic achievement.

Similarly, Tepper Jacob, and Stone (2005) surveyed administrators, teachers, and students from five low-performing schools in the Chicago Public Schools system to determine their perceptions of the implementation of a grade retention policy comparable to SSI. Findings suggested that students were motivated to work harder due to the threat of retention. Teachers felt that students were more accountable, because they understood that their score on the test would be the determining factor of promotion or retention, not a grade given by the teacher. While the survey revealed that time on test preparation had increased a great deal, teachers and principals reported that the retention policy had positively impacted instruction. Tepper Jacob and Stone (2005) felt that the findings from their study showed that accountability policies can positively impact student achievement by encouraging teachers and principals to focus on the needs of the lowest-performing students.

In order to influence policy, education stakeholders must reflect on the impact that education reforms have made over time and continue to advocate for policy alternatives that are in the best interest of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Brown (2007) argues that educational stakeholders should be more aware of the agendas set by the legislative and executive branches of the government before determining which specific reforms to promote, rather than evaluating the effectiveness

of policies put in place after the implementation of the promoted reform. Brown (2007) goes on to say that education stakeholders must understand the politics behind the reform, including how decision-makers view and define issues surrounding student achievement, in order to provide input and make real changes to improve student achievement.

Closing the Achievement Gap

The main objective of NCLB was to close achievement gaps by improving student performance across race and socioeconomic status; unfortunately, national and state student performance data reflects little to no progress in these efforts (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, &, Berliner, 2012; von der Embse, N. & Hasson, R., 2012). Dee and Jacob (2011) suggest that this lack of progress can be attributed to the notion that schools alone are responsible for overcoming the socioeconomic disparities that impact student achievement. Darling-Hammond (2007) points out that there is a need to provide teaching incentives to urban and poor rural schools, because these schools are populated with struggling students and underprepared teachers. Altshuler and Schmutz (2006) argue that assessment practices mandated by NCLB are discriminatory, particularly against the Hispanic population. To build their argument, Altshuler and Schmutz (2006) focus on the cultural differences between the dominant white American culture, which shapes high-stakes testing practices, and the Hispanic culture. In order to be successful, Hispanic students must understand the language and adopt the behavioral norms of the dominant culture.

As accountability systems have grown, expectations for schools increase and exemptions for students serviced through special programs, like English as a Second Language (ESL), have been restricted (Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Garcia (2003) argues that the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) are consistently overlooked in policies implemented through educational reforms. While

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high-stakes tests have been used to ensure that all students are able to achieve specific academic standards, these tests cannot accurately measure the academic achievement of ELLs who are working to obtain proficiency in their new language (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Garcia, 2003; Wright & Li, 2008). Wright and Li (2008) conducted a study on the achievement of ELLs who had been in the country for less than a year and were required to take a high-stakes mathematics test. They argued that the ELLs were not provided with an opportunity to learn grade level material before being tested and, as a result, failed the test. In Texas, ELLs are required to take the reading and writing portions of the STAAR in English and they are subjected to grade promotion under SSI. A linguistically accommodated test has been developed for math, science, and social studies. They further suggest that participation in high-stakes tests for ELLs be delayed, so schools can provide the type of instruction needed to help students effectively acquire the language and apply it to academic concepts.

Darling-Hammond (2007) argues that schools that serve large populations of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are at a severe disadvantage in increasing student performance due to the way NCLB defines and classifies LEP students. LEP students are defined and classified based on their ability, or lack thereof, to speak, read, write, and understand the English language. Once a LEP student has demonstrated proficiency in the language, they exit the English as a Second Language (ESL) program and are no longer classified as LEP; thus, making it difficult for the LEP subgroup to reach the high performance standards set forth by NCLB (Darling-Hammond, 2007). Accountability measures that require all students to pass the same assessment in order to be promoted to the next grade or awarded a high school diploma are setting minority groups, like ELLs, up for failure if there is no consideration given to the specialized supports needed for success (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2007;

Garcia, 2003).   This type of requirement becomes more of a language policy and is unfair to students new to the language and the schools that are trying to meet the students' needs (Wright & Li, 2008).

<div align="center">**Effective Middle School Instruction**</div>

Musoleno and White (2010) found that middle school students in particular are negatively impacted by high-stakes testing due to teachers foregoing developmentally appropriate instructional practices for test preparation.   Middle school is comprised of students, typically ages 11 to 14, in grades six through eight (National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform, 2008). Middle school students are at a unique place in adolescent development due to rapid cognitive growth and the budding awareness of social identity (Musoleno & White, 2010; National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform, 2008). Middle school students are at the point in adolescent development where they are seeking more social interaction and peer approval; therefore, teachers should plan instruction that provides opportunities for socialization and collaborative learning (Hester, Gable, & Manning, 2003).

Esteves and Whitten (2014) state that middle school students need supportive school environments, because they are in the process of realizing their emotional and social identities in the greater context of the school community and beyond. The teacher, who is at the center of the school environment, plays an important role in the middle school student's perception of academic achievement. Wentzel (1997) contends that students, especially students in middle school, will be more motivated to perform well academically if they perceive that teachers care about them. Since middle school students are becoming more aware of the different facets of self, as an individual and in the social context, instruction at the middle school level is most effective when designed to meet the unique needs of the middle school learner (Esteves & Whitten, 2014; Musoleno &

White, 2010).Additionally, middle school students are more likely to engage in classroom activities if the teacher is empathic and cognizant of students' social needs (Mertens & Flowers, 2003; Wentzel, 1997). Effective instruction for middle school students often involves instructional strategies that provide students with choice and individualized support and capitalize on the social aspects of learning (Little, McCoach, & Reis, 2014; Musoleno & White, 2010).

In order for instruction at the middle school level to be effective, educators must recognize and address the unique needs of the adolescent learners by creating an environment that promotes positive social interactions in addition to academic achievement (Hester, Gable, & Manning, 2003). Struggling students become frustrated in classes that rely heavily on whole-group instruction, because their individual needs are not being addressed; this frustration can lead to behaviors that are seen as disruptive or insubordinate by teachers and administrators (Hester, Gable, & Manning, 2003). Allington (2007) states that whole-class instruction is the least effective method of teaching, which is demonstrated by the low academic achievement experienced by schools where whole-class instruction dominates.

Intervention

Most accountability policies require schools to provide low-performing students with additional supports in the form of intervention. Picklo and Christenson (2005) found that the same types of interventions are being provided to all students and there is no differentiation for struggling learners. In order for struggling learners to experience academic growth, educators need to tailor interventions so that they address individual student needs (Jimerson, et al., 2006; Picklo & Christenson, 2005).

According to Jimerson et al. (2006), reading is an important skill that students need to acquire; therefore, early identification and intervention for students who struggle

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with reading are effective ways to prevent academic failure. Allington (2007) argues that supplementary educational interventions brought on by federal education policy are not beneficial to adolescent struggling readers, because these interventions do not work to help students learn to read. Furthermore, Allington (2007) found that the intervention model adopted by most schools provides struggling students with one reading intervention class for 30 to 60 minutes a day. This class provides students with opportunities to further develop their reading skills with materials that are on their actual reading levels. For the rest of the school day, struggling readers are subjected to on-grade level reading materials that are not conducive to helping these students experience academic gains. In order for reading interventions to be effective, support must be provided throughout the school day and involve access to on-grade level content through reading materials that are on each student's reading level (Allington, 2007; Jimerson et al., 2006; Picklo & Christenson, 2005). After determining an appropriate intervention that targets individual student needs, educators need to constantly monitor student responses to the intervention and, when needed, make adjustments to ensure that the intervention continues to be effective for the student (Jimerson et al., 2006).

In addition to supports throughout the school year, summer school programs are made available to provide struggling students with more time and exposure to grade-level content in hopes that students will experience gains in academic achievement (Jimerson et al., 2006). According to Kelleher (2003), summer school is the last viable intervention due to the plethora of other interventions available to at-risk students during the school year. Furthermore, Kelleher (2003) questions the qualifications of teachers volunteering to work summer school programs, stating that teachers selected may lack expertise and may not be certified in the content area they are teaching due to the small number of teachers applying to the program. While Kelleher's concerns are valid, summer school

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programs can improve student passing rates on high-stakes tests by at least a third

(Tepper Jacob & Stone, 2005). Jacob and Lefgren (2001) analyzed standardized test data

form Chicago Public Schools to determine the impact of summer school and grade

retention on student achievement. In 1997, Chicago implemented a promotional policy,

similar to SSI, which required students in third, sixth, and eighth grade to meet the

standard in reading and math on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in order to be

promoted to the next grade. The sample consisted of students who were subject to

Chicago's promotional policy and were in the third and sixth grades from the 1993-1994

to the 1998-1999 school years. While results are mixed on the impact of grade retention

and the net effect of grade retention and summer school, results show that summer school

has positive impacts on reading and math achievement for up to two years for both third

and sixth graders (Jacob & Lefgren, 2001). In addition, summer school programs may

prevent students from dropping out due to the social stigma of being overage in any

particular grade (Jimerson et al., 2006). For summer school programs to be successful,

educators involved in the program should maintain high standards and create a positive

school culture which will lead to student engagement and success (Kelleher, 2003).

Retention

Accountability measures that require students to meet specific performance

criteria in order to move on to the next grade level are implemented to address the issue

of social promotion (Brown, 2007). Social promotion is defined as placing students in

the next grade level, because they turn one year older (Brown, 2007; Greene & Winters,

2006). If students do not meet the performance criteria, then they are retained. Greene

and Winters (2006) conducted a study to evaluate Florida's program to end social

promotion. This study sought to determine the impact of ending social promotion by

comparing a group of low performing third graders from 2002, the year in which the

retention policy was implemented, and a group of third graders from 2001, the year before the policy was implemented. They found that students retained in third grade made larger gains than students who were promoted to fourth grade.

　One of the contributing factors to the increase in grade retention practices is the emphasis of high standards and accountability brought on my NCLB (Jimerson et al., 2006).   The belief behind these types of retention policies is that students will be motivated to do well, because they do not want to repeat a grade level (Brown, 2007). When using grade retention as an intervention to help struggling learners, the assumption is that student achievement will increase when students are provided the same material a second time (Picklo & Christenson, 2005). The decision to retain is made at the end of the year, which makes it more of an acknowledgement that the student struggled, rather than an effective intervention that addresses student needs. In fact, grade retention as an intervention does not address the academic and emotional needs of struggling learners, nor does it target areas for improvement (Jimerson et al., 2006). There is no evidence that supports the use of grade retention as a successful academic remediation; in fact, students who are retained are more likely to continue to struggle and, eventually, drop out of school (Jimerson et al., 2006; Picklo & Christenson, 2005).

Brown (2007) suggests that retention is a consequence of the implementation of high-stakes accountability in the education system. Retention becomes a method of measuring the effectiveness of the accountability system. Individual students who are retained due to failure to meet the standards outlined in state statutes become evidence that the system of accountability is working (Brown, 2007). Holmes (2006) argues that retention policies based on test scores are exhausting resources as they require students to go through individualized instruction after they have been retained, instead of using prior test scores to provide struggling students with support before retention. Picklo and

Christenson (2005) found that early identification of students who are at risk for failure and the implementations of academic interventions throughout the year are more effective ways to boost student achievement than grade retention. Jimerson et al. (2006) suggest that comprehensive programs that recognize students' academic, social, and emotional needs have the potential to improve student achievement and reduce retention; however, these programs are expensive, unlike retention, and effective implantation would require a school-wide commitment.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory was used as a theoretical framework to guide this study. The basic idea behind social learning theory is that human learning is impacted by cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. According to Bandura (1977), people are more likely to adopt modeled behavior that elicits positive outcomes rather than behaviors that have negative effects. Furthermore, social learning theory encompasses several components in which observed rewards and punishments influence how people think, feel, and act. People do not develop behavioral guidelines for social situations on their own; instead, appropriate behavior is learned through observed or experienced response consequences. Bandura's social learning theory also suggests that "psychological functioning is a continuous reciprocal interaction between personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants" (Bandura, 1977, Pg. 194). This idea suggests that behavior and environment are continuously influencing and regulating one another to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved.

Middle school is an interesting developmental period to examine through the lens of Bandura's social learning theory, because adolescents are developing a sense of self while learning to handle intensified emotions in multiple social contexts (Berger, 2008; McDevit & Ormrod, 2010). In middle school, adolescents begin to pull away from

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parents and teachers as peer acceptance becomes increasingly important in defining identity and understanding social contexts (McDevit & Ormrod, 2010). The school environment becomes essential to the development of middle school students as school provides a variety of social contexts for adolescents to discover the different facets of self (Esteves & Whitten, 2014; Musoleno & White, 2010).

Social learning theory highlights the need for young adults to feel successful in chosen activities (McDevit & Ormrod, 2010). Young adults thrive on competence and will seek out activities in which they have high self-efficacy; on the other hand, young adults will avoid activities in which they have low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). For this reason, it is important to explore how academic interventions, like accelerated instruction and summer school, impact struggling learners' perceptions of success in school. Brough, Bergmann, and Holt (2006) explored the obstacles struggle students face and found that it is difficult to change students' perceptions of school due to years of failure, despite expended efforts. Teachers play a pivotal role in helping improve students' sense of self-efficacy. Teachers must realize that they have the ability to reach students who are willing to come to school, because these students are also willing to learn social survival skills, even though their outward dispositions indicate that they are not (Brough, Bergmann, & Holt, 2006).

Toshalis (2015) states that educators should consider examining the larger context of school systems through the lens of social reproduction theory before they mistakenly identify resistant students as the main problem. According to Toshalis (2015), social reproduction theories paint school as an unfair institution that is biased towards those with privilege. When marginalized students act out and resist the school system, then they cut themselves off from opportunities for social mobility by denying their education. Toshalis (2015) goes on to say that the social reproduction viewpoint provides educators

with insight on how to understand and appropriately respond to student resistance. When educators consider student resistance as a factor in the larger societal context, then the main issue ceases to be student misbehavior and instead becomes the need for social change.

Summary

If the purpose of NCLB is to improve student learning and ensure that all students have quality education, it has been argued that high-stakes testing is producing the opposite effect of its initial intent. If students are still not successful after being provided effective instruction and intervention, then they face the consequence of retention. Policymakers in Texas have implemented a retention policy; however, efforts are being made to avoid retention by requiring schools to provide accelerated instruction to students who cannot achieve on high-stakes tests. The assumption is that this focused, accelerated instruction will improve student learning and help students perform on grade level. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory supports this assumption in that retention is socially unacceptable thus motivating students to pay attention to the accelerated instruction provided.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The goal of this mixed methods, non-experimental research was to examine models of accelerated instruction provided through the Student Success Initiative (SSI) during a summer school program to determine which model had the greatest impact on student achievement at the intermediate school level of instruction. The first research question asked, "Which implementation model of accelerated instruction yields the highest percentage of student achievement on the third administration of the Grade 8 reading STAAR exam: four-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher or two-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher?" The second research question asked, "Are there differences between four-hour and two-hour instruction by subpopulations (demographic groups)?" The third research question asked, "How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of accelerated instruction through SSI in the summer school program at the intermediate school level of instruction?" The fourth research question asked, "How can accelerated instruction through SSI better meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) at the intermediate school level of instruction?" Chapter Three provides discussion on the research design, population and sample, participant selection, and operational definitions. Then, the quantitative and qualitative phases are discussed. The chapter concludes with discussion on ethical considerations, limitations, and implications.

Research Design

This study utilized the explanatory sequential mixed methods design to examine the implementation models of accelerated instruction and each model's impact on student achievement. A mixed-methods approach provides a more complete understanding of a

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research problem due to the various types of data collected (Creswell, 2014). Mertens (2005) states that the mixed-methods approach allows for the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data to create final inferences in a study. The explanatory sequential design was selected for this study, because this design allows for a greater emphasis to be placed on the quantitative data and qualitative data is used for further exploration of the quantitative findings (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The explanatory sequential design has two distinct phases. The first phase involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data. In this study, quantitative data collected was STAAR scores from the second and third administrations of the reading exam. In the second phase, qualitative data was collected to explain significant or nonsignificant quantitative findings (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Qualitative data in this study was collected through interviews with teachers. Both sets of data were analyzed to determine which model of accelerated instruction can be effectively implemented to positively impact student achievement.

Population and Sample

Sunnydale Independent School District (SISD) is a large, urban district in south Texas that serves approximately 54,000 students through 35 elementary schools (grades prekindergarten – 4), eight middle schools (grades 5-6), 10 intermediate schools, (grades 7-8), five high schools (grades 9-12), and four alternative campuses (a community school, a career center, and two disciplinary campuses). The demographic make-up of the student population is predominantly Economically Disadvantaged (79%) and Hispanic (82%). The sample from this study was a purposive sample consisting of eighth grade students from all of the District's intermediate schools who did not meet passing standard on the second administration of the STAAR reading and were required to attend summer school for accelerated instruction. Eighth grade students were selected as the sample for this study due to the grade promotion requirements outlined by SSI. If these

students pass the third administration of the STAAR reading, then they will be promoted to high school. SISD provided intermediate students with two summer school locations; five intermediate schools went to Location A and the other five went to Location B. Each location was an intermediate school campus centrally located amongst the five intermediate schools assigned to that location.   Table 1 provides a demographic summary of the five intermediate schools assigned to Location A and Table 2 provides a demographic summary of the five intermediate schools assigned to Location B.

Table 1

Demographics of Schools from Sample Location A by Percent

	Intermediate Schools				
	A	B	C	D	E
Asian	0.4	1.2	0.3	0.0	0.4
Black or African American	1.3	5.2	0.7	3.6	2.6
Hispanic/Latino	94.4	85.6	94.3	90.1	92.5
White	3.8	7.3	4.1	6.0	4.2
Economically Disadvantaged	90.6	83.5	85.0	86.5	88.3

Table 2

Demographics of Schools from Sample Location B by Percent

	Intermediate Schools				
	A	B	C	D	E
Asian	9.8	5.5	0.5	1.1	8.9
Black or African American	17.7	4.5	4.9	6.3	16.7
Hispanic/Latino	67.0	73.1	90.4	83.8	62.6
White	4.4	15.8	3.6	7.8	9.6
Economically Disadvantaged	67.5	63.2	83.9	83.5	62.8

Participant Selection

Participants (N = 455) in this study did not meet the passing standard on the first administration of the Grade 8 STAAR reading, given on March 31, 2015. TEA provided schools with the scores from the first administration of the STAAR reading on April 20, 2015. Per SSI, every school district in Texas is required to provide accelerated instruction to all students who did not meet passing standard on the first administration of the STAAR reading before the second administration is given. Only students who did not meet the passing standard on the first administration of the STAAR reading are required to take the second administration. In SISD, individual campuses are allowed to determine how accelerated instruction is provided to students before they take the second

administration. Students had approximately 17 days of accelerated instruction before taking the second administration of the STAAR reading on May 12, 2015.

After failing to meet the passing standard on the first and second administrations of the STAAR reading, participants were required to enroll in the district's summer school program in June 2015 to undergo accelerated instruction before taking the third administration of the STAAR reading. The summer school program ran from June 8, 2015 to June 24, 2015, Monday through Friday for four-hours each day. The four-hour time period included a lunch break and, if applicable, a class change at the two-hour mark. Teachers reported to the summer school program on June 8th for a teacher preparation day and students reported on June 9th to begin classes. The third administration of the STAAR reading was on June 23, 2015, which gave participants a total of 10 days for accelerated instruction.

The summer school program provided mandatory accelerated instruction for students who were required to take the third administration of the STAAR reading per SSI, as well as credit recovery for students who failed a core content area class during the school year. The District's technology department created a computerized registration program. Counselors at students' home schools were responsible for registering students in summer school for accelerated instruction and/or content area classes using this registration program. The registration program provided counselors with a list of options to select when enrolling students. Counselors could enroll students in up to two classes. If students were enrolling in summer school specifically for accelerated instruction through SSI, the counselors had two options: enroll students in just the accelerated instruction course or enroll students in the accelerated instruction course and a writing course. If students required accelerated instruction and failed a core content area class, counselors enrolled students in accelerated instruction and the course needed for credit

recovery. Students who were enrolled in summer school strictly for credit recovery were not included in this study.

The summer school program offered two types of accelerated instruction: four-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher and two-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher. The District Curriculum Specialist provided teachers with the curriculum for the direct instruction classes. This curriculum focused on vocabulary development and reading skills that the majority of students struggled with on the STAAR reading. The Program Manager for each summer school location was responsible for going into the computerized registration program and assigning teachers to classes and subject areas. Once teacher assignments were entered, the computerized registration program automatically populated classes and generated class schedules based on the course selections entered by the counselors during registration. Therefore, participants were randomly assigned different methods of accelerated instruction based on the enrollment information entered by their counselor. Students who were enrolled in summer school for accelerated instruction only were placed in the four-hour class. Students who were enrolled for accelerated instruction and a writing course or a credit recovery course were placed in the two-hour class.   A total of 22 teachers were responsible for providing the different types of accelerated instruction. At Location A, six teachers provided four-hour instruction and five teachers provided two-hour instruction to participants (n = 261). At Location B, seven teachers provided four-hour instruction and four teachers provided two-hour instruction to participants (n = 194). Summer school Site A offered an additional accelerated instruction class that utilized the district's curriculum in conjunction with a computer program called Edgenuity. This program assessed students' reading levels and adjusted lessons to fit the students' needs. Lessons in Edgenutiy focused on reading skills from main idea to inference. This class

was offered in two-hour segments by one teacher and had a total of 41 students. In

addition, the teacher leading the computer class utilized the district curriculum on a daily

basis in conjunction with the computer program. Table 3 provides a demographic

summary for each summer school location. In addition, Table 4 provides a summary of

the special populations at each summer school location.

Table 3

Demographics from Sample Locations by Percent

	Summer School Locations	
	A	B
Female	50	46
Male	50	54
Asian	------	6
Black or African American	2	10
Hispanic/Latino	96	80
White	1	3
Economically Disadvantaged	84	72

Table 4

Special Populations from Sample Locations by Percent

	Summer School Locations	
	A	B
English Language Learner	50	40
Section 504	7	4
Special Education	50	46

Operational Definitions and Variables of Measure

Accelerated Instruction. Accelerated instruction served as the independent variable in this study and will be based on requirements set forth by the Student Success Initiative (SSI). For the purposes of this study, accelerated instruction was defined as targeted, enhanced instruction provided to students who failed the second administration of the Grade 8 reading portion of the STAAR. This instruction was provided in a summer school setting.

Student Achievement. Student achievement served as the dependent variable in this study. The degree to which students display mastery of the state academic standards as measured by standardized assessments claimed by the Texas Education Agency to be accurate and valid measures of student learning (TEA, 2008). For the purposes of this study, the Grade 8 reading portion of the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) was the standardized assessment used to determine student achievement.

Phase I Quantitative

Instrumentation

To measure student achievement this study utilized scale scores from the second and third administrations of the reading STAAR. According to TEA (2012), the validity of the STAAR assessments is reinforced each year by a panel of national testing experts and through implementation of national standards of best practice. The Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 is used to establish the reliability of the STAAR assessments. While an acceptable reliability coefficient is .70 or above, reliability coefficients of .80 and above are preferable and those that are at or above .90 are considered excellent (Salkind, 2006). For STAAR, internal reliabilities ranged between .81 and .93 (TEA, 2012).

Data Collection

The researcher requested official consent from the institutional review board at the University of Houston-Clear Lake and the school district. Following the receipt of consent, STAAR data from the spring and summer of 2015 was collected from the district. The researcher specifically requested STAAR and demographic data for students who failed the second administration of the Grade 8 reading STAAR in May 2015 and the corresponding students' data from the third administration of the reading STAAR in June 2015. The District provided the quantitative data in the form of a spreadsheet with no identifying student information to maintain confidentiality. The spreadsheet contained STAAR scores from the second and third administration of the STAAR reading exam, demographic data, and the type of accelerated instruction provided.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to conduct the quantitative data analysis. Due to the sample size of the students receiving computer instruction being so small (1 teacher, n = 41), the researcher wanted to determine if there was a difference in the outcome measure. However, conducting the analysis with those students as their own group would have presented skewed data due to unequal sample sizes. To determine if there was a significant difference between the two-hour teacher-led model and the two-hour model with computer assistance an ANOVA was run with Bonferroni post hoc tests with the 3rd administration of the STAAR test as the dependent variable and the grouping variable (2-hour, 2-hours with computer, and 4-hour) as the independent variable. There were no significant differences between the two 2-hour groups, so for the purposes of this study, the two-hour teacher led model and the two-hour model with computer assistance were grouped together for further data analysis. Initially an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was performed with the second administration of the STAAR used as a covariate and the third administration of the STAAR as the dependent measure to determine the effect of the model of accelerated instruction, the summer school site, and language status of the student on their achievement on the STAAR. Because the data failed the assumptions of ANCOVA, the dependent variable was configured into a gain score, with the second administration score minus the third administration score. A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the impact of the independent variables on the gain score. The

findings of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis shaped questions for the qualitative data collection.

Phase II Qualitative

Data Collection

This study utilized the explanatory sequential design; this designed allowed the quantitative phase to shape the qualitative phase. After the quantitative data analysis, an interview protocol was developed based on the findings. The questions in the interview protocol were designed to elicit in-depth responses regarding accelerated instruction in the summer school setting. Questions were also developed to get a deeper insight into the findings from the quantitative data analysis, specifically the performance of the English Language Learners (ELLs).

Participants were selected using a convenience sample. All summer school teachers who provided reading accelerated instruction were contacted through email with a formal invitation to participate in the study. A total of eight teachers responded to the invitation. After teachers responded to the invitation, face-to-face interviews were scheduled. Interviews were conducted in Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. The researcher went to the teachers' home campuses and conducted the interviews during conference periods. Table 5 provides a demographic summary of the teacher participants.

Table 5

Demographics for Teacher Participants

	Gender	Age	Race
Harry	Male	31	White
Janet	Female	49	White
Jenny	Female	36	White
Jordan	Female	47	White
Patricia	Female	63	White
Ron	Male	34	Hispanic
Samantha	Female	30	White
Tabitha	Female	36	Hispanic

Data Analysis

Interviews with summer school teachers were recorded and transcribed. Interview transcriptions were coded using the constant-comparative method. According to Litchman (2010), the constant-comparative method involves a three step coding processes: first, codes are developed; second, codes are organized into concepts; lastly, categories are developed. To develop the codes in this study, the researcher began by reading the transcribed interviews three times. The initial reading was conducted to become familiar with the content. During the second reading, the researcher identified emergent codes that were aligned to the research questions. In the third reading, the researcher used different color highlighters to identify data that supported each code. The highlighted data was transferred to Microsoft Excel so that the researcher could organize the codes into concepts. Then, the researcher reviewed each concept and developed

clear, concise categories. Lastly, the categories were used to define themes and subthemes produced in this research.

Ethical Issues

The researcher acquired approval to conduct the study from the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects of University Houston–Clear Lake. After approval, the researcher gained consent from the school district where STAAR and demographic data were collected. Individual student data was kept confidential; student names or identification numbers were not published with the research findings. In Phase Two of the study, participants were given pseudonyms to protect names and identities. The District and campuses involved in the study were also given pseudonyms to protect the identity of teachers and students. All of the data collected in this study were stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's office for up to five years and will then be destroyed.

Limitations

While this study sought to inform the implementation of accelerated instruction, there are limitations. The sample of this study pulls from eighth graders in one, large urban district. There may be a lack of generalizability to other districts and grade levels due to geographic, demographic, and age constraints. Another limitation is that teacher interviews were conducted after the summer school program was completed, so responses to interview questions were based more on reflections than current practice. While there was no significant difference between the two-hour computer program and the two-hour teacher led program, this could be attributed to the small sample size.

Implications

The results of this study may be used to guide instructional decisions for struggling learners. Eighth grade students are required to pass STAAR reading and math

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before moving on to the ninth grade. If students do not pass, they must be provided

accelerated instruction. This puts a great deal of pressure on students and teachers. By

identifying strengths and weaknesses of the accelerated instruction provided, this study

can provide valuable insight to education stakeholders at the district level that leads to the

most effective implementation of accelerated instruction in the summer school setting.

Implications were discussed in detail in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to examine models of accelerated instruction provided through the Student Success Initiative (SSI) during a summer school program to determine which model had the greatest impact on student achievement. The quantitative data for this study consisted of archived STAAR scores from the second and third administrations of the Grade 8 reading exam. The qualitative data consisted of individual interviews with eight summer school teachers. This chapter presents the results for each question that guided this study.

Research Questions 1 and 2

Research question one asked which implementation model of accelerated instruction yielded the highest percentage of student achievement on the third administration of the Grade 8 reading STAAR exam. The two models examined were the four-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher and the two-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher. Research question two asked if there were differences between the two models of instruction by subpopulations.

To determine the effect of the model of accelerated instruction, the summer school site, and language status of the student on their achievement on the STAAR, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was performed with the second administration of the STAAR used as a covariate, the groups as fixed factors, and the third administration of the STAAR as the dependent measure. Assumptions of ANCOVA state that there must be homogeneity of regression slopes for all groups, and the data failed this assumption (Salkind, 2008). The data were then configured into a gain score, with the second score minus the third score. If the results were positive, the student showed a gain from the

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second to the third administration, if the score was negative or zero the student showed a decrease or no change respectively.

In order to determine the impact of the independent variables on the gain score, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed. In the first iteration, the variable denoting the amount of time a student spent in accelerated instruction (2-hours vs. 4-hours) was entered into the model. This produced a significant result $F(1, 435) = 7.2$, $p < .01$; $R2 = .13$. The next step included period and school type, again the overall result was significant $F(2, 452) = 4.0$, $p < .02$; $R2 = .13$ and finally the full model was run with all three predictors including LEP status. $F(3, 451) = 5.1$, $p < .01$; $R2 = .18$. Upon examining the final model's parameter estimates, it was determined that only the amount of time a student spent in accelerated instruction as well as LEP status significantly predicted the outcome variable. See Table 5.

Table 5

Parameter Estimates for Model of Accelerated Instruction, Summer School Program and LEP Status

	Beta	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t	p value
Constant	18.5	7.5	--	2.5	.01**
Period	13.4	6.6	.11	2.0	.04*
Program	-3.8	6.5	-0.03	-.58	.56
LEP	-14.9	5.5	-0.13	-2.67	.01**

Note. ** Significant at $p < .01$; * significant at $p < 05$. Period = 2-hour vs. 4-hours in summer school; School = Type of summer program; and LEP = Limited English Proficient

Results indicated that the type of summer school program did not significantly predict achievement on the last administration of the STAAR test. Length of time in accelerated instruction through SSI did marginally predict achievement on the STAAR, with those in the four-hour accelerated instruction model showing higher scores. Students in the four-hour program scored 13.4 points higher than those in the two-hour program, holding all other variables constant. The students who were identified as LEP scored 15 points lower than those not identified as LEP (holding all other variables constant) independent of which program they received.

The quantitative data shows that students were more successful on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam when they were provided with more accelerated instruction, regardless of what summer school location they attended. Students who were classified as LEP, or English Language Learners (ELLs), scored 15 points lower than all other students, regardless of the amount of time they spent in accelerated instruction. To gain a deeper understanding of the daily interactions in the accelerated instruction classroom, it was necessary to gather qualitative data in the form of teacher interviews.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked how teachers perceived SSI in the summer school program. The quantitative findings show that students experience more growth when given more time with accelerated instruction through SSI. Teachers' perceptions were essential to gain a deeper understanding of how accelerated instruction through SSI impacted student achievement. Qualitative data collected through teacher interviews

provided insight into the daily classroom interactions amongst teacher, student, and the accelerated instruction curriculum. Eight teachers were interviewed and pseudonyms were given to keep participants' identities confidential. Analysis from the qualitative data showed seven main themes that characterize teachers' perceptions of accelerated instruction through SSI in the summer school classroom. The seven themes that emerged concerning teacher perceptions were: curriculum and instruction, data, test preparation, characteristics of summer school students, teacher collaboration, building relationships, and technology.

Curriculum and Instruction

All the teachers that participated in this study felt that the curriculum provided by the District was organized and provided structure for the accelerated instruction. The following four participants typified the views of the eight interviewees. Patricia, a white female in her early sixties, had quite a bit of experience with the District's curriculum as she had taught English Language Arts and Science in the district for approximately 23 years. Patricia stated, "[The District] gave you everything that you needed…it was well organized…I didn't even have to make copies. I mean everything was done and ready for us to go, which was really nice." Similarly, Ron, a Hispanic male in his early thirties, had been teaching Reading in the district for approximately eight years. Ron stated, "Basically, the District has it planned out to a T. The information is there. There's more information than you need." Jordan, a white female in her late forties, had been teaching English Language Arts in the district for approximately seven years. She stated, "[The curriculum] is pretty well laid out for you, what they want you to cover is given to you. I mean it's given to you, this is what you need to cover; your copies are made for you." These statements are reflective of all the teachers' satisfaction with being provided instructional materials for accelerated instruction. Further analysis of the qualitative data,

revealed that all the teachers involved in this study had various ideas about the instructional approach of the curriculum. The following subthemes emerged from these discussions: teacher creativity and student engagement.

Teacher creativity. When discussing the implementation of the curriculum, four of the teachers that participated in this study discussed the teacher's ability to take ownership of the lessons through creative means. Jordan reflected on the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and the role the teacher plays in the process of instruction by commenting:

> You do have some creative freedom in there, but for the most part it's very structured, and that's always a plus. Weakness is it doesn't always cater to a teacher's speed. Some teachers are faster or slower than others, uh, so it definitely gives you some "fudgeability" to add your own personality into that, so for some teachers that may be a weakness because you have to get out of your box, be creative, and you do have to take your own time.

Jordan recognizes that, while the curriculum is provided, the teacher is responsible for the delivery of the material and the pacing of the lessons. She feels that teachers who lack creativity may struggle with adapting the curriculum into instruction.

Samantha, a white female in her early thirties who had been teaching English language arts and reading in the district for two years, was able to exert her creativity when she found that her students were not connecting with the curriculum. Samantha explained:

> This is not working. I am frustrated. I don't know if I can go two weeks having to deal with this. So, I took a gamble… I had to kind of go rogue. We switched off of the paper, especially for persuasive techniques and stuff like that. We ended up watching a documentary and having debates and asking questions and things like

that…. So that was my main thing I think there was just so much paper and less interaction when clearly a lot of those kids need a lot of hands-on a lot of different learning styles.

Samantha's example shows how utilizing creativity to guide instruction, as Jordan mentioned, can be beneficial to student learning. Samantha saw that her students were not connecting with the worksheet style of instruction, so she developed other methods of instruction,

Harry, a white male in his early thirties who had been teaching English language arts and reading in the district for approximately three years, also got creative when implementing the curriculum. Harry utilized the curriculum more thoroughly than Samantha, but found outside materials to make instruction more interesting for students. He stated:

> For the most part, I used just the curriculum for the district, and because it was a 4-hour block, I did try to incorporate different stuff. I would go home with the stuff that we were doing the next day and see if there was something, like videos or something, like I could use, like prior knowledge, to get them excited for what we were doing. I felt like that helped a little bit but most days I stuck with the curriculum… I liked the stuff that the district provided; it's just putting your own tweak on it.

Similar to Harry's experiences, Ron followed the curriculum provided, but also utilized his creativity to find videos and create activities for vocabulary. He explains:

> I made some crossword puzzles on vocabulary…and videos if we were talking about a subject, I tried to use maybe a two or three-minute video to interact with them to see how it is relevant to the subject.

Jordan, Samantha, Harry, and Ron were able to discuss the role that teacher creativity plays in adapting the curriculum for instruction. While these four teachers provided specific examples of how they were creative in their instructional methods, all teachers involved in this study discussed how they provided instruction to students.

Student engagement. In addition to identifying the teacher's role in the implementation of the curriculum, the role the students played in the process was also discussed. Tabitha, a white female in her mid-thirties who had been teaching in the district for approximately 10 years, shared her concerns regarding student engagement and the curriculum. She stated:

> Some of the things I didn't like about [the curriculum] was it was a lot of stuff all
> at once, and the material is not very engaging for the students. Like it was very
> hard to hold their attention.

Similarly, Samantha stated, "I know a lot of it is STAAR related and we want to push them towards that, but if they're not engaged it's a huge waste of time." Samantha went on to describe how students were responding to the SSI curriculum after the first week of summer school:

> I kind of felt like just the massive paper handouts was kind of to the point where it
> was so banal to the kids…that they just did not want to do it anymore, so it
> actually made instruction harder, because it was harder to keep control of them…
> Once we did [more interactive] stuff like that the kids were much more engaged
> and that whole four days of class was just absolute bliss. It was probably some of
> the best teaching slash learning that I have had in a while.

Both Tabitha's and Samantha's comments highlight the difficulties teachers face when there is a disconnect between the curriculum provided and student interest. Janet, a white female in her late forties, attempted to explain this disconnect by stating, "In

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summer school, you know you are going to have the kids that are able but are not willing."

Jenny, a white female in her mid-thirties who had been teaching in the district for approximately five years, was also concerned about student engagement and stated, "It was rough on those kids towards the end because the group of kids that I had were very hyperactive kids." The curriculum provided was centered around preparing students for the third administration of the STAAR test and, as these three teachers pointed out, this material did not always lend itself to student engagement.

Test Preparation

All eight of the teachers that were interviewed in this study discussed the STAAR reading exam and how to prepare students to pass this test. Through the qualitative data analysis, the theme of test preparation was discussed as instruction geared toward test-taking strategies. The intent of this instruction was specifically aimed at helping students prepare for the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. Through further analysis of the qualitative data, the following subthemes emerged: preparing the students for the test and teacher hesitation to try new methods of instruction.

Preparing students for the test. All of the teachers that participated in this study understood that the students in their summer school classes were there for accelerated instruction through SSI and that students were required to take the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. Three teachers in particular expressed concern about preparing students for test day. Tabitha stated:

> …the materials that they gave us, it was stuff that is reflective of the STAAR test, and so the things that we went through, it was what the students were going to see on the test… And also a lot of the material, you have to build a lot of background first before you can teach it. And the same is with the STAAR test. The kids don't

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have the background so, kind of hard to take the test, so you have to build them up.

Tabitha acknowledged that the curriculum provided reflected the STAAR test, but her concern was that students lacked the background knowledge needed to be successful on the test. Her comment suggested that in addition to teaching material that students would see on the test, she also had to teach them background knowledge needed to understand the tested material.

Jenny compared teaching accelerated instruction through SSI to brainwashing. She explained:

Even though they were bored, it was just constantly put in their head, get out the dictionary and look it up. Dissect this question, how would you answer this, what are you looking for, so it was more of a brainwashing kind of on how to get through the test and get through the questions…what I was hoping is that even though I can't make sure they're annotating on the test, and I can't tell them to do those things [on test day], but if I force them to do it for so long all throughout the class that when it got time to the testing…hopefully they would stop after every paragraph, and annotate at least in their head…But it was just rigorous constant over and over and over and over and over again. I think that's brainwashing, I think. [Laughter]

Jenny's comment about brainwashing suggests that, even though it was not fun for students, test preparation was necessary to help students pass the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. While Jenny used drill and practice instruction to show students how to take the test, she knew that there was a chance they might not use strategies taught on test day.

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Harry also expressed concern about a student's willingness to use strategies on test day. He stated, "You teach it all year long and then in a four-hour test you can't pick it up." When asked about the curriculum being too worksheet heavy, Harry replied:

It is, it is, but again I'm not too down on that, because it's just time to annotate and do all those things they should hopefully practice, practice, practice until the test. Um, again, it's just a lot of reading, but unfortunately they have to read, it kind of stinks because…most of the kids hate to read, but unfortunately that's the practice, practice, practice idea.

Harry and Jenny both feel that the instruction provided in summer school was not enjoyable; however, it was necessary to prepare them for the STAAR test.

The undertone of the comments provided by Tabitha, Jenny, and Harry reflect the stress teachers feel when providing accelerated instruction through SSI to students who must pass the third administration of the STAAR reading exam in order to be promoted to high school. These three teachers expressed concerns about preparing students for test day, but they were also hopeful that the instruction provided in the summer school program would be beneficial.

Teacher hesitation to try new methods of instruction. When analyzing the theme of test preparation, the subtheme of introducing new methods of instruction emerged. Three teachers in particular discussed trying new methods of instruction; however, they were hesitant to move forward with implementing anything new. Patricia expressed interest in introducing new methods, rather than test-taking strategies, to teach students skills needed to pass the STAAR test. She explained:

So I really think if we could implement some technology where they could get immediate definitions for the words, and I know that may not happen on the test, but at least when they're learning the skill, to not have to struggle with that, and

then be able to, you know, figure out what's going on with the questions and the answers, and then teach them the test-taking skills without having to, I guess, fight against that vocabulary issue, so.

Patricia considers the idea of implementing some type of technology to help students with vocabulary, but she quickly references the inability to use it on the test. While the desire to help students be more successful is there, the hesitation to implement something that would not be allowed on the test is also present. Her comment suggests that something different needs to happen with instruction to help better support students struggling with vocabulary, but there is a concern that students would not get that same help on test day.

Ron also expressed a desire to utilize new methods of instruction. He stated:

We talk about personalized learning, there's definitely some instruction…where you keep going at your level and you keep moving on with reading…[The programs are] interactive…they can start that off, but then they move on to paper and pen, because that's where…the STAAR is going to be at.

Similar to Patricia, Ron discusses a method of instruction that can help students be more successful with learning to read. He discussed the idea of personalized, interactive learning to improve reading skills, then he takes instruction back to the standard STAAR curriculum.

Samantha, who "went rouge" during summer school to try new instructional methods, discussed why teachers may be hesitant to implement new instructional approaches in the wake of STAAR. She stated:

At this point, these kids have been done to death with STAAR…I think we have become so fearful of basing our performance off test scores that we often times don't want to try anything new. I know that even happens to me in the

classroom…I mean, man, we were rocking and rolling in class and then they went

to take the test and why can't they do [what they did in class]?

Patricia, Ron, and Samantha expressed the desire to teach students skills needed

to be successful readers, but there is a constant focus on test-taking strategies due to the

SSI requirement of students needing to pass the third administration of the STAAR

reading exam to be promoted to the ninth grade. Samantha verbalized the fear that

teachers, as a whole, may feel when deviating from the standard curriculum, especially

when teacher performance is measured by student scores on the STAAR exam. These

three teachers seem to acknowledge that, while new methods of instruction are discussed

and thought about to teach reading skills, test preparation is a necessary method and

focus of instruction due to the high stakes associated with the STAAR exam.

Data

Data was most often discussed in terms of student STAAR scores on the second

and third administrations of the reading exam. In some instances, data was referred to as

student information concerning English Language Learner (ELL) and Special Education

(SPED) status. All of the teachers interviewed discussed the benefits of having data

before and after summer school, except for one. Patricia, did not see the benefit of

having the data before summer school began. Patricia reasoned:

 The kids who failed the test pretty much are across the board have the same

problems, most of it vocabulary. You know, so, I don't know that it's that helpful

to receive the scores beforehand. You know they didn't pass it.

From the conversations about data with the 7 other teachers that participated in

the study, two sub-themes emerged: using data to identify student needs and reviewing

data for teacher effectiveness.

Using data to identify student needs. When discussing data, seven of the teachers involved in this study wanted data before the summer school program began so that they could gain an understanding of the students they would be teaching and develop a plan to best meet each student's needs. For example, Samantha liked the idea of having data prior to summer school starting, so that she could become familiar with the students she would be teaching. She stated:

> I feel like maybe having it a little bit prior would have prepared me a little bit more and let me kind of get some names in my head, so when I called…the role and I figured out who they were…I'm already going to know that I need help this kid or that I'm probably going to have to keep an eye on this one or this one should probably not sit at that table.

Samantha would have utilized data to get a basic understanding of student needs to help her with class management. Jenny also saw the benefits in having the data beforehand. She stated, "Most definitely I would have like to have had [STAAR scores]…I would have used it for grouping."

Ron went on further about utilizing data to target student needs. He excitedly explained:

> Oh yes, yes [having student scores beforehand] would definitely help out…you're looking at some people and it may be vocabulary and you can work on that…some it may be inference…We're just pulling from every single TEK. We're not going on the strength and usually data is where you know where we can hit our assessment points.

Later, Ron added:

> I know you can't give all of it, but maybe some paperwork on where the students' levels are so we know what we have to work with… That could also help out with

our curriculum…It's great curriculum from the district, but I mean um, is it really aligned with your class? You know what I mean? If you know you are doing a lesson on inference and all the kids in there passed the inference section…you can review it, but you know you really need to hit what's low and you know what they did bad on, so.

Ron felt like data would help him identify student needs to guide instruction. Rather than pull from every TEK or teach the entire curriculum, Ron explained that using data to identify specific skills his students struggled with could impact instruction. Much like Ron, Harry expressed a desire to know the strengths and weaknesses of his students to guide instruction. He stated:

We don't know how close the kids are, how far they are away, but if there are kids that were pretty close, there's specific strategies…it might be testing strategies or something that you can kind of help out with.

In addition, Harry reflected on utilizing the data to motivate students. He stated:

Honestly, having the data would be really really beneficial…that kind of gives them the impressions that they are not just here for punishment, and we just have to work work work instead to really try to get them up to where they need to be in order to go onto high school, so I think it would be beneficial.

Tabitha also saw a need for the data as she connected it to the use of data during the regular school year. She stated:

I think knowing the test scores would have helped because you can look at the data and see exactly what they need to work on…just like when we look at our regular class, like our data. We could do that for summer school kids. It would be helpful.

Tabitha, like Ron and Harry, felt that using data to identify student needs and target instruction would be helpful to students in the summer school program. Tabitha's comment suggests that summer school teachers would be comfortable with utilizing data to identify student needs as it is a commonplace practice during the school year.

Janet, who began teaching three years ago after leaving the data-driven business industry, also expressed a desire for the need to utilize data to identify student needs to guide instruction. She stated:

Every single year of summer school, before it starts, I ask for, can we get what, not just what their scores are, but where are their struggles, What do I need to focus on with this kid to help bring him up? And unfortunately I think what the feedback I've gotten is that's kind of like a nightmare because they are all individual data analysis that's all over the place. But that would be something I feel really strongly about,…data data data data data…If the classes were truly split up by what [students] need to focus, where their weakness…I could see they're in summer school for three weeks. Having a moving schedule…their first week they're going to get this skill concentrated…Then the second week, he's going to get this skill concentrated, and really address what they need rather than trying to do a blanket fix.

Janet's comment suggests that the current summer school practice is not focused on individual student needs, because data is not being utilized to identify strengths and weaknesses. This idea is similar to Ron's concern about the curriculum not being completely aligned with the student needs. These six teachers felt that data should be utilized to determine student needs to guide instruction and meet students' specific learning needs.

Reviewing data for teacher effectiveness. Although all eight of the teachers expressed a desire to know the extent of how students improved after being provided accelerated instruction in the summer school program, three teachers felt that reviewing data after summer school would provide them insight into how they impacted student learning. For example, Patricia, who did not see a need for the data beforehand, expressed a desire to see student scores after the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. She stated, "I would just for my own curiosity, say, like to know what they made after they took the test." Patricia was not interested in seeing the scores beforehand, because "I don't know that it's that helpful to receive the scores beforehand. You know they didn't pass [the STAAR]." Stating that she was curious to see how students scored after she spent time with them in summer school suggests that she is interested in how her instruction impacted their learning.

While Jordan expressed her dislike of being compared to her data, she also expressed a desire to review STAAR results before and after summer school. Jordan stated:

> Although I would be the first to battle data…because I'm not a teacher who likes to be compared to my data, but I'm definitely a teacher who would want to know where they stood before and where they stood after…Every student has a different learning style, so you want to know if you're making progress with that student. So most definitely I would see a benefit to having it before, as well as after.

Jordan's comment suggests that she does not like others comparing her to her data; however, she would personally like to know if her instruction is being effective with the students she works with. Similar to Patricia, Jordan views data as a tool to determine if the instruction she provided during summer school was effective.

When Harry was told that students were showing growth after accelerated instruction through SSI, he stated, "I don't feel like I get data afterwards to know…this is like encouraging to me, because you never really get to see what they do afterwards either." Harry feeling encouraged by the scores suggests that there is an uncertainty of the impact accelerated instruction through SSI has on his students' learning. The comments made by Patricia, Jordan, and Harry indicate that they would like to review the data to determine how effective they were as teachers in the summer school program.

Teacher Perceptions of Summer School Students

To gain a deeper understanding of the impact of accelerated instruction it is important to understand the teachers' perceptions of the students who are required to attend to it. The teachers involved in this study reflected on how students behaved in summer school and responded to the accelerated instruction. The subthemes that emerged from these discussions were student behavior and student apathy.

Student behavior. All of the teachers interviewed claimed that classroom management and student behavior was not an issue. Janet stated, "I didn't have any classroom management issues, no behavior problems, anything like that…Classroom management was not an issue at all because they just, you know, wanted to get through." Jenny recognized that her classroom routines may have helped behavior. She stated, "They became more accustomed to how I did things and I never had an issue." Tabitha reflected on her group of students and their motivation for behaving. She stated:

I had a good group of kids. Um, they all wanted to pass, and they all worked hard. So discipline ... I didn't have any problems. The kids all one goal, and that was to pass the STAAR Test, and they all wanted it. So they did, they did very good.

Harry stated, "I think I am going to summer school and have a bunch of behavioral issues and different stuff, but I don't because it's a fresh teacher, a fresh way

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of looking at stuff." As Harry stated, there is a stereotype of the summer school student being a behavior issue, but that is not the case here.

One of the contributing factors to positive student behavior was that at both summer school sites students were dismissed from the program if they misbehaved or disrupted class more than once. As Jordan explained:

I've taught summer school for six years, and I've had very few classroom behavior problems. I think the two key factors is that the kids at this point know, you know, and especially if you have a really structured program, where they know if there's two strikes, they're done. A large part of that is they know that if they get kicked out, that they're going to repeat the eighth grade. So that's a large part of it, and the second reason why I feel like I had very few problems is just my structure and my connection with the kids.

Jordan felt that the structure of the summer school program provided students with expectations that aided in positive behavior. Jordan also made connections with students and she felt that was another factor that helped the students in her class behave.

Samantha acknowledged that there were a few times students misbehaved. She stated, "I didn't have too many issues. I did have a few but we were kind of able to talk it out." Ron also acknowledged that there were a few students who misbehaved, but the majority of students are at summer school to get the help they need to be successful. He stated:

You're going to have your knuckleheads…but most of the kids are there to do, to learn…they really want to succeed. So, those kids are there. They come and they want you to help them, so I have never had really a problem…I've seen some students try to, but most of the students, they're very respectful…even though they don't want to be in summer school.

Similarly to Ron, Patricia reflected on the mentality and work habits of eighth graders. She stated:

They're eighth graders for one thing…they have a lot of other things on their mind. They just want to get this done and over with, right, as quickly as possible…You have some in every group that are willing to do the work, that are hard workers, then you have some that are very slow to get going. And then once they get going, you know, it's all OK. And then you have ones that just resist…that's just the nature of eighth graders.

Samantha, Ron, and Patricia recognized that eighth grade students will try to resist and occasionally act out, but for the most part, students were at summer school to learn. The comments made by all eight of the teachers show that student behavior during accelerated instruction provided through SSI was not disruptive to the learning environment.

Student apathy. While student misbehavior was not an issue, three teachers discussed issues with overcoming student apathy. Samantha stated, "I think it was just really the level of apathy that made them a little harder to corral and the fact that they didn't know me." Samantha also went on to say:

They were extremely restless, which you know was normal in summer school. They're not coming expecting to work…my second group…was absolutely impossible to work with because they were not interested, they did not care. They were at summer school because someone forced them to be not because they cared about going to the next grade. I had many of them tell me that they planned to drop out in a year and uh they got bored very quickly.

Jenny also commented on what she initially saw from students:

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I got the feeling that they're just the type of kid that doesn't really do much in

school. They're the cool, bad kids…Like they're too cool for school kids, those

type of kids, like 'I'm not going to do anything, it's school, and I don't have to,

and you have to pass me anyway.' Kind of that kind of attitude is what I got from

those kids. None of those kids seemed broken; none of the kids I had at all

seemed broken or beat down or just distraught that we there. They seemed

bummed they had to waste their summer there but not, uh, emotionally beat down

because of it or anything.

Samantha and Jenny recognized that some of their students were in summer

school because they were forced to be there. Samantha and Jenny both discussed

students who are disinterested in and apathetic towards school. Patricia reflected on

reasons why students may be apathetic. She stated, "[Students] that aren't as highly

motivated and you know they need the help. Who knows why they're like that? It might

be because they failed so much that they've pretty much given up, you know, or you

know, they'd rather be playing video games. I mean, I don't know."

Samantha, Jenny, and Patricia recognized the apathy some students exhibited

during summer school. These three teachers acknowledged the lack of effort and worked

to help students overcome this apathy. As Samantha said, "Well you know summer

school is a different kind of beast."

Teacher Collaboration

Teacher collaboration referred to any method of summer school teachers working

together, such as discussing student progress, sharing materials, or identifying effective

lessons. While neither summer school site required teachers to collaborate, two teachers

took the initiative to work with other teachers. For example, Ron stated:

I did with a couple of them.   I was like what are you doing in there? What's working? How are you building your lessons around it? We shared… I actually got the crossword puzzle from another teacher. They told me about a generator that would work out, because we wanted to implement the vocabulary…

Janet also collaborated with other teachers at her summer school site. She explained:

There was four of us, that we shared scope magazines…and we'd talk about how the lesson was going for us and if they added something or what novels we were using.   I mean, me using a novel in my classroom comes from someone else telling me that they did it and how much the kids enjoyed it, so I stole that idea from somebody else…I think there was a lot of collaboration going on amongst us.

It appears that Ron's and Janet's experiences may have been a result of them knowing teachers at their summer school sites. Other teachers that participated in this study did not have the same experiences with collaboration. Tabitha remarked, "I think everyone pretty much got the curriculum and did their own thing with it. We didn't meet together or anything like that." Jenny had a similar experience. She elaborated:

I feel like we kind of worked in isolation. I don't feel like they were unfriendly in any way. I just feel like, because it's summer school, and we don't know each other, we just go into the room, shut the door, then I do feel like it was kind of isolated. There wasn't any collaboration. Really, other than helping me set up my whiteboard.

As Jenny mentioned, Janet felt that not knowing the other teachers had a part in the lack of collaboration. She stated, "I could see if it was someone I already knew, somebody I had a relationship with, maybe we could have worked better together on

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meeting the needs of the kids." Harry also remarked on not knowing any of the other teachers, but having the desire for collaboration:

I don't know anybody else and so did not get a chance to [collaborate]...In fact, that little Saturday workshop day maybe even just having all the teachers that are doing SSI or eighth grade reading or whatever can get together and just kind of bounce some ideas [around], because…other people are better at things than we are, and there's teachers that have taught summer school for eons now, so they might have some better resources and stuff that I wouldn't know about.

Much like Harry, Samantha saw a need for teachers to be involved in a process of sharing resources, ideas, and lessons. She elaborated:

I think there are a lot of teachers who have lessons that [engage students]…maybe ask teachers for some suggestions of things that they have done that really connected with their kids… I think that would help the kids in the summer a lot more.

Later, Samantha remarked:

I did not know whole lot of people…beyond my teachers, but they all taught different things, so…I didn't really get to talk with a whole lot of teachers. I do know that, I personally, is everything that was handed to us just felt it was kind of like, "Here you go." You have to adapt quickly, that's part of being a teacher. But, I just feel like maybe a lot of people were kind of just like, "Oh, OK, this is all we do" and there wasn't really a whole lot of option or time to maybe share anything… but I just feel like maybe, if I felt that way, and it takes a lot to get me to feel like that, then maybe other people did, too.

Collectively, these remarks show that all the teachers that participated in this study enjoy collaborating. Collaboration was easy for teachers like Ron and Jordan,

because they developed relationships with the other teachers working summer school. The other teachers did not have these kind of causal social relationships, so collaboration was more difficult.

Building Relationships

All of eight of the teachers involved in this study spoke about students in a manner that reflected care and concern. Building relationships was conceptualized in this research as the teacher's ability to connect with students to build a meaningful relationship. Two subthemes emerged from this idea of building relationships: self-awareness and authenticity.

Self-awareness. One factor that can be contributed to the teacher's ability to build relationships with students is self-awareness in how students perceived them. Four teachers shared comments that reflected this type of self-awareness. For example, when asked about working with ELLs, Harry joked and stated, "I am muy muy gringo." Similarly, Samantha joked about her appearance by stating, "I also recognize that on a personal level…I'm not very tall…I dress kind of funny, you know, Wednesday Adams. They're not used to that." Similarly, Jenny commented,

> I always have to stop, and step back, and oh Jenny, these kids don't know you, calm down, they don't know how you act, they don't know your personality, and then let them get to know you.

Later, Jenny jokingly stated, "I'm a big dork." Harry, Samantha, and Jenny were able to laugh at themselves when reflecting on how students may perceive them.

While Harry, Samantha, and Jenny connected with students due to their differences, Jordan felt that her realness helped foster relationships with students. She stated:

My strength has always been my ability to build connections with my kids, from

my first year. From my first year teaching, it has always been my strength is my

ability to build connections with kids. Uh, I don't know what the trick to that is. I

could ask that more than I don't. I think it has to do with I remember what it was

like to be a 7th and 8th grader. Uh, and my life wasn't a candy coat so uh I think

my kids kind of get my realness, because I am who I am with my kids, and how I

am with you is no different than with my kids…

These four teachers' comments show a self-awareness in how students may

perceive them. Harry, Samantha, and Jenny connected with students through their

differences, while Jordan connected with students by remembering the difficulties she

faced in seventh and eighth grade.

Authenticity. Another aspect of building relationships with students was the idea

of being honest and genuine through actions and communication. Five of the teachers

involved in this study expressed that they cared for the students they were working with

in a manner that was honest and authentic. For example, when asked about how he built

relationships with students, Ron thoughtfully commented:

I'm honest with the kids. If you're honest with them you know, you can talk

about other things you know that aren't school related and then you know how to

get them interested and you know every once in a while when you take your

break, you know you have to take breaks in here you can't just go straight…you

can joke around you know have a little inside jokes with them and you know that

builds rapport.

Jenny also reflected on how she built rapport students with students by saying, "I

talk to them like they're normal…I don't yell at them or scream at them." Ron and Jenny

utilized honest communication to connect with students in the summer school environment.

Jordan specifically discussed why she chooses to work summer school. She stated:

> I actually wouldn't miss summer school for anything. It's my favorite. I actually prefer summer school to the regular school year. Uh, just because that's my kid. For me that's the kid who needs someone who wants to be there, he's pushing hard. Everybody always said that it's something about the money, but honestly that's nothing for me. It's about this is the kid I want. That's the kid who I can build a connection with quick and my ability to make a connection with the kids is pretty quick. I usually have my kid pretty fast, so that's really good in the accelerated program during the summer.

Jordan expressed a desire to work with struggling students, because she wants to help them be successful.

While Jordan discussed the summer school student in general terms, Samantha shared an experience she had when dealing with a difficult student and the relationship that developed. She described:

> I had one kid I had to take outside and have a come to Jesus meeting with. I really thought this kid is going to hit me, but he ended up being my biggest advocate for the whales. He was very upset about the documentary, the questions that were asked, the debate…all that really got to him…He outdid me. I had no argument for his arguments. I had to put my hands up and say hey you won. [Laughter] I think he looked at me and thought, "I don't think a teacher has ever told me that." [Laughter] You know, without saying here's your office referral at the end of it.

Samantha had an honest conversation with this student and a positive relationship developed. She did not give up on him, as it appeared other teachers did; instead, she encouraged him to participate in class and share his opinions.

Janet also offered a vivid description of a difficult student who she developed a relationship with after teaching him in summer school for two years. With tears in her eyes, she described with sincerity:

The last day, we came back from lunch…and [student] walks to the class late, and I said "no sir, you got to go to [the Assistant Principal's] office because unh unh no no no." And so he's like huh, and I said "[Student] you've got to get your story together. You are going into high school." Anyway, I sent him down to [the Assistant Principal's] office and he didn't come back. And [the Assistant Principal] must have got him good. Anyway, I was out there putting the kids on the bus, and oh my god, it makes me cry every single year, and I'll cry thinking about it. Anyway, here come [student] flying up to the bus, all the kids are up on the bus, and I'm standing out there [tears up]…then here comes [student]…He's like "What's wrong, Miss? Why are you crying?" And you know when he came to me, he wasn't even up to my chin, and now I was looking up to him. I thought "I'm going to miss you." And he said "Awww", and he hugged my neck, and I said "[Student], you've got to get your stuff together." I said "You can't be doing this in high school. You need to go forward and do great things and you can, but you can't play around. Now is the time."…And he's like "OK, Miss. OK, I'll do good. I'll … OK." And…then he turned around and walked off…He got as far from the door from me, and then he turned around and came back and he hugged my neck, and he says "I'm really sorry, Miss." I said "OK, but now you know. You know. Go be a big kid. You know, go do it right. Finish it right." And you

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know, for that moment, for him then to know that he got it—that's like you know

you screwed up and you were a twerp and you didn't do your best and then glad

he heard enough about it to say I'm sorry, I did do wrong.

Later, Janet summed up her experience by saying, "Yeah, we'll cry over you…I

will…Relationships, that's big." Janet, like Samantha, was able to build relationships

with difficult students by being honest and showing the students care.

All five of these teachers expressed a desire to get to build positive

relationships with their students. While Ron, Jenny, and Jordan spoke about developing

relationships in general term, Samantha and Janet shared stories of specific students that

had an impact on them in a meaningful way. The comments shared show that there is

authenticity in the relationships these teachers build with their students. Jordan summed

it up nicely when she said, "…a kid knows when are you there for them and when you

are not."

Technology

Through the qualitative analysis, technology was suggested as any software or

electronic device that students used independently, this definition excludes the use of

interactive white boards or multi-media presented by the teacher. The concept of using

technology as a resource in accelerated instruction came up in all but one of the

interviews. Teachers had mixed views on the implementation of any type of technology

in accelerated instruction during summer school. From these mixed viewpoints, the

following subthemes emerged: technology as a hindrance and technology as a motivator.

Technology as a hindrance. Three of the teachers interviewed felt like

technology should not be utilized during accelerated instruction in the summer school

program. For example, Harry was not in favor of implementing technology. He

explained:

For how short we are in there, I would see a lot more problems with that than

benefits…I couldn't see reading [utilizing technology] with the short amount of

timeframe that we have, and them needing to practice everything that they are

doing as far as annotating [the text].

Likewise, Jenny did not see the benefits of technology. She elaborated:

I feel like it would be more of a hindrance…I think at this point that their focus

really needs to be on the test preparation, test taking skills, dictionary skills,

answering questions skills, then it to needs be on actual essay skills. At this point,

it's putting the cart before the horse…It's too far gone for them to try and learn

those [test taking skills] skills, and their best way to get through it is to dissect the

questions, figure out what it is that they're asking them.

Much like Harry and Jenny, Tabitha did not support the implementation of

technology if it was not going to be available to students on the test. Tabitha liked the

idea of students having access to an electronic dictionary, but explained:

I've heard they can use an electronic dictionary if the district provides it, but it's

not available to every student. So if it's not going to be available on the test, they

have to be able to know how to look it up in the dictionary. I think technology is

great — they can type in the word and look it up in summer school, but they're

not [going to be able to use it on the test]. They have to get used to the dictionary.

They have to know how to use the dictionary.

Harry, Jenny, and Tabitha felt that their students did not have the reading skills

necessary to be successful on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam;

therefore, any instruction focused on utilizing technology would take away from

accelerated reading instruction. These three teachers were more in favor of focusing on

test-taking strategies that students could utilize on testing day. As Tabitha pointed out, students would not be able to utilize technology on test day.

Technology as a motivator. In contrast, Patricia felt that, despite students not having access to it on test day, the implementation of technology would encourage struggling students. She explained:

> I think technology, using technology, with them would be a great benefit. And being able to, you know, look at the word, because then they could do it individually, they wouldn't be embarrassed, you know, to raise their hand or constantly using the dictionary…which you know none of these kids like using the dictionary…So I really think if we could implement some technology where they could get immediate definitions for the words, and I know that, you know, may not happen on the test, but at least when they're learning the skill, to not have to struggle with that, and then be able to, you know, figure out what's going on with the questions and the answers, and then teach them the test-taking skills without having to, I guess, fight against that vocabulary issue, so.

Jordan also felt that technology would be beneficial to students despite not having access to it on test day. She explained:

> I think technology has a place in everything. I think technology has a place in any program. I think it gets kids interactive; it gets them engaged; and it gets them excited about it…I know they can't use it for the test, but it can help them build skills to get them ready for the test.

Ron and Janet discussed the idea of utilizing technology for personalized learning. Ron stated that students would "definitely have some type of interest" in a program that moved at their pace. Janet elaborated:

I think the technology is great, and I'll tell you why…[it] helps keep the kids more engaged, because when you've got someone who truly is able, you know, then they're not sitting there bored while you're trying to bring somebody else up…you're limited with [district created differentiated] instructional materials, so they're not causing disruptions and distractions taking you away from teaching. They can go on there, move through it quickly, you know, and get more accomplished. Then, you know, also that frees me up. Those kids that can move on and will move on on their own, [so I can] concentrate my support on those kids who really need it.

The four teachers in favor of technology discussed the ability of the programs to work at each student's pace to keep them engaged.

Summary

It was evident that all the teachers involved in this study cared about their students and wanted to help them be successful. The teachers understood the pressure the students faced of having to pass the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. The teachers worked to build relationships and make instruction engaging. There was a desire to try new, creative methods of instruction, but time constraints, lack of data, and the need to prepare students for the third administration of the STAAR reading exam prevented teachers from deviating too far from the standardized curriculum. Overall, teachers presented a positive perception of accelerated instruction through SSI in the summer school program.

Research Question 4

The fourth research question merged quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data analysis showed that students who were identified as LEP scored 15 points lower than all other students on the third administration of the STAAR reading

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exam. The eight teachers in this study were provided with these results and asked how accelerated instruction could better meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs).

All of the teachers that participated in this study had ELLs in their classrooms who had a wide range of language proficiency. Students labeled as a Level 1 or 2 had only been in the United States for one or two years and spoke little to no English. Students labeled as a Level 3 had been in the country for 3 years and should be almost fluent in the English language. Students are rarely labeled as Level 4 as this level is reserved for unschooled asylees and refugees who are illiterate in their home language. Students labeled as Level 5 had been in the country for five or more years and are fluent in the English language, but have not met the state requirements, like passing a STAAR reading or writing exam, to be exited from the ESL program and no longer be labeled as an ELL. Three themes emerged from the qualitative analysis: student grouping, unreasonable expectations, and limited resources.

Student Grouping

Through the qualitative analysis, the theme of student grouping was discussed as grouping students based on language proficiency and English development. Two subthemes emerged: separate classes for ELLs and inclusive approaches.

Separate classes for ELLs. Five of the teachers interviewed felt that students should be grouped together in classes based on language development and English proficiency. For example, Janet was in favor of grouping students based on language development as she felt summer school needed to be tailored to individual student needs. She explained, "I would group them to give them the specific support that they need, and the strategies they need, rather than trying to be, you know, one size fits all." Patricia also felt that grouping students together based on language proficiency would be beneficial during summer school. She stated:

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I think for this small amount of time that they're in summer school, it's probably better to group them as LEP…maybe in the regular school year, it might be different, but in that short period of time it's probably better that they're grouped together.

Samantha expressed concerns about her Level 1 and 2 students who spoke little to no English. She stated:

I had a couple of kids in my classes that spoke almost zero English...They would benefit from being placed in a class where they would have a couple of ESL teachers co-teaching...[with an] emphasis on vocabulary building, especially in the questions and how to breakdown the questions so that they understand a simpler form of the questions.

Similarly, Jenny had three girls that spoke little to no English. She was concerned about their lack of participation in class activities. She elaborated:

I think grouping them together would definitely help, because…I had those three girls, and we were just miles ahead of them, and it was constant backtracking with them and going back to them. I felt like they didn't want to share. It was really hard to get them to share. They would share with the other kids that they knew from the schools that they were with, but not out loud when we were doing group instruction. They wouldn't share with anything. So if we could group them together more, I think it would definitely benefit them.

Harry also had students who were not proficient in the English language. He had resources to assistant these students, but did not find them as effective as grouping. He stated:

They still have bilingual dictionaries. We have all that, but again, if they were grouped according to [language] and we had a specific group for that it would

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probably be more beneficial than sitting in a classroom and not really understanding what's going on.

These five teachers felt that it would be beneficial to group students by language proficiency so that instruction could be tailored to meet specific student needs. Their comments suggested that ELLs were not actively involved in instruction due to language barriers.

Inclusive approaches. Two of the teachers interviewed shared inclusive approaches to student grouping. Ron recognized the need for ELLs to have instruction geared toward language development and accelerated instruction. He explained:

I would say divide them up half the day…so a student is specifically with LEP students and then the other half [of the day] they're in a class with [general education] students…so they're getting both of it. If they're just with the LEP students, they're not going to get it…they're going back and forth… if you separate them for half the time and then you put them into a regular class it would definitely work out.

Similar to Ron, Jordan felt that ELLs needed instruction for language development and accelerated instruction; however, she was unsure of how this could be implemented in the summer school setting. She stated:

One of the things I thought that would be beneficial to the students during the school year would be like one class they go to as an elective that breaks down the basics of the language, and then they go to their cores, because then they got a basis that helps through the cores. I don't know if I would do that during an accelerated learning program during the summer, but I definitely believe, if you had a small group and someone who could work with a small group to give them the basics of the language, it definitely would be helpful.

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Ron and Jordan both felt that ELLs need instruction in both language development and accelerated instruction. Ron was more optimistic about the potential of this approach working in summer school; however, Jordan, like Patricia, was concerned with how time impacts the summer school program.

Unreasonable Expectations

The idea of unreasonable expectations developed as teachers discussed the state's requirement for students who spoke little to no English to meet SSI requirements. Four teachers expressed concern and lamented on the notion that such requirements impeded actual learning. For instance, Jenny explained, "I had three ESL girls that…had severe language deficiency, so for those girls it was very hard for them to get through it and to use sight words and things like that." Jordan was also concerned with ELLs language deficiencies in regards to STAAR vocabulary. She shared her frustration:

I've always said I'm dealing with students who don't know or understand the basis of the word home, cat, or big...teaching them how to break those words down is impossible to do when they can't even break down simple ones…

Patricia expressed similar concerns and exclaimed:

Why do they put these Level 1s and 2s in a situation where they have to take this test, this state test, it's just absolutely…I do not understand that. You know, it just doesn't make any sense…I understand that we all need to be assessed, but to put them in that position with a test that is difficult for a General Ed student and they really need to work hard and here are these kids who can hardly speak the language to start—I don't understand that…Well, that sort of defeats the whole kid when they're looking at a test and they can't figure out hardly anything on the test. I mean, to me that's…I don't think that's a positive thing. You know, so, I think they should have a test on their level. If they're Level 1, here's the test. If

they're Level 2, here's the test. You know, have a variety of tests for them so that they can feel like they're succeeding and learning.

Tabitha, like Jenny, Jordan, and Patricia, was concerned about students not having the necessary language to pass the third administration; however, Tabitha was able to see the possible benefits of ELLs participating in the accelerated instruction program:

They don't have the language necessary to be able to take the test, they don't know what a lot of the words mean...They need the language, like what does infer mean? What does, um, like, all those testing words, what does explain? What does to judge? All those types of words, they have no idea what they mean. But if we help them ahead of time before they take the test to know what all those words mean, like the synonyms, and what explain means, I think that would help those kids a lot. And even being able to know…I can ask for a bilingual dictionary, I know I get extra time, I think all that stuff together would help those kids ahead of time.

These four teachers expressed concerns regarding language issues they have to address in order to meet the needs of ELLs. These teachers understand that the end goal of summer school was for students to pass the third administration of the STAAR reading, and LEP students likely would not pass, despite the teacher's efforts. Jordan sums it up accurately with her comment, "You're dealing with a student who already in the classroom is behind, so when you accelerate during the summer…it puts them even further behind."

Limited Resources

Through the qualitative data analysis, the theme of limited resources emerged. From this theme, two subthemes were revealed: student needs and additional staff.

Student needs. Discussion involving student needs focused on instructional strategies and materials available specifically to ELLs during the summer school program. In Texas, training is provided throughout the school year and before the third administration of the STAAR exam in summer school to inform all teachers about the testing accommodations available to ELLs.   Three of the teachers involved in this study discussed using these accommodations in accelerated instruction.   For example, Harry stated, "I think they still have, I mean, bilingual dictionaries, we have all that…" Tabitha went on to discuss the benefits of students knowing they can utilize these accommodations on the STAAR. She stated:

> I've been giving, using the dictionary... And even being able to know, like I can ask for a dictionary, I can ask for a bilingual dictionary, I know I get extra time, I think all that stuff together would help those kids ahead of time.

While Harry and Tabitha discussed testing accommodations to provide support for students, Ron acknowledged that he had the information and went further to discuss instructional strategies he used to support ELLs in the classroom. He stated:

> They gave me information that told me…the supplemental information [that listed student ELL accommodation, like] the dictionaries…With resources it was kind of hit or miss… if [students] spoke [only] Spanish, I had other students that can go along, so like the think pair share is definitely like a thing used in there a lot.

Later, Ron discussed how he paired students up. He explained:

> It was high low, it was high low, but mainly I looked at, especially for the LEP students who was very good at Spanish too for my LEP students and I would pair them together and even if it was high low right there, they would definitely help me out and when they're teaching each other it works out but with the rest of them it was high low.

Harry, Tabitha, and Ron discussed the use of accommodations, such as dictionaries and extra time as resources available to ELLs in accelerated instruction. Ron furthered his discussion by adding the strategies he used to support ELLs in the classroom.

Additional staff. Three teachers discuss having additional staff in the room to provide language support for ELLs. For example, when discussing grouping students by language proficiency in the same class, Patricia stated, "I think for this small amount of time that they're in summer school, it's probably better to group them as LEP. Because then I get the aide, you know, in there to help them." Jordan also discussed the need for other staff in the room to assist with language support. She stated:

> In so many of the classes [during the school year], our LEP learners have inclusion help or they have para-professionals who help. I know that's not possible during the summer, but you definitely need someone who can break that down for students, who can work with those students on more on a one-on-one basis. So, uh, I believe that even offering para-professional help or, it's not even possible in the summer...definitely having someone that worked with them more on a one-to-one basis would be beneficial to them.

Patricia and Jordan expressed a need for additional staff in the room to provided language support.

Harry also felt there was a need for para-professional support in the classroom. He stated:

> I think you need someone in there that knows what they're doing…unfortunately with the short amount of timeframe we have … I can't help them out too much. So just having someone in there that's specifically for that group would probably be beneficial. I think for the most part they do that; they try to.

Patricia, Jordan, and Harry felt that there was a need for additional staff in the classroom to provide language support in the classroom. Their comments imply that this staff member should speak Spanish in order to support ELLs during instruction.

While only three of the teachers involved in this study specifically discussed needing additional staff in the classroom to provide language support, seven teachers supported grouping students by language proficiency levels. It is also interesting to note that six of the teachers involved in this study are white, two are Hispanic, and none of the participants are fluent Spanish speakers.

Summary

The results of the quantitative research showed that accelerated instruction through SSI positively impacted student achievement; however, ELLs were not as successful as peers who were not labeled ELL. The teachers that participated in the study provided in-depth responses regarding accelerated instruction in the summer school setting. Teacher responses also provided a deeper insight into the quantitative data, which showed English Language Learners (ELLs) scored 15 points lower than students not identified as ELL on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. The conclusions of these findings were discussed further in Chapter Five

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CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings for each question that guided this study. A discussion on the implications for theory, future research, and practice follows the summary of findings.

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine models of accelerated instruction provided through the Student Success Initiative (SSI) during a summer school program to determine which model has the greatest impact on student achievement at the intermediate level of instruction. Existing literature discussed interventions required by accountability policies, like accelerated instruction through SSI, as having little impact on student success due to the lack of focus on individual student needs (Jimerson, et al., 2006; Picklo & Christenson, 2005). English Language Learners (ELLs) in particular struggled to experience academic success on high-stakes tests due to additional time spent on obtaining language proficiency (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Garcia, 2003; Wright & Li, 2008). Existing research pertaining to the struggles ELLs face is of particular interest to this study as the District involved had a large percentage of ELLs; these learners' struggles were a focal point of this study. This research examined specifically the practice of accelerated instruction through SSI in a summer school program to see how student achievement was impacted through this practice.

This was a mixed-methods study that entailed two phases of data collection and analysis. The first phase was the quantitative data collection and analysis. The following research questions guided the first phase of this study:

1. Which implementation model of accelerated instruction yields the highest percentage of student achievement on the third administration of the Grade

8 reading STAAR exam: four-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher or two-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher?

2. Are there differences between four-hour and two-hour instruction by subpopulations (demographic groups)?

In the first phase of the study, student scores from the second and third administrations of the STAAR reading exam were compiled. The data was inputted into SPSS and an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and a hierarchical multiple regression analysis were run. The quantitative data analysis showed that accelerated instruction was improving student scores, with students in the four-hour model scoring higher; however, students who were identified as LEP scored 15 points lower than all other students on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. The second phase of the study required qualitative data collection and analysis to add depth to the quantitative data, specifically the discrepancy between scores on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam for students who were identified as English Language Learners (ELLs) and all other students. The following questions guided the second phase of this study:

3. How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of accelerated instruction through SSI in the summer school program at the intermediate school level of instruction?

4. How can accelerated instruction through SSI better meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) at the intermediate school level of instruction?

In the second phase of the study, qualitative measures were used in the form of face-to-face interviews with teachers who taught accelerated instruction in the summer school program. Chapter Four detailed the summary of quantitative and qualitative data.

The three sections below present a summary of findings as they relate to each of the research questions.

Research Questions 1 and 2

The data in this research showed that the more time spent in the accelerated instruction classroom led to more success on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam, regardless of race, gender, or summer school program attended. This shows that the district's curriculum was likely a contributing factor to student success, as all teachers utilized these materials. This data also shows that students who had the most exposure to accelerated instruction were more successful on the STAAR. While students did make progress on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam, ELLs scored 15 points lower than all other students, regardless of the amount of time they spent in accelerated instruction. The qualitative data helped provide more insight into the experience students had with accelerated instruction.

Research Question 3

Qualitative data collected through teacher interviews provided a deeper understanding into the teacher's role regarding the preparation and delivery of the accelerated instruction and the daily classroom interactions between the teacher and students. There were seven themes that emerged concerning teacher perceptions: curriculum and instruction, data, test preparation, teacher perceptions of summer school students, teacher collaboration, building relationships, and technology. A summary of each theme is necessary to understand the teacher perceptions.

Curriculum and instruction. Curriculum and instruction was referred to as the materials provided by the District (curriculum) and the instructional methods that the teachers used to provide accelerated instruction to the students (instruction). Teachers had positive perceptions of the curriculum provided by the District. Little time was spent

on basic tasks, such as making copies or finding stories for lessons; therefore, teachers were able to focus on instruction. Effective instruction for middle school students often involves instructional strategies that provide students with choice and individualized support and capitalize on the social aspects of learning (Little, McCoach, & Reis, 2014; Musoleno & White, 2010). Teachers involved in this study seemed to realize that students, especially struggling students, need opportunities to discuss what they are learning with their peers. Furthermore, middle school students are in the process of realizing their emotional and social identities in the greater context of the school community and beyond (Esteves & Whitten, 2014). Teachers in this study implemented the curriculum provided to them by the District, but they also brought in supplementary materials, like movie clips and newspaper articles, to engage students with relevant real-world material. While Allington (2007) states that whole-class instruction is the least effective method of teaching, teacher-led whole class instruction is necessary, to a certain extent, in the accelerated instruction classroom. Teachers in this study varied instruction by providing direct instruction, then moved on to partner work, then individual work, and often concluded class with whole class discussion. This variation in instruction likely contributed to the improvement on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam, as the teacher had time to work with individual students.

Teacher discussion regarding curriculum and instruction also focused on teacher voice. Teachers discussed having the freedom to make the curriculum their own. Some teachers seemed to greatly enjoy this aspect, while others found it stressful. This stress can be tied to the pressure teachers feel to help students be successful on high-stakes exams (Bracey, 2009; Madaus, 1988; Madaus & Clarke, 2001; Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008).

Data. Data was discussed as student scores on the second administration of the STAAR reading exam. In some instances, teachers referred to data in terms of student information regarding ELL and Special Education status. For the most part, teachers were not provided with data before or after the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. Throughout the year, teachers use data to guide instruction and monitor student progress. Not having the data to drive instruction made most teachers feel as though they had to teach all skills necessary to pass the test. In order for struggling learners to experience academic growth, interventions should be tailored to address individual student needs (Jimerson, et al., 2006; Picklo & Christenson, 2005). Teachers thought having student data would allow them to individualize learning so that students had the opportunity to grow in the areas needed.

Test preparation and technology. Test preparation referred to instruction specifically aimed at helping students pass the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. Technology was suggested as any software or electronic device that students used independently. These two concepts are paired in this summary, because the ideas of test preparation and technology reflect conflicting views held by teachers. Teachers felt that a certain amount of drill and practice was necessary to help students prepare for the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. This feeling led some teachers to believe that technology had no place in accelerated instruction through SSI, because students would not experience technology on the test. There was a certain amount of apprehension amongst teachers about trying something new, including technology, to engage students while going through accelerated instruction through SSI during summer school. Teachers in support of technology reasoned that students could learn essential reading skills utilizing some type of technology that worked at the student's pace. These teachers viewed technology as a way to quickly engage students. These conflicting views

show that, while teachers are willing to implement new things, like technology, the necessity of test preparation forces them back into the comfortable drill and practice method of instruction.

Teacher perceptions of summer school students. Perceptions of summer school students were based on teacher descriptions of students involved in in the summer school program, specifically students enrolled in accelerated instruction through SSI. Teachers were very aware of the fact that students going through accelerated instruction in summer school struggled with reading and were not successful on the STAAR reading exam. Struggling students experience frustration in the classroom and this frustration can lead to behaviors that are seen as disruptive or insubordinate by teachers and administrators (Hester, Gable, & Manning, 2003). The teachers involved in this study seemed to understand the characteristics and needs of their students. Middle school students are more likely to engage in classroom activities if the teacher is empathic and cognizant of students' social needs (Mertens & Flowers, 2003; Wentzel, 1997). Teachers capitalized on the students' need to be social and did not automatically characterize students as behavior problems. Teachers felt that students were motivated to pass, because they understood passing the STAAR meant moving on to the next grade level.

Teacher collaboration. Teacher collaboration referred to any method of teachers working together to improve instruction for students. Teachers who had developed previous relationships with summer school teachers informally collaborated throughout the summer session. On the other hand, teachers who did not know other teachers well did not have these opportunities. For the most part, teachers worked in isolation. There was a desire for more structured collaboration. Teachers felt like they could learn from veteran teachers who knew what would and would not work with struggling students.

It is not surprising that the teachers desired more collaboration as the middle school model focuses on establishing a positive environment for both students and teachers (Glover & Zwemke, 2016; Ingwalson, 2016; Merterns, Anfara, Caskey, & Flowers, 2012). Being on a team of is part of the middle school concept (AMLE, 2010; Divoll, Gauna, & Ribeiro, 2018; Flowers, Mertens & Mulhall, 2000; Glover & Zwemke, 2016; Ingwalson, 2016; Merenbloom & Kalina, 2016). The teachers in this study expressed a desire to collaborate as working with a team of teachers to impact student learning is a commonplace practice throughout the school year. Creating time for teachers to collaborate in the summer school setting will make instruction more effective for struggling students.

Building relationships. The concept of building relationships involved the teacher's ability to connect with students in a manner that motivated students to become involved in the learning process. Research shows that teacher–student relationships impact student achievement (Cameron, Connor, & Morrison, 2005; Culp, Hubbs-Tait, Culp, & Starost, 2000; Divoll, 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Field, Diego, & Sanders, 2002; Hamre & Pianta, 2005, 2007; Martin, Marsh, McInerney, Green, & Dowson, 2007). Wentzel (1997) contends that students, especially students in middle school, will be more motivated to perform well academically if they perceive that teachers care about them. Furthermore, teacher-student relationships are essential in a classroom setting (Divoll, 2010; Friedman, 2006; Martin & Dowson, 2009; O'Connor & McCartney, 2007; Pianta, 2006; Pianta, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, & Morrison, 2008; Watson & Ecken, 2003).

The focus in the summer school environment is on instruction and struggling learners must adapt to the accelerated pace; therefore, it becomes crucial for teachers involved in these types of programs to have the desire to build positive relationships with

students. As suggested in the relationship literature, the teacher's ability to create positive relationships is strongly affected by his own attachment experiences (Ainsworth, 1989; Bretherton, 1992; Slater Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991; Watson & Ecken, 2003). Teachers who are more likely to build positive relationships with their students have identified as having secure attachment histories with their parents (Horppu & Ikonen-Varila, 2004; Kesner, 2000). Due to the impact of previous attachments, teachers have their own perceptions of how relationships should develop in the classroom and not all teachers are willing to share personal information or feel comfortable making classroom relationships the center of their teaching philosophy (Watson & Battistich, 2006). That was not the case with the teachers involved in this study as each teacher had a quirky personality and a unique sense of humor that had the ability to connect to teenage students. Empathy was evident as each teacher talked about how STAAR testing and failure impacted student learning. Several of them shared personal stories of students who impacted their lives.

As ELLs are a focus of this study, it is important to note that most of the teachers in this study did not share the same racial or cultural background as the students they were teaching. Conflicts can result in a disconnect between the teacher and students in classrooms where the teacher does not match the students' cultural and/or racial background (Delpit, 1992; Divoll, 2010; Dyson, 1993, 1997; Gay, 2000, 2006; Gregory, 1997; Grossman, 1995; Katz, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Milner, 2006; Morrell, 2003; Nieto, 2000; Sheets & Gay, 1996; Townsend, 2000; Valenzuela, 1999; Weinstein et al., 2004). However, Divoll (2010) found that creating caring relationships with and showing a genuine interest in students has the potential to prevent conflicts that stem from disconnections found in classrooms with a racial/cultural differences between the teacher and students. The group of teachers that participated in this study genuinely cared about

students. Even though summer school lasted a short period of time, these teachers felt it important to build relationships with students. Teachers who develop positive relationships with students improve student learning (Cameron et al., 2005; Culp, et al., 2000; Divoll, 2010; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Field, Diego, & Sanders, 2002; Hamre & Pianta, 2005, 2007 Hamre & Pianta, 2007; Martin et al., 2007); therefore, a positive teacher-student relationship is necessary for students to be successful in an accelerated program.

Research Question 4

It is important to consider the educational needs of ELLs as this population continues to increase in United States schools (Freeman & Freeman, 2009). Students who have limited language proficiency have a dropout rate that is four times as high and higher repetition rates than their fluent counterparts (U. S. General Accounting Office, 2009). Garcia (2003) argues that the needs of ELLs are consistently overlooked in policies implemented through educational reforms. In order to be successful on high-stakes assessments, ELLs must understand the language and adopt the behavioral norms of the dominant culture (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006). High-stakes testing practices create a system in which low-income, low-achieving, often minority, students continue to struggle, because the schools they attend focus efforts and limited resources on test preparation, rather than on improvements in quality instruction (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Vasquez Heilig & Darling-Hammond, 2008).

The data in this research showed that ELLs scored 15 points lower on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam as compared to students who were not classified as ELL. This data shows that accelerated instruction through SSI in the summer school program is not meeting the needs of ELLs; therefore, teachers were asked how accelerated instruction could better meet the needs of these students. Three themes

emerged regarding improvement of accelerated instruction for ELLs: student grouping, unreasonable expectations, and limited resources.

Student grouping. In this study, teachers supported the idea of grouping students together based on language proficiency due to the short amount of time students had in accelerated instruction during the summer school program. Teachers found that students who spoke little to no English struggled with the accelerated instruction curriculum in addition to struggling with the language. Wright and Li (2008) also found that ELLs are not successful on high-stakes test, because they need time to effectively acquire the language and apply it to academic concepts. Teachers felt that ELLs would be more productive when grouped with students of similar language proficiency levels, because this grouping would make accelerated instruction more accessible.

ELLs require differentiated instruction, because they are in the process of learning grade-level academic content in another language. Teachers should recognize the importance of language in a student's culture and its impact on academic success (Redman, 2007). Accommodating students in the classroom includes validating the languages that students speak (August & Hakuta, 1997; Delpit, 1992; Faltis, 2006; Morrell, 2003; Nieto, 2000; Sheets & Gay, 1996). Classroom teachers diminish the possibility of alienating ELLs by validating the language the student speaks at home (Delpit, 1992; Dyson, 1997; Garcia, 2002; Schmidt & Ma, 2006). Teachers in this study discussed inclusive models of instruction for ELLs that would provide students with language instruction for part of the day and academic instruction with the content area teacher and general education peers for the other part of the day. As there is little to no language support offered to ELLs in the summer school program, implementing this model has the potential to be beneficial if teachers can successfully validate the student's home language during academic instruction.

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Unreasonable expectations. In Texas, ELLs are required to take the reading and writing portions of the STAAR in English and they are subjected to grade promotion under SSI. Wright and Li (2008) argue that this type of policy does not provide ELLs with an opportunity to learn grade level material before being tested and, as a result, students experience failure. The teachers involved in this study felt that these SSI requirements were unreasonable for ELLs, even with the accelerated instruction provided during the summer school program. The teachers felt it was unfair for ELLs to take the STAAR reading test a third time as the test would not accurately represent students' content knowledge. High-stakes tests, like STAAR, cannot accurately measure the academic achievement of ELLs who are working to obtain proficiency in their new language (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Garcia, 2003; Wright & Li, 2008). It would be more beneficial to delay ELL participation in high-stakes tests, so schools can provide the type of instruction needed to help students effectively acquire the language and apply it to academic concepts (Wright & Li, 2008).

Accountability measures, like SSI, that require all students to pass the same assessment in order to be promoted to the next grade are setting minority groups, like ELLs, up for failure if there is no consideration given to the specialized supports needed for success (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2007; Garcia, 2003). This type of requirement becomes more of a language policy and is unfair to students new to the language and the schools that are trying to meet the students' needs (Wright & Li, 2008). If the goal is to educate all students, then policies like these must be revamped to provide accurate measures of ELLs academic progress.

Limited resources. This study found that students who spoke little to no English were in classes with teachers, who could not communicate with them due to language barriers, and the only consistent resource available was a bi-lingual dictionary. Teachers

tried to engage ELLs with the resources provided, but they were concerned about the lack of success ELLs would experience on the STAAR reading exam. Walker, Shafer, and Iiams (2004) found that mainstream teachers struggle with adapting instruction for ELLs. Similarly, George (2009) found that teachers working with ELLs desired more support from their school districts to adequately meet the needs of ELLs. These findings suggest that teacher preparation programs are not adequately preparing teachers to teach ELLs (Crawford, 1993; Divoll, Gauna, & Ribeiro, 2018; Zeichner, 1993; Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). Teachers involved in this study did not directly say that they desired more training to adapt instruction for ELLs; however, the discussions that revolved around the lack of resources for ELLs suggests that there is a need to provide general education teachers with strategies to provide and adapt instruction for these students.

Furthermore, the teachers who participated in this study frequently focused on providing instruction for academic content and the gaps ELLs had in the content. Given that middle school ESL teachers are often marginalized (George, 2009; Divoll, Gauna, & Ribeiro, 2018), it is not surprising that the instruction provided to ELLs in summer school focuses on content rather than language needs, because content and language acquisition are often considered separate (Elfers, Lucero, Stritikus, & Knapp, 2013). This further suggests that training summer school teachers in instructional strategies for ELLs is needed, especially when this population of students is growing nationwide. While a summary of the findings was essential, it is also necessary to discuss implications for theory, research, and practice that these finding had.

Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

The findings shown in this research had several implications for social learning theory, research, and practice. Accordingly, this section necessitated a discussion of the implications and suggestions offered by the researcher.

Implications for Theory

From this study, three implications for social learning theory emerged. First, this study analyzed archived STAAR data and teacher perceptions to determine the impact of accelerated instruction through SSI in a summer school program. Bandura's (1977) social learning theory guided the research conducted in this study with the leading concept that human learning is impacted by cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Further, social learning theory states that people learn through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1977). While teacher interviews provided information on daily classroom interactions, classroom observations were not conducted. Future research should conduct classroom observations to determine what is influencing students in the summer school classroom.

Middle school is an interesting developmental period to examine through the lens of Bandura's social learning theory, because adolescents are developing a sense of self while learning to handle intensified emotions in multiple social contexts (Berger, 2008; McDevit & Ormrod, 2010). The school environment becomes essential to the development of middle school students as school provides a variety of social contexts for adolescents to discover the different facets of self (Esteves & Whitten, 2014; Musoleno & White, 2010). In line with Bandura's social learning theory, Toshalis (2015) suggests that the larger context of school systems should be examined through the lens of social reproduction theory for educators to get a better understanding of resistant students. The summer school environment is geared toward the struggling, resistant student. The teachers involved in this study had a positive perception of student behavior in the summer school setting. They recognized student apathy, but focused on ways to motivate and engage students in accelerated instruction.

Social learning theory suggests that behavior and environment are continuously influencing and regulating one another to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved (Bandura, 1977). In looking at summer school through the social learning theory lens, students understand that they are all in this environment due to academic struggles and, with that understanding, students do not need to engage in misbehavior to deflect from their academic struggles.   Moreover, teachers have the greatest ability to impact struggling students who are willing to come to school (Brough, Bergmann, &Holt, 2006). The teachers in this study showed genuine care and concern for the students they taught in summer school. Further research should be conducted to determine how factors, such as the relaxed summer school environment and teacher relationships, impact academic success for struggling students.

The idea behind retention policies, like SSI, is that students are motivated to work harder to achieve state standards in order to avoid the social stigma that comes with grade retention (Brown, 2007). While this study found that teachers found this to be a motivating factor for students, students were not asked what social pressures motivated them to be successful in accelerated instruction. Future research should conduct student interviews to determine what factors impact their social learning.

Implications for Research

There were three implications for future research found in this study. First, this study looked specifically at accelerated instruction provided to students in the summer school program to prepare them for the third administration of the STAAR reading exam. These students also went through accelerated instruction after failing the first administration of the STAAR reading exam during the school year. Data received from this study showed that students made more progress when more time was spent in accelerated instruction during the summer school program; therefore, future research

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should examine accelerated instruction provided during the school year to determine what factors can be contributed to student success outside of the summer school environment.

Secondly, this study focused on one large, urban district with two summer school locations. Future research should be conducted using other districts to gain a broader perspective of the impact of accelerated instruction through SSI on student achievement. Future research should compare how suburban and urban districts implement accelerated instruction to help determine factors that are hindering the success of ELLs. A more comprehensive study will provide more insight into the most effective way to implement accelerated instruction.

Lastly, the teachers involved in this study had unique personalities and a sincere regard for the students they taught. Adolescent learners are more likely to engage learning and classroom activities when they believe the teacher cares about them and is interested in their social lives (Mertens & Flowers, 2003; Wentzel, 1997). Further research should be conducted to gain greater insight into the teacher's role in accelerated instruction. Examining different types of teachers and their personalities will provide insight into what type of teacher is most effective in alternative environments, like summer school, for the success of struggling learners.

Implications for Practice

In regards to educational practice, four major implications emerged. First, teachers struggle with the stress of the high-stakes exam and understand that they are forged with the task of preparing struggling learners to pass the third administration of the STAAR reading exam; therefore, teachers desire opportunities for collaboration with other teachers. Opportunities for structured collaboration would allow teachers time to reflect on what is working and what is not working in regards to the accelerated

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instruction curriculum. During the school year, teachers have these opportunities to collaborate to improve instruction, and while summer school is fast paced, teachers wanted the opportunity to collaborate with other teachers to improve instruction for struggling learners in summer school.

In addition to collaboration, teachers wanted to utilize data in the form of student scores on the second administration of the STAAR reading exam to guide instruction. Teachers did not have access to student scores on the STAAR reading exam during summer school. In order to truly benefit students, teachers wanted to target areas where students struggle based on the data. Teaching a whole year's curriculum in three weeks was seen as stressful and unnecessary. Teachers felt that summer school was viewed as mundane punishment for students, because they had to sit through lessons that were not tailored to meet their needs. Providing teachers with this data will help them structure accelerated instruction to best meet student needs. Furthermore, teachers would like to have access to student scores on the third administration of the STAAR test to see how they impacted students during summer school. Giving teachers access to this data will allow them to improve during the school year and in future summer school sessions as they will see the difference they are making.

Another implication is the use of technology in accelerated instruction provided through SSI during summer school. For the 21st century learner, utilizing technology is something they have become accustomed to; however, teachers were very apprehensive of technology taking away from test preparation. It would be beneficial for districts to explore technological tools that would allow for teachers providing accelerated instruction through SSI during the summer school opportunities to differentiate instruction. Any technology used would have to be time efficient and easily accessible so

that time to teach technology does not take away from the required skills focused on in accelerated instruction.

Finally, the finding that ELLs are scoring 15 points lower than all other students shows that there is a need to differentiate accelerated instruction to meet the needs of these students. The majority of teachers involved in this study felt that grouping the students according to language proficiency would help ELLs be more successful, because specific language supports, like a bi-lingual teacher or paraprofessional, could be utilized to target needs and help make the accelerated instruction curriculum more accessible.

Conclusions

The goal of SSI is to ensure that all students receive quality instruction on grade-level in order to be academically successful in mathematics and reading (TEA, 2014). High-stakes accountability measures, like accelerated instruction through SSI, can be used as tools that help educators improve the academic achievement of all students (Brown, 2007). This study showed that accelerated instruction through SSI helped students experience growth on the third administration of the STAAR reading exam as the majority of students showed improvement. In order to support teachers' efforts in alternative environments, like summer school, practices such as teacher collaboration, student use of technology, and data driven instruction need to be further explored. In addition, future research should examine how to improve upon practices similar to accelerated instruction in order to improve student achievement for all students, specifically for ELLs. It is evident that there is a need for more resources and support for this growing population. If the goal of education is to help all students achieve at high levels, then we need to reexamine the intervention and supports provided to struggling learners.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What type of accelerated instruction did you teach (2-hour or 4-hour)?

2. What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program?

3. According to the data that was received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in student scores on the third administration. What do you think contributed to this success?

4. Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided?

5. How did you implement the curriculum provided by the District? Did you use any supplemental materials?

6. According to the data that was received from this study, students who were identified as Limited English Proficient scored approximately 15 points lower than students who were not identified as LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of students, particularly our English Language Learners?

7. How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? Was classroom management an issue for students? If so, please explain.

APPENDIX B: APPLICATION FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF

HUMAN SUBJECTS

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
Faculty/Sponsor Application for Investigation Involving Human Subjects
2700 Bay Area Blvd.   281.283.3015   FAX 281.283.2143
Houston, TX 77058-1098   uhcl.edu /research

DATE:	**October 28, 2015**
TITLE:	**Instruction in the Fast Lane: The Impact of Accelerated Instruction Through the Student Success Initiative on Student Achievement**
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S):	**NA**
STUDENT RESEARCHER(S):	**Jenifer Kirby Anderson**
FACULTY SPONSOR:	**Gary Schumacher**
PROPOSED PROJECT END DATE:	**June 2016**

All applicants are to review and understand the responsibilities for abiding by provisions stated in the UHCL's Federal-wide Assurance (FWA 00004068), approved by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) on March 9, 2004: (a) The Belmont Report provides ethical principles to follow in human subject research; and (b) Federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and all of its subparts A, B, C, and D are the minimum standards applied to all of UHCL's human subject research.
See **http://www.uhcl.edu/research** -- **Protection of Human Subjects, Federal-wide Assurance.**

For questions, contact the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) at 281-283-3015 or sponsoredprograms@uhcl.edu

Principal Investigator (PI) / Faculty Sponsor (FS) Responsibilities Regarding Research on Human Subjects:

- PI / FS acknowledges reviewing UHCL's FWA (Federal-wide Assurance) (FWA #00004068) approved by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP). PI / FS understands the responsibilities for abiding by provisions of the Assurance.

- The PI / FS cannot initiate any contact with human subjects until final approval is given by CPHS.

- Additions, changes or issues relating to the use of human subjects after the project has begun must be submitted for CPHS review as an amendment and approved PRIOR to implementing the change.

- If the study continues for a period longer than one year, a continuing review must be submitted PRIOR to the anniversary date of the studies approval date.

- PI / FS asserts that information contained in this application for human subjects' assessment is complete, true and accurate.

- PI / FS agrees to provide adequate supervision to ensure that the rights and welfare of human subjects are properly maintained.

- Faculty Sponsors are responsible for student research conducted under their supervision. Faculty Sponsors are to retain research data and informed consent forms for three years after project ends.

- PI / FS acknowledges the responsibility to secure the informed consent of the subjects by explaining the procedures, in so far as possible, and by describing the risks and potential benefits of the project.

- PI / FS assures CPHS that all procedures performed in this project will be conducted in accordance with all federal regulations and university policies which govern research with human subjects.

A. DATA COLLECTION DATES:
1. From: The date of approval from the human subjects committee
2. To: June 2016
3. Project End Date: June 2016

B. HUMAN SUBJECTS DESCRIPTION:
1. Age range: 24 and older
2. Approx. number: 22
3. % Male: 40%
4. % Female: 60%

C. PROJECT SUMMARY:

Complete application using commonly understood terminology.

1. Background and Significance
Provide a **CONCISE** rationale for this project, based on current literature, information, or data. Include references as appropriate.

The implementation of high-stakes accountability under NCLB requires students to meet specific performance criteria in order to move on to the next grade, thus eliminating practices like social promotion. Brown (2007) argues that social promotion is the fatal flaw in the U.S. education system, because this practice allows students to move through the education system simply because they turn one year older. With high-stakes accountability, students who do not meet the performance criteria are retained. Retention practices like this allow high-stakes tests to be the dominant method for measuring school effectiveness and student achievement (von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Brown (2007) suggests that retention is a consequence of the implementation of high-stakes accountability in the education

system. Retention becomes a method of measuring the effectiveness of the accountability system. Russo (2005) states that retention policies are justified based on outcomes for individual students, instead of the broader effects retention has on all students and families. Individual students who are retained due to failure to meet the standards outlined in state statues become evidence that the system of accountability is working, because the all the responsibility is placed on the individual student instead of the accountability system (Brown, 2007; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012; Russo, 2005).

On the contrary, Altshuler and Schmutz (2006) argue that the use of individual assessments place all the responsibility on the student and high-stakes accountability systems that put these policies into place are not assessed for effectiveness and have no burden of responsibility. The main objective of NCLB was to close achievement gaps by improving student performance across race and socioeconomic status; unfortunately, national and state student performance data reflects little to no progress in these efforts (Darling-Hammond, 2007; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012; von der Embse, N. & Hasson, R., 2012). Dee and Jacob (2011) suggest that this lack of progress can be attributed to the notion that schools alone are responsible for overcoming the socioeconomic disparities that impact student achievement.

While high-stakes accountability measures raise concerns regarding negative impacts on instructional practices (Altshuler & Schmutz, 2006; Dee & Jacob, 2011; Nichols, Glass, &, Berliner, 2012), NCLB and the renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in 2002 have made it evident that high-stakes testing is the dominant method for holding schools accountable (Brown, 2007; von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). Therefore, states will continue to implement high-stakes

accountability measures, like retention policies, to ensure that every effort is being made to improve

student achievement.

In Texas, the Student Success Initiative (SSI) was implemented with the goal of ensuring that all

students receive quality instruction on grade-level in order to be academically successful in mathematics

and reading (TEA, 2013). The implementation of SSI also brought about a retention policy that

addresses high-stakes accountability and eliminates social promotion. Holmes (2006) argues that

retention policies based on test scores require students to go through individualized instruction after they

have been retained, instead of using prior test scores to provide struggling students with support before

retention. SSI attempts to address that issue by providing students with accelerated instruction.

Examining the implementation and success of accelerated instruction will provide valuable insight on

how to effectively provide accelerated instruction in order to positively impact student achievement.

2. Specific Aims
Purpose, Hypotheses/Research Questions, Goals of the Project. **BRIEFLY** describe the purpose and goals
of the project (include hypotheses or research questions to be addressed and the specific objectives or
aims of the project. Describe or define terms or methods as needed for CPHS reviewer's understanding.

The focus of this study will be on three models of implementation of required accelerated

instruction after the second administration of the STAAR reading exam at a summer school site in one

large, urban Texas school district. The models of implementation include: four-hours of accelerated

instruction provided through direct instruction from a teacher, two-hours of accelerated instruction

provided through direct instruction from a teacher, and two-hours of accelerated instruction provided by

a computer program. The purpose of this study is to identify strengths and weaknesses of these models

of accelerated instruction through SSI to determine which model has the greatest impact on student

achievement. By identifying the most effective model of accelerated instruction, this study can provide

valuable insight to education stakeholders at the district level that leads to an effective implementation

of accelerated instruction that will positively impact student achievement.

The following research questions will guide this study:

- Which implementation model of accelerated instruction yields the highest percentage of student achievement on the third administration of the eighth-grade reading STAAR exam: four-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher; two-hours of direct instruction provided by a teacher; or two-hours of instruction provided by a computer program?
- To what extent does accelerated instruction through SSI impact eighth-grade student achievement on the third administration of the eighth-grade reading STAAR exam for different subpopulations, specifically gender and English Language Learners?
- How do teachers perceive the effectiveness of the different models of accelerated instruction?
- How do the interviews with teachers help to explain any quantitative differences in achievement for the different models of accelerated instruction?

3. Research Method, Design and Procedures

(A) Provide an overview of research methodology and design; e.g., how the data are to be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.

(B) Provide step-by-step description of procedures and how they are to be applied. Procedures are to begin from CPHS approval and end when data compiled and results reported. Possible information to include: What are participants asked to do? When and where are they to participate? How long will it take to participate? Describe type of research information gathered from participants, i.e., data being collected.

Note that ethical responsibility of researcher to participant does not end until participant's information has been destroyed. Research documentation cannot be destroyed for up to three years after completion of a study.

This study will use the explanatory sequential mixed methods design to examine the

implementation models of accelerated instruction and each model's impact on student achievement.

The explanatory sequential design was selected for this study, because this design allows for a greater

emphasis to be placed on the quantitative data and qualitative data is used to follow up on quantitative

findings (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The explanatory sequential design has two distinct phases. The first

phase involves collecting and analyzing quantitative data. In this study, quantitative data collected will

be STAAR scores from the second and third administrations of the reading exam. In the second phase,

qualitative data is collected to explain significant or nonsignificant quantitative findings (Creswell &

Clark, 2011). Qualitative data in this study will be collected through interviews with teachers. Both sets of data will be analyzed to determine which model of accelerated instruction can be effectively implemented to positively impact student achievement.

After receiving STAAR data from the district, SPSS will be used to conduct data analysis. Scale scores from the third administration of the eighth-grade reading STAAR will be matched with class rosters for each model of implementation using student identification numbers. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be used for this part of the quantitative data analysis, because ANOVA will calculate differences in performance between each model of implementation and differences between individual students within each model of implementation. Scores from the second administration of the STAAR reading will be subtracted from the scores of third administration to provide gain scores. These gain scores will be the dependent variable of the study. Independent variables are the types of instruction: two-hour direct instruction with a teacher, four-hour direct instruction with a teacher, and the four-hour computer based program. The ANOVA will determine if there are significant differences for the different types of instruction, which in turn will help determine which of the three implementation models of accelerate instruction has the greatest impact on student achievement. After looking at the scores for the different types of instruction, scores for different subpopulations will be analyzed using the ANOVA method.

After the quantitative data analysis, an interview protocol will be developed based on the findings. Teacher interviews will focus on why they think the different types of instruction provided impacted or did not impact student achievement. Interviews with summer school teachers will be recorded and transcribed. Interview transcriptions, curriculum documents, research field notes, and attendance records will be coded using the constant- comparative method.   The two sets of data will be

analyzed side by side to explore relationships regarding the research questions. When all relationships

are explored, a comprehensive inference will be made to provide answers to the research questions.

Procedures:

1. Obtain CPHS approval

2. Obtain STAAR reading scores

3. Analyze data

4. Interpret results

5. Develop interview questions

6. Interview teachers

7. Transcribe and analyze data

8. Interpret results

4. Instruments for Research with Human Subject
Indicate instruments to be used.
(A) Submit copies electronically, if possible.
(B) Submit copy of copyrighted questionnaire for CPHS review. Copy kept on file by CPHS.
(C) Examples of instruments are as follows: (1) Educational Tests, (2) Questionnaires/Surveys, (3) Psychological Tests, (4) Educational Materials, i.e., curriculum, books, etc., (5) Interview or Phone Script, or (6) human subjects recruitment advertisements.

The instruments used to collect data will be an educational test, specifically the reading STAAR, and

interviews with teachers. The STAAR test is required by the Texas Education Agency and is a part of

the student assessment schedule; therefore, this is archival data that already exists. Interview questions

will be developed after analysis of the archival data.

5. Human Subject Source and Selection Criteria
Describe the procedures for the recruitment of the participants. Indicate when human subject involvement is expected to begin and end in this project. Example information to include:
(A) Characteristics of subject population, such as anticipated number, age, sex, ethnic background, and state of health.
(B) Where and how participants are drawn for subject selection criteria. Coercion or undue influence needs to be considered and eliminated.

(C) How ensuring equitable subject selection.
(D) If applicable, criteria for inclusion and/or exclusion and provide rationale.
(E) Children are classified as a vulnerable population. See Subpart D, §46.401, of federal   guidelines for additional safeguards aimed to protect the rights and welfare of these subjects.

Human subject involvement will begin after analysis of archival data and end after all interviews of willing participants have been completed. Participants will receive an email inviting them to participate in the study. After participants have agreed to participate via email, interviews will be scheduled. Interviews will be conducted at the each teacher's campus or an agreed upon neutral location.

Participants for this study will include all teachers who provided accelerated instruction to students at either summer school program in the District. Approximately 22 teachers will be interviewed.

Participants range in age from 24 to 55. Participants have various ethnic backgrounds. Approximately 60% of participants are female and 40% are male.

6. Informed Consent
For more details, see "Federal & University Guidelines" document, "Informed Consent" section.
(A) Describe procedure for obtaining informed consent.
(B) Use language that is appropriate for age or understandability of subjects.
(C) Attach informed consent page.
(D) If applicable, attach the following documents for review: (1) Parental permission form for participation of minors (under 18 years of age). (2) Assent form for children between ages 7 and 17: (2a) ages 12-17 must sign assent form; (2b) ages 7-11 must have witness sign attesting to child's positive assent.
(E) **Request CPHS waiver for documentation of informed consent, if appropriate**. Justification is required. See "Federal & University Guidelines."

The informed consent page (attached) will be shared with participants via email, so they can review it before agreeing to an interview. At the interview, a printed copy of the informed consent page will be shared with participants and they will be asked to sign the page before the interview is conducted.

7. Confidentiality
Describe how data will be safeguarded: (a) how confidentiality maintained; use of personal identifiers or coded data; (b) how data collected and recorded; (c) how data stored during project; (d) who has access to data or participant's identifiers; (e) who is to receive data, if applicable; (f) what happens to data after research is completed.

Note that research documentation, including signed informed consent forms, are safeguarded for three years after completion of study for federal audit purposes. Faculty sponsors are responsible for safeguarding research documentation completed by students.

For the quantitative data collection, student identification numbers will be used as opposed to student names. Spreadsheets of scores and student demographics will be saved on the researcher's district computer and protected by passwords. The researcher is the only person who will have access to this data.

To process the data in SPSS, the data will be stored on a USB and taken to the methodologist, Dr. Lastapas. These data will be deleted from the USB upon completion of the study.

For the qualitative data collection, teachers will choose pseudonyms and their real names will not be shared or published. Recordings and transcriptions of the interviews will be saved on the researcher's computer and protected by passwords. The researcher is the only person who will have access to this data.

8. Research Benefits
Describe any anticipated benefits to subjects as well as reasonably expected general results.

The anticipated benefit of this study is an increase in student achievement due to improved accelerated instruction provided in the summer school setting.

9. Risks
Describe any foreseeable risks to the subjects, whether physical injury, psychological injury, loss of confidentiality, social harm, etc., involved in the conduct of the research. Explain precautions taken to minimize these risks. If there are any foreseeable risks, provide contact information of organization(s) for professional treatment.

None

10. Other Sites or Agencies Involved in Research Project
Indicate specific site if not UHCL, e.g., school districts or school, clinics.
(A) Obtain written approval from institution. Approval should be signed and on institution's letterhead. Other proof of documentation may be reviewed for acceptance by CPHS.
(B) Institution should include the following information: (B1) institution's knowledge of study being conducted on its site; (B2) statement about what research study involves; (B3) outline specific procedures to be conducted at site; and (B4) identify type of instrument(s) used to collect data and

duration needed to complete instruments; (B5) statement that identities of institution and participants will be kept confidential; (B6) institution's permission granting the use of its facilities or resources; and (B7) include copy of Informed Consent document(s) to be used in recruiting volunteers from the institution.

(C) If at all possible, electronic copies of letter or other documentation are to be submitted with CPHS application.

(D) If letters are not available at time of CPHS review, approval will be contingent upon their receipt.

Consent has been requested from Sunnydale Independent School District.

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORMS

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

You are being asked to participate in the research project described below. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate, or you may decide to stop your participation at any time. Should you refuse to participate in the study or should you withdraw your consent and stop participation in the study, your decision will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you may be otherwise entitled. You are being asked to read the information below carefully, and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

Title: Instruction in the Fast Lane: The Impact of Accelerated Instruction Through the Student Success Initiative on Student Achievement

Student Investigator(s): Jenifer Kirby Anderson
Faculty Sponsor: Gary Schumacher, Ph.D.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this research is to identify strengths and weaknesses of accelerated instruction models provided at the two intermediate summer school sites in the summer of 2015 to determine which model has the greatest impact on student achievement. By identifying the most effective model of accelerated instruction, this study can provide valuable insight to education stakeholders at the district level that leads to an effective implementation of accelerated instruction that will positively impact student achievement.

PROCEDURES

The research procedures are as follows:

- After analyzing STAAR data, interview questions will be developed.

- Interviews with teachers will be conducted to identify factors that led to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the different models of accelerated instruction.

- The STAAR data and responses from teacher interviews will be analyzed side by side to explore relationships regarding the research questions. When all relationships are explored, a comprehensive inference will be made to provide answers to the research questions.

EXPECTED DURATION

The total anticipated time commitment will be approximately forty-five minutes to one hour.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION

There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this project.

BENEFITS TO THE SUBJECT

There is no direct benefit received from your participation in this study, but your participation will help the investigator(s) better understand the implementation of required accelerated instruction through the Student Success Initiative and how to better serve our students in the summer school setting.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. The data collected from the study will be used for educational and publication purposes, however, you will not be identified by name. For federal audit purposes, the participant's documentation for this research project will be maintained and safeguarded by the Faculty Sponsor for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. After that time, the participant's documentation may be destroyed.

FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

There is no financial compensation to be offered for participation in the study.

INVESTIGATOR'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW PARTICIPANT

The investigator has the right to withdraw you from this study at any time.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact the Student Researcher, J. Kirby Anderson, at phone number {xxx-xxx-xxxx}or by email at jkirband@hotmail.com. The Faculty Sponsor Gary Schumacher, Ph.D., may be contacted at phone number {xxx-xxx-xxxx} or by email at schumacher@uhcl.edu.

SIGNATURES:

Your signature below acknowledges your voluntary participation in this research project. Such participation does not release the investigator(s), institution(s), sponsor(s) or granting agency(ies) from their professional and ethical responsibility to you. By signing the form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, and explanation of risks or benefits have been explained to you. You have been allowed to ask questions and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You have been told who to contact if you have additional questions. You have read this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate as a subject in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Principal Investigator or Student Researcher/Faculty Sponsor. You will be given a copy of the consent form you have signed.

Subject's printed name:_____

Signature of Subject: _____

Date: _____

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items listed above with the subject.

Printed name and title: _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____

Date: _____

THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE (UHCL) COMMITTEE FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS HAS REVIEWED AND APPROVED THIS PROJECT. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UHCL COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (281-283-3015). ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT UHCL ARE GOVERNED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. (FEDERALWIDE ASSURANCE # FWA00004068)

APPENDIX D: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Tabitha

Anderson: This is my interview with Tabitha. Thank you for agreeing to participate today.

Tabitha: You're welcome.

Anderson: Now what I've noticed with Site B and the Site A summer school … there were two types of accelerated instruction provided. There was a two-hour where people were with maybe two different groups of kids for two-hours. Then a four-hour where they were there all day. What type of accelerated instruction did you do?

Tabitha: Um, I had the students for four-hours for reading.

Anderson: What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program?

Tabitha: Um, I think some of the strengths were that the students, the materials that they gave us, it was stuff that is reflective of the STAAR Test, and so the things that we went through, it was what the students were going to see on the test. Some of the things I didn't like about it was it was a lot of stuff all at once, and the material is not very engaging for the students. Like it was very hard to hold their attention. And also a lot of the material, you have to build a lot of background first before you can teach it. And the same is with the STAAR Test. The kids don't have the background so, kind of hard to take the test, so you have to build them up. That's the only ...

Anderson: According to the data that was received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in June scores on the third administration. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the four-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% [1:46 note there is a noise on the recording here and it was hard to discern if this number is correct] improved on the third administration. What do you think contributed to this success?

Tabitha: I think the kids know that, uh, first of all they have to pass that or there's a possibility that they will have to repeat. Second, the kids are in that intensive reading class, and they're going over strategies, and for some of the kids they have a different teacher than they normally have, and so they get to see a new strategy, and maybe that

might have helped some of them, like a new way to look at things, new ways to annotate, like what different schools did and things like that. And also they were in there for, like, my students had me for four-hours. It was four-hours of intense reading instruction, and so I think for some of them, that might have really helped.

Anderson: Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided?

Tabitha: Uh, some of the students, um, they really wanted to pass, so they tried ... for the most part, the students that I had wanted to pass so they tried really hard. I had a good group of students. Um, they were engaged, kind of jumped up the lessons, and tried to make it interesting. Um, tried to make it where they could understand it, tried to make it where they could move around, and, um, just different ... just tried to do different things to make it fun for them ... I don't know. I think they tried really hard to understand the materials.

Anderson: And how did you implement the curriculum provided by the district, and did you use any supplemental material?

Tabitha: OK. I used the summer school stuff that they had, and I just did what I normally do in my regular classroom ... I take it apart, how we annotate it, I did all of that just like I do in my regular classroom. I didn't add anything extra because they gave us *so* much stuff to do [background laughter] and they give us a lot of good ideas, uh, so I used all the stuff that they had, but I didn't do it in the order that they gave it to us. I skipped around a little bit, and pulled pieces that I thought the kids would enjoy, and pieces that flowed together, like poems and stories, to pair them together. I did that. Um, just tried to make it a little more engaging for the kids, like how I do it in my classroom.

Anderson: How did you set your classroom up? Did you — I know you said you kind of had them moving around — so did you do a lot of partner work? Did you do a lot of direct instruction? How did you set it up?

Tabitha: Um, there was ... there was some direct instruction and then, like I did the "I do, you do, we do", so I showed them how to do it and then I let them work with a partner, and they would have to do it by themselves, and they were in groups. Like, I think I had them in groups of four. Some of the teachers had them in rows, but I like the kids to ... And then I would also like, like have A in one corner, B in one corner, C in one corner, D in one corner, cuz they were answering STAAR type questions. I'd say "OK, get up, go to where you think the answer is," and they would move around like that. Just different things like that.

Anderson: OK, switch it up ...

Tabitha: Yes ...

Anderson: Did you, um, did you know if your students were ELL or SPED or [5:17 unsure of word, perhaps "LED"?] ... did you think of [5:18 unsure of word , overlapping speech] ...

Tabitha: Uh, they gave us some information, but it was late, like it was like halfway through, you know what I mean, like it wasn't right away ... I guess they had a hard time. Um, but for the most part, you can tell ... you have a good idea when you see the kids, whose what, you can tell ...

Anderson: Did you have any levels 1's or 2's that weren't speaking English?

Tabitha: Um, I think I might have had one or two.

Anderson: OK. So when you grouped kids, how did you group them?

Tabitha: I would group them, like ... on the kid, because after a couple of days, you can tell who's scored really low, like, you know, who's low and who's higher, and I would pair 'em up like that, like a high/low, and then with mixed abilities. Like I might a low one, I might have one in the middle, and then a high one. So I'd pair 'em like that.

Anderson: And did you have access to students' scores? Or was it all from just the, uh, observation ...

[6:23 Some overlapping speech] Tabitha: It was just through observation. We didn't have access to their test scores.

Anderson: Do you think that would have helped [6:30 background noise] ... ?

Tabitha: I think it would have helped. I think knowing the test scores would have helped because you can look at the data and see exactly what they need to work on. Um, that would be helpful, um, because you might know they need to work on paired passages, or you might know they need to work on "figure 19-b," just like we do when we look at our regular class, like our data. We could do that for the summer school kids. It would be helpful.

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as [7:03 background noise] ... English proficient were approximately 15 points lower than students who were not identified as [7:08 unsure of word] ... Have you seen accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to meet the needs of the students, particularly our ELL ... ?

Tabitha: If you would have asked me in December how to answer this question, I would have said "I have no idea." But I'm teaching the ESL students now, so um, I think a big thing for these kids is language. They don't have the language necessary to be able to take the test, like they don't know what a lot of the words mean, and I've been giving using the dictionary to look them up. So, what I ... like what I'm doing now in my classroom with my ESL kids is like we're going through the test very slow. This is what you need to do. Let's code the question. Look at the verb. What does the verb mean? And we're doing that, and I think that would help these students. They need the language, like what does infer mean? What does, um, like, all those testing words, what does explain? What does to judge? All those types of words, they have no idea what they mean. But if we help them ahead of time before they take the test to know what all those words mean, like the synonyms, and what explain means, I think that would help those kids a lot. And even being able to know, like I can ask for a dictionary, I can ask for a bilingual dictionary, I know I get extra time, I think all that stuff together would help those kids ahead of time.

Anderson: Did you have to, um, teach your students dictionary skills, or do you feel like, um, they were able to access the dictionary easily?

Tabitha: Um, in summer school, um, I had to review a little bit with the kids. Um, I don't think they normally ... not every kid would say "hey, I want a dictionary." That's something that the teacher has to teach 'em. Um, and some kids don't — they just won't do it. But, um, we did a thing in summer school where, um, we played dictionary games, and we'd see who got to the word first. And the kids did pretty well. There were a couple we that had to show, OK, alphabetical order, but, um, it wasn't ... it was maybe two or three. It wasn't bad.

Anderson: Do you think implementing any kind of technology in the summer school program would help?

Tabitha: Um ... they can't use it on the test, so ... uh, well, I've heard they can use an electronic dictionary if the district provides it, but it's not available to every student. So if it's not going to be available on the test, they have to be able to know how to look it up in the dictionary. I think technology is great — they can type in the word and look it up in

summer school, but they're not — they have to get used to the dictionary. They have to know how to use the dictionary.

Anderson: Did you have the opportunity to plan with any of the teachers? Or do you feel, um, that everyone got the curriculum and kind of did their own thing with it?

Tabitha: Um, I think everyone pretty much got the curriculum and did their own thing with it. We didn't meet together or anything like that. We just kind of made it our own.

Anderson: How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? Was classroom management an issue for these students? If so, please explain.

Tabitha: Um, for the students, I had a good group of kids. Um, they all wanted to pass, and they all worked hard. So discipline ... I didn't have any problems. The kids all one goal, and that was to pass the STAAR Test, and they all wanted it. So they did, they did very good.

Anderson: And they were definitely motivated by the grade retention, you think?

Tabitha: Yes, I think so.

Anderson: Was there anything else, any other information, you think would be beneficial to the study?

Tabitha: No, ma'am.

Anderson: Well, thank you for your time this morning.

Tabitha: You're welcome.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Harry

Anderson: This is my interview with Harry. I found that I am interviewing teachers from Site B and the Site A site and we offer two types of accelerated instruction, 2-hours where we see two groups of students and four-hours where you are with the same students all day. Which type of accelerated instruction did you teach?

Harry: 4-hour.

Anderson: What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program overall?

Harry: Um, I as far as the strengths, I think they realize were that uh, I think they feel that they have to pass it, and so like they are putting forth as much effort as they can um, and then I feel like it's geared towards a specific subject, of course that's gonna help them you know pinpoint just that and not have to worry about everything else, uh weakness is that they are checked out of course they don't want to be there and a lot of the teachers don't want to be there and so it is just kind of a that mix its tough but…

Anderson: According to the data that we received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in student scores on the third admin. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the four-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% improved What do you think contributed to this success?

Harry: Um, probably the fact that, again, its four-hours of practice and they're staying with one teacher for the most part I think they're all staying with the same teacher I know I kept the same kids and so I think that continuity kind of helped. Seeing that strategy and being able to kind of play off what the teacher was modeling and what they were thinking on how they were answering the different questions and again just the practice, practice, practice unfortunately. [Laughter]

Anderson: Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided that four-hour time period?

Harry: I think, uh, because they, you know of course it was a different teacher, I think that really helped out a lot because, uh, again we all are good at certain things. I think that um, it helped out just being able to see it from a different perspective. But I think that was the only reason that um my kids listened to me because some of it was different from what their teachers had taught them or a different way of doing the same strategy. So…

Anderson: Do you think they overall responded pretty well?

Harry: Yes, for the most part I think I am going to summer school and have a bunch of behavioral issues in different stuff, but I don't because it's a fresh teacher, a fresh way of looking at stuff, so that's what I have gotten doing summer school all these years so…

Anderson: Did you have any data on your students prior to going the classroom with them?

Harry: No, I don't think I ever had, and like I said, I am getting to see this stuff now, but I am glad I am getting to see this now, because I don't feel like I get data afterwards to know — this is like encouraging to me cuz you never really get to see what they do afterwards either, so this is pretty neat to see.

Anderson: So do you think it would have benefitted you to have data beforehand?

Harry: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Anderson: I have heard that a lot too, "we don't see it before, and we don't see it afterwards."

Harry: We don't know how close the kids are, how far they are away, but if there are kids that were pretty close, there's specific strategies…it might be testing strategies or something that you can kind of help out with so, I don't know, it would be definitely beneficial to have that data for sure.

Anderson: Do you think summer school should look at group students according to how they fell, or their ESL level.

Harry: Yes, and that's why our second administration because that's what we do here at Thompson. So I do think putting the kids are close together, or STAAR A kids, or ESL, like you said.

Anderson: Did you have any Level 1 or 2 kiddos, or any kiddos who rarely spoke English in your summer school class?

Harry: Uh, so not last year, the year before though, four days in there was a girl who raised her hand and said the girl sitting next to her did not speak English, so thankfully last year that didn't happen but uh yeah, I still had, uh, I still don't remember what the

label was on the student but I still had something like that, at least one kid last year. So, which is really something difficult to do anything with, so…

Anderson: Absolutely. Absolutely. And how did you implement the curriculum provided by the district, and did you use any supplemental material?

Harry: for the most part, I used just the curriculum for the district, and because it was a 4-hour block, I did try to incorporate different stuff. I would go home with the stuff that we were doing the next day and see if there was something, like videos or something, like I could use, like prior knowledge, to get them excited for what we were doing I felt like that helped a little bit but most days I stuck with the curriculum but specifically the Winchester House one, that's the one about a haunted house, I showed them some video of haunted stuff like on Youtube, that didn't last long, and anything scary like that was interesting to then. They worked much better after that. I liked the stuff that the district provides, it's just putting your own tweak on it.

Anderson: It was mostly worksheet heavy, I understand?

Harry: It is, it is, but again I'm not too down on that because it's just time to annotate and do all those things they should hopefully practice, practice, practice until the test. Um, again, it's just a lot of reading, but unfortunately they have to read, it kind of stinks because they hate most of the kids hate to read, but unfortunately that's the practice, practice, practice idea.

Anderson: Did you have the opportunity to plan with any other teachers at summer school, or you feel like it was …? [Overlapping answer.]

Harry: No, and that's kind of the bad thing being over there, I don't know anybody else and so did not get a chance to do that so …

Anderson: Do you think that would have been beneficial?

Harry: Yeah, in fact that little Saturday workshop day maybe even just having all the teachers that are doing SSI or 8th grade reading or whatever can get together and just kind of bounce some ideas off cuz that would I think again, other people are better at things than we are, and there's teachers that have taught summer school for eons now so they might have some better resources and stuff that I wouldn't know about.

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as limited English proficient were approximately 15 points lower than students

who were not identified as LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to meet the needs of the students, particularly our English language learners?

Harry: I think you need someone in there that knows what they're doing. I mean clearly, I'm not, I can, I uh work with my ESL students all year, the ones I do have in the class, but unfortunately with the short amount of timeframe we have … I am muy muy gringo so I don't …I can't help them out too much. So just having someone in there that's specifically for that group would probably be beneficial. I think for the most part they do that, don't they? They try to.

Anderson: They try to; they do…

Harry: It's probably hard getting someone for summer school.

Anderson: So they get them to speak no English, I know we were trying to pull them out for a periods of time, but this also includes our Levels 3's and 5's too.

Harry: Right, who are going to be in the class.

Anderson: Yes.

Harry: So, and like I said, I think they still have, I mean, bilingual dictionaries, we have all that, but again if there were, if they were grouped accordingly to that and we had a specific group for that it would probably be more beneficial than sitting in a classroom and not really understanding what's going on.

Anderson: Um, hm. Did you teach any dictionary skills, or how did you help with vocabulary with these kiddos?

Harry: To be honest, uh, that's something in the classroom I worked on a whole lot more this year so I would probably, I am probably going to use this a lot more this summer, but I didn't this last year because one, the district curriculum didn't have a lot of that, so it would be a day you'd have to plan on doing that, your own stuff, so that would be very beneficial for those students too.

Anderson: Did they ever, or did you notice kids reaching for the dictionary when they struggled, or was it kinda like…?

Harry: Not really, and again it just goes back to even if you do work on that every day and you try to teach the importance, the kids in the class, you have to make a conscious decision to do it, put your hand under the desk and get it, and that's a lot of work, so I didn't notice them using it. Now, again, I did work with them on it. I don't want to say I didn't work with them on it all but uh again you just don't see a lot of effort when it comes to them seeing or they don't understand and they just glaze over it and all that.

Anderson: Just so they know they can use it on the test, but do they is the question.

Harry: It's the same with our students. You teach it all year long and then a four-hour test you can't pick it up.

Anderson: Do you think there's any place for technology in the summer school program or with the reading curriculum?

Harry: That's a good question. Uh, for how short we are in there, I would see a lot more problems with that than benefits. Uh, probably not in the reading; I could see it if it was in another subject or something, then yes. But I couldn't see reading with the short amount of timeframe that we have and them needing to practice everything that they are doing as far as annotating and all that. Probably not.

Anderson: Um, hm. How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors, and was classroom management an issue for these students? If so, please explain.

Harry: Um, no, I uh the classroom behavior was pretty good like [unclear word] said keep them busy, and there's plenty of stuff to keep them busy. Um, and uh I only think I had problems in the last two years. I think I had one kid a year and then and one of them was just…I had given the STAAR test for the third time and I was filling in for another teacher and he didn't like me for some reason and would kind of cuss at me and stuff. I think they know because that if they get sent to the office, most of the time they're out. So I think they generally behave pretty well, and they know that, and so they behave pretty well. So I don't think behavior is an issue.

Anderson: How did you structure your class? Did you any grouping or any partner work? Or was it a lot of direct instruction?

Harry: Um, a lot of it is independent work. Uh, I think it was more like a progressive thing. I gave a lot of strategy; I gave a lot of suggestions, you know, the first week. Then let them work with a lot of groups and then, as we got closer to the test, to more independent stuff. Um, so, we split. Hear what I had to say, hearing what their peers had

to say, picking up whatever works and leaving what doesn't, and then doing it on their own.

Anderson: Did you have their IEPs and their paperwork so their overall classification…

Harry: Yeah, but I think last year specifically I think we didn't get that until the end of the first week … it was late … but it would be nice to have that on time, but I understand, I understand the chaos and craziness, that happens.

Anderson: So when you grouped them, you do it on how you assessed them in the class, and did you do them by level or similar?

Harry: Uh, yes, well, yes, I definitely grouped them. I am trying to think what I did. Uh, it was more on observation though than it was IEP or anything like that, just because, um, well I didn't want to have the behavioral issues which was what it was. So the kids you knew kind of were got together, they were going to mess around. Tried to limit that, so that was why.

Anderson: Is there anything else, any other observations you would like to share about the summer school program, or the accelerated instruction curriculum in particular?

Harry: No, like you said I think, I think, uh, the thing you have, uh, brought up about having the data before, and I would even say, like it would be nice to see afterwards, and again not even specifics since we don't know the kids that well, but even having that is really encouraging to me and makes me look forward to summer school a little bit more this year.

Anderson: [Laughter] All right!

Harry: But, no, honestly having the data would be really really beneficial but even if we could have some details even as far as, I don't think we'd be able to do that in Eduphoria [??] where we could look up specific places where they are weak, but that would be ideal, but again I don't think that that would be possible, but no, other than that, I think it runs pretty smoothly. I've been very pleased the last couple of years how smoothly it works, so

Anderson: It's interesting too though cuz all year that's how we teach, we get the data, we are [unclear, overlapping speech] and now I know you're primarily in the same mode as we are, you're looking at it, you're analyzing it, and you're planning to that instruction. When we go into summer school…

Harry: It's just here, give them work.

Anderson: Yes. They test. Make them test.

Harry: And like you said, that kinds of give them the impression that they are just here for punishment, and we just have to work work work instead of really trying to get them up to where they need to be in order to go onto high school, so I think it would be beneficial.

Anderson: All right. Anything else, Mr. Harry.

Harry: No, ma'am.

Anderson: All right. I will go ahead and end.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Jordan

Anderson: This is my interview with Jordan.

Jordan: Good enough.

Anderson: OK, so what I found with the Site A and Site B we've held, that we've offered two types of accelerated instruction, the 2-hour where you might see different two different groups of students within the 4-hour time period, or a group of students are with you all day for four-hours. So which type did you teach, the 2-hour or the 4-hour?

Jordan: I've done both.

Anderson: OK, last year in the summer…?

Jordan: Last year, during the summer would have the 4-hour program.

Anderson: So they were with you all day.

Jordan: Yes, ma'am.

Anderson: What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program?

Jordan: Strength is it is pretty well laid out for you, what they want you to cover is given to you. I mean it's given to you, this is what you need to cover, your copies are made for you. You do have some creative freedom in there, but for the most part it's very structured, and that's always a plus. Weakness is it doesn't always cater to a teacher's speed. Some teachers are faster or slower than others, uh, so it definitely gives you some fudgeability to add your own personality into that uh, so for some teachers that may be a weakness because you have to get out of your box, be creative, and you do have to take your own time, but…

Anderson: And According to the data that was received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in June scores on the third administration. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the 4-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% improved on the third administration. What do you think contributed to this success?

Jordan: Um, smaller groups. I think any time you deal with smaller student-teacher ratio, you're going to have improved scores. Uh, and during summer, you do have them for four-hours, and it's definitely more focused on skills as opposed to other concepts. As well as I think the less students you have in the classroom, the less distractions you have with the students, so that's always a plus.

Anderson: How many kiddos did you have in your class?

Jordan: I remember having twelve.

Anderson: Oh, wow.

Jordan: So, and that's a plus.

Anderson: Absolutely. Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the 4-hour accelerated instruction that you provided?

Jordan: At the [unclear] time, I did reading SSI this past summer, and I have done other programs. But the reading SSI, you have students who don't have a natural love of reading, they don't like to read per se, but they realize they have to be there to get where they want to go. UH, I think my students seemed to be respond well, but that's because I think the student connects to my ability to make connections with my students and to interact with them and to make it, uh, move around a lot. I tend to make things move around a lot, and we actually read a novel as well, we read a novel out loud, so uh that was adding my piece to the puzzle, uh, and that they were really interested in, it was a plus so, when the kids are asking the next day, "what's going to happen", or "are we going to ready today", that's how you know you've gotta, you've gotta a hook. I think I have a positive, in my opinion, I think I had a positive response from my students.

Anderson: What novel did you read?

Jordan: I read it every summer, *Girls, Drums, and Dangerous Pie*.

Anderson: I've read that one.

Jordan: It's one of my favorites ones.

Anderson: That's a real fun one to read.

Jordan: If I can't–my first choice is always *Notes from a Midnight Driver*–but if I can't get my hands on that one, it's always the second one so. My students always love *Notes from a Midnight Driver*, because I think it's their life or someone around them's life, so…

Anderson: I haven't read that one. I'll have to check it out.

Jordan: Same author, same author. He just writes about a teenager who was rebelling against his parents' divorce and stole his dad's car and ran into a judge.

Anderson: You know, I think I did read that one.

Jordan: Yeah, it's one of my favorite ones.

Anderson: [Overlapping dialogue] … I think I picked up the other one.

Jordan: Yeah, and my kids always like that one because it deals with something they can relate to or, or something they can relate to, and that's always my first choice. I like the book, and also my students always respond well to that one so during the summer I'll read that one with my students so …

Anderson: And you're a coach?

Jordan: I do, I do coach basketball, yes.

Anderson: Do you think your coaching abilities have something to do with the relationship building you're able to do over the summer?

Jordan: I would like to say that would be it, but nah, I've only been a coach for two years. Uh, my strength has always been my ability to build connections with my kids, from my first year. From my first year teaching, it has always been my strength is my ability to build connections with kids. Uh, I don't know what the trick to that is. I could ask that more than I don't. I think it has to do with I remember what it was like to be a 7th and 8th grader. Uh, and my life wasn't a candy coat so uh I think my kids kind of get my realness, cuz I am who I am with my kids, and how I am with you is no different than with my kids, except I am structured. So my ability to make connections has just a lot to do with just who I am. Uh, coach, I don't like coaching. Uh, it has little to do with my classroom though, so other than the fact I can get away with saying things a teacher can't say, but I will say I can say things the teacher can't say, you know.

Anderson: That is true; that is true.

Jordan: So, this is actually my last year coaching, cuz I'm doing the CONNECT program, so it takes me away from coaching into a different aspect of academics, but for me, I'm here, it's all about the kids, all about what I can do to impact their lives. I've always told people, uh, cuz I went through a principal certification program as well, I would wash a kid's car if it would make an impact on their life; I wouldn't care. Uh, so for me I think a kid knows when are you there for them and when you are not. So, and that's a huge piece of the puzzle for me.

Anderson: And with summer school being so fast-paced, you've definitely taken time to have a great impact on your kids.

Jordan: I actually, uh, wouldn't miss summer school for anything. It's my favorite–I actually prefer summer school to the regular school year. Uh, just because that's my kid. For me that's the kid who needs someone who wants to be there, he's pushing hard. Everybody always said that it's something about the money, but honestly that's nothing for me. It's about this is the kid I want. That's the kid who I can build a connection with quick and my ability to make a connection with the kids is pretty quick. I usually have my kid pretty fast, so that's really good in the accelerated program during the summer.

Anderson: Absolutely. Absolutely. And how did you implement the curriculum provided by the district, and did you use any supplemental material?

Jordan: Uh, I am a big organized, structured person, so I usually take what they give me and break it down into a binder on a day-by-day basis. The kids are…I give the kids a copy of that, but I also give them a file folder so that they have the ability to organize it the way they like. Um, I did use everything the district gave me, but again, we did read a novel as well, and I did implement some, uh, videos and audios when it came to reading. Uh, because united streaming has uh, an audio, the *Notes from a Midnight Driver* so the years I've done that, I used that as well to help my [(7:34) unsure of word] learners. Uh, but um, primarily I use novels, video, and audio to supplement, so

Anderson: OK, and when you did the novel, did y'all read it for fun, were you trying to get them excited, or did you do some other kind of skills building within the novel?

Jordan: Then novel was basically for fun.

Anderson: OK.

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Jordan: Just to get them excited …

Anderson: OK, just to get them excited.

Jordan: Just to get them excited, exactly, and because I am a somewhat faster teacher than others, even though we're able to cover the structure, and work in a small group, I did do small groups during the summer but I do small groups all the time. Uh, and I moved at a faster pace, so the reading of the novel became for fun rather than going for structures. When you get them excited about reading, then hopefully for them to walk away and understand that reading's not just like *Jane Eyre* or it's not just about *Pride and Prejudice*. Sometimes it's about what your life is really about. And I tell my students all the time, if I would have had novels like you guys have when I was your age, I'd have been in love with reading when I was young. I didn't fall in love with reading until I was older, but it's because novels when I was a kid—cuz I am old—when I was a kid, it was really boring, it wasn't about life around us, but life before. But when you're dealing with *Twilight* and dealing with *Divergent* and dealing with all these things now that deal with thoughts kids actually have when it comes to rebellion and anti-social behavior, when you're dealing with those things, it's really easy to get a kid excited because suddenly they go, "dude, seriously, this is about things I think about and feel". I say that's a great thing about your novels now—they're about that, they used not to be that way.

Anderson: How did you structure your class? Did you start with reading the novel, or did you do student skills and drill, or direct instruction group work, and then end the class with the…how did you structure it?

Jordan: We mostly did direct instruction, we did group work, we would have some interactive activities, whether it was flip charts or, you know, some things the district gave us. A novel was usually toward the end of the day. So, and there would be times where, you can always tell when your kids are fidgetive, and there, you know, and I would say, well, let's take a break from this. We're done with this. And if I needed to, I'd put the novel in the middle of the day because sometimes you can just tell when you need to do something different. And it ends up being a Thursday or Friday when they are already kind of there, so …

Anderson: Yeah. When you went into the classroom, did they give you the data for the students scores for the kiddos?

Jordan: No.

Anderson: And did you have a roster telling you if the kids were SPED or MET [?]? Did you have any new way of—

Jordan: Yes

Anderson: OK, you knew, knew classifications but not scores.

Jordan: Not scores, exactly.

Anderson: Do you think it would have helped you having the scores?

Jordan: I personally as a teacher, um, although I would be the first to battle data, uh, cuz I'm not a teacher who likes to be compared to my data, but I'm definitely a teacher who would want to know where they stood before and where they stood after. Uh, because every student has a different learning style, so you want to know if you're making progress with that student. So most definitely I would see a benefit to having it before, as well as after.

Anderson: Did you group them according to how you felt, or how did you group them when y'all were doing some group work?

Jordan: Usually, when you did group work, would be because the first day you do, you take a pre-test, so you can tell by looking at that pre-test where you need to put students. So I'd always end up, do my best on my higher scores, I'd do my best to put one of my higher scores with other students. So, I would break my kids down into groups of 3's in the beginning, that would be where I would do my small groups based on—I'd base it on the pre-tests, that's what I would base it on.

Anderson: And, according to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as limited English proficient were approximately 15 points lower than students who were non-LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of the students, particularly our English language learners?

Jordan: Um, you're dealing with a student who already in the classroom is behind. Uh, so when you accelerate during the summer, it's even, it even puts them further behind. In so many of the classes now, our LEP learners have inclusion help or they have para-professionals who help. I know that's not possible during the summer, but you definitely need someone who can break than down for students, who can work with those students on more on a one-on-one basis. So, uh, I believe that even offering para-professional help

or, it's not even possible in the summer, but one of the things I thought that would be beneficial to the students during the school year would be like one class they go to as an elective that breaks down the basics of the language, and then they go to their cores, because then they got a basis that helps through the cores. I don't know if I would do that during an accelerated learning program during the summer, but I definitely believe, if you had a small group and someone who could work with a small group to give them the basics of the language, it definitely would be helpful. I don't know how that would work during the summer, or how to get my head around that, but uh, I've always said I'm dealing with students who don't know the understand the basis of the word home, cat, or big, or those words, but then I'm going to introduce homozygotes and aboticmodic, so teaching them how to break those words down is impossible to do when they can't even break down simple ones. So, um, definitely having someone that worked with them more on a one-to-one basis would be beneficial to them.

Anderson: Did you have any ELA's in your summer school class?

Jordan: I'm going to say there was a large percentage.

Anderson: Did you have any Levels 1's and 2's, not speaking English primarily.

Jordan: Yes, yes.

Anderson: Did they refer back to their dictionary, or did you find that was a struggle for them as well?

Jordan: Um, they would go back to the dictionary.

Anderson: Our English language dictionary or a bilingual dictionary?

Jordan: A bilingual one. And that was provided by the district, provided by their school.

Anderson: How do you think technology would fit into a summer school program? Do you see a place for it, or do you feel like since we're taking the test, it would be difficult?

Jordan: I think technology has a place in everything. Uh, I'm 100% driven in my pre-AP class by technology, and about 85% driven in my regular classroom by technology. I'm a Schoology [?] fanatic. Uh, all my class is set up in there. So I think technology has a place in any program. I think it gets kids interactive; it gets them engaged; and it gets them excited about it. And there's way too many programs out there to where, I mean, for example, when I had a lesson in my classroom, where it's um, I'll give an example,

which as an interactive lab online, 100% of my kids are engaged, regardless of, regardless of what their normal engagement is in my classroom. That's the day they're engaged. I couldn't imagine that not being the case when it comes to an accelerated program and you have an interactive program, they would be engaged in it. And the great thing for our LEP learners is there's Google Translate, there's all these other programs that they would be able to use to help them with where they are at. I know they can't use it for the test, but it can help them build skills to get them ready for the test.

Anderson: How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? Was classroom management an issue for these students? If so, please explain.

Jordan: Um, I didn't…I've taught summer school for six years, and I've had very few classroom behavior problems. I think the two key factors is that the kids at this point know, you know, and especially if you have a really structured program, where they if know there's two strikes, they're done, a large part of that is they know that if they get kicked out, that they're going to repeat the 8th grade. So that's a large part of it, and the second reason why I feel like I had very few problems is just my structure and my connection with the kids. You know, so, um, I've never had many classroom problems.

Anderson: Was that something that was decided before, two strikes and students are kicked out of summer school?

Jordan: No, you know, I'm kind of using my overall experience as a summer school teacher. My last year at Site B, I don't remember that being that well-spoken. But I taught summer school at Bondi for three years, and that was a very spoken truth. That was, you know, you come to one time, I'm gonna talk to you, come to me twice, and you're done. And it wasn't just a talk, it was a walk. At Bondi, it was a walk. I don't remember being [?] classes here but I still didn't have that many classroom problems. There's no such thing as a perfect classroom. It's impossible, and it's not just in an accelerated program. You sit in my classroom 5th period it would be a totally different ballgame than 1st period. But the fact of it, I had very few problems just because of my, again, I'm going to talk to a kid and say hey, you don't want to do this. I know you like me and all, but you don't want to look at me again next year, you know, so uh, and I don't what the issue with this would be at the administrative level.

Anderson: Did you have the opportunity to collaborate with any of the teachers, or do you feel teachers got the curriculum and did what they wanted with it?

Jordan: No, I mean, there were several of us, there was four of us, that we shared scope magazines, we would pass around, and we'd talk about how the lesson was going for us

and if they added something or what novels we were using, I mean, me using a novel in my classroom comes from someone else telling me that they did it and how much the kids enjoyed it, so I stole that idea from somebody else. Uh, so no, I think there was a lot of collaboration going on amongst us.

Anderson: OK. Is there anything else you would like to add about the summer school program, or the accelerated instruction provided that you think would be beneficial to study?

Jordan: No, I think your questions were pretty exact.

Anderson: Thank you.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Janet

Anderson: This is my interview with Janet. Alright, so what I've noticed at SITE B and at Site A, there were two types of accelerated instruction, where kids were with teachers for two-hours and they might see two different groups, or they were there all day with four-hours. So which type of accelerated instruction did you teach?

Janet: I taught the four-hour...blocks. I had the same kids through the day.

Anderson: What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program?

Janet: I taught Edginuity which is what I did, I thought the Edginuity was really good at being able to individualized, at differentiate instruction for the kids. One of the weaknesses of it was that the way that the lunch period was broken up, because I would have to take the kids to lunch and then, but you know get them back in the classroom for maybe another 30 or 45 minutes. I thought it would have been more, you know, which by they're all you know getting them wrangled back down and back in class timely and efficiently was a real issue. I think for that kind of program, uh, it would have been better to have the kids have the last lunch and that way they could have just gotten them rounded back up cuz they would have made it through. You know, I gave them stretching breaks and all to where it wasn't that big of a deal, but just the break-up of lunch was a problem.

Anderson: They could get pretty hungry … [overlapping dialogue]

Janet: The differentiation, the Edginuity was really great for that, and you know it freed me up that I could go sit and support the kids that were really struggling through it.

Anderson: According to the data that was received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in student scores on the third administration. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the 4-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% improved on the third administration. What do you think contributed to this success?

Janet: I think that, um, you know it's hard for me to say if overall it's 25% of general students. I don't know what went on in other classrooms. Um, I think a lot of…again, definitely the differentiation in instruction on Edginuity, and I know my feedback isn't, you know, maybe as critical because the kids being in on the computer and I was just

issued support, but you know what, I think, uh, looking at the numbers, for me by the time the kids get to the third administration, it's, you know if you don't, some people change mostly because they feel the heat, not because they see the light. I think that, then again, there's a difference in a 4-hour, I just think the extended time obviously did them well. You know, I wish I had, you know I can see how my feedback from if I taught in a traditional classroom may be more valuable. Um, maybe I could evaluate the you know instructional materials but…

Anderson: Your feedback is definitely valuable, because that is something we were looking at and that the technology aspect has been popping up when I talk to different teachers about what was going on in summer school. And having been predominantly with the technology, do you think it was helpful, or…?

Janet: I think the technology is great, and I'll tell you why. In summer school, you know you are going to have the kids that are able but are not willing. OK, and the fact that you know high school is on the line here and you know they have that little bit of fear. You know, that's the motivator, and I think because I recognize a lot of my kids from last year and you know that they shouldn't have been in summer school, they should have passed the class, you know, and I think the accelerat-, the technology on that, helps keep the kids more engaged because when you've got someone who truly is able, you know, then they're not sitting there bored while you're trying to bring somebody else up, if, you know, because you're limited with the SEI instructional materials so they're not causing disruptions and distractions taking you away from teaching. They can go on there, move through it quickly, you know, and get more accomplished. Then, you know, also that frees me up, those kids that can move on and will move on on their own, concentrate my support on those kids who really need it.

Anderson: Did you have access to STAAR scores in summer school?

Janet: No, that's what thing I asked for, but they weren't able. And every single year of summer school, before it starts, I ask for, can we get what, not just what their scores are, but where are their struggles, what do I need to focus on with this kid to help bring him up. And unfortunately I think what the feedback I've gotten is that's kind of like a nightmare because they are all individual data analysis that's all over the place. But that's would be something I feel really strongly about, you know, and I wish…girl, you shouldn't ask me questions…because I don't just tell you what I think it is. You know what, my opinion is, I think, you know, data data data data data, you know what, if you could take an if the classes were truly split up by, OK, you know what, these kids with a little, they need to focus where their weakness is non-fiction. Or these kids over here, where I could see they're in summer school for three weeks. Having a mover on

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schedule. OK, their first week they're going to get this skill concentrated, you know then the second week, he's going to get this skill concentrated, and really address what they need rather than trying to do a blanket fix. That's my two cents' worth, but, you know.

Anderson: Do you think the Edginuity helped provide you with some of that [unclear word]…

Janet: Yes, absolutely.

Anderson: Because while it might be hard to combine all STAAR scores in that short amount of time, but the Edginuity gave some immediate feedback.

Janet: Yes, it definitely provided that, absolutely.

Anderson: Did you get the entrance exam with them, correct?

Janet: Um hm, yep.

Anderson: How long did that take?

Janet: Oh, girl, I can't remember what I ate for breakfast. You know what, the problem with Edginuity was we had trouble getting the kids registered in the class, and then the training we got, and I know you were there, it was just kind of last minute. It wasn't really the in-depth…I mean by the time the class was over, I had it but I mean we lost probably three, maybe four days with some kids being on there because they weren't registered in Edginuity and you know set up right and we were kind of just doing a blanket little manual instruction and even you know the first day, the first two days, we lost because they were supposed to be there and it wasn't in, we didn't have our SDI materials because we weren't expected to need them, and so I think our kids done have markedly better if, you know, we know now what we didn't at that…

Anderson: We could not enroll them, we had to email them…

Janet: Yes, the Edginuity rep. Yeah, yeah. And then she had to contact somebody else behind her to get that done and yeah, some kids lost three, maybe even four days. And so they kept saying "OK, it's coming, it's coming", and so were making due with what we had and they had pulled over and brought us some SDI materials but it was just kind of on the fly, things that we hadn't really prepared for. You could see how details my lessons—I plan my lesson out, I plan a lot, and, you know, didn't have that. You know,

fortunately, it's my subject and so I was able to improvise a lot, but it could have been, I feel like it could have been…I feel like our kids lost a lot.

Anderson: So during those times when you weren't able to use the district curriculum until they brought you some, and so were you just pulling what you had to use in your class?

Janet: Yeah. Things like Schoology and I could put up on the projector and at least go at it that way. They didn't have hard copies, paper, you know like all the stuff I showed you here, that all I dump into Schoology so if a kid's absent they can still have class at home or if they are at guidance or whatever, and um I pulled some of that stuff up and used it. I know we had the scope magazines that were literally for like a day it's like OK well give them a scope magazine to read. Hmmm, and you just do the best that you can with that.

Anderson: I think we kind of talked about #4 and can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided?

Janet: You know what, honestly, I thought, I mean, I didn't have any classroom management issues, no behavior problems, anything like that. I think the students, they welcomed the opportunity to work at their own pace and get through it. Uh, you know, there were no complaints. There were no complaints at all.

Anderson: You didn't ever think kids might have been getting tired of being on the computer all day or did they just kind of pound through it?

Janet: I gave my kids breaks, you know, which you have to do. I mean, we got up, we walked around, and maybe one turned a [unclear word], but the one thing at San Jac the year before that I wish I'd had more access to was, I would take my kids, and I was doing a regular class there, not the Edginuity, was [unclear words] was thirty minutes in the gym—I could probably get in trouble for it—I snuck them into the gym. The guys, they would come back sweaty, and you know, relaxed and ready to go again for the afternoon break. But every day I took them to the gym for 15 minutes. And I wished I had that opportunity at Cleans just to get them physical, even every single was on the floor, every kid, they were kicking soccer balls, playing basketball, even the girls, and the girls that weren't there, who just wanted to wallow in the stands, I made them get up and walk the gym with me cuz I'd get my steps too. And just having that break from get all this classroom, and that 15 minutes was 15 minutes wasted but it was not wasted at all because they were much more productive. When they come back, I would have lost more than 15 minutes in the classroom with…yeah. So, in my class when we were doing the

Edginuity, when I would take them on a restroom break, we would go upstairs, around the building, down the other stairs, around the building, and move them around, so …

Anderson: And then get snacks from the concession.

Janet: Get some snacks, get some Scooby snacks going on, I brought, you know, I would bake them brownies and cookies and you know, it's like OK, babies, this sucks, and it's partly your fault because you didn't do what you were supposed to do but I still love you anyway and we're going to get through this. I want you to do your best. You could do this. And you know they respond to that, they know if you know care about them, so.

Anderson: I know it's fast and furious, but you took that time to do that relationship building …

Janet: Yeah, cuz it's matter. Let me tell you what happened, and I don't know if you want, this made me cry, it was like oh my gosh, Jenifer, um I don't know if you remember him, he was one of my kids. I had in 7th grade and in an elective for 8th grade and all, Ariel Jimenez?

Anderson: The name sounds familiar.

Janet: Yeah, because he stayed in the office a lot. Um, anyway, the last day, Ariel was always like, you constantly got on go, come on Ariel, and he was the twerpiest twerp of all kids as a 7th grader. I just, I was like, are you sure we can't hit them? Or, just…

Anderson: You mean corporal punishment?

Janet: Oh my gosh, he was the twerpiest little 7th grader, wiry, you could bounce him off the walls, drove me crazy, and then 8th grade, he was just kind of like a slacker slacker slacker. OK, and so anyway the last day, we came back from lunch, or a snack, or something and Ariel walks to the class like, and I said "no sir, you got it Mr. Sebatres' office because unh unh no no no." And so he's like huh, and I said "Ariel you've got to get your story together. You are going into high school." Anyway, I sent him down to Mr. Sebatres' office and he didn't come back. And he must have got him good. Anyway I was out there putting the kids on the bus, and oh my god, it makes me cry every single year, and I'll cry thinking about it. Anyway, here comes Ariel flying up to the bus, all the kids are up on the bus, and I'm standing out there [tears up] you know, oh, and then here comes Ariel, and say "Bye, Ariel." He's like "What's wrong, Miss? Why are you crying?" And you know when he came to me, he wasn't even up to my chin, and now I was looking up to him. I thought "I'm going to miss you." And he said "Awww", and he

hugged my neck, and I said "Ariel, you've got to get your stuff together." I said "You can't be doing this in high school. You need to go forward and do great things and you can, but you can't play around. Now is the time." He's like "It's OK." Tears are pathetic. And he's like "OK, Miss. OK, I'll do good. I'll … OK." And I said, "OK, you go and be good and come back and see me." He said, "OK", then he turned around and walked off, and Jenifer, he got as far from the door from me, and then he turned around and came back and he hugged my neck, and he says "I'm really sorry, Miss." I said "OK, but now you know. You know. Go be a big kid. You know, go do it right. Finish it right." And you know, for that moment, for him then to know that he got it—that's like you know you screwed up and you were a twerp and you didn't do your best and then glad he heard enough about it to say I'm sorry, I did do wrong. You know, as though now when I went over for the field trip when we took our kids, then it was like he'd just come around and I asked "Are you doing great?" And he's like "I'm doing better." Anyway, that was kind of a sidebar, sorry, but…

Anderson: No, you have those moments …

Janet: Yeah, that I mean he walked and then just stopped and came around and turned back. I'm sorry I was a little … Yeah, you were. Yeah, he'll turn out OK.

Anderson: [Laughter] They catch your hearts sometimes.

Janet: Oh, yeah.

Anderson: Then knowing seeing someone cares. Oftentimes that time when they're in summer school and going through all this stuff, it's interesting because it's a procedural threat. It's like I could do this because someone cares.

Janet: Yeah. Yeah, we'll cry over you. [Laughter] And then I will, I will, anyway…Relationships, that's a big…

Anderson: Yeah.

Janet: And it makes a difference if you make something for them than go buy a box of Little Debbie snacks. You know, it's different. Even if it's out of the box, or the slice & dice cookies. Yeah.

Anderson: That's the only way I make mine.

Janet: Right, right, anyway…

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as LEP's scored approximately 15 points lower than students who were non-LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of the students, particularly our ELL kiddos?

Janet: You know what, that's what I struggle when I do my data. I do my Gen Ed, my SPED, and my LEP, so I can see not just how are they different. You know, I can see gen individual sub-pop that [coughs] that's again, I know there's different data that they're better mixed in, for me personally, if I would group them and to give them the specific support that they need, and the strategies they need, rather than trying to be, you know, one size fits all, you know I believe that the teachers could be more concentrated effort if OK if what I have in my class are LEP students, and then their needs are going to be more similar to just the general pop and be able to target that and cater to their specific needs and focus on that because the time period is so small, you've got to make it so concentrated—you can't water it down. You know, or trying to do you know meet by your higher kids, you've got your lower kids, you've got your LEP, you've got your SPED babies, and you only have one, yeah that's what I would say is group them more so your instruction could be more concentrated and focused on what their needs are. I would do that every day in my classroom if they let me choose. [Laughter] Yeah, anyway, my answers probably aren't very popular but…

Anderson: I don't think that. I've heard that in multiple conversations that the grouping could be beneficial.

Janet: I believe with everything.

Anderson: …with short periods of time.

Janet: And then using all the, you know, SDI strategies and focusing, you know, I don't know that I knew if had any SPED kids. And you know, being able to know who your kids are before they get there is a big hairy deal. And I know there's late enrollment and stuff that you know you can't tell. I know all that, and so it's hard, it's really hard.

Anderson: Did you have the opportunity to collaborate with any of the teachers at..

Janet: Oh, I collaborate all of the time. I mean, it, I didn't, I don't even know the names of the other Edginuity people very well. She was doing math, but she was from San Jac. I don't even remember her name. But umm, I just, I would have… You know, it's people, you know I don't know that the junior high thing ever goes away, you know all the

cliques and all that kind of stuff and um you know we really didn't get to establish much of a relationship because her time was spent with her peeps and, you know what I mean, and there wasn't a lot…I mean I could see if it was someone I already knew, somebody I had a relationship with, uh, that um, maybe we could have worked better together on you know meeting the needs of the kids on the Edginuity because she had like the match section, I had the reading, but still you know being able to coordinate OK, well you've got this kid over here and this is what, you know now that I'm thinking about there were a couple kids that would come just for the 2-hour block, because they would do math in the morning and reading in the afternoon. But most of them were just straight-through.

[Room Interruption]

Anderson: How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? And was classroom management an issue for these students? If so…

Janet: No, no, I think I already addressed that. Classroom management was not an issue at all because they just, you know, wanted to get through, and then being able to work at their own pace and go through and, you know, keep moving forward. They didn't have to sit and wait. You know, the differentiation helped.

Anderson: Yeah, oh yeah. Is there anything else you would like to add or be any information that could benefit the study?

Janet: No, I think the most important thing is, to me, grouping the students would be the most beneficial for the concentration. And then you know being able to have their data and who you're going to have, you know at a least a day or two before they get there. Technology, having that fully up and going, and then I think this last year it was kind of like all new last-minute kinds of things, so that's understandable, so certainly it will be better planned and prepared you know for the coming. So that's kind of it in a nutshell.

Anderson: I appreciate your time.

Janet: I'm glad to help. I know sometimes people aren't willing to, yeah. So my daughter will be twenty tomorrow, she's going to start grad school in the fall.

Anderson: Awesome

Janet: She started early, so I know she'll be doing a lot of different kinds of research. She's forwarded me some of her sorority sisters' stuff—like Mom she needs help with this, answer these questions. OK.

Anderson: It's all to better the education system.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Ron

Anderson: This is my interview with Ron. All right buddy, I've noticed that I am looking at Site A and Site B and so through the both programs we either offer two-hours of accelerated instruction where you might see two groups of students or four-hours where the same kids are with you all day. Which section did you teach?

Ron: Um, I've taught both. Primarily we've done the two-hour ones where we switch but have also done the four-hour one where it's the whole time where you are with the same students.

Anderson: So, last year. Last year, you did the…?

Ron: Four-hour.

Anderson: Ok, good.

Anderson: What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program?

Ron: The strengths is I mean you really focused on one primary subject, uh so you can hit as many TEAKS ? as you want in one day that you feel feasible that you know that's going to happen. Weaknesses though it can be a little strange you know some of the students they get a little antsy reading over again you do have to take breaks. Um, another strength you know, is that you do build that rapport with students because its such a long time and you are there in together so they kind of feel it. A weakness, once again, it's not that long even though it's four-hours, it is not that long you don't get I guess a full semester you just get a few weeks.

Anderson: So fast and furious.

Ron: Yes, yes. [thank you very much – sounds like to someone else]

Anderson: According to the data that we received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction, as there was improvement in student scores on the third administration. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the 4-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% improved on the third admin. What do you think contributed to this success?

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Ron: Um, once again it's just kind of a repetition if you are doing it over and over again, if they are doing reading or math, over and over again. It's going to stick a little bit more instead of that that hour a day that and that supplemental time at home you know for homework I think honestly, it's that straight teaching of that specific subject and going over and over and over it again that helps the students out and plus in all the seriousness, it's the third time they are going to take it so they have to you know, a lot of them turn that light on and they're in school and their friends aren't in school so. [Laughter]

Anderson: Some focus, huh?

Ron: Yes.

Anderson: Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided?

Ron: Um, well it's… I think it's a lot more calmer and um, in summer school so the students they really attend to it whether being because they have to be there because they failed it for the third time or they're really getting the information they need because uh we do give them a little extra time for work um, it is smaller classes most of the time so we can do one-on-one work as opposed to regular school. Um, the other thing I feel is um, there's no distractions it's really just focused so when they come in they know what they have to do and that's why I feel like they are really you know, it's a positive response and it's all the schools, it's not just one school so everybody is there for a specific reason so there's no no um, I'm trying to think of the word, there's no distractions I'm just going to use that so that's all [Laughter] I'm going to come back to that word, but yeah I get really good responses with them, and even the students that are very low you know, they try so hard.

Anderson: Did you have any kiddos that didn't speak English Level 1's, Level 2's in your class?

Ron: Um, yes. I am trying to think back to that, yes. I've had other 1's Level 1's, Level 2's, I had one student that years ago that didn't speak any English so they put him in there as well.

Anderson: Were you provided with a roster that told you who was SPED, who was ESL?

Ron: Yes, after I think, like the first or second day they gave me information that told me that and the supplemental information of course the dictionaries and then um, with resources it was kind of hit or miss, some schools did some didn't and if they spoke

Spanish I had the students where my Spanish is fairly ok but uh, there's other students that can go along so like the think pair share is definitely like a thing used in there a lot. One summer school I had a student that spoke, what is it? Islamic? wait, he was from Lebanon so he spoke

Anderson: Lebanese?

Ron: Yeah, I think it is Lebanese is the language so with him the reading program leader at the time we really had to work together to get some information but he was a level two, he spoke a little English but there were still words that he didn't get and I didn't know how to speak [Laughter]
Anderson: Google translate, right?

Ron: Yes, pretty much that's it.

Anderson: How did you implement the curriculum provided by the district and did you use any supplemental materials?

Ron: Um basically the district has it planned out to a T, the information is there there's more information than you need the only thing I made was supplemental is we had some extra time so I made some crossword puzzles on vocabulary so we went over vocabulary with the, you know, draw the picture and write it in a sentence but just to add it, to use it daily we did some crossword puzzles with it and videos if we were talking about a subject, I tried to use maybe a two or three minute video to interact with them to see how it is relevant to the subject so.

Anderson: How did you structure your class, was it like direct instruction and group work? Or how did you structure the class?

Ron: It's divided like that we come in and we had a daily warm up and then usually it went in line with what we were talking about that day if it was poetry maybe we talked about figurative language in there or if it was nonfiction we talked about a specific person or a place uh, then, you know I modeled what the lesson was for the day and then they got into groups and went one-to-one with them, we came back as a class, we went over the work uh, we did that primarily to look at where the kids levels are and then I did little assessment s there um, with little tests, they weren't necessarily tests they were just going around with multiple choice kind of to get prepared for the upcoming third administration of the STAAR, so.

Anderson: So how did you group them did you go, high low or did you group on [unclear dialogue]?

Ron: It was high low, it was high low, but mainly I looked at, especially for the LEP students who was very good at Spanish too for my LEP students and I would pair them together and even if it was high low right there, they would definitely help me out and when they're teaching each other it works out but with the rest of them it was high low. Anderson: Would you say that the majority of the time it was direct instruction then group then some group and some individual or vice versa?

Ron: I would say, it would structure back to it. It was instruction, then go to group, one-on-one, individual and then we would go back to instruction then when we're trying to do our wrap-it-up with our assessment because we went over as a class ok what was this answer what was this answer and then they looked at kind of their mistakes

Anderson: Did you have students' scores prior to them coming to you?

Ron: that's the one thing I didn't have you know, I never knew what their scores are I kind of have to ask the kids like individually and most times they're pretty honest with me, and I ask like at the beginning of class where do you, you know, where is your weakness at because I can't look at his Euphoria? I don't have any of their scores I don't have.

Anderson: Yeah

Ron: I don't have any of their background.

Anderson: Would you like that? Do you think that would be beneficial?

Ron: Oh yes, yes that would definitely help out because you know you're looking at some people it may be vocabulary and you can work on that and some it may be inference so we're just pulling from every single TEAK we're not going on the strength and usually data is where you know where we can hit our assessment points

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as LEP scored approximately 15 points lower than students who were non-LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of the students, particularly our ELLs?

Ron: I would say divide them up half the day so you have a half time of them with uh, with individual LEP students so a student is specifically with LEP students and then the other half they're in a class you know with students with at you know, native language so they're getting both of it, if they're just with the LEP students it's not going to get it but they have to do both so they're going back and forth uh, accelerated that's one thing because the need a little bit of extra time just because of the language barrier but I think if you separate them for half the time and then you put them into a regular class it would definitely work out

Anderson: So some language support time and…

Ron: Yes

Anderson: Versus the… did you notice your ELL kiddos referring to the dictionary a lot? Or was that something that you had to teach them?

Ron: I had to teach them, there's a couple of them I was like you need to look at it, you need to look at it and not just with them I didn't single them out I was like lets go to the dictionary you know let's go to the dictionary and I already knew which words were going to be there not just for the native speakers but for the LEP kids you know everybody is going to look up this word right now, so.

Anderson: Do you think technology has any kind of place in summer school?

Ron: Yes, it's going to definitely have some type of interest. I have seen a lot of um, when we talk about the personalized learning there's definitely some instruction, I have seen some math instruction where you know some of them you keep going at your level and you keep moving on with reading uh, definitely you have interactive it shows words and at the end they can specifically take a test they can start that off but then they move on to paper and pen because that's where uh, that's where the STAAR is going to be at

Anderson: Yeah [Laughter]. How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? Was classroom management an issue for the students? If so, please explain.

Ron: There's always going to be like one or two but you know I mean as a majority of the classes in summer school have been fine, they been fine I mean you're going to have your knuckleheads you kind of do but most of the kids are there to do to learn and to get really you know they really want to succeed so those kids are there they come and they want you to help them so I have never had really a problem you know I've seen some students try to but most of the students they're very respectful and uh once you get them

going they you know even thought hey don't want to be in summer school I know they don't want to be in summer school but uh issues I wouldn't say anything.

Anderson: Do you think you did a lot of relationship building and that might've helped with, or do you…?

Ron: I think so you know I'm honest with the kids if you're honest with them you know, you can talk about other things you know that aren't school related and then you know how to get them interested and you know every once in a while when you take your break you know you have to take breaks in here you can't just go straight um you can mention it too you can joke around you know have a little inside jokes with them and you know that builds rapport, so…

Anderson: When you took breaks did you walk them around or are you talking about mental breaks in the classroom?

Ron: Most of our breaks, yes, it was a restroom so we went as a class to the restroom um and when we were in the class I always had you know, stretch out and you know I always make little jokes and they may not laugh you know they might be shaking their heads at me but f there was I wasn't a part of it I just kind of… it usually works out [Laughter]

Anderson: The humor, you think, might make them more comfortable?

Ron: I think so, I think so. There's some that won't talk to you but you know [Laughter] and it's a new experience you know because a lot of those kids you've never seen before and you're only going to see them for a couple of weeks and then they're gone so…

Anderson: Is there anything else you would like to add or think that could help with the study?

Ron: Summer school? Um…

Anderson: And accelerated instruction or…?

Ron: Just, um, I like what you said earlier about a little bit more information and Euphoria about I know you cant give all of it but maybe some paperwork on where the students levels are so where do we have to work with and that could also help out with our curriculum and you know what I mean its great curriculum from the district but I mean um, is it really aligned with your class you know what I mean if you know you are doing a lesson on inference and all the kids in there passed the inference section then I

would say you I mean you can review it but you know you really need to hit what's low and you know what they did bad on, so.

Anderson: Did you have the opportunity to collaborate with any of the other SSI teachers?

Ron: I did I did with a couple of them I was like what are you doing in there what's working um, you know what's how are you building your lessons around it and you know we shared I actually got the crossword puzzle from another teacher so they told me a generator that would work out because we wanted to implement the uh the vocabulary and it's a way to get them going

Anderson: did you stick with the vocabulary that the district provided or did you go over any of the test questions?

Ron: I went over both so they have a lot of good vocabulary that they're mostly tone and mood words so there's a lot of words that pop up on tone and mood questions but I added some other ones that are in questions like conclude or you know um, assertion things that you know I know are on their and they need to know, so it is kind of a little bit of both.

Anderson: Anything else you can think of?

Ron: Um, that's pretty much it the procedures are all there the curriculum is there I just you know more information on the students what we're getting but beside that you know uh, it's, is it goes pretty quick too you know

Anderson: It does, it is a whirlwind [Laughter]. All right, thank you, sir.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Jenny

Anderson: This is my interview with Jenny. Alright, Ms. Jenny, so what type of accelerated instruction did you teach?

Jenny: Uh, I did the four-hour.

Anderson: And what were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program?

Jenny: Um, I'll start with the weaknesses. Some of the weaknesses being in there four-hours. It was rough on those kids towards the end because the group of kids that I had were very hyperactive kids. Um, the strengths of being in there for four-hours was I became closer with those kids can the people that are in the two-hour long program. They became more accustomed to the way I did things, and I never had an issue, not being able to finish something with them so if there were ever any stories we were doing we were always able to continue it. There was always time for extended discussions or things like that. I never felt rushed or anything like that with them.

Anderson: Hmm. That's good. According to the data that was received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in student scores on the third administration. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the 4-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% improved on the third administration. What do you think contributed to this success?

Jenny: Um, just the drilling of being there, like I said for four-hours, even though they were bored, it was just constantly put in their head, get out the dictionary and look it up. Dissect this question, how would you answer this, what are you looking for, so it was more of a brainwashing kind of on how to get through the test and get through the questions. And the constant annotations to where what I was hoping is that even though I can't make sure they're annotating on the test, and I can't tell them to do those things, but if I force them to do it for so long all throughout the class that when it got time to the testing, that they didn't write it down, hopefully they would stop after every paragraph, and annotate at least on their head. Go back and think OK what is this paragraph about? Do I understand this paragraph? And the same thing with the questions. Try to at least answer it in their own words by at least thinking about it and dissect those questions the same way. But it was just rigorous constant over and over and over and over and over again. I think that's brainwashing, I think. [Laughter]

Anderson: Braintraining.

Jenny: Braintraining! Oh, I like that much better. Braintraining. That sounds so much better.

Anderson: Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided?

Jenny: Um, like I said at the beginning, it was lot for them to be in there for the whole four-hours in the same classroom with the same group of kids. But after, I mean halfway through the first week, definitely by the end of the first week, they were used to it, they had my expectations, and they were used to one another. They built—all these kids were from different schools—so they all built relationships with each other because they were stuck in that classroom with each other, so they were helping each other, they were giving each other, well not giving each other answers, but you know when they were stuck on questions, how to answer it, this is how you do it, this is how you don't do it. So I think they benefited from that. And again, just being in there for that four-hour time period and being forced to do that hopefully forced them to do it on the test.

Anderson: Um hm, um hm. How did you implement the curriculum provided by the district? And did you use any supplemental materials?

Jenny: Um, I used some of the stuff that was provided by, by the district that was warm-up but with those kids it takes sooo long so what they wanted us to do for a warm-up for the kid, that would be an entire you know an hour-long lesson that it would be, so I just started using the warm-ups as just the first half of the day and then we would go through an entire hour, going through I had broken up in blocks, an entire hour going through and annotating, and then an entire hour for questions, answering the questions in their own words, going back and finding the proof, dissecting the questions, and then an entire hour of discussing why the answers are correct and why the answers are not correct. And any supplemental material, I didn't use any of my own materials, I used whatever it was that they gave me for all that.

Anderson: How did you structure the class? So, um, did you do any group work or was it a lot of direct instruction? How was your class structured?

Jenny: They were all in groups, um, at least 2 and some of them in 3. And we would start off reading. I would read a paragraph to them, and then they would annotate. And I would do that for a couple of paragraphs depending on how long the passage was. And then about halfway through I would say OK, now you do it on your own. I would read

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silently in my head, and then I would give them a couple more minutes when I was done reading and OK you should be through with this paragraph by now, you should have annotated it, and then I would look to see what they would do so it was very much direct instruction, very much on their own, and then when they were answering the questions, they could work with each other, as long as they were helping each other, OK, look this word up in the dictionary, see what this word means, and then go back and find the proof. Did you find that? Where did you find that it said that? Things like that. And then it was entire group instruction at the very end where we would all discuss why the answer is the correct answer, and I would just call on them, why did you put this? Why is your answer right? And then I always do the whole no, why do you think that's the answer? Really, when then prove it, prove it, prove it, and then I pretend like I don't know that's the answer and go like yeah, OK that is the answer. [Laughter] And they feel really smart for that, but um, it was just all of it, all together.

Anderson: Did, um, I noticed you said answer in your own words. Did you hide some of the multiple choice answer choices, or did you just um …

Jenny: For some of the stuff that I used for my warm-ups, I always printed out without the answer choices on there. So the things that I had, but the stuff that they gave us that were in the booklets that we used, I just tell them "cover it up" because they're going to have to do on the STAAR. And that's why I tell them just cover it up with your hand, try to answer it in your own words. And you can tell when you go through and their answer in their own words is exactly like the answer choice [Laughter] and then just remind them, guys, this is for you like please just try before you actually look at those answer choices because it's not going to help you if you don't.

Anderson: Hm hm, hm hm. The warm-ups they gave, weren't they the vocabulary warm-ups with the, that, uh…

Jenny: Yes, and that worked for about…

Anderson: What's that trick called? The um…

Jenny: Uh, the Cornell notes.

Anderson: I'm thinking about the square chart, sounds like, similar to, different from…

Jenny: No, what we did is we had journals like the composition books, and those just told us to do it like Cornell note style taking with the vocabulary warm-ups. And the words, uh, what's most effective for them, especially in passing the test, is the commonly used,

well they're not on there, I have them up there, like the commonly used STAAR words. And so the words they were having these kids use are just like SAT random weird words. So we did that for a little bit, but in the end, I just turned it into that, where I took emphasize, and illustrate, and convey, and things like that and made sure they understood what those words mean, because in the questions, I have noticed so many times that they don't understand what the word means in the question. They just either guess, or they just give up, and it makes it so much more difficult for them. So I did that for a couple of days, and then I changed it to where it was just the commonly used STAAR test words.

Anderson: Then you were doing that whole random vocabulary SAT words versus words that could help them understand answer choices

Jenny: Yes. Yes.

Anderson: OK. Did you have trouble getting them to use the dictionary, or did you have to teach them how to use the dictionary?

Jenny: Some of them were OK with it. Some of them could open it up and use their guide words and go straight to it, and some of them acted like they had never seen one before in their lives so it was…and I had three ESL girls that were severely severely language, uh, had severe language deficiency, so for those girls it was very hard for them to get through it and to use sight words and things like that. But it was a mixture. I had Tay (sp?) in there, and he knew exactly what he was doing, but some of the other kids, they acted like they had never seen a dictionary before in their lives. The same way they do here, even though they've been given those skills forever, they still act like they don't know what they are.

Anderson: Tay kinda fooled you there, because you already knew… [Laughter]

Jenny: Yes, yes, I already knew.

Anderson: Did you have the chance to collaborate with any other teachers or were there any other SSI reading teachers you talked to? Or do you feel like the teachers just worked in isolation?

Jenny: I feel like we kind of worked in isolation. I don't feel like they were unfriendly in any way. I just feel like because it's summer school, and we don't know each other, we just go into the room, shut the door, then I do feel like it was kind of isolated. There wasn't any collaboration. Really, than helping me set up my whiteboard. [Laughter]

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as LEP's scored approximately 15 points lower than students who were not identified as LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of students, particularly our English language learners?

Jenny: I think grouping them together would definitely help because like I said I had those three girls, and we were just miles ahead of them, and it was constant backtracking with them and going back to them, and I felt like they, they didn't want to share. It was really hard to get them to share. They would share with the other kids that they knew from the schools that they were with but not out loud when we were doing group instruction. They wouldn't share with anything. So if we could group them together more, I think it would definitely benefit them.

Anderson: What do you think, were they Level 1's and 2's, or Level 3's and 5's?

Jenny: Yes, no, they were definitely 1's and 2's …

Anderson: So talking no English …

Jenny: Very, very, very little English. And then I had Levels 3's and 4's, and they did OK, but two of the girls were from Ponte's [sp?] class.

Anderson: Oh …

Jenny: So, I mean, those are 1's and 2's, if they came from Ponte.

Anderson: Yeah. Did and I know there, but were you provided with a roster that identified any kids as LEP or SPED or…

Jenny: I think so. I think we always are. We're given that information, yes, but I honestly…I'm almost 100% sure we're always given that information, who's LEP, who's SPED, yes.

Anderson: Did you receive student scores, other than the ones that were yours and you knew their scores, did you receive other students' scores?

Jenny: No, no. I did not receive STAAR scores for the other kids, no.

Anderson: Do you think that would help you or …?

Jenny: Yes. Most definitely, I would have liked to have had that information.

Anderson: And what would you have done? Would you have used that for instruction or …?

Jenny: I would have used it for grouping.

Anderson: OK.

Jenny: To group them based on what their scores were.

Anderson: Would you have gone high/low? Or comparable?

Jenny: I have would have, um, switched it up throughout it. I'd like to start off, I would high/low, and then work more one-on-one with the low while the highers could do a little more independent. And as we progressed, then I would incorporate the highs in with the lows and see how they worked with one another.

Anderson: And that's kind of like what you do during the year …

Jenny: But that's what I do in class, yes, yes yes. In the beginning, I take all the lows and I do a lot of one-on-one with them, and then, kind of, when they're ready, feed them into the other groups.

Anderson: And do you think technology would help during the 2-1/2 weeks we have, or do you feel like it would be more of a hindrance? Where would technology's place be?

Jenny: I feel like it would be more of a hindrance. If there was any kind of videos or any kind of playlists or anything like that they wanted them to do, I think at this point that this point their focus really needs to be on the test preparation, test taking skills, dictionary skills, answering questions skills, then it to needs be on actual essay skills. At this point, it's, it's putting the cart before the horse, you know, it gets, it's too far gone for them to, to try and learn those skills, and their best way to get through it is to dissect the questions, figure out what it is that they're asking them.

Anderson: How would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? Was classroom management an issue for these students? If so, please explain.

Jenny: In the very beginning, it always is with summer school because those kids don't know you, and you're directly out of school with a group of kids who do know you, and you go in there, like, uh, bull. And then you have to, I do, I always have to stop, and step back, and oh Jenny, these kids don't know you, calm down, they don't know how you act, they don't know your personality, and then let them get to know you. So in the beginning, I always have issues with summer school kids. And, like I said, half the week, definitely by the end of the first week, I usually didn't have any serious discipline issues but a little bit of attitude, a little bit of talkback. I had a couple of kids from other schools that you know that wanted to put their head down and not do anything at all and just sit there and do nothing at all but by the middle of the first week, end of the first week, definitely I didn't have any issues after that.

Anderson: And with those kids that were putting their heads down, do you think it was that motivation factor, where they were just kind of beat down for having failed the test so many times, they were like "ugh" …

Jenny: No, I got the feeling that they're just the type of kid that doesn't really do much in school. They're the cool, bad kids…

Anderson: Ahh…

Jenny: Like they're too cool for school kids, those type of kids, like I'm not going to do anything, it's school, and I don't have to, and you have to pass me anyway. Kind of that kind of attitude is what I got from those kids. None of those kids seemed broken; none of the kids I had at all seemed broken or beat down or just distraught that we there. They seemed bummed they had to waste their summer there but not, uh, emotionally beat down because of it or anything.

Anderson: So there was no, you didn't get the sense that oh, I'm going to have to go to 8th grade again if I fail…?

Jenny: I didn't get that sense at all. I didn't get that sense at all. I got more the sense of entitlement where they, where they know they are going to go on to the 9th grade regardless.

Anderson: Do you think that was an age thing?

Jenny: A lot of it. With a lot of those kids it was an age thing, yes.

Anderson: Hmph. So how did you get those kids to participate? What do you think you did that reached them?

Jenny: I don't know, the same thing I always do [Laughter], just the way I talk to them like they're normal, instead of, you know, I don't yell at them or scream at them, you know, just hey, we'll you do this for me, and if they're still really rude, just you don't have to be rude, I was just trying to be nice, trying to help you, it's just another way I approach them just they're on the same level as I am. I'm not an adult. I'm not a teacher. I just kind of talk to them we're on the same level and I don't know why they like me. I don't know why they do things to me, to tell you the truth at all, I'm a big dork.

[Overlapping dialogue]

Anderson: In that 2-1/2 weeks, you were able to work on building those relationships…

Jenny: Absolutely. Absolutely. With the kid who was kind of rude the first couple of days of school. By the end of the two weeks, he was very nice to me, very chatty with me, how are you doing, have a good weekend, those kinds of things, yeah.

Anderson: It's that Jenny magic.

Jenny: I don't know what it is. [Laughter] It feels like desperation [unclear dialogue] but I feel like that poor old lady, be nice to her.

Anderson: Um, is there anything else you would like to add or any comments about summer school accelerated instruction that you think, any questions you have?

Jenny: Um, the only thing I last year summer school ran smoother than it ever run in any of the years I ever did summer school, so whatever you guys did for summer school last year, it ran smooth as silk, and it was fantastic. Um, no, other than that, I don't really have anything to add.

Anderson: How long have you been teaching summer school?

Jenny: Four years, that was my fourth year to do it. No, third year to do it. I did it at Bondi and at San Jac and then last year at Cleans [sp?].

Anderson: So what happened at San Jac that didn't…?

Jenny: San Jac, I had eleven desks and thirty-eight children the first day I taught.

Anderson: Oh, wow.

Jenny: Yeah, I taught, and it stayed like that for a week before they, they were able to level out classes. So that was very confusing. Also the kids, their schedules constantly were changing because they were trying to shuffle that, so that was very confusing for the kids. And then Bondi, it was just, um, a lot of like the lunch schedules and things like that were things that were confusing and not clearly stated on how we should do this and where we should do it and how we go about it and things like that, but it wasn't serious issues like that. And in defense of San Jac, having the overload of class, the year before when I was at Bondi they cut, cut me part-time as a teacher. I only taught half-day instead of a whole day because they'd hired too many so I think that, I don't think San Jac hired enough the next year and then I think that's why they had to bring on more to level out those classes. I don't think it was whoever was in charge at San Jac did. I think it was just the way it worked out.

Anderson: And last everything was…

Jenny: Everything was very clearly communicated. Everything ran very smoothly. The snacks in the middle of the day was great for the kids. I will add that. It motivated them, because if they misbehaved, I told them I wasn't going to take them. And if they misbehaved when we got back, then you don't get to go tomorrow. So that was a wonderful motivation tool for them. Very good tool. And it gave them a break, and got them out of the class, and stuff like that, cuz like I said, four-hours in the classroom is a long time. It. It worked well.

Anderson: Awesome. Maybe because I was there with the [unclear dialogue]

Jenny: Yes, it was that Anderson chick…

Anderson: All right, well thank you, Ms. Jenny.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Patricia

Anderson: All right, we are recording…

Patricia: OK.

Anderson: I'll go ahead and give you a copy of the questions just so you can see some of the data.

Patricia: All righty…

Anderson: And…and…this is my interview with Patricia. OK, what type of accelerated instruction did you teach? Did you teach, um two sections of the two-hour or did you have the same students all day in the four-hour.

Patricia: I had the same students. I had SSI...

Anderson: OK.

Patricia: …ESL.

Anderson: I noticed that, some of the, there were a few at Site B that had different groups of kids in two-hour sections, and then at Site A there was a mix of the four-hour and the two-hour.

Patricia: Yeah, there was a mix where I was, so…

Anderson: And what were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program, in your opinion?

Patricia: Oh, well, let's see…Um, well they had, I think they had very good curriculum for the ESL students, and they were, um, you know, understandable, fairly straightforward. I don't know that they correlated as well, um, with the actual test, the type of questions we have on the test. Um, cuz the type of questions on the test are lengthy a lot of times, and the answers are lengthy, where the curriculum we had was good, but most of the passages were shorter than you get on the test. Um, most of the questions were simpler. And so, um, I'm kind of putting this both together. So I think the strengths at least for the kids I taught were good to start out that way, but then somehow

may be differentiate where they get more difficult. Of course we only have, you know, what, 2-1/2 weeks—

Anderson: Yes.

Patricia: —to do all this, so [Laughter] you can't perform miracles, but perhaps working with the curriculum to at least get some of the, um, more difficult questions in there.

Anderson: Um hm.

Patricia: And more STAAR-like passages.

Anderson: Practicing a little bit more…

Patricia: Yeah, a little bit more with that. I mean I know these kids, the ones I taught, need the basics. They don't have the foundation, you know, in reading, so they need those basics in reading, you know, stories and poems. But when they go take the test, there's a difference, between what…

Anderson: What they then practice and what they actually did.

Patricia: And you know we have plenty of opportunities to use the dictionaries, um, we have plenty of supplies, all of that is great. Um, the people in charge have always been wonderful and helpful. Uh, so, you know, lots of strengths, but I think the main thing is, is just trying to prepare those kids for a very difficult test. Is, you know, anyway… [Laughter] Does that answer your question?

Anderson: Oh, of course.

Patricia: OK.

Anderson: According to the data that was received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction as there was improvement in student scores on the third administration. Approximately 25% of students enrolled in the 4-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 64% improved on the third administration. What do you think contributed to this success?

Patricia: Smaller numbers in the classroom. Um, I think that ability for us to have one-on-one interaction with the students because of the smaller numbers, um, they are there for that specific purpose. You know, they are not there for any other subject. They are there

specifically for that, um so they're pretty motivated, you know, the kids are motivated. Whereas in the normal school year, who knows?

Anderson: Um hm.

Patricia: You know, so…

Anderson: How many were y'all running to a class?

Patricia: I only had, I th–, well, I had to look it up, I, maybe, under 20. So maybe one year I had 14 and another year I had 16 or whatever but it was under 20. So, that was good.

Anderson: Yeah, that's nice.

Patricia: I think it's under 20, pretty sure or somewhere around there. Um, so the smaller numbers, the ability, I mean you're with those kids for four-hours, so you're going to have that one-on-one interaction with them. So I think that was another difference too is, you know, they're still pretty shy about asking for help, so you're able to assess what they're doing in the classroom pretty much right away. You know, you don't have 130 kids to grade, you know, so you can assess them quicker, uh, you have the time to talk them about, you know, the things they don't understand. That one-on-one I think makes a huge difference for them.

Anderson: Hm hm.

Patricia: So…

Anderson: And at y'all's campus did you receive any of the students' scores, at—

Patricia: Prior to…?

Anderson: Yes, ma'am.

Patricia: [Pause] I don't think so. I don't remember getting…no.

Anderson: Do you think that would have helped at all, or was it just easier to just, uh, accept what they were doing right then and there?

Patricia: Um, you know, for the most part, and I'm not talking specifically about those students, but the kids who failed the test pretty much are across the board have the same problems, most of it vocabulary. You know, so, I don't know that it's that helpful to receive the scores beforehand. You know they didn't pass it.

Anderson: Yeah.

Patricia: You know, so, um, and when the passing score, I think it was what, 60…I think it was 58 last year, or was it 54? Anyway, they only have to get a little over half the questions right to pass, and when they didn't get over half, you know that it had to be mostly vocabulary. They just didn't understand the questions. Or the answers. Or the story. Or the [unsure of word] [Laughter] You know, so, I don't know if that's so important. I would just for my own curiosity, say, like to know what they made after they took the test…

Anderson: Yes.

Patricia: But they're from all different schools, and…Two years ago I asked each AP if they could send me the information, and a couple of them did, you know, but, so, but it's the end of the summer, you know, and so anyway, um, so no, I don't think that's important…

Anderson: Um hm.

Patricia: …to have that.

Anderson: Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided?

Patricia: For the most part, I mean, there were a couple, not this past year, but the year before, that didn't want to be there, you knew that they weren't, you know, they just weren't, they came, well, maybe they missed a few, uh, times, but for the most part they came, but yeah. For the most part, most of them were, I guess, um, how shall I put it? They wanted to pass that test. They were motivated. And they knew they had already not succeeded twice, so they were very motivated, that third administration, yeah, I'd say for the most part, like I said there was a couple. This past year, I didn't find that, but the one before that, the summer before that, I did. Yeah, so…

Anderson: How did you implement the curriculum provided by the district? And did you use any supplemental materials?

Patricia: I pretty much used what they gave me. They gave you everything that you needed. You know, so, it was very well organized, uh, I didn't even have to make copies. I mean everything was done and ready for us to go, which was really nice.

Anderson: Um hm.

Patricia: So and I utilized pretty much all of it. Um, supplemental, uh, I don't remember if I used…I think I used technology, I mean I used the whiteboard. Um, but other than that, I think that was it. So.

Anderson: When you were implementing, you know, the vocabulary and the reading of the stories, did you do any collaborative grouping—

[Interruption – Overhead Announcement]

Patricia: Um, no. I'm trying to think with, uh, I might have put a couple of the Level 1's with the highest ESL kids in the room. Um, but I had an aide that came in…

Anderson: Oh, that's good.

Patricia: …an ESL aide. She didn't come the whole period, because she had to split, or the whole time. Um, so, that was the only—otherwise, they're, for the ESL kids, uh, I didn't really see the value in grouping them.

Anderson: Um hm.

Patricia: They were all, they needed individual one-on-one help but, you know, like I said, a couple of times I might have grouped the Level 1's with somebody else. So.

Anderson: So it was lot of the direct instruction with independent work?

Patricia: Um hm. Yeah.

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as Limited English Proficient scored approximately 15 points lower than students who were not identified as LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of students, especially our ELL kids?

Patricia: Hmmm…well, you know if we could do something with technology where they could, and I know haven't seen it, but I've heard of it, where the modified STAAR, you know how they can put their cursor over the word, and they can get an immediate definition, I think something like that would be very helpful for them. Because there are so many words they don't know that they just like "this is too much for me", but if they…I think technology, using technology, with them would be a great benefit. And being able to, you know, look at the word, because then they could do it individually, they wouldn't be embarrassed, you know, to raise their hand or constantly using the dictionary, um, which you know none of these kids like using the dictionary and that's one of the tools that they need to use. So I really think if we could implement some technology where they could get immediate definitions for the words, and I know that, you know, may not happen on the test, but at least when they're learning the skill, to not have to struggle with that, and then be able to, you know, figure out what's going on with the questions and the answers, and then teach them the test-taking skills without having to, I guess, fight against that vocabulary issue, so.

Anderson: Did y'all have any electronic dictionaries or anything like that as a resource?

Patricia: No.

Anderson: They're just the big, thick ones?

Patricia: Um hm.

Anderson: And were they using bilingual dictionaries as well?

Patricia: Yes, so, like I said they don't like using them so it's a big struggle to get them to use the dictionaries. So, I mean we used them every day, of course. Like I said, I mean teaching them dictionary skills, for sure, but at least having the technology there that they could immediately get the definitions so that we could teach other skills and not just vocabulary would be very beneficial. I know it'd be expensive, but you know…

Anderson: It would help because they wouldn't, it would be, you know looking at their knowledge and not their language acquisition…

Patricia: Right.

Anderson: I know that's a struggle. Uh, do you think it helped in your class, cuz you said all your kids were ELL?

Patricia: Um hm.

Anderson: Do you think it helped grouping them that way? Or would you have liked, um, other students that were non-LEP in there to maybe provide some support?

Patricia: Well, there's always been kind of a controversy about that, um, I think for this small amount of time that they're in summer school, it's probably better to group them as LEP. Because then I get the aide, you know, in there to help them. Um, I think that they're used to be around each other so they don't feel embarrassed about, you know, their lack of language skills so they're pretty much all in the same position. So I think for, you know, maybe in the regular school year, it might be different, but in that short period of time it's probably better that they're grouped together.

Anderson: At that point, everybody's low … [Chuckling]

Patricia: Right. Right.

Anderson: LEP or not.

Patricia: Right.

Anderson: And how would you describe your daily classroom behaviors? Was classroom management an issue for these students? If so, please explain.

Patricia: Not at all. They were very well behaved. The only problem I had like I said were those couple kids a couple of years ago who it was just hard to motivate them to do anything but they weren't a discipline problem. You know, they just kind of sat there and had to go around [unclear dialogue] you know, motivate them to do their work, but other than that, no, these kids are really sweet, they're well behaved, um, they listen, and they really try to do their best, so…

Anderson: Do you think their MET status helped with the motivation? To help them want to pass the test and take it more seriously as opposed to a Gen Ed kiddo who just struggles and kind of turns apathetic a little?

Patricia: I don't know. I don't really…hmm…I don't know though. I think in each group it's the same. They're 8th graders for one thing, you know. Um, they have a lot of other things on their mind. They just want to get this done and over with, right, as quickly as possible. Um, you know, you have some in every group that are willing to do the work, that are hard workers, then you have some that are very slow to get going. And then once

they get going, you know, it's all OK. And then you have ones that just resist, you know, and um, I don't think that's any different, whether they're LEP or they're General Ed. It's, you know, you're going to have that in groups, that's just the nature of 8th graders, I think. So, you know, my job is to help guide all of them, you know, the kids that are hard workers to make sure that they're constantly motivated, and you know they're doing something that they need for them. And then the other ones, the same thing, you know, um, be on top of it, and that's what's so nice about having them for that length of time and having smaller numbers so especially those ones that aren't as highly motivated and you know need the help. Who knows why they're like that? It might be because they failed so much that they've pretty much given up, you know, or you know, they'd rather be playing video games, I mean I don't know… [Laughter] All I know is when I have small numbers and for this length of time, I can help [unsure of word] them. You know, so, no discipline problems.

Anderson: That's good!

Patricia: Yeah.

Anderson: Well, do you have any questions for me?

Patricia: So what is your, um, what are you going to do with all this…information?

Anderson: I have the, um, uh, number data that I'm looking at, and I ran some statistical analysis with my, um, methodologist, and I want teacher feedback to really put, you know, the personalization in what was really going on, because the numbers don't always tell you everything. So getting feedback from the teachers about how things went…my ultimate goal, um, you know is to finish my danged dissertation [Laughter] but also to maybe help, uh, with the summer school program, help with how we provide students with accelerated instruction. The good news is there is improvement. We have a lot of improvement going on—67%—and while that might not get every kid passing, not every kid is going to pass, but helping them along the way and help prepare them for high school. Just the teacher perception really put, you know, what was actually going on in the classrooms with the students.

Patricia: Yeah, well, and part of it is, there's nothing I can do about it is why do they put these, uh, Level 1's and 2's in a situation where they have to take this test, this state test, it's just absolutely…I do not understand that. You know, it just doesn't make any sense. I mean, you know, I understand that we all need to be assessed, but to put them in that position with a test that is difficult for a General Ed student and they really need to work hard and here are these kids who can hardly speak the language to start—I don't

understand that. You know they say well they're just gonna show progress with the kids. Well, that sort of defeats the whole kid when they're looking at a test and they can't figure out hardly anything on the test. I mean, to me that's…I don't think that's a positive thing. You know, so, I think they should have a test on their level. If they're Level 1, here's the test. If they're Level 2, here's the test. You know, have a variety of tests for them so that they can feel like they're succeeding and learning.

Anderson: Especially when they have linguistically accommodated tests in math, science, social studies…

Patricia: Right.

Anderson: …and then bam. In reading and writing, they have to…and it's especially hard on our Level 1's and 2's…

Patricia: Um hm. So what's the state's motivation for doing this? Cuz this just doesn't make any sense to me. I don't…anyway, but I'm not in charge. [Laughter] They just have to accept that [unclear dialogue] I understand the…

Anderson: [Laughter] Don't look to me. I, I don't understand cuz your point was that the you know STAAR A test doing that kind of stuff, I don't understand why we couldn't provide that same thing to our STAAR L kiddos just for language support.

Patricia: Yeah.

Anderson: Cuz in a four-hour time period, even with extra time, you know, you might get six hours. Who wants to take a test for six hours knowing that you don't understand anyway…

Patricia: Right.

Anderson: But, um, just some kind of language support other than a dictionary. In a world where in our classrooms they can go to Google and dictionary.com and find the definition like that.

Patricia: Well, and I think that would be, I mean, I'm not discounting them learning how to use a dictionary at all, but I think that would be so helpful for them to have that available…so we can teach them other skills, and they can understand the other test-taking skills. Rather than constantly the struggle…

Anderson: Yeah, even the word choices, and we've been trying to get, um, on my campus, we've been trying to get them to use the thesaurus more, but now we have to purchase thesauruses when we already have all these dictionaries but a lot of my reading teachers are saying some of the answer choices are in, for that word, in the thesaurus. So…

Patricia: But then the thesaurus is not that easy to use. You have to figure out the different categories, they're like what is that? I don't understand that category! So, nothing's perfect, you know there, um, but yeah, in this world of technology, I think we could do something to help them…

Anderson: Yeah.

Patricia: …You know, with using technology, so, anyway, just my opinion.

Anderson: And summer school is helping. That's the good news!

Patricia: Yes, well, that's good, because I know they work hard, and we work hard, and you know you want the best for them and you want them to be successful.

[Interruption – Overhead Announcement]

[Laughter]

Patricia: Something's going on…anyway.

Anderson: Well, thank you so much for…

Patricia: You're welcome.

Interviewer: J. Kirby Anderson
Participant: Samantha

Anderson: This is my interview with Samantha. All right, Ms. Samantha what type of accelerated instruction did you teach, the two-hour or the four-hour?

Samantha: I taught… I was supposed to teach the four-hour but I ended up teaching 2 2-hour classes.

Anderson: Ok

Samantha: That were only STAAR related not reading subject, just STAAR.

Anderson: So you had two groups of kids come to you throughout the day?

Samantha: Yeah. Apparently we had enrolled way more kids than we thought we would and so what was supposed to be one for our class ended up being 2 2-hour classes of the accelerated STAAR.

Anderson: What were some of the strengths and weaknesses of the summer school program on the whole?

Samantha: Um, I would say that because at this point these kids have been done to death with STAAR I kind of felt like just the massive paper handouts was kind of to the point where it was so banal to the kids or banal I am sorry, I wanted to say benign but then I was like that is not the right word it had become so banal to the kids that they just did not want to do it anymore so it actually made instruction harder because it was harder to keep control of them, um once we uh, I had to kind of go rogue we switched off of the paper especially for persuasive techniques and stuff like that we ended up watching a documentary and having debates and asking questions and things like that once we did stuff like that the kids were much more engaged and that whole four days of class was just absolute bliss it was probably probably some of the best teaching slash learning that I have had in a while. So that was my main thing I think there was just so much paper and less interaction when clearly a lot of those kids need a lot of hands-on a lot of different learning styles I can't tell you how high my stacks of IEPs were. So I kind I felt like that was something of a weakness that was something we could work on.

Anderson: ust change in that as far as the district provided curriculum.

Samantha: Um hum I would just say more interactive stuff maybe things that are a little more because they know their strategies its all been done to death, I kind of feel just maybe less paper more interactive more a little bit of hands-on learning or at least maybe saying well you could do it this way or you could do it this way you know this is one lesson we had a teacher say works really well with this kind of stuff and we have another teacher that says this is what they do for this and that way you know within a couple of days you're going to be able to tell your classes which one is the type who will just sit and do the paper and which ones are the type that will crumple them up and throw them around the room.

[Laughter]

Anderson: According to the data that we received from this study, all students benefited from accelerated instruction, as there was improvement in student scores on the third administration. Approximately 14% of students enrolled in the 2-hours of accelerated instruction passed, and 55% improved on the third admin. What do you think contributed to this success?

Samantha: Um, I think part of it was some of the kids' realization that they were about to not go to ninth grade um I think another part of it was um, there was a lot of STAAR vocabulary review for questions and I think that actually helps the kids benefit um monumentally it becomes so confusing to really understand what the question is asking so I think that probably helped a lot unfortunately it's the type of test they really have to learn strategies for and there were actually questioning strategies in there that I felt were beneficial to the kids it cleared up a lot of stuff. So that probably has something to do with that and I think that just some kids just need a healthy dose of pressure and a nice refresher to remember what it is they have to do

Anderson: Yeah it could be a summer school tagline, pressure refresher.

Samantha: Pretty much. [Laughter]

Anderson: Can you give me your opinion regarding how you felt students responded to the type of accelerated instruction that you provided that two-hour time period? How do you think they were responding?

Samantha: Well they were extremely restless, which you know was normal it summer school they're not coming expecting to work but again my first class I noticed when we did paper stuff they were more attentive you know as a group they had a better chemistry my second group on the other hand was absolutely impossible to work with because they

they were not interested, they did not care uh they were at summer school because someone forced them to be not because they cared about going to the next grade I had many of them tell me that they planned to drop out in a year and uh they got bored very quickly, a lot of them had extreme reading disabilities so of course the paper and things like that I had a lot of dyslexic kids in that class the paper stuff and all that just didn't work so when we kind of switched over to I basically took one lesson and all the higher level questions I asked and I just showed them that documentary blackfish and then we started um asking questions and we started nailing down certain ways they get you to you know listen to your opinion and things like that once we did that it was much better so uh so I think hat again it when you already have them in a summer school setting and they don't expect to work and they just want out they just want to get it over with I kind of feel like the paper the endless paper was maybe not the way to go

Anderson: Yeah

Samantha: That is just me and I know that eighth grade is so much different from seventh grade but I have seen the test and I have seen what they do and its slightly a beefed up version of what I do in my own class and my kids are at the point where if I put one more piece of paper in front of them they're going to flip me over the side of the balcony so [Laughter] I understand what those kids are going through so I kind of feel like their response was a resounding "meh".

Anderson: Yeah

Samantha: That is just how I felt about it.

Anderson: Yeah. Do you think, was your um, was your more difficult group in the afternoon?

Samantha: They were but they also it also like I said it coincided with the fact that for that particular group I had a massive stack of ELL paperwork and IEPs so…

Anderson: So even if they came to you in the morning [Overlapping dialogue]

Samantha: I think they would have been just the same, yeah.

Anderson: how did you implement the curriculum provided by the district and did you use any supplemental materials I know you kind of talked a little bit I saw the documentary too the whale documentary that was pretty cool um so how what parts did you implement and what other things did you do with like the documentary and stuff?

Samantha: Basically I took um bits and pieces of the curriculum I have been handed in the packet and one of the things I had a really hard time with understanding how they were being persuaded so I took a lot of the questions and uh questions and facts that had been in their worksheets that were given to me and I just kind of reworked the questions to work with the documentary um I also had a lot of persuasive work left over from teaching writing because um now this year is a little bit different but when the years I taught writing we touched on persuasive but mostly our expository writing was just very factual informational stuff but then after STAAR we would really hit persuasion because I knew that they had to do that in eighth grade um so I took a little bit out of what I had from there but um learning about ways that are different persuading looking at things that are like word choice and um pictures and stuff like that that kind of grab your attention and get you focused we incorporated all of that in there and my kids ended up having a huge debate um and it was really neat so it was a real verbal back-and-forth they couldn't yell they had to wait till the next person was done talking and then they would you know state their piece and they would they would have to give me evidence um based on what they saw or what they they had maybe read so they would have to I would have to say what made you think that why are you telling me this how do you know that's true and then they would say well, in the documentary it states that a lot of these animals wear their teeth down chewing on the tanks that's not natural and then uh I would set those ground rules up so that was something I had done in my class and uh not necessarily with Blackfish but uh I had just discovered it last summer so um but I had them do that with other things and that seemed to really uh that really seemed to get them to kind of understand the importance of evidence to back up your claim and when we would go back and do the paperwork it was a little bit easier to go back and say ok where do you see something that would make you think that that's the correct answer which you know which is so much of the eighth grade curriculum is backing your answer up so that is just kind of what I did I took a little bit of the curriculum from summer school tweaked it a little bit to fit what we were watching instead of what we were reading and then I took my own stuff and mixed it together and I really kind of felt like that helped some of these kids if nothing else they were interested in something at school for once [Laughter] I had one kid uh I had to take outside and have a come to Jesus meeting with and I really thought this kids going to hit me and he ended up being my biggest advocate for the whales he was very upset the documentary the questions that were asked the debate all that really got to him and he he uh he outdid me I had no argument for his arguments I had to put my hands up and say hey you won. [Laughter] I think he looked at me and thought I don't think a teacher has ever told me that [Laughter] you know without saying here's your office referral at the end of it.

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Anderson: So what kind of sounds like you realize these kids that with the district curriculum and that you were able to pull in stuff that engaged them and got them excited and then pulled back in the district curriculum be like look this is how it applies.

Samantha: Yeah that's what I tried to do I like I said I took a gamble it was kind of like look at this is not working I am frustrated I don't know if I can go to weeks having to deal with this so I took a gamble and um it actually inspired uh my nonfiction unit this year with my own students so um this year I took a lot of what I had done in summer school you know definitely reworked it filled in the gaps and made it a little bit stronger because you know the other one was like like I said it was totally roll of the dice I had no idea if it was going to work so that is what I tried to do um I don't know if it really had an impact on them but like I said for about four or five days there teaching them was nice teaching them was really nice [Laughter] teaching them was cool they were very very interested in it.

Anderson: So would you think that there's more of a need for technology and some short videos and things like that to put in the curriculum?

Samantha: I think it helps them bridge to see something because a lot of them had I think what connected a lot of them was they had been to SeaWorld.

Anderson: Ok.

Samantha: So this is a place they've been this is a place they've seen these are animals they have watched they a couple of them had even petted so for them seeing this and it is relevant to their experience is a big thing I think a lot of times the kids don't really, um, they're so insular and we can blame technology and truthfully I look back at 13 and what did I know? I mean I knew everything and I you know I look back and realized that I knew absolutely nothing. But you know at this age they're so insulated and social escapades are their only goal in life right now because everything that they do is social and think actually what really made them interested was this applied not only to their life but their friends' lives as well so there were kids sharing their experiences in class and hearing these kids having similar reactions having similar experiences and the funny thing is that um in the documentary we watched they explained that everything about them was social everything about the whales is social everything all their ideates everything and one kid actually made the observation oh wow so there're a lot like teenagers.

Anderson: That's awesome.

Samantha: Yeah they're very dependent on their social circle everything about them is their social circle so and you know these are kids that probably normally don't make insightful connections like that not from what I saw I could be wrong I wasn't their teacher during the year.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: But so it.

Anderson: So giving them the opportunity to…

Samantha: Yeah

Anderson: …to connect with the material…structured talk.

Samantha: Yeah and I think that um I think there are a lot of teachers who have lessons that do this and I think it would be maybe really need to kind of ask teachers for some suggestions of things that they have done that really connected with their kids and I mean I think that would help the kids in the summer a lot more um because the thing is I know a lot of it is STAAR related and we want to push them towards that but if they're not engaged its…

Anderson: Yeah it's a waste of time.

Samantha: Yeah it's a huge waste of time…and it's impossible to teach kids that are not engaged.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: So…

Anderson: Did you have the opportunity to plan with any summer school teachers are was everybody you feel like, kind of since it was such a short period of time, everybody kind of did their own thing?

Samantha: You know I really don't know, uh, I did not know whole lot of people I mean beyond my teachers but they all taught different things so I didn't see a whole lot of people so I didn't really get to talk with a whole lot of teachers I do know that um I personally is everything that was handed to us just felt it was kind of like, "here you go."

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: And that was it you know and it you have to adapt quickly that's part of being a teacher but I just feel like maybe a lot of people were kind of just like "oh ok this is all we do" and there wasn't really a whole lot of option or time to maybe share anything or just we get the kids in we get them sat down we rush them through class we get them through lunch we throw them out the door [Laughter] so I mean you know for good reason they're little terrorists at this age [Laughter] but I just feel like maybe if I felt that way and it takes a lot to get me to feel like that then maybe other people did too.

Anderson: Like rushed…?

Samantha: Rushed and maybe just kind of like you know here you go and just give them this and aright we're done here and um for me it was a little daunting because I like I was normally a writing teacher and I had thought I was going to teach writing and I ended up teaching eighth grade reading which I could do but it was a little bit like what is all this you know I didn't really know what was so.

Anderson: So there really was no planning time or no …
Samantha: if there was I wasn't a part of it I just kind of… showed up for work [Laughter]

Anderson: because I do remember there was one day where they gave us the packets but haven't been there I don't recall the even going over them with the teachers or anything like that

Samantha: No…

Anderson: It was kind of left up to each individual teacher?

Samantha: yeah they kind of said ok well here's the lesson plan and its go this attached to it and you're going to get like so many of them

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: And to me that's all I recall from that day everything was such a blur and I think I want o'clock we were out the door.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: So… [Laughter]

Anderson: According to the data that was received from the studies, students who were identified as limited English proficient scored approximately 15 points lower than students who were not identified as LEP. How do you think accelerated instruction in the summer school program can be adjusted to best meet the needs of the students, particularly our ELLs?

Samantha: Um, I had kids in a couple of my classes um, well I only had 2 so why did I say that? I had a couple of kids in my classes that spoke almost zero English and trying to keep a lid on the rest of the case of dynamite and trying to get to them and then on top of that their English is so so very limited um that they in the presence of all these other kids they would often shut down or get upset um I feel like maybe um they would best be served in a class especially like our really really limited English babies

Anderson: Yeah those level ones and twos

Samantha: They would benefit from being placed in a class where they would have a couple of ESL teachers coteaching but for the regular LEPs you know that are three four and fives um I think that a lot of emphasis on vocabulary building especially in the questions and how to breakdown the questions so that they understand a simpler form of the questions that is what seems to really help our ELLs on this campus. We have a thing called it's called change it up and it's where you go through and you breakdown questions into something simple so that you know it's you know exactly what the question is asking you and I think that

Anderson: Ok.

Samantha: Especially going through star and the same word show up every time, all the time things like convey, express, indicate all those words are fancy words for show.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: Differ, contrast, different.

Anderson: Uh huh.

Samantha: Similarities compare sameness. We go to those words a lot over and over and over and over again until basically I can say and that's a fancy word for? And they can chorus respond because everybody knows it.

Anderson: Uh huh.

Samantha: So I think that maybe including some of that for like two or three days maybe even a week would like really help the kids because a lot of what happens with our LEPs and ELLs is questions are what trips them up.

Anderson: Uh huh.

Samantha: They can read the story they can use context clues for the story they have no idea what they are being asked to do.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: Now I don't know if the new test is going to be like that um I'm told it was a little bit different but you know maybe that wont last this year maybe.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: You know so I think that that could really help the kids.

Anderson: Do you think that, um, or did you teach any dictionary skills with them do you think that that's something that would help or?

Samantha: I think that's something that should be mandatory throughout the year, at least once six weeks um, that's something I do with my kids uh it is tedious and it's very annoying but I say spent one week on it in the beginning, sacrifice one week and you never have to hear them whine again.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: But I also think that maybe for those kids who were either mentally absent that week or still don't quite get it um I think a couple days of a dictionary exercise would be wonderful at least they would be able to when they test kind of have an idea of how to navigate the dictionary and because when you really get down to it I hear a lot of people say well it's alphabetical order why don't they know how to do that yeah but there's a lot more to a dictionary to it than that so even I over time how to learn how to properly use a dictionary it wasn't as simple as knowing my ABCs.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: You know, and especially when it's summer school you're going to have kids who are just now learning their ABCs so unfortunately that just happened to get kids who slip through the cracks so I kind of feel like two days maybe three days I'm Dictionary exercises would be very beneficial to the kids.

Anderson: When exactly did you get your IEP's and all of that stuff? Did you have it prior to?

Samantha: No

Anderson: Would you have liked it prior to…?

Samantha: Yes, very much I think I got it actually a week in.

Anderson: OK.

Samantha: I had no idea how many of my kids were spec ed and it explained why a lot of my kids couldn't read.

Anderson: Uh huh.

Samantha: They just…I had no idea what kind of issues they faced in fact I was a little bit suspicious I was like surely there's more than one spec ed kid and here and the only reason I knew he was spec ed was because he was mine [Laughter] he was my his seventh-grade year and I helped him all his eighth grade year so I was just you know I had a really good relationship with that kid so I knew and I knew the other kid they would let me take was spec ed then I was like that can't be the only two there was next thing I know a file folder full of IEPs showed up.

Anderson: Oh my goodness.

Samantha: So which I don't think was the fault of anybody I think that summer school is just so you know we get a week off and then it's here!

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: So [Laughter] I feel like maybe having it a little bit prior would have prepared me a little bit more and let me kind of get some names in my head so when I called on them on the role and I figured out who they were it was like ok I'm already

going to know that I need help this kid or that I I'm probably going to have to keep an eye on this one or this one should probably not sit at that table.

Anderson: You mentioned the ESL level ones and twos possibly being grouped together do you think it would be beneficial to group all students together or kind of keep them separate for different type of grouping? What do you think would work in the summer school setting?

Samantha: Can you clarify that a little bit?

Anderson: Um, like, if we had all level threes and fives in a class and maybe had all sped kids in a class some higher functioning gen ed kids, would that be more beneficial or keeping it kind of how it was?

Samantha: I think that um spacing out the level 3 to 5s and the spec ed kids would probably be a little more beneficial because I kind of felt like some classes were just full of them and you can't really attend to a class like that unless you have a coteacher.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: I mean even even spec ed teachers don't have a class of 30 kids.

Anderson: Yeah, that's true.

Samantha: You know and even resource teachers don't have that and even ESL teachers don't have 30 kids in a class, not that I have seen um but I think that um maybe just a little more uh spacing of certain students might be a beneficial that way you would have just a little more even mix that way you don't have a whole table full of kids who can't explain anything to each other you know it especially when we rely a little bit on peer tutoring

Anderson: Uh huh.

Samantha: Um and then maybe the ones and twos having their own class I, I felt like my girls were lost and there was just no way of digging them out.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: They just didn't have it, a couple of them tried, Lord knows they tried, they just didn't have it.

Anderson: Yeah. Did you utilize a lot of student grouping during the summer school?

Samantha: What I could, um, I tried to move some students around there were so many kids thought that could not be around each other um, for whatever reason, uh you know a lot of kids you would expect summer school being a different mix of kids but we had so many kids from two particular schools, it was like, they already knew each other they already had beef with one another [Laughter] it was like you know we're used to being in a class and cutting up and it just, you had to be real careful I had a couple of close calls in my classroom and fortunately I'm pretty good at putting out those fires but there were two girls out in the hallway just oh my God, it was like, OK! It was just very active with that…so um, I tried to as best I could but then like I said you realized this kid cannot sit next to this kid they hate each other, just, you know…or this girl cannot sit with a bunch of boys because she's wildly inappropriate, you know you just kind of had, I did the best I could.

Anderson: Yeah. Sounds like a lot of personalities coming together.

Samantha: Well you know summer school is a different kind of beast.

Anderson: Absolutely, absolutely [Laughter]. How would you describe your daily for classroom behaviors? With classroom management and issue for the students? If so, please explain.

Samantha: Yes and no. Um, I am a very type B teacher. It takes a lot to get me riled up there's only two things that really will make me snap up real fast and that is bullying or being abusive toward your classmates or me or trying to start a fight. Those are two things that you will get an instantaneous reaction out of me and I never met a kid that liked it. Um, but even so with uh having to have to kind of run the kids I think it was just really the level of apathy that made them a little harder to corral and the fact that they didn't know me you know and they weren't really going to get to know me so um, I think that made it a little harder. I didn't have too many issues, I didn't have a few but we were kind of able to talk it out but I kind of feel like as a whole as a program I did feel like it was a little bit of a problem but I think that kind of goes back to like I said that they weren't really engaged they were STAAR tested to death.

Anderson: Uh huh.

Samantha: Which you know is a state requirement I mean I'm sure if we could get away with it we wouldn't do that to them

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Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: But I think that I think that was my two main issues what's keeping them engaged in keeping them off each other's throats. But I mean as far as after each the first week it really wasn't that bad. But you know I also recognize that on a personal level uh, I'm not very tall, um, I dress kind of funny, uh, you know, Wednesday Adams, they're not used to that and uh, I look a lot younger than I am. A lot of them don't realize that I am older than their parents and so I think a lot of times they're like "oh, we can mess with this one" and I'm just like uh no.

[Laughter]

Samantha: Uh, no. [Laughter] sorry, so like I said, after a week it get calmed down but like there was just so much chaos going on, they were just over it, so, but like I said, man, when we did that Blackfish unit they it was…

Anderson: You just connected

Samantha: Yeah, it was that classroom that you're promised when you become a teacher [Laughter] the one that shows up on the pictures and all the videos they show you [Laughter] when you're getting your certification, you know where the lady rings the bell and she's like "ok, scholars, we're all going to sit down and we're going to read our stories out loud to one another" [Laughter] and they're like "classroom management is key". I have yet to have one of those classrooms.

Anderson: [Difficult to hear] …it's not going to happen in summer school.

Samantha: No, and like I said I think it's just a combination of things, but I think if uh, you know, student apathy lack of time to really develop a relationship with the kids, you know is just part of the beast but also lack of engagement I think that just all contributes to it but as far as the way discipline was handled uh, I thought it was handled perfectly, you know one strike and you're out. You know so that part was handled just fine.

Anderson: Why do you think, I just, you know, in our conversation it's interesting because I really I went into a few of the classrooms and I just loved seeing the video and seeing your kids get engaged with that and the district does kind of just throw this packet at everyone do you think its that kind of fear or that concern that if we do these, you know, engaging hands-on activities that it's not going to benefit the kids the same way as you know a STAAR based packet you know you think that's the logic behind this?

Samantha: I think that's the logic behind it, um, I think we have become so fearful of basing our performance off test scores that we oftentimes don't want to try anything new. I know that even happens to me in the classroom because you know, I'll be sitting there you know we'll be doing pretty well and the next CBA rolls out and I see where I fall as a teacher and you're just siting there going [Slam] but I did all this stuff, I did, I mean man we were rocking and rolling in class and then they went to take the test and why can't they do that and I think that that's part of it I also think that um, it is harder to wrangle up lesson plans and stuff a lot of times they'll send out things and a lot of teachers don't respond we don't have time. You know we don't have a lot of time to go to the bathroom much less answer an email that doesn't, isn't, you know we're not going to get in trouble for not answering it.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: So I think that's part of it but I do think that as a district we are so fearful of our test scores and that's solely my opinion and I understand why and I you know, and I think that that just, when you have that nervousness about it I think it tends to creep into the other realms of teaching and educating and I can see why they do it.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: But at the same time it's like man, they've been doing it the STAAR way the whole school year and it's kind of like if they don't really get it and we've been doing it a certain way, I just don't see how making them doing it the same way they've been doing it and they haven't been getting it is going to benefit them at all.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: But at that, I think that has a lot to do with it, I think you're correct in your thinking.

[Laughter]

Anderson: Is there anything else you would like to add or any other observations you had about summer school? That you think would be useful

Samantha: Um, no, no, it was an adventure, and I will probably do it again next year but I just need the break this year.

Anderson: Absolutely.

Samantha: And uh, some of those kids I think, believe it or not, they're in ninth grade and you know I am still in contact with a few of them I only met them during that time and you know there were some good positive things that came out of it but you know and there were some really funny stories that came out of it um, the kid that bucked up to me in the middle of class and called me a mean name, my two kids from my school were sitting in the back going "you dead now buddy" they were just sitting there waiting on the fireworks [Laughter] and all the kids turned around and they looked at me and they looked at them and they were like what's the big deal and I showed them what the bid deal was and that was the kid that became my biggest animal rights advocate, I mean he turned out to be a pretty cool kid um, but I think that if you can just get them engaged.

Anderson: Yeah.

Samantha: That would be key for summer school because a lot of them like going because its easy they don't have to think they don't really feel like they have to do anything and they get to eat [Laughter] um, that is actually things that my kids have told me like, reasons they like summer school, because mom's going to be gone for seventeen hours out of the day so, I'm like wow, that's uh, that sucks that you're so bored that you would willingly go do worksheets [Laughter] Good Lord. So.

Anderson: Children…

Samantha: Yes, they are precious. Precious.

Anderson: Well thank you, ma'am. I am going to go ahead and turn this off.

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EDUCATION
- Master of Science, Instructional Technology, University Houston-Clear Lake, May 2005

- Bachelor of Arts, Literature, University Houston-Clear Lake, August 2003

CERTIFICATIONS
- Principal Certification, EC-12, standard certificate, valid through November 2017

- Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), obtained July 2012

- English Language Arts, 4 – 8, standard certificate, valid through November 2017

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WORK EXPERIENCE
- Assistant Principal, Southmore Intermediate, Pasadena, Texas (November 2012 – Present)

- Campus Testing Coordinator, Southmore Intermediate, Pasadena, Texas (August 2009 – Present)

- Peer Facilitator, Southmore Intermediate, Pasadena, Texas (August 2009 – November 2012)

- Language Arts Teacher, Southmore Intermediate, Pasadena, Texas (August 2005 – July 2009)

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