

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

A Comparison Study of Quick60 and Reading Recovery Instruction

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Educational Psychology
At Massey University, Albany
New Zealand

Bridget Alexandra MacDougall

2016

Abstract

New Zealand has a national system of early reading intervention called Reading Recovery. This intervention is available to children after a year at school if they are seriously underachieving in reading. There has, however, been concern that the intervention has not achieved its aim of bringing underachieving readers up to class average. Results of international literacy surveys consistently indicate a wide gap between the best and poorest readers. Some critics have argued that a key reason for the gap is a lack of focus on the explicit teaching of phonologically-based skills in Reading Recovery and that other interventions could be more effective. One intervention that has been suggested is Quick60, a New Zealand developed literacy intervention for underachieving children that is taught in small groups and emphasises the teaching of phonologically-based skills. One aim of the present study was to assess the efficacy of Quick60 relative to Reading Recovery. A second aim was to consider whether Quick60 could be of equal efficacy but more cost-effective than Reading Recovery which is taught on an individual basis and is whole language in approach. The comparison study of Quick60 and Reading Recovery took place in two schools and involved 30 children. Children were assessed on a number of language and literacy measures before and after 13 weeks of instruction. The results of the study indicated that both the Quick60 and Reading Recovery children made gains but no more than did the control group.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Tom Nicholson for his advice, guidance and patience over the past two years. I must also give thanks to Dr. Sandra Iversen for her continuous expert advice and encouragement. Thank you, Dr. Alison Arrow for your valuable comments on the final draft.

I would like to thank the school principals for allowing me to conduct the study at their schools and the teachers and teacher aides for generously sharing their time, experience and classrooms with me. In addition, my appreciation goes to the children and their families for allowing me to conduct this research, and for taking part in the testing with such enthusiasm.

Finally, I am indebted to my parents, siblings, extended family and girlfriends who have provided their unconditional love and support over the past several years. I have held your words close to my heart during my most challenging moments, which in turn has encouraged me to reach this academic and professional pinnacle in my career.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1.....	1
Introduction	1
The Overall Literacy Situation in New Zealand	1
Reading Recovery	2
Rationale for the Present Study	3
Purpose.....	5
Research Questions.....	5
Hypothesis.....	5
Organisation of Remaining Chapters	5
Chapter 2.....	7
Literature Review	7
Theory	7
The Multiple Cue theory.....	8
Simple View of reading theory.	12
Approaches to Literacy Instruction	13
Whole language approach.....	13
Code emphasis/phonics approach.....	15
New Zealand’s National Literacy Strategy.....	15
Emergent Reading Skills and Matthew Effects in Reading Achievement	18
Reading Recovery	20
Support for RR	21
Against RR.....	22
Sustainability of RR in the New Zealand context.....	23
Evidence Based Best Practices in Reading Instruction.....	25
Research on Quick60.....	27
Research Context of the Current Study	28
Research Questions.....	28
Null Hypothesis	28
Chapter 3.....	29
Methodology.....	29
Participants.....	29

Research Design	32
Measures.....	33
Standardised assessments.....	34
Non-standardised assessments.....	34
Quick60.....	34
Spelling test	34
Pseudo-word decoding test.....	35
Other non-standardised assessments.....	35
Running record/reading book level	35
Procedure	36
Quick60	37
Reading Recovery	39
Ethical Considerations.....	40
Summary of the Chapter	41
Chapter 4.....	42
Results.....	42
Summary	44
Chapter 5.....	46
Discussion.....	46
Did Quick60 and Reading Recovery have Comparable Effects?	46
Limitations and Recommendations	51
Concluding Statement.....	53
References	55
Appendices.....	67
Appendix A: Quick60 Spelling Test	67
Appendix B: Quick60 PseudoWord Test	73
Appendix C: Levelling the Boxes and Books.....	79
Appendix D: Child, Parent, and School Information and Consent Sheets	81
Appendix E: Quick60 Lesson Plan 12.2 Snowy Weather.....	91
Appendix F: Massey University Human Ethics Committee Northern Approval Letter.....	100

List of Tables

Table 1. Composition of students according to gender, age and ethnic group 32
Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations - Pretest and Posttest Scores 44

List of Figures

Figure 1. Sample of a leveled text, lesson 15. 2 38