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 OF THE EFFECTS OF TWO PEER TUTORING PROGRAMMES ON THE READING ABILITY OF CHILDREN WITH READING DIFFICULTIES IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education at Massey University Palmerston North, New Zealand by

SHARON THERESA BELSHAM 2000
ABSTRACT

A context emphasis peer tutoring programme was compared with a code emphasis programme to ascertain whether phonological processing strategies could be taught through peer tutoring and which peer tutoring programme was more effective in improving the reading ability of older poor readers. The comparison between the different theories of teaching reading was in response to the debate between context and code methods of teaching reading.

Forty-eight Year 3 to 6 (7 to 10 year old) children were identified as needing assistance in reading and were paired with a successful reader within their own classroom. Ten Year 3 to 6 classes were involved and were randomly assigned to either Pause Prompt Praise (context emphasis) or Sound Sense (code emphasis) or as Control. There were four Pause Prompt Praise classes, four Sound Sense classes and two control classes with 16 pairs of children in each experimental condition. The programme was a 20-minute daily session, over a seven-week period in the second term of the school year. The tutoring took place within the regular classroom and was in addition to the regular classroom reading programme. The Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (1988), the Burt Word Test (1981), and three tasks of phonological processing ability, (Phoneme Segmentation, Psuedoword Reading, and Words with Common Rime Units) were administered to all 48 disabled readers in Term 1, prior to the tutoring beginning in Term 2. The alternate forms of the same tests were administered in Term 3 of the school year to all students at the completion of the tutoring period.
The results indicate that neither of the peer tutoring programmes was more effective than each other or the control condition in improving the reading performance of reading disabled students. There were no significant differences between the two methods of peer tutoring. This lack of difference in the results may be attributed to a variety of factors namely, age of the students and the severity of the reading disability, the reading history of the students, lack of monitoring of peer tutoring procedures, and the difficulties inherent in learning and teaching new strategies.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank the pupils and staff of Whangaparaoa Primary School for volunteering to participate in this reading programme, without their support and co-operation this study would not exist.

I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. W. Tunmer for the reading remediation course which inspired me to question the theoretical foundation of my methods of teaching reading, and for his professional guidance, support and interest throughout the project. Thanks also to Dr. Sandra Iversen for assisting with putting the theory into practice and also to my assistant supervisor Dr. K. Greaney for his support and many comments throughout the writing of this thesis.

Finally, many thanks to my husband, David and my children, Aaron, Vanessa and Charlotte for their support, encouragement and tolerance throughout my studies over the last five years.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>(ii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>(iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>(v)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>(viii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>(ix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Appendices</td>
<td>(x)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

- Rationale for the study  
  Page 2
- The Study  
  Page 3
- Overview  
  Page 3

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

- Introduction  
  Page 5
- Peer Tutoring  
  Page 5
- Pause Prompt Praise  
  Page 8
- The Great Debate between Code and Context  
  Page 10
- The Alphabetic Principle  
  Page 13
- The Importance of Early Reading Achievement  
  Page 17
- Automaticity and its Role in Reading Achievement  
  Page 18
- Rime-based Analogies  
  Page 19
Words with Common Rime Units Task 40
Phoneme Segmentation Task 41
Pseudoword Reading Task 41
Data Collection 42

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION 43
Statistical Analysis 43
Reading Accuracy and Reading Comprehension 46
Burt Word Reading and Pseudoword Naming Task 48
Phonemic Segmentation and Words with common Rime Units 48
Discussion 50
Lack of progress of disabled readers 50
Reading History 52
A Closer Look at Pause Prompt Praise 52
The Importance of Monitoring Tutoring Procedures 55
Learning New Strategies 55

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS 58
Research Design Issues 59
Suggestions for Further Research 61

REFERENCES 62
APPENDICES 70
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1</td>
<td>Mean Reading Ages and Chronological Ages of Disabled Readers</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 2</td>
<td>Pre and Post-test Means and Standard Deviations of three comparison groups on all Measures.</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3</td>
<td>Comparison between Mean Chronological Ages and Mean Reading Ages and Reading Deficits.</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Flow chart outlining the Pause Prompt Praise programme.</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2</td>
<td>Graphs of Pre and Post-test Mean Raw Scores for the Neale Analysis of Reading Accuracy.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3</td>
<td>Graphs of Pre and Post-test Mean Raw Scores for the Neale Analysis of Reading Comprehension.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4</td>
<td>Graphs of Pre and Post-test Mean Raw Scores for the Burt Word Reading Test.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 5</td>
<td>Graphs of Pre and Post-test Mean Raw Scores for the Pseudoword Reading Task.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 6</td>
<td>Graphs of Pre and Post-test Mean Raw Scores for the Phoneme Segmentation Task</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 7</td>
<td>Graphs of Pre and Post-test Mean Raw Scores for the Words with Common Rime Units Task.</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF APPENDICES

| Appendix A | Words with Common Rime Units Task | 70 |
| Appendix B | Phoneme Segmentation Task | 75 |
| Appendix C | Pseudoword Reading Task | 77 |
| Appendix D | Pause Prompt Praise Instruction Booklet | 87 |