

FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING GUIDED READING IN SPANISH SCHOOLS AS AN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING APPROACH

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Abstract.

This research tests the feasibility of implementing Guided Reading in English as a second language learning methodology at an early stage of schooling in Spain. Reading records from year 2012 of students I taught during my time as a visiting teacher working for different schools belonging to the Rockford school district in Illinois from 2005 to 2008, were analyzed along with reading records obtained through the American School of Valencia also in 2012, creating a comparison. At the same time, a questionnaire was sent to administrators from both schools to express their opinions on the aforementioned feasibility, and also on the possible legal constraints faced while implementing Guided Reading in Spain and the benefits of enriching Guided Reading through Information and Communications Technology to make it more efficient. After studying the reading progress of the students under Guided Reading teaching both in USA and in Spain, results corroborate the hypothesis of Guided Reading being a valid English as a second language learning methodology to be implemented in Spain, as the reading benchmarks set were not only met but surpassed, according to the obtained data.

Key Words: guided reading, language learning, methodology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Spanish education is undergoing a progressive change towards a multilingual scenario where languages are first taught at earlier stages of schooling than they were in the past. This responds to the progressive internationalization Spain has been experiencing as a member of the European Economic Community first, and a member of the European Union later on, with 24 official languages being used throughout the 28 states considered members of the Union.

Other European countries have developed multilingual societies earlier than Spain has, and it has mainly been accomplished by empowering the early instruction of English at their schools. It is now, over 50 years after the treaty of Paris, that Spain is acknowledging the importance of English as an international communicative tool. Europeans have steadily arrived to Spain from different countries, claiming their right to work, and bringing new needs along with their arrival, mainly regarding linguistics. Since it is not strange now to communicate with people who came from other countries inside the European Union, and it is recently being less strange for Spanish people to move out of the country looking for international opportunities, schooling is not to turn a blind eye on this new society, but to update in order to accommodate to it. Foreign languages have been traditionally dealt with late in the curriculum in Spanish schools, because of having a different need and exposure than what Spain presently has. Outdated methodologies and approaches do not meet the demands anymore, so new methods scaffolding a renewed instruction are necessary.

Guided reading has been long used in bilingual scenarios in the US, where Wilkins (1974) exposes how children acquire both languages simultaneously, proving to be a successful approach enabling students to learn foreign languages at the earliest stages of education. Therefore, promoting the implementation of Guided Reading as one resource to be considered when renewing the instruction of foreign languages in Spain seemed natural to me, mainly after experiencing the benefits of Guided Reading instruction myself back in 2005 when I worked for the Rockford Public Schools system in Illinois, and implementing Guided Reading in order to teach English to Spanish speaking students was part of my daily tasks.

The aim of this research was to prove the validity of Guided Reading as an optimum approach fitting the new demands of the upcoming multicultural schooling in

Spain. Teaching foreign languages in general, and English in particular, to students at the very first steps of education, instead of delaying the implementation later in the schooling process is something that has long been pursued in Spain, and it is finally being worked upon due to the internationalization of Spain. By studying reading developments accomplished in different schools under Guided Reading implementation, the feasibility of Guided Reading as a valid approach to be utilized as a resource to work on the linguistic skills of young students can be tested, being the results more than successful.

In order to successfully teach bilingual students at their early stages how to read and write both in English and Spanish, most American schools running bilingual transitional programs make use of Guided Reading, being its instruction a necessity in the elementary classroom. We must take into account that literacy, as explained by Wells (1981), implies that both reading and writing are equivalent in their consequences for cognitive functioning. Through such instruction educators can meet the diverse needs of their readers as these programs allow for differentiated reading lessons, exemplifying the complexity of reading as a skill every child must acquire in school as explained by Goldman (1987). This process begins with educators first assessing their students' reading abilities. Educators need to assess students in order to group them appropriately. This is done using running records. Data in the areas of reading fluency, accuracy, and comprehension need to be gathered on each student to allow educators to first discover the needs of each learner, and to then, develop approaches and instruction to ultimately improve student performance, as stated by Fountas & Pinnell (1996). Assessing fluency, accuracy, and comprehension will often provide insight as to whether a text is too easy or too difficult. Recognizing such factors aids educators in discovering when to reassess and move a student to a different group where his/her needs will be better met. As it is complicated to address every student as wished while teaching reading and writing at elementary school, specially taking into account the ratio of students per teacher and the amount of attention they all require at the same time, Guided Reading is being utilized to isolate a small group of students from the rest of the group. This is done according to their specific learning needs as individual language learners as stated by Richards (1978). Thus we can focus on them regarding their reading and writing, sitting in a round table along with the teacher, while monitoring the rest of the group using work stations called learning centres. According to Mackay

(1989), while it may be true that a good teacher can make almost any set of reading materials work in class, it is obvious that properly conceived reading exercises free the teacher to work more efficiently with students to solve individual reading problems.

The reading centre, being only one of many other possible centres, is the one that every other centre is set up to enable. Teachers utilize graded reading books that go from A to Z as difficulty and the number of words increase. These books are appealing to the reader and, at the very easy ones, teachers and students may even use Rubbermaid fake monster or witch fingers to point at the words on the book, making it fun for the kids to engage into reading, being it an example of what Alcón (2002) labelled as didactic means. Hildreth (1958) even explains how learning to read begins with story-telling and picture-book reading, which furnish practice in the language patterns of reading and accustom the child to the use of books.

From kindergarten to second grade, both monolingual and bilingual students are tested on sight words, being them a set of three hundred words that are to be visually recognizable by the students. Among the words chosen to make up the text printed on graded reading books, sight words have to appear systematically so that students get familiarized with them making them recognizable at first sight. Words that are successfully recognized by the student through testing, get crossed out and not presented again before the eyes of that specific student, narrowing the attention into the sight words still to be recognized or acquired until the whole set is accomplished. Sight words are also gradually posted on word walls as they are presented to the students, so that they are surrounded by them and capable of better memorizing them even without noticing it, through visual recognition and retention. Beginner books contain basically patterns with repetitions of basic sight words printed in big lettering and accompanied by big and appealing illustrations, always related to the meaning of the sight words underneath them. As difficulty rises, the lettering size gets reduced and the amount of sight words per page goes up high, taking space from the also reduced illustrations.

Celce-Murcia (1979) states that preliterate ESL students need a great deal of practice in handwriting, thus it is implemented right after reading the book and still as part of the learning centre, asking the students to write down some of the sight words from the text they just read. It is even possible to work on the spelling as we ask the

readers to spell out the words they were asked to write down on dry erase whiteboards. Possibilities are virtually never-ending through Guided Reading. Hildreth (1958) considers that there are many advantages in linking reading instruction with all aspects of linguistic expression. In an attempt to measure literacy, defined by Wells (1981) as a situation implying that both reading and writing are equivalent in their consequences for cognitive functioning, each grade level establishes benchmarks regarding optimum reading levels for the students so that reading and writing capabilities could be qualified in the report cards depending on the benchmarks being met, exceeded or not reached. Ideally, Guided Reading groups should not include more than six students at a time and three reading groups should be met by the teacher on a daily basis, as studied by Ford & Opitz (2008) through a survey of 3,000 educators, so that the whole reading time slot gets taken profit from.

Teachers should sit down surrounded by readers but also facing the rest of the classroom at all time. Thus, both the seat used by the teacher in the Guided Reading round table and the location of the table itself are not random since they are vital for the success of classroom management. The rest of the group is to be scattered in different learning stations where worksheets would be already set up so that students could accomplish autonomous working. Learning stations should contain work on core areas of the curriculum, embracing the subjects of choice. A schedule is also necessary for the success of the activity, being the most common way to arrange it a pocket chart with the daily or even weekly schedule, indicating at least learning centres, groups and times. Through time, students get so familiarized with the system that it becomes automatic and really profitable once autonomous work is reached.

Monitoring the reading improvement and checking on the reading level students are at according to the graded books they are challenged with, provides teachers with definite information on the progress of students on a daily basis and without the pressure of a one-time only standardized test, which could not reflect real performance of the students because of the pressure of the test itself. Often, students who feel they cannot read just give up, being motivation a key factor as stated by Lyons (2003), Hoffman (1986) and Muñoz (2000). When provided with texts at their own Guided Reading levels as explained by Wilkinson (1971), students begin to realize exactly what they are capable of and eventually develop an excitement for reading. Making reading fun and enjoyable encourages students to take part in reading activities more often.

Utilizing Guided Reading within the classroom provides educators with an effective way to differentiate reading instruction, allowing them to meet the needs of their students, taking the stress off the students who do not feel successful. Thus, according to Fountas & Pinnell (1996), accuracy is an indicator of whether or not students are reading books at an appropriate level.

Feeling comfortable in their daily routines, facing their teacher and not a mere test administrator without a recognizable face for them, are factors that could give teachers a more real sense of the level of the students through their Guided Reading performance than standardized testing. To become an accomplished reader, the child must have mastered the rules governing symbol-sound correspondence in English, be able to use those rules in learning words and progressively refine and automate word-decoding, and acquire and perfect a complex set of processing skills that allows for rapid processing of incoming material and the extraction of meaning.

Several aspects of Guided Reading have traditionally been criticized, namely the dispute between those considering it an instructing tool and those who believe it is merely an assessing tool. Nowadays, Guided Reading is widely used in US schools, not as an assessing tool but as a methodology applied to language teaching in general, and to foreign language teaching in particular. The role of teachers in Guided Reading sessions has also been doubted, because teachers implementing Guided Reading are expected to facilitate and not to lead, the way Posteguillo (2001) talked about their instructing role becoming accessory, and sometimes these two roles may be misunderstood. Instead of teaching comprehension, which is the core of Guided Reading, some educators tend to focus on assessing students, resulting in a diminishing action that converts the role of Guided Reading teachers from facilitators to evaluators. Certain critics minimize Guided Reading sessions by considering it mere hearing sessions where a teacher hears a child read, not considering it a teaching method as a consequence. Obviously, Guided Reading includes much more than hearing children read, because aiming at a balanced reading situation, as this methodology does, implies an integral consideration of reading, writing, phonics or word study, to name just a few. Guided Reading has also been criticized because of the Fountas & Pinnell consideration regarding student-book placements. Fountas & Pinnell (1996) believed that kids should be placed

in books they can read with better than 90% accuracy and with high reading comprehension, being this match not as easy as it may seem as noted by Anderson (1985), whereas critics prefer placing students in more challenging books, presenting a higher frustration range for the readers, alleging that by doing this, the progress of the students would be greater. According to Mackay (1989), while it may be true that a good teacher can make almost any set of reading materials work in class, it is obvious that properly conceived reading exercises free the teacher to work more efficiently with students to solve individual reading problems.

2. METHOD

Reading records were used from the 2012 third graders at both John Nelson Elementary School in Rockford, Illinois, and the American School of Valencia (ASV from here onwards), along with a questionnaire aimed at the administrators of both schools.

Since all the students were third graders, the ages of the students were between eight and nine years old, so homogeneity in this aspect was clear. Another aspect shared by most of the students was the fact of having Spanish as their mother tongue, although this characteristic was not definitive for the research because the Guided Reading sessions were conducted in English. Some ASV students are not Spanish students, being them from countries with official languages other than Spanish.

In order to properly design the questionnaire, its creation was achieved following three different stages, taking into consideration the identification of the objectives, the setting of secondary topics, and the formulation of the questions. The aim of the questionnaire was basically checking the perception of administrators who are in daily contact with bilingual education in general, and with Guided Reading in particular, on the possibility of Guided Reading techniques being mass imported into Spanish public elementary schools. Secondary topics were also established targeting the opinion of the interviewees on the possibility of implementing different bilingual programs into Spain so that multilingual scenarios are best reached throughout schooling. Other topics utilized as secondary topics for the conducted interviews include legal framework matters or the application of new technologies with instructional purposes.

The degree of success and effectiveness of interviews mainly depends on the way questions are formulated. Thus, every question should strike the interviewee as

meaningful, being formulated using a standard version of the language, avoiding mistakes and vagueness while doing so. Personal matters are also not desired when creating a questionnaire, and questions are to include single ideas not to be misleading. Needless to say, biased questions are not allowed in formal research interviews, so the standpoint of the author is always going to be neutral. Simple, fresh and attractive designs are strongly recommended, as it is interactivity when dealing with interviews, so that interviewees feel comfortable answering the questions as if conversing. The balance of open and closed questions should also be taken into account, enabling interviewees to combine answering freely and subjectively to open questions, but also to select whatever options the questions may propose. It is the interviewer who needs to choose when to utilize open or closed questions, depending on the matter being discussed, and the nature of the information being pursued, always aiming at providing the interviewee with the best framework possible for each answer. Short questions have been chosen in order to ease the answering process while avoiding vagueness while doing so. Bearing the aforementioned ease in mind, a progression is visible regarding the relation between the order of the questions and their difficulty of being answered, delaying complicated questions so that smoothness is well looked upon. Dynamicity was achieved by varying the typology of the questions included in the interviews not to discomfort interviewees while providing us with appropriate answers. Once the interviews were conducted, they were analyzed and evaluated to extract authorized information to be included in the analysis of gathered data.

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

After collecting the reading progress of third graders both in Spain and in the United States of America, with the help of the ASV, and John Nelson Elementary School, respectively, data contrast was initiated utilizing statistic procedures because of the reliability and accuracy of the method. What was actually definitive was the relative capability of the students in terms of reading comprehension in English, being this necessary for the reading sessions to succeed. Thus, having English as a second language was a requisite to be met by the totality of the students analyzed here. Obviously, after reviewing the reading levels the students were performing at by the beginning of third grade, this entering score revealed how students had different English

language knowledge levels, having this an impact on the study, but it also provided us with interesting information regarding individual progressions. Another aspect worth mentioning before looking into the scoring of the students is the geographical difference experienced by the students, being half of them in Spain and the other half on USA soil. The predominant English variety used for schooling in Spain is British English in general, and Received Pronunciation in particular, whereas the mid-west state of Illinois, where John Nelson Elementary School is located at, is obviously using American English at school. This should not be perceived as a barrier because Guided Reading techniques are not divided according to any specific English variety or accent, they respond to a holistic approach which improves communicative competences. On top of that, most of the students do not come from English native speaking families, so they have to generate learning options themselves out of the exposure they are granted with by their schools.

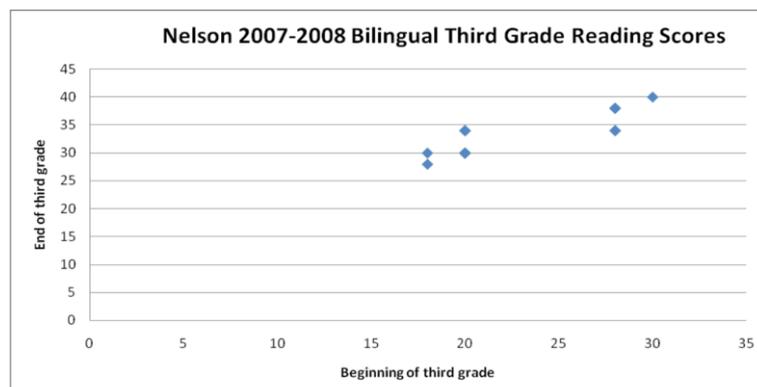
When analyzing the statistical results from the reading progression of every third grader included in the study, both centralization and dispersion measures are to be taken in order to convert data into numbers showing interesting behavioral patterns. Identifying the lowest and highest figures representing reading progress, and detecting the average progress and the deviations between the aforementioned extremes regarding Guided Reading lettering advances, grouping becomes available. The average reading progress of third graders under Guided Reading instruction both in Nelson Elementary School and in the ASV results from adding each individual reading achievement to later divide it by the total number of students being analyzed. The median value is also studied, representing the central value if the corpus contains an odd number of results or the division of the two central values if the corpus contains an even number of results, along with other concepts as the minimum and maximum value inside obtained by the students, and the difference in value between both ends, being it called range. Obtaining these references is vital to test the validity of the hypothesis about the feasibility of American Guided Reading techniques being imported into the Spanish educational system as a tool to achieve successful second language teaching at the earliest stages of schooling. It is important to take into account how our hypothesis cannot be considered fully proven by means of statistical analysis since the gathered data being studied only represents a mere sample.

As I personally experienced back in 2007 by working for the school, Nelson bilingual third graders utilize the entrance and exit benchmarks established by Fountas & Pinnell (1996), being them N level as the third grade entrance benchmark, and Q level as the third grade exit benchmark. Lettering established by Fountas & Pinnell (1996) is usually correlated by numbers indicating the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), being in this case 30 and 38 the numeric DRA benchmarks indicating entrance and exit levels at ASV. Out of the total 19 students analyzed from the third grade classes selected from the John Nelson Elementary School, two students began third grade reading at DRA 18, meaning Fountas & Pinnell J level, which is the reading level they were expected to be by the beginning of second grade, so they were exactly one grade level behind regarding their reading capabilities, although they were both diagnosed with learning disorders and received special education visiting assistance both in Reading and Math. Nine students began third grade reading at DRA 20 level, meaning Fountas & Pinnell K level, which is the reading level assigned by the middle of the second grade level, so they were behind what their reading level should be according to the Nelson third grade entering reading benchmark. A DRA of 28, which means Fountas & Pinnell M level, was scored by other seven students by the time they began third grade at ASV, being this level indicated as the exit second grade reading level benchmark, not the third grade entrance one, meaning they were almost at the expected DRA by September 2007. One Nelson student achieved DRA 30, meaning Fountas & Pinnell N level, by the time this student started third grade. This student was exactly at the reading level expected by their school. This means that one student out of nineteen, representing 5.3% of the total, met the reading expectations by the beginning of third grade. Not a single student exceeded the reading benchmark by the time they entered third grade. Consequently, eighteen students, representing 94.7% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students starting third grade at Nelson in 2007.

By the end of third grade, one student reached DRA 28, meaning Fountas & Pinnell M level, being this the end of second grade reading benchmark, so these students were exactly one grade level behind according to their reading abilities. Six students reached a DRA of 30 by the time they finished third grade, which represents Fountas & Pinnell N level, being this the benchmark established by the time students start third grade. This fact establishes that these students reached, by the end of third grade, a reading level they should be at when commencing third grade. Seven students ended

third grade reading at DRA 34 level, meaning Fountas & Pinnell O level, which is the middle of third grade expected benchmark. These students fell slightly short of meeting or exceeding their benchmarks of expectation by the time third they finished third grade. Four students met the expectations of Nelson Elementary School, reaching a reading level of DRA 38, which is represented by Fountas & Pinnell P level, being this the end of third grade established reading benchmark. Out of nineteen students, one of them exceeded the Nelson Elementary School reading expectations, reaching a DRA 40 reading level, which means Fountas & Pinnell Q level. This student was an overachiever since this student ended third grade reading at a level that is expected by students entering fourth grade. This means that four students out of nineteen, representing 21% of the total, met the reading expectations by the end of third grade. Only one student, representing 5.3% of the students, exceeded the reading benchmark by the time this student exited third grade. Consequently, fourteen students, representing 73.6% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students finishing third grade at Nelson in 2008.

Regarding the individual reading progress of the students under Guided Reading instruction, the number of students reading at the expected levels for their age, according to the established benchmarks, raised from 5.3% to 21%, representing a 15.7% increase. Despite being low figures, a sensible improvement was achieved utilizing Guided Reading techniques. Consequently, students not meeting the reading benchmarks decreased from 94.7% to 73.6%, representing a 21.1% drop. The number of overachiever students exceeding the reading benchmarks of expectancy also ascended from 0% to 5.3%, representing a significant 5.3% increase.





Taking into account that third graders are supposed to improve their reading by eight Fountas & Pinnell reading levels throughout the academic year (students should start third grade reading at reading level 30 and finish this grade level reading at level 38), it is possible to analyze the population of students in terms of adequate or inadequate readers according to their reading progression being lower than eight Fountas & Pinnell reading levels or not. The lowest value recorded when checking the progression of the 2007-2008 Nelson bilingual third graders was 6, and the highest progression value recorded was 14, giving us the minimum and maximum of this study. The average of the progression in this group is 10.5, which is over the expected progression of 8 Fountas & Pinnell reading levels for each student. Median in this group is 10, which is also over the aforementioned reading progression expectancy. Finally, it can be established that the range is 8, representing the distance between the lowest and highest values in the results.

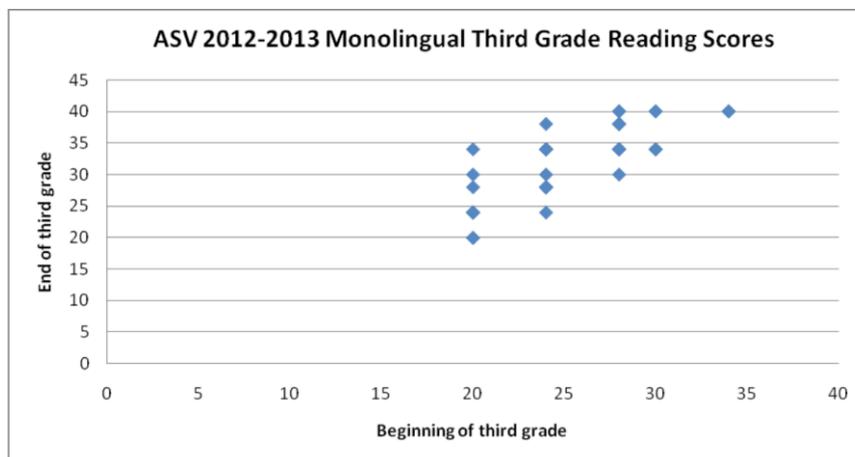
According to Kristy Beam, Preschool and Elementary principal at the American School of Valencia at the time, ASV third graders utilize the entrance and exit benchmarks established by Fountas & Pinnell, being them N level as the third grade entrance benchmark, and Q level as the third grade exit benchmark. Lettering established by Fountas & Pinnell is usually correlated by numbers indicating the Developmental Reading Assessment or DRA, being in this case 30 and 38 the numeric DRA benchmarks indicating entrance and exit levels at ASV. Out of the total 54 students analyzed from the two third grade classes selected from the American School of Valencia, fifteen began third grade reading at DRA 20 level, meaning Fountas & Pinnell K level, which is the reading level assigned by the middle of the second grade level, so they were behind what their reading level should be according to the ASV third grade

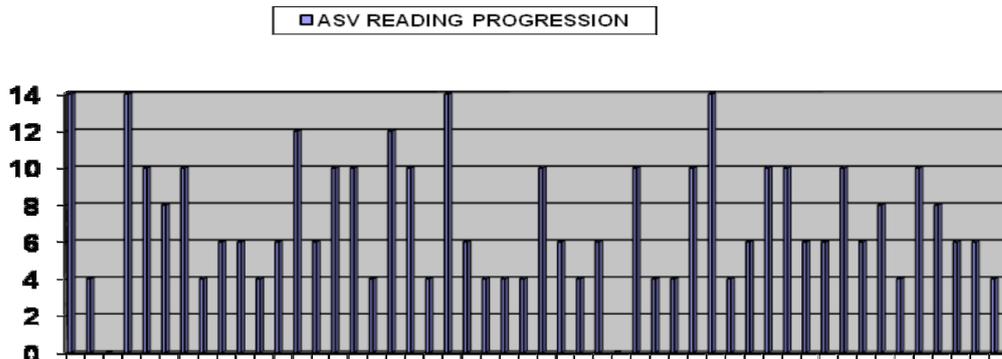
entering reading benchmark. Other fifteen students began third grade scoring a DRA of 24, meaning Fountas & Pinnell L reading level, which is the reading level assigned two thirds of second grade in, so they were slightly behind in their reading capabilities. A DRA of 28, which means Fountas & Pinnell M level, was scored by other fifteen students by the time they began third grade at ASV, being this level indicated as the exit second grade reading level benchmark, not the third grade entrance one, meaning they were almost at the expected DRA by September 2012. Seven ASV students achieved DRA 30, meaning Fountas & Pinnell N level, by the time they started third grade. These students were exactly at the reading level expected by their school. Two students began third grade reading at DRA 34, meaning Fountas & Pinnell O level, which is the reading level they were expected to be by the middle of third grade, so they were overachievers that were half a grade level ahead regarding their reading capabilities. This means that nine students out of fifty-four, representing 16.6% of the total, met the reading expectations by the beginning of third grade. Only two students, representing 3.7% of the students, exceeded the reading benchmark by the time they entered third grade. Consequently, forty-five students, representing 83.3% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students starting third grade at ASV in 2012.

By the end of third grade, two students were still reading at a DRA 20 level, meaning Fountas & Pinnell K level, which is a middle of second grade reading level. Consequently, these two students were significant underachievers, taking into account that the end of third grade reading benchmark is DRA 38, meaning Fountas & Pinnell P level. These students ended third grade one grade level and a half behind according to their reading capabilities. Eight students ended third grade reading at DRA 24, which represents Fountas & Pinnell L level, being this reading level expected three quarters into second grade, so these students were slightly over one grade level behind in reading. Seven students reached DRA 28, meaning Fountas & Pinnell M level, being this the end of second grade reading benchmark, so these students were exactly one grade level behind according to their reading abilities. Six students reached a DRA of 30 by the time they finished third grade, which represents Fountas & Pinnell N level, being this the benchmark established by the time students start third grade. This fact establishes that these students reached, by the end of third grade, a reading level they should be at when commencing third grade. Eighteen students ended third grade reading at DRA 34 level, meaning Fountas & Pinnell O level, which is the middle of third grade expected

benchmark. These students fell slightly short of meeting or exceeding their benchmarks of expectation by the time third they finished third grade. Seven students met the expectations of the American School of Valencia, reaching a reading level of DRA 38, which is represented by Fountas & Pinnell P level, being this the end of third grade established reading benchmark. Out of fifty-four students, six of them exceeded the ASV reading expectations, reaching a DRA 40 reading level, which means Fountas & Pinnell Q level. These students were overachievers since they ended third grade reading at a level that is expected by students entering fourth grade. This means that thirteen students out of fifty-four, representing 24% of the total, met the reading expectations by the end of third grade. Only six students, representing 11.1% of the students, exceeded the reading benchmark by the time they exited third grade. Consequently, forty-one students, representing 75.9% of the total, did not meet or exceed the reading expectations for students finishing third grade at ASV in 2013.

Regarding the individual reading progress of the students under Guided Reading instruction, the number of students reading at the expected levels for their age, according to the established benchmarks, raised from 16.6% to 24%, representing a 7.4% increase. Despite being low figures, a sensible improvement was achieved utilizing Guided Reading techniques. Consequently, students not meeting the reading benchmarks decreased from 83.3% to 75.9%, representing a 7.4% drop. The number of overachiever students exceeding the reading benchmarks of expectancy also ascended from 3.7% to 11%, representing a significant 7.3% increase.

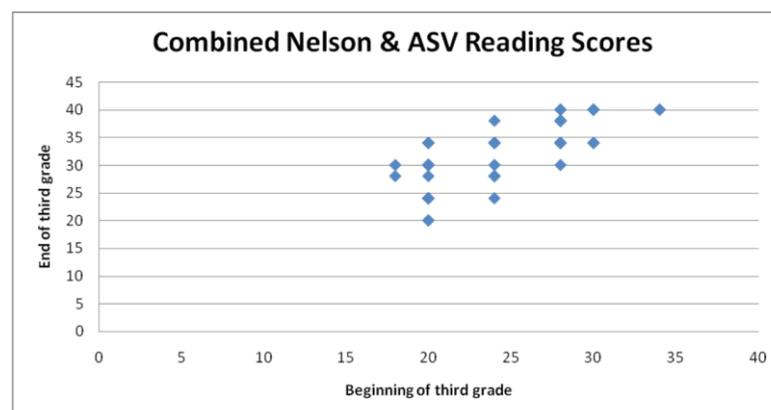


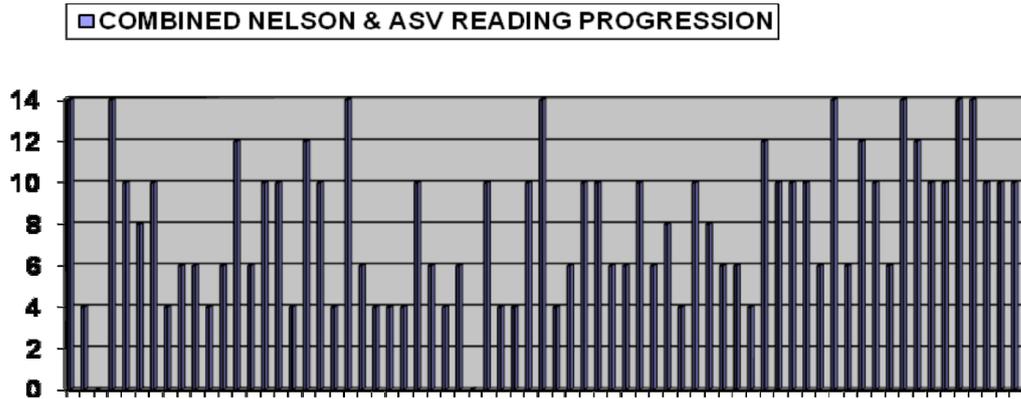


The lowest value recorded when checking the progression of the 2012-2013 ASV third graders was 0, and the highest progression value recorded was 14, giving us the minimum and maximum of this study. The average of the progression in this group is 7.3, which is slightly under the expected progression of 8 Fountas & Pinnell reading levels for each student, but this is mainly due to the existence of two students who dropped the mark by recording a progression of 0 reading levels. Median in this group is 6, which is also under the aforementioned reading progression expectancy. Finally, it can be established that the range is 14, representing the distance between the lowest and highest values in the results.

4. DISCUSSION Y CONCLUSIONS

Taking the numeric references established by Fountas & Pinnell as Guided Reading levels, which indicate the Developmental Reading Assessment or DRA, being in this case 30 and 38 the numeric DRA benchmarks indicating entrance and exit levels at ASV, the reading progression of the students can be studied.





The lowest value recorded when checking the progression of the combined Nelson and ASV third graders was 0, and the highest progression value recorded was 14, giving us the minimum and maximum of this study. The average of the progression in this group is 8.2, which is slightly over the expected progression of 8 Fountas & Pinnell reading levels for each student. Median in this group is 8, which just meets the aforementioned reading progression expectancy. It is worth noting the existence of two ASV students who experienced no reading progression at all, bringing the combined lowest value to 0 and affecting the whole study. Finally, it can be established that the range is 7, representing the distance between the lowest and highest values in the results.

Considering the combined data analyzed here, and taking into account that the median value of the whole group exactly meets the reading progress expectancy of 8 Fountas & Pinnell reading levels, and the average reading progression under Guided Reading instruction not only meets, but also exceeds the third grade reading progression expectancy by 0.2 levels, even when the group of students whose data is being reviewed includes bilingual students who are not really expected to experience the type of reading progression monolinguals are accomplishing because of having to cope with a language other than their mother tongue, the implementation of Guided Reading techniques has to be considered successful. This fact embodies the spirit of Guided Reading, which proves to be a very useful approach in the field of teaching languages in general, and teaching foreign languages at the earliest stages of schooling as studied by Olson (1985) in particular, as the students are only in third grade and English is not their mother tongue. Therefore, implementing Guided Reading techniques in the upcoming multilingual schooling in Spain is, at least, worth taking into consideration. Our main hypothesis is validated by the results obtained after analyzing the combined data, since the average

progress of students under Guided Reading instruction surpasses the progress expectancy established to evaluate third graders.

Current global education has students from different nations enrolling in schools that are now multicultural and international in nature. Since Spanish schools are nothing like they were in the past, teaching methodologies used when instructing foreign languages are to be reviewed and updated. Otherwise, methodologies created to fulfill necessities of other times would lose their purpose because of necessities changing and needing methodologies addressing them. Exposure to foreign languages in general, and to English in particular, is far easier and greater nowadays than it was not so long ago. Whereas wealthy families used to be the only ones affording relatively consistent exposure, today it is almost possible for every person to have that experience.

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