English Language Learners in Arizona Public Schools:

Challenges and Opportunities for Achieving Quality Language Development

by

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ABSTRACT

Arizona's English Language Development Model (ELD Model) is intended to increase and accelerate the learning of English by English Language Learners (ELLs), so that the students can then be ready, when they know the English language, to learn the other academic subjects together with their English speaking peers. This model is part of a response to comply with the Flores Consent Order to improve services for ELLs in Arizona public schools.

Whether or not it actually has improved instruction for ELLs has been the subject of much debate and, in 2012, after four years of the requirement to use Arizona's ELD Model, the ELL students who were identified as reclassified for the six districts in the study did not pass the Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) test. The model's requirement to separate students who are not proficient from students who are proficient, the assessment used for identification of ELLs, and the Structured English Immersion four hours of English only instruction are at the nexus of the controversy, as the courts accepted the separate four hour SEI portion of the model for instruction as sufficient to meet the needs of ELLs in Arizona (Garcia, 2011, Martinez, 2012, Lawton, 2012, Lillie, 2012).

This study examines student achievement in Reading and Math as measured by AIMS standards-based tests in six urban K-8 public school districts between 2007-2012. This period was selected to cover two years before and four years after the ELD model was required. Although the numbers of ELLs have decreased for the State and for the six urban elementary districts since the advent

of the Arizona ELD Model, the reclassified ELL subgroup in the studied districts did not pass the AIMS for all the years in the study. Based on those results, this study concludes with the following recommendations. First, to study the coming changes in the language assessments and their impact on ELLs' student achievement in broad and comprehensive ways; second, to implement a model change allowing school districts to support their ELLs in their first language; and, finally, to establish programs that will allow ELLs full access to study with their English speaking peers.

DEDICATION

For my family, the completion of this dissertation proves once again, that the family motto “I Am Ready” comes in its own time, but does come eventually to all of us through education and perseverance. As many of us in my family learned English as a second language, I am proud to be able to better understand the complexity of that feat, and I am especially grateful to have retained my first language through the support and opportunities my parents provided for all nine of us.

For my daughters, I dedicate a journey of life-long learning to both of them; if not for my responsibility to them, I may not have worked as hard, or accomplished as much. I hope I have given them the inspiration they gave me; to continue their education throughout their lives and careers. To Nicole, I say, you only have to take the first step, and then the next and you will find yourself on your way. To Karen, I say, look at what you have accomplished little girl, a BSN is a great achievement, and now that you know you can do it, you can go further if you like.

I would also like to dedicate this to my six year old niece, newly arrived from Nicaragua in 2010, an American citizen born abroad; she entered Kindergarten under an early Kindergarten program in an Arizona public school in the 2010-2011 school year. She was monolingual Spanish and AZELLA tested into an ELD Model/SEI classroom. The teacher sent notes home every day to report on how her day went. The notes from teacher were by far mostly smiley faces ☺ when she was a well behaved student, and one sad ☹ face note for bad

behavior. The one and only one of those notes with a sad face came with the comment that she was talking in class. We assumed it was for speaking out of turn, but my niece explained that it was because she was speaking Spanish to help her a classmate understand the teacher's instruction. She said she didn't like to speak Spanish anymore because the teacher didn't like it. She never brought home a note with a sad face after that. After two years in ELD classrooms, supported of course at home by bilingual adults, she has now been reclassified as proficient in English and is in a 'regular' 2nd grade class. For her I will always make sure I encourage her to be proud that she is bilingual, and to never forget she is special and good, querida Adelita Nicole Roa.

For my governing board, thank you for supporting me in my academic work, allowing and encouraging me to pursue and complete this degree among all the other important work we have done and we still have to do on behalf of English Language Learners and all students in urban public schools.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge first and foremost my mentors, Dr. René Diaz and Dr. Georgina Takemoto, for giving me the courage to serve in an urban public school in Arizona, and always being just a phone call away. I also could not have done this without the support of my teammates at work, especially Kathy Garcia, Tom Lind, and the many others who always encouraged and accommodated my schedule, supporting me through my journey. If I've missed acknowledging anyone, please accept my thanks, there are so many people that have helped.

I must also acknowledge the D.E.L.T.A. professors that got us started, helped us chose a topic that we were passionate about, and showed us how to articulate our work in a scholarly fashion. It would be remiss of me not to mention Dr. Gustavo Fischman, my Chair and most patient professor; Dr. David Garcia for help and insight into the world of SPSS and statistics; and Dr. Stephen Lawton for agreeing to be a part of my committee and asking many important questions to help guide me in my work.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Arnold Danzig and Dr. Lynn Davey for leading our D.E.L.T.A. students on an extraordinary international experience through visiting Buenos Aires, Argentina and Oaxaca, Mexico to learn about different cultures and educational systems.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

U.S. Public Education and English Language Learners

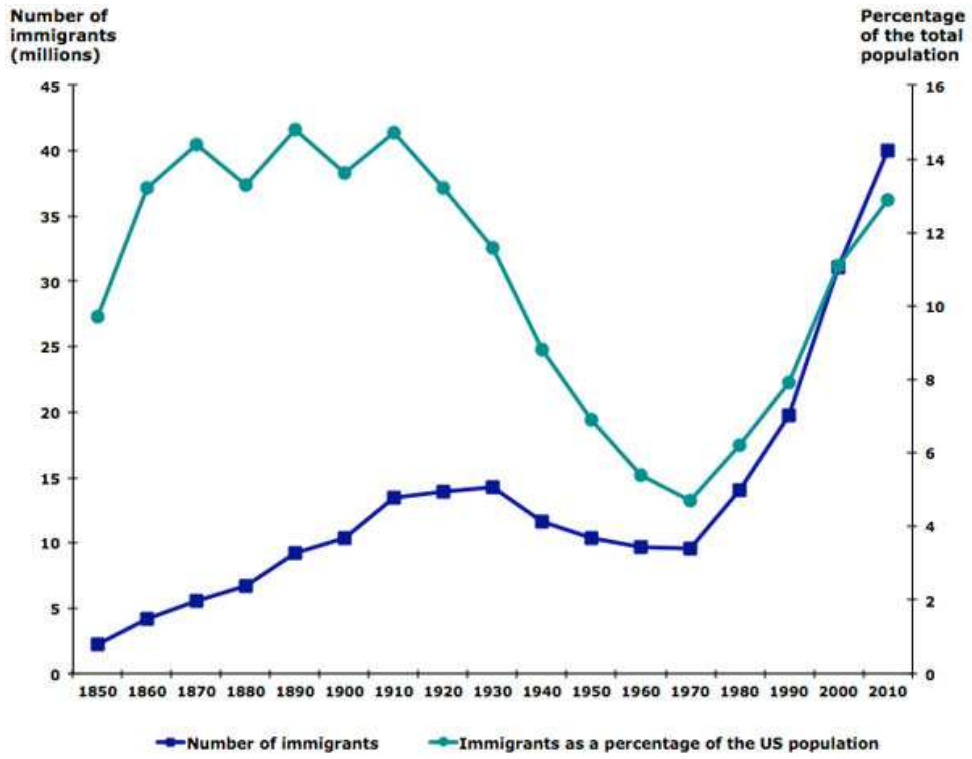
Public schooling for English Language Learners in the United States has been getting a lot of attention in the past few years, as the tenth anniversary of the authorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reveals that many public schools still struggle to meet the standard of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (Center on Educational Policy (CEP), April 2011). One of the main issues that public schools report as the reason they do not attain the AYP goal is the low achievement attributed to special student populations, both the Special Education subgroup of students, and the subgroup known as English Language Learners (ELLs). Closing the achievement gap of students in poverty, minority students, students in special education, and ELLs is the major purpose for Federal funding to assist public schools in this endeavor. "The goal of OELA [Office of English Language Acquisition] and Title III is to ensure that all federal dollars are spent to *"close the achievement gap"* for limited English proficient and immigrant children" (USDOE, 2011). Though this achievement gap is a national issue, Arizona's response to address the student achievement of English Language Learners has been challenging and has created opportunities to study the impact of the Arizona English Language Development Model.

Immigration and Sources of Immigrants

The increase in the number of immigrants from countries whose language is other than English to the United States has increased dramatically in the last

several years. A history of immigration in America shows the increase since 1850 to 2010 both as total number of immigrants and the percentage of immigrants. The sharp increase from 1970 to 2010 is depicted in Figure 1; immigrants growing in number from 10 million to over 40 million, and from approximately 4% to 13% of the population in the same time period. It is important to point out that although the number of immigrants has increased, the percentage in 2010 of those same immigrants is less than the percentage of immigrants in the late 1800's and early 1900's (13%:2010; 15%:1890-1915). Cycles of discontent with the number of immigrants in the U.S. and their perceived negative impact on the nation's resources revolve around trends in economic downturns; those who are last to enter the country are usually blamed for at least part of the problem of slow economic recovery due to the perception of having to share benefits during scarce resources. In reality, the percentage of immigrants in 2012 is about the same as 1900's; as the entire population in America has grown, so has the number of immigrants; and as Figure 1 indicates, the percentage of immigrants has increased sharply in a short amount of time from the 1970's to 2010; from 5% to 13% respectively, even though as previously pointed out, 13% is still lower than the higher 15% in the early 1900's. This steeper increase from the 1970's to 2010 is also reflected in the same steep increase in the percent of Latin American foreign born in the U.S. in Figure 2 and the number of Mexican-born residing in the U.S. in Figure 3.

Figure 1. Foreign-Born Population and Foreign Born as Percentage of the Total US Population, 1850 to 2010



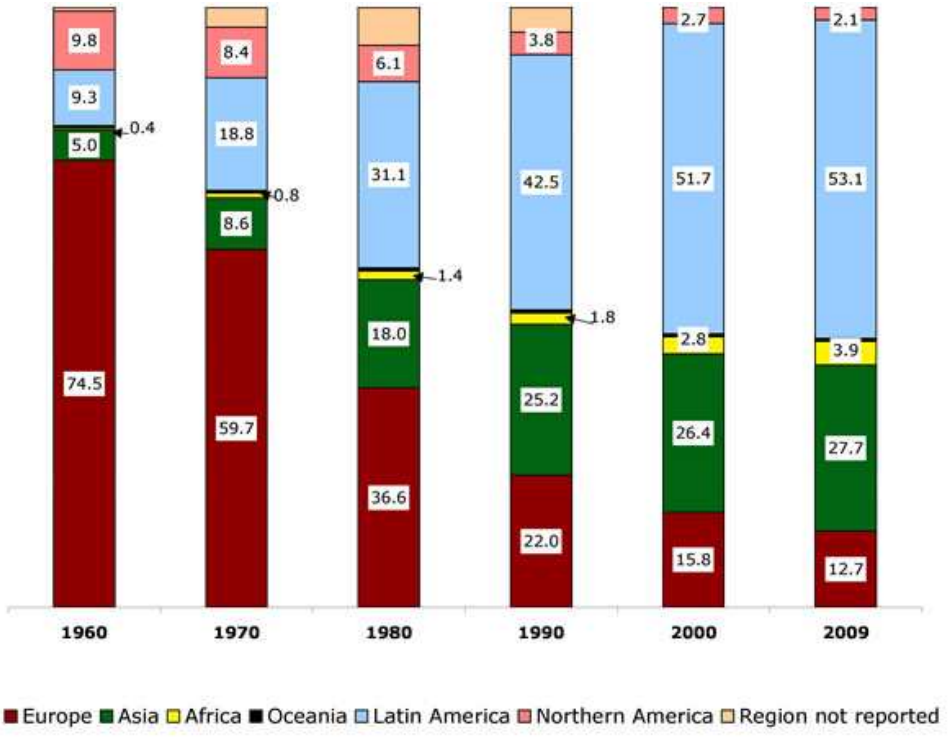
Note: The term "immigrants" refers to people residing in the United States who were not US citizens at birth. This population includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents (LPRs), certain legal nonimmigrants (e.g., persons on student or work visas), those admitted under refugee or asylee status, and persons illegally residing in the United States.

Source: The 2010 data are from the US Census Bureau's American Community Surveys, the 2000 data are from Census 2000 (see www.census.gov). All other data are from Gibson, Campbell and Emily Lennon, US Census Bureau, Working Paper No. 29, Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-Born Population of the United States: 1850 to 1990, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1999.

Today's immigrants are mostly from Mexico, Central, and South America, although there are also many immigrants from all parts of the world. The source

of the immigrants by country and by percentage by decade is displayed in Figure 2 and Mexican-born immigrants in Figure 3.

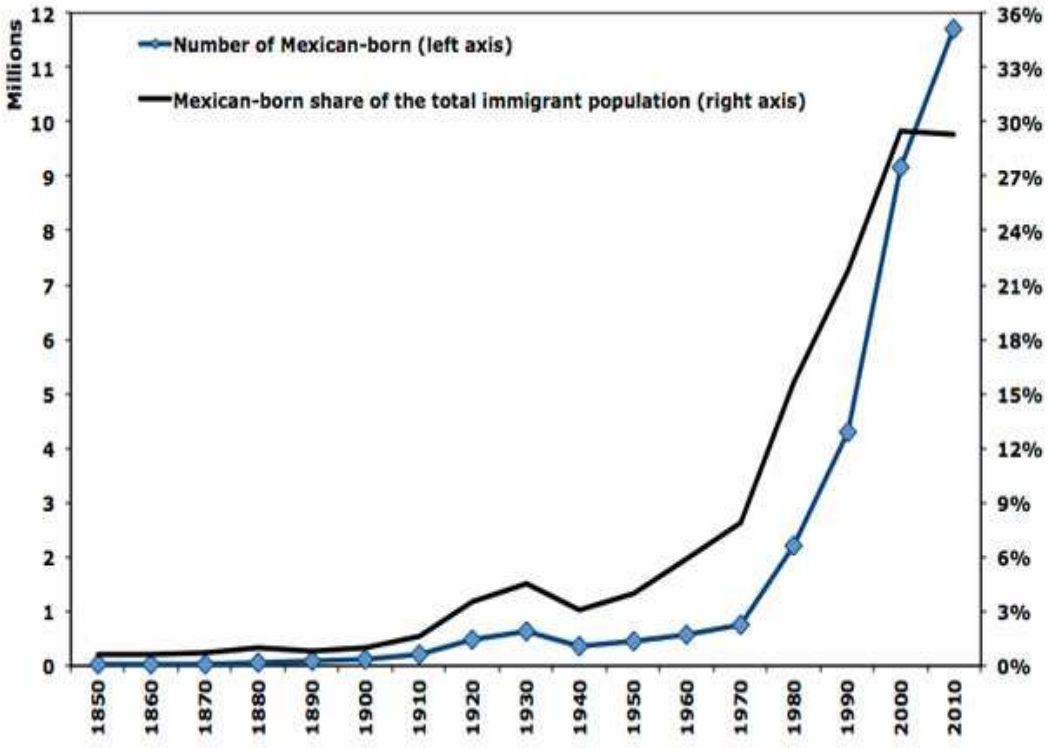
Figure 2. Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth as a Percentage of the Total Foreign-Born Population: 1960 to 2009



Notes: 1. The term "foreign born" refers to people residing in the United States who were not US citizens at birth. The foreign-born population includes naturalized citizens, lawful permanent residents (LPRs), certain legal nonimmigrants (e.g., persons on student or work visas), those admitted under refugee or asylee status, and persons illegally residing in the United States.
2. In contrast to 1960 to 1990, nonresponse on country or region of birth in both 2000 and 2009 was allocated. For 2000, the "Not reported" category only includes 316 people who were born at sea. For 2009, persons born at the sea were excluded from the total estimate.

Sources: US Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses 1960 to 2000 and 2009 This report is available at http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/twps0029.html ; For 2000 data refer to Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table QT-P15. "Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population: 2000"; For 2008 data refer to Table B05006 "Place of Birth for the Foreign-Born Population."

Figure 3. Mexican Foreign-Born Residing in the United States, 1850 to 2010



Note: The term "immigrants" refers to people residing in the United States who were not US citizens at birth. This population includes naturalized citizens, legal permanent residents, certain legal non-immigrants (e.g., refugees and persons on student or work visas), and persons illegally residing in the United States.

Source: Data for 1850 to 1990, excluding 1940 and 1950 are from: Campbell J. Gibson and Emily Lennon, "Historical Census Statistics on the Foreign-born Population of the United States: 1850-1990" US Census Bureau, Population Division, Working Paper No. 29, February 1999. Data for 1940 and 1950 are from MPI analysis of decennial census data made available by Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Shroweder, and Matthew Sobek, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010. Data for 2000 are from MPI analysis of decennial census data; data for 2010 are from MPI analysis of data from the US Census Bureau's 2010 American Community Survey.

These figures support the fact that most immigrants are from Spanish speaking countries nationally; and the research also supports that most ELLs speak Spanish as their first language in Arizona (ADE, 2011, Garcia, 2011).

> In 2009, 80.0 percent of the entire US population age 5 and older said they speak only English at home. The remaining 20.0 percent (or 57.1 million people) reported speaking a variety of foreign languages.** Of them, Spanish was by far the most commonly spoken language (62.1 percent), followed by Chinese (4.6 percent), Tagalog (2.7 percent), French (including Cajun and Patois, 2.3 percent), Vietnamese (2.2 percent), German (1.9 percent), Korean (1.8 percent), Russian (1.5 percent), and Arabic (1.5 percent). *Notes*: * Refers to the 285.8 million people age 5 and older who resided in the United States at the time of the survey. ** These respondents might or might not speak English at home in addition to a foreign language. (Migration Policy Institute, 2011).

Garcia also presents data from the Centers for Disease Control that in 2005 indicated 24% of children born in the U.S. were Hispanic (Christie, 2008). "Rather surprisingly, Christie (2008) points out Census Bureau data say that over half of ELL children in our schools were born in the U.S. These children make up 75% of the ELL students in grades K-5 and 57% of those in grades 6-12" (p. 469. This indicates that the majority (75%) of ELL students are U.S. citizens, even though the general public perception is that if you do not speak English, you must be a non-citizen, as evidenced by the many ordinances, proposed bills and acts in various legislatures that attempt to regulate, limit and restrict benefits for immigrants (Auerbach, 2007). The idea that non-citizens are receiving the benefit of a public education, and are becoming more of a burden than the educational system was designed to bear has created an animosity towards supporting any additional services and funding to the perceived non-citizens (Casper, 2011). Certainly, the political discourse on removing citizenship rights or status from

children on illegal aliens in various states has had adverse effects on the idea that public schools should have to educate those perceived as ineligible for free and uniform education guaranteed by most state institutions (Casper, 2011).

Regardless of whether the children are immigrant, non-citizens or U.S. citizens, with 20% of the U.S. population speaking languages other than English at home, public schools must pay attention to the education of students who comprise subgroup known as English Language Learners (ELLs) (Stritikus, 2006, Callahan, 2005, Garcia, 2011). Christie (2008) notes that the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition data "show that between 1995 and 2005, more than 10 states experienced greater than 200% growth in the number of ELL students"(p. 469). Figure 4 shows the number of Limited English Proficient (LEPs) students in Arizona increased from 72,253 in 1995-96 to 152,962 in 2005-2006, or as a percentage of total enrollment from 8.95% to 13.97%, and to compare to the data from the National Clearinghouse, a 115.6% growth from 1995-2005 (Arizona Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition [OLEAS], August 2008). The Arizona Auditor General's report of 2011 states that ELL student population has decreased to 106,000 in 2010 and that ELLs are concentrated in the elementary grades (Arizona Auditor General, 2011, Callahan, 2005). The report attributes the decrease to ELL students becoming proficient in English at higher rates, or students being withdrawn by parent request, and that fewer new ELLs arrived in Arizona (Arizona Office of the Auditor General, 2011). The idea that fewer new ELLs arrived in Arizona may be attributed to several factors, some less politically

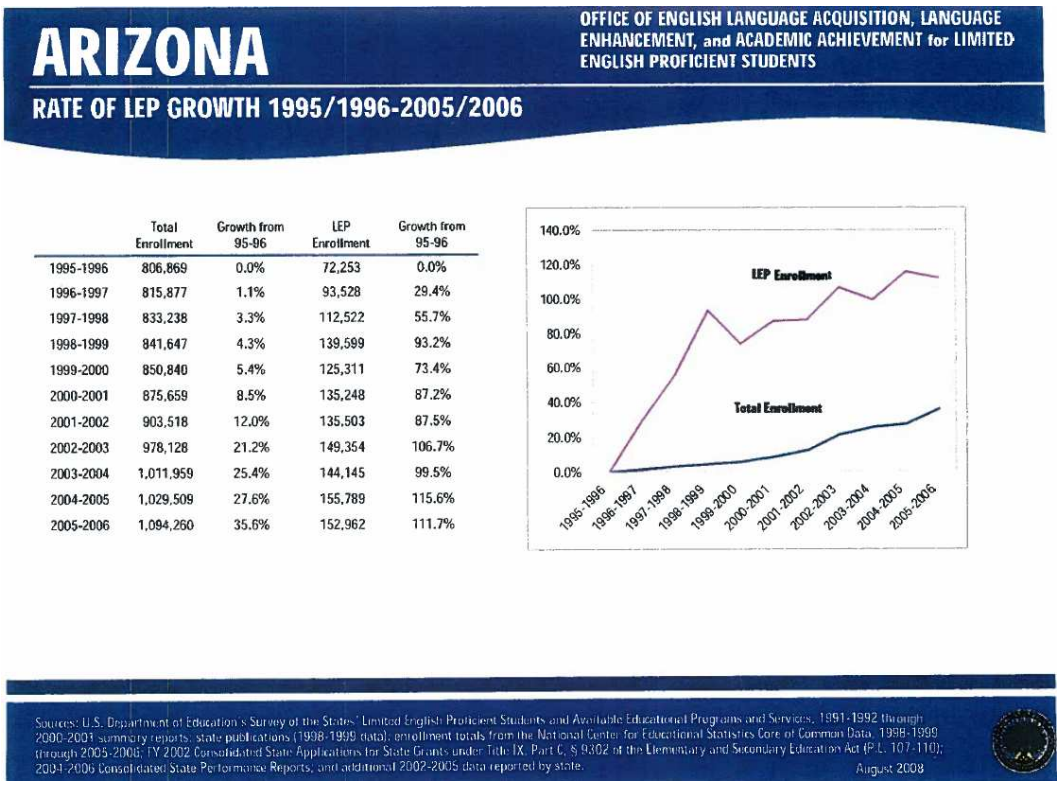
charged than others. The overall slowing of the economy, having fewer casual labor jobs available that are attributed to be filled by undocumented or recent immigrants, fewer small business able to grow and be sustained, may have generated less interest of immigrant workers in coming to Arizona, either legally or not (Passel, 2012). The more politically discussed connection of the reason for the decrease in ELLs (although not mentioned in the AG report) is to the enactment of legislation to discourage, prevent, identify and remove undocumented immigrants (Arizona State Legislature, 2010) which is attributed to sending the message that immigrants and their families are at risk of deportation. As stated in the purpose statement in Arizona's famous Senate Bill 1070:

> The provisions of this act are intended to work together to discourage and deter the unlawful entry and presence of aliens and economic activity by persons unlawfully present in the United States (Arizona State Legislature, 2010).

Terms such as "anchor babies" are considered as "hate speech" by most social justice lens, yet the term has been used to support accusations that the children of illegal immigrant parents use their U.S.-born children to eventually gain citizenship status for the rest of family, thus furthering the public perception that ELLs were not "deserving" of public benefits and public education (Auerbach, 2007, Casper 2011, Passel, 2012). Although many bills are introduced in legislative sessions that are not passed into laws, the purposes stated are to limit and restrict public benefits for illegal immigrants; Arizona's HB 2624 clearly states in an amendment proposed to Title 1, chapter 5, Article 1, section 1-502

that illegal aliens must reimburse the state for public benefits, including C.2.(e) public instruction in a kindergarten program or grades one through 12 (Arizona State Legislature, 2008). These unfortunate hard times for public perception of immigrants and ELLs as the recipients of public education further complicates how states address the education of ELLs (Casper, 2011). As the rate of ELLs increased over the last decade, making their presence more obvious in more grades in more school settings, the ability of educators to meet their needs with scarce public school resources drove a lawsuit in Arizona to increase funding per ELL student and to provide additional services for ELLs to decrease the achievement gap. The failure of the school system in Nogales, Arizona to succeed in teaching English skills to students led to a federal lawsuit against the state claiming that inadequate funding, programs, and resources were preventing children from succeeding in school. It was also driven by Federal accountability for ELL subgroups through No Child Left Behind, adopted in 2000, and Arizona's Proposition 203 (2000) against bilingual education programs.

Figure 4. Arizona Rate of LEP Growth 1995/1996-2004-2005.



Arizona and English Language Learners (Flores vs. Arizona Department of Education)

Even before NCLB was authorized in 2000, the Arizona public school system has been challenged by lower student achievement of ELLs and of appropriating additional funding for the instruction of ELLs. In a lawsuit initially filed in 1992 -- Flores vs. Arizona Department of Education -- the plaintiffs stated that Arizona did not provide adequate funding to instruct ELLs. The Flores vs. Arizona Department of Education timeline below shows the highlights of the progress of the lawsuit. A convergence of the NCLB accountability challenges beginning in 2000, of Arizona's passage of Proposition 203(English only instruction against bilingual education) also in 2000, both during the Flores cost

study served to exacerbate the climate and limit the program choices for ELLs in Arizona.

The disposition of this lawsuit is critically tied to the instruction of ELLs in Arizona, and the response to the lawsuit by the legislators in House Bill 2064 instructed the Arizona Department of Education to require a new program, namely the Arizona English Language Development Model, and with additional funding that aims to address the original concerns of the plaintiffs (Arizona State Legislature, 2007. Lawton indicates that from the beginning, this lawsuit was a funding issue and not a program or model debate, so the courts had to determine if the funding for ELLs was adequate, and was not charged to determine which model would be adequate (Lawton, 2012). This opportunity to increase services for ELLs by increasing funding was not fully taken advantage of to increase programs that research shows are most effective for ELLs to be able learn in their first language and acquire a second language simultaneously (Martinez-Wenzl, 2012).

The public perception against bilingual education programs and the desire to have English Only programs was evident in the passing of Proposition 203 in Arizona in 2000, giving the litigation from the Flores suit a focus on increased funding, and not increased bilingual programs, with the alternative of the ELD model taking shape in response to the lawsuit and in response to the Proposition 203.

“Flores vs. Arizona

1988: State gives schools about $164 extra for each student still learning English. A state survey determines schools spend about $450 extra on each student still learning English. Number of English learners: 45,000.

1992: Lawsuit in U.S. District Court claims state schools have failed to identify English learners and provide programs to help them. Number of English learners: 75,000.

2000: Court calls the state's funding for language learners "arbitrary and capricious." It orders the state to conduct a cost study and distribute money to schools. Number of English learners: 126,000.

2001: State survey shows districts spend from $0 to $4,600 per English-learning student. Court orders a new study to specify appropriate language services and the cost of providing those services. Number of English learners: 153,000.

2002: Federal judge rejects the state's funding increase to $350 per pupil because it is not based on an actual cost study.

2004: National Conference of State Legislatures' cost study reports that Arizona's language learners need funding of up to $2,495 each in elementary school and up to $1,662 in high school to keep up with academic peers. Number of English learners: 161,000.

2005: Court threatens to levy a $500,000 a day fine if state doesn't comply with order.

2006: Court rejects new state law to spend an additional $14 million a year.

2008: State gives schools $40 million to establish a new language-learning program, but maintains two-year limit on funding. Appeals court says Arizona hasn't complied with original court order.

2009: State schools superintendent Tom Horne and the Legislature's Republican leaders say the court is meddling in Arizona's business. They ask the U.S. Supreme Court to step in. The justices agree to hear the case. The Supreme Court sends the case ***back to the appeals court, telling the court to consider changes that Arizona has made in instructing English learners.*** Number of English learners: 143,000" (Kossan, 2009).

The changes that Arizona has made in instructing ELLs are embodied in the Arizona English Language Development Model, which uses Structured English Immersion (SEI) to deliver instruction using only English. The ELD model changes how ELLs are to receive instruction, with the intent on increasing the rate of which the students are to learn the English language, and subsequently, after English is acquired, to increase the reclassified ELLs student achievement in the core academic areas. The English Language Development Model was required to be implemented by all public schools by the 2008-2009 school year (ADE, 2007).

Structured English Immersion Accepted by Courts

The response from the Arizona legislature to the Supreme Court to remedy the Flores lawsuit was to direct the Arizona Department of Education to mandate and monitor a four hour Structured English Immersion (SEI) using only English as the language of instruction to teach only the English language. The Supreme

Court tells the appeals court to consider the change to this four hour SEI model, and the Arizona English Language Learner Task Force's recommendations on implementation and monitoring of the model. Martinez-Wenzl, Perez and Gandara (2012) of the University of California, Los Angeles conduct an analysis of documents from the Task Force and concluded that the choice of the SEI four-hour model mandated by the HB2064 law does not improve instruction for ELLs and "carries serious negative consequences for EL students stemming from the excessive amount of time dedicated to a sole focus on English instruction, the de-emphasis of grade level academic curriculum, the discrete skills approach it employs, and the segregation of EL students from mainstream peers" (p. 1).).

Statement of the problem

The Arizona ELD Model is Arizona's response to the challenge of addressing the needs of English Language Learners, as the increase in the number of ELLs over the last decade is critically tied to the effort to meet federal requirements for all students to make adequate yearly progress. The problem of closing the achievement gap for ELLs is both a national and a state issue.

For Arizona public schools the Arizona ELD model required a change in the approach of language instruction for ELLs. The features of the model that pertain to grouping of students by proficiency, prescribing four hours for specific areas of language instruction with focus on a discrete skills inventory provide an opportunity to study the impact of the model. Prior to the requirement of the ELD Model, all certified teachers and administrators were required to obtain a Structured English Immersion (SEI) certificate or an English as a Second

Language (ESL) or Bilingual Education Endorsement in addition to their teaching certificate, but at that time there were no specific time allotments to language were required, and ELL students were not required to be grouped by proficiency.

The Arizona ELD Model is intended to increase the rate that ELLs learn English, so that they can then be reclassified as proficient in English and be better prepared to achieve in the core academic areas.

Research Questions

1. Has the implementation of the English Language Development model produced changes in the academic achievement of English Language Learners as measured by Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) for Reading and Mathematics?
2. Has the implementation of the English Language Development model produced changes in the number of students identified as "English Language Learners"?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to discuss and analyze if and how the ELD model impacted the academic achievement of ELLs as measured by the AIMS test scores in six urban public schools in Arizona. The importance of the AIMS test as an indicator is that it is the standard by which all students are measured for performance in both the state performance labels and the federal adequate yearly progress labels. Since No Child Left Behind requires that every state administer standardized tests, this is Arizona's test for both the state and federal

accountability requirements. AIMS was developed to drive educational reform in Arizona by ensuring more consistent and rigorous state standards of instruction (Jorgenson, 1999). The test is administered statewide to third graders through high school and is widely reported to give a profile of student performance (Jorgenson, 1999).

The State Board of Education considers the standards and graduation requirements and aligns the AIMS to those standards. The standards are available for all grade levels and are expressed through teaching objectives that guide teachers in their instruction. The AIMS test, aligned to the standards in the subject areas of reading comprehension and mathematics content is a valid and reliable assessment given consistently with standardized testing protocol and security. Arizona has adopted the new Common Core Standards (and will align the test to those new standards) scheduled for full implementation by 2013-14.

In the case of the AIMS Writing assessment this study does not compare this component sub-test as there is more subjectivity in scoring than with other tests, is not given in grades three and four, and although it has the same high stakes as reading and mathematics, the interrater reliability is less (Lopez, 2011). The AIMs becomes even more important as students are required to pass the AIMS test for graduation from high school (Jorgenson, 1999).

The reclassification rate of ELLs assigned to school districts by the Arizona Department of Education is not publically available, but is reported through the Federal Title III requirements for English Language Learners at a district level with a “Yes” or a “No” as to whether the district met a 19% increase

of reclassified students from the prior year. This study reports on whether the districts met the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) by the reclassification of English Language Learners moving from pre-emergent, emergent, basic, intermediate to proficient and advanced, by at least 19% of ELLs reclassified as making progress in moving from pre-emergent to proficient. All six districts in the study made their AMAOs and reclassified at least 19% of their ELLs in the second year of the ELD model requirement, 2008-2009 through 2011-2012 (ADE, 2012). The ELLs that are reclassified are then used to calculate whether the district made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the ELL subgroup; that is students who were ELLs and are now reclassified as proficient in English based on the AZELLA assessment are disaggregated to see if they also passed the academic state test, the AIMS Math, Reading, and Writing.

Relevance of the Study

Over 100,000 students are eligible for English Language services in Arizona, and schools and districts are held accountable for their language proficiency and academic performance reported by reclassification rates in meeting the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives and standardized test scores captured by AIMS (Figure 4. Arizona Rate of LEP Growth 1995/1996-2004-2005, Office of the Auditor General Report, 2011).

It is important to study how the Arizona ELD model has provided challenges and opportunities for achieving quality language development for ELLs and all students and the results contribute to the existing body of research on efforts to improve academic achievement for all.

Organization of Study

The overview of this study includes the background information of who and where might English Language Learners come from and some historical perspective of the percentage of immigrants to non-immigrants over time. The review of the literature is organized thematically to analyze the common issues and balance the perspectives of the authors and researchers. Literature surrounding ELL student issues on language policy debates, academic and language proficiency testing, teacher preparation and various models for ELL instruction are reviewed. The theoretical and methodological frameworks are tied to the research questions and describe the steps and stages of data collection and analyses. The findings and discussions include data from 2007-2012 and analyze the selected districts, the school years studied, and the State for student achievement in Math, Reading and ELL reclassification data available.

Data were obtained from the Department of Education's website with unidentifiable student information for the AIMs tests for school years 2007-2012. ELL reclassification rates are only reported as to whether a district met the minimum 19% reclassification rate from the prior year under the Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) by the Arizona Department of Education. Title III is also known as the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. Title III is a part of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and is specifically targeted to benefit Limited English Proficient (LEP) children and immigrant youth. The Act states that LEP students must not only attain English proficiency but simultaneously meet the

same academic standards as their English-speaking peers in all content areas. Federal funding is provided to assist State Education Agencies (SEAs) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in meeting these requirements (USDOE, 2012).

The unit of study for comparisons of student achievement and Federal accountability is district-wide. The district data are compared to the state data for K-8 schools. Percentage of ELLs and percentage of low socio-economic status (poverty) are factors reviewed for impact district-wide results (Hakuta, 1999). Districts that are compliant with the ELD Model as identified by the Auditor General's report of 2011 will be compared to urban districts of similar in size, percentage of ELLs, and percentage of low socio-economic status. The auditor general's report compares 60 districts for compliance in 2009-2010 fiscal year, the third year of the required ELD model. Of the six of the urban districts in the study, one is deemed fully compliant with the ELD model for both SEI model, grouping of students by proficiency and providing Individual Language Learner Plans for students in schools and grades with less than 20 ELLs (Auditor General, 2011).

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

A challenge for this study was to review the literature striking a balance between research that supports time-on-task oriented, English only structured immersion models like the current Arizona ELD model and research that supports integrated approaches to second language instruction in language programs that use both first and second languages. This review of the literature is contextualized around language education policies, subtractive vs. additive language policy debates, the multitude of models of education for ELLs: Bilingual Education and Structured English Immersion models, teacher preparation and training, reclassification of ELLs, and standardized testing and high stakes accountability.

Language Education Policies

Since the federal No Child Left Behind reauthorization in 2001 calls for high accountability for all children, the children are in fact accounted for by subgroups by ability such as Special Education eligible, ethnicity and race as in Hispanic, Native American, African American, and in language as in English Language Learners and the subgroup of poverty (Abedi, 2004). This reauthorization does not prohibit bilingual education, yet it does not provide federal support for any particular program for ELLs (Peregoy, 2005). The subgroups are reported and accounted in both the State and Federal accountability standards (AZLEARNs and AYP respectively) (Abedi, 2004). Federal Adequate Yearly Progress or AYP uses standardized test scores in all groups and in

subgroups. Wright (2005) points out that there is agreement that the ELL subgroup need extra attention and should have the same high standards as their non-ELL peers to reach the same achievement, but not with the restrictions intended from Arizona's Proposition 203 to end bilingual education. The disagreement is and has been how to provide successful language programs (Martinez, 2012). Proposition 203 passed in 2000 is considered a restricted-oriented language policy as it limits the placement of ELLs into bilingual education programs and requires that ELLs be immersed in English only (Wright, 2005, Wright, 2006, Johnson, 2005, Combs et al., 2005, Lawton, 2012, Martinez, 2012).

Subtractive vs. Additive or English Only vs. English Plus

Bilingual education programs were originally designed to meet the needs of ELLs by allowing them to be taught literacy and content in both their native language and in English (Rolstad, Mahoney & Glass, 2005; Robledo-Montecel & Cortez, 2002). Instead of supporting bilingual education as a preferred program, the NCLB Act places heavy emphasis on English language proficiency, and leaves the choices of the programs up to each state (Peregoy, 2005). Structured English Immersion (SEI) is a program that uses English to teach both the English language and academic content in English, and may be seen as a transitional one-year program for ELLs (Peregoy, 2005, Johnson, 2005, Callahan, 2005, Combs et al., 2005, Clark, 2009, Crawford, 2000, Grisom, 2004). Stritikus analyzes the English-only programs in contrast to bilingual programs and questions whether the Structured English Immersion for ELLs subtract, take away, or minimize

respect for cultural and linguistic differences (Stritikus, 2006). Certainly the reception a non-English family receives when enrolling a child in a school that promotes English-only for its students can be daunting and insensitive to the cultural challenges immigrants and non-native speakers face. Similar and prior to Arizona, California's Proposition 227 was seen as voter supported initiative to teach English only to ELLs, and to eliminate or greatly reduce bilingual education programs for ELLs (Stritikus, 2005 & 2006; Monzo, 2005; Thompson, DiCerbo, Mahoney & MacSwan, 2002, Grisom, 2004, Lawton, 2012).

Although the three states considered to have eliminated bilingual education (California, Arizona, and Massachusetts) by voter initiative (Prop 227, Prop 203, and Question 2, respectively), and all of these three states have some provision for waivers and choices for parents, the overarching messages sent by the laws are to discourage bilingual education as a preferred program and to encourage support for programs that teach English language in English (Clark, 2009; Peregoy, 2005; Stritikus, 2003, 2005, 2006; Monzo, 2005; Thompson, DiCerbo, Mahoney & MacSwan, 2002, Grisom, 2004, Garcia, 2011, Lawton, 2012). Stritikus concludes the three states have subtractive language policies, and Garcia describes these states to be "Pioneers in Restrictive Policies" (Stritikus, 2006; Garcia, 2011, Lawton, 2012).

Language policies initiated by voter referendum may continue the trend to prescribe interventions for ELLs intended to improve student achievement (Mora, 2000). Mora describes that even after voter initiatives; research in academic achievement of ELLs recommends a "well-paced, additive acculturation" for

ELLs, regardless of what intervention is mandated, although this is not a focus of the English-only programs (Mora, 2000).

The Varieties of Interventions for ELLs

Bilingual programs have many versions as there are also many types of English Language Learners (Lopez, 2006). The programs are designed to match the learners' needs, which can be interpreted in as many varieties as there are languages; in this study English is the target language or majority language; and immigrant or native language is the minority language (Freeman & Freeman, 2004).

Peregoy (2005) recommends the programs for ELLs learning English should be designed to match the learner. Transitional Bilingual Education uses the native or minority language to build literacy in the first home language for one to three years and then to stops teaching in the home or minority language in order to begin developing English, which is usually the second language, as soon as possible. In Transitional Bilingual Education students are usually separated from English- speaking students until they are transitioned to regular classrooms (Peregoy, 2005; Crawford, 2000; Hakuta, 1999). This separation is supported by the Lau vs. Nichols and Castañeda court rulings, which were intended to give, support the first or minority language of the learner. This same ruling is used to support the Arizona ELD model for separating ELLs from native English-speaking or proficient in English students, without of course the support for the home or minority first language.

Maintenance Bilingual Education is for students who are learning English and are also supported in their home or minority language through all grades, possibly even through high school, with the goal of full bilingualism for ELLs, and students are mainstreamed with English speakers, but continue to receive support in their first language (Peregoy, 2005; Hakuta, 1999). Two-way Immersion Programs also known as "developmental bilingual education" serve both ELLs and non-ELLs or native English speakers by providing second language acquisition in classrooms where there are an equal number of ELLs and native English speakers. This program has much support from the research if the program is fully supported with a variety of attributes from Bilingual teachers, culturally inclusive school/classroom culture, and funded adequately (Peregoy, 2005; Gomez, Leo, Freeman & Freeman, 2005; Monzo, 2005; Combs et al., 2005; Crawford, 2000; Robledo Montecel, 2002; Cahnman & Varghese, 2005; Stritikus & Garcia, 2005; Hakuta, 1999). All the above programs use the ELLs' native language, for either a separate transitional period of time or fully integrated with the native English speaking peers. However, he trend has been to move away from programs that use the non-English languages to support ELLs and to move to focus on teaching the English language and using English only to teach content (Garcia, 2011). Bilingual education programs as dual-language programs are still in place, but fewer are supported by the trending restrictive language policies (Garcia, 2011).

The trend away from programs that use the non-English languages to support ELLs has resulted in the use of several different models to teach English

only to ELLs with the primary purpose to teach English language so ELLs may understand the academic content once they become proficient. Unfortunately, many of these programs have similar titles and acronyms even though they differ in structure. Sheltered English Immersion) programs are designed for ELLs that have already reached an intermediate level of English proficiency. They may also be known as programs that use "Specifically Designed Academic Instruction in English" or SDAIE and teach content in English with an emphasis on techniques to deliver content or academic instruction that may use visual resources that are not heavily based on text alone (Peregoy, 2005).

Students that are pulled out of their regular mainstream classrooms for extra support in learning English separately from their peers have teachers tasked with the goal of assisting ELLs to accelerate their proficiency and use the "ESL or ELL pull-out" programs similar to a Special Education pull-out program to provide the additional time separately for their ELLs (Peregoy, 2005). Other English Language Development (ELD) programs may also be known as English as a Second Language (ESL) or English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) where teachers, usually having an ESL endorsement or teaching certificate, teach while using English for all subject matters for ELLs with varying levels of English proficiency; the teachers typically use the SDAIE techniques for students (Peregoy, 2005).

Structured English Immersion (SEI) programs also have teachers who have an SEI or ESL endorsement who teach all content in English with the primary goal of teaching the English language and the program is not designed to

teach bilingualism (Peregoy, 2005; Clark, 2009). The Arizona ELD model is a Structured English Immersion model where teachers are encouraged to use sheltered strategies to teach English to ELLs, with an emphasis on time on task for grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing. The Arizona ELD model requires SEI to be used in a four-hour block to ELL students identified as not proficient in English in a typically six hour school day (Garcia, 2011).

The Arizona English Language Development (ELD) Model

The Arizona English Language Learners Task Force was formed as a result of legislation in 2006 with the intent to develop and adopt "research based models of Structured English Immersion (SEI) programs" for all schools and school districts (ADE, 2008). The HB2064 law requires a minimum of four hours per day for the first year for an "intensive English-language teaching program...designed to accelerate the learning of the English language … distinguished from other types of instruction, e.g., math, science, or social science, in that the content … emphasizes the English language itself" (ADE, 2008). Wright and Choi (2006) conducted a survey of 40 teachers throughout Arizona and teachers reported "they have been given little or no guidance over what constitutes SEI...most ELL students in their schools are receiving mainstream sink-or-swim instruction"(p. 6). The study recommends that the state department of education provide a clear definition of SEI (with primary or first language support), and that students have access to English instruction every day for a minimum number of minutes, and that ELLs not be put in mainstream classrooms until they are sufficiently fluent in English (Wright & Choi, 2006).

The Task Force reported a summary of research to support the SEI models with a total of eleven (11) subtopics with supporting research ranging from very early to very recent studies, some in context of language acquisition, some in context of time-on-task, specific grammar skills, and emphasis on vocabulary (ADE, 2008). The subtopic of time-on-task, the time a student spends on learning, is noted as key to student academic success (ADE, 2008; Bloom, 1974). Bloom's article from 1974 and Carroll's research from 1963 on time-on-task are cited by the Task Force as supporting the four hours required of the SEI model (ADE, 2008). The relationship between time-on-task and student engagement is described by the Borg's study in 1980 with the idea that the time students are engaged in learning is important to increased student achievement (ADE, 2008). Karweit's studies in 1983 reviewed 50 years of time-on-task research, concluding that there is a positive relationship engaged time and student achievement, although there was no emphasis on language acquisition (ADE, 2008). A review of the Bloom's 1974 "Time and Learning" article in *American Psychologist* also cites "The Carroll Model" from 1963 and points to time as the "central variable in school learning and that students differ in the amount of time they need to learn a given unit of learning to some set criterion" (p. 683). Bloom also terms the entire process of learning as dependent on the "quality of instruction … when the quality of instruction is high, then the level of achievement of the student and the time on task increase" (Bloom, 1974, p. 687). Neither the Bloom or Carroll research is specific to any content area; in fact Bloom mentions the time-on-task is related to all subject areas that are essentially sequential to the units of

instruction, which until a student needs to master a unit before the next unit can be understood (Bloom, 1974). Bloom also states that the time on task research is "still in progress" and "hesitates to makes these as more then highly probable statements" (p. 688). Carroll's original study of students in 1963 measures how long a group of students take to learn a made-up language based on two tests given, the first test having fewer instructions and harder to understand than the other. All the students were native English speakers timed on how long it took them and how well they tested in learning a new made up language in a few hours (Carroll, 1963). The Carroll article is about how much time a student needs to "learn" a task; in the model, a fake foreign language is created with rules regarding verb tense, using some rules for vowels and consonants to create a verb in the "Midimo" language. The hypothesis is that the amount of learning is solely a function of the amount of time spent (controlling for quality of instruction) (Carroll, 1963). The instruction is not direct instruction, but the organization of the booklets used for the task/test (Carroll, 1963). One booklet was well organized and defined as quality instruction, the other disorganized and more difficult to understand when read, while the extent to which such an artificial language can be generalized to the typical classroom situation may be limited, given the latter typically uses a variety of instructional approaches (Carroll, 1963).

The Task Force also lists a subtopic with empirical research supporting allocation of "fixed periods of time to teaching certain elements of the English language," yet notes that there is very little empirical research on ELL children in

school (ADE, 2008). This subtopic focuses on a recent study of ELLs given separate blocks of time for English language development (ELD blocks) that show a "modest but significantly higher English Oral language and literacy scores" for students in the classroom with time devoted to oral language and reading (ADE, 2008; Saunders, Foorman, & Carlson, 2006). Again there is agreement from language acquisition research that oral language development is important for all students, including ELLs (Saunders, Foorman, & Carlson, 2006). The Saunders et al. study also analyzed ELD blocks in bilingual classrooms and English Immersion classrooms so that class type and program (bilingual programs: transitional bilingual, maintenance, dual language vs. SEI) made no significant difference as the focus was on the ELD block or non-ELD block over a variety of programs (Saunders et al., 2006, p. 187). The research for supporting separate blocks of time in any amount or for four hour blocks was not indicated in the article, and only oral language development was measured, not reading comprehension or academic content knowledge (Saunders et al., 2006). The same study discusses that having targeted instruction is more efficient in the English Immersion models, and that learning increased, but that this has not been extensively discussed in SEI model context (Saunders et al., 2006). The separate block of time for oral English for ELLs in the Saunders et al. study (2006) mentions that "For all students, especially ELLs, meeting challenging academic standards involves developing a strong command of English, especially in terms of its for academic uses" and also mentions that "teachers will need professional development about the importance of using the decontextualized register of

academic language during ELD instruction" (p. 182). Unlike the success of the students oral language development from the separate ELD block in the Saunders et al. study (2006), the subtopic that addresses research supporting the explicit teaching of grammar (also known as "discrete language skills") notes a study in 1993 by Spada and Lightbown that shows decreased teacher effectiveness when teachers only addressed grammar in decontextualized lessons (ADE, 2008).

Krashen, Rolstad and MacSwan (2007) reviewed the Arizona ELL Task Force's research supporting the SEI model over other models and came to very different conclusions citing recent and relevant studies also. They reviewed eleven subtopics and the research to support the subtopics and concluded additional research is important to take into consideration when proposing effective models for ELLs. In every subtopic Krashen, et al. (year) identify additional research to expand the dialogue and attempt to provide opportunities for the readers and possibly the Task Force to consider more supported models, chiefly models that are not structured through time-on-task, teaching discrete skills sequentially and expecting the acquisition of English in fixed periods of time. The review supports the Task Force's assertion that reducing class size will improve ELLs achievement (Krashen, Rolstad, & MacSwan, 2007). Teacher qualifications and funding of ELL programs need attention in Arizona as much as the models proposed (Krashen et al., 2007). Martinez specifically reviews the Arizona ELD model's use of prescriptive and English-only and concludes that there is overwhelming research that learning in an ELL's native language assists

and supports increased student achievement for ELLs in other contexts and academics (Martinez, 2012).

Teacher Preparation, Endorsements, and Training

All teachers and administrators are required to attain Structured English Immersion endorsement in Arizona. Teachers with Bilingual or English as a Second Language endorsement are exempt from additional SEI training. The SEI coursework may be taken as a course at a university, community college, or school districts may offer an approved SEI curriculum for their teachers. Coursework consists of six semester hours or 90 hours of instruction covering the history of language acquisition, cultural sensitivity of diverse student cultures, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) techniques or Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) strategies that use instructional models tailored for ELLs. Training must include integrating comprehensible input (making text easier to understand through visuals as an example), speaking slower, giving wait time for students to listen, specific feedback, grouping structures, building background and vocabulary development, and student engagement which are strategies supported by the research for ELLs in both SDAIE and SIOP models (Peregoy, 2005; ADE, 2011).

Funding from the Federal entitlement grants (Title I, II, III and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act/ARRA) allows schools and districts that are eligible due to large numbers of student in poverty, which also happen to have large number of ELL students, to invest in teacher training, recruiting highly qualified teachers, and supporting supplemental programs to increase student

achievement (USDOE, 2009). A report with recommendations for addressing the needs of ELLs cites that there is a shortage of ESL endorsed teachers as well as a shortage of Bilingual teachers, and that there are only three states, Arizona, Florida, and New York, which have teacher standards for instruction of ELLs (USDOE, 2009).

Christie (2008) points to scholarly work by Hakuta which states 1) that quality instruction is what matters, not just the quantity; 2) that training for teachers is preferably imbedded in their work days to explicitly address the needs of ELLs; and 3) that teachers should work together to have language development in all content areas (Christie, 2008). Brock, Moore, and Park (2007) discuss the importance of compensating for the cultural mismatches that may exist between teachers and ELL students by explicitly preparing teachers for delivering instruction to students of diverse cultural backgrounds. Brock (2007) reviews "white, monolingual, middle-class" student teachers and their reflections on their experiences teaching diverse students literacy. The study concludes in part the need to prepare teachers, especially teachers that are from the cultural majority to look beyond the ELLs seemingly deficiencies in language, and strive to make a connection to the students to meet their individual needs.

As reforms continue to trend to English-only, the theoretical framework of language interactionist theory focusing on the interaction of the teachers with the students is critical. Research indicates that teacher preparation programs, whether at colleges, universities, or school and district orientation, should emphasize that learners' needs are the priority and that learning a second language for the

students may be just as challenging as the teacher's learning to teach through strategies to facilitate the ELLs achievement in both acquiring language and mastering content (Mora, 2000). Mora implores that teacher preparation programs continue to emphasize the building of cultural capital for ELL students to attain the opportunities of their native English speaking peers.

Arizona Teachers and the SEI/ELD 4-Hour Model

The Civil Rights Project at UCLA published a study specific to Arizona's model in the context of teachers' understanding, perceptions, preparation, and effectiveness of the Arizona ELD Model (Rios-Aguilar, 2012). The study findings show the complexities of the conditions in schools with high Latino, high poverty, and high proportion of ELLs and also reports all but 6% of the teachers in the study had SEI, ESL, Bilingual Full or Provisional Endorsements (Rios-Aguilar, 2012). The interaction opportunities of the students to access English speaking peers are limited by the separation during the four-hour block, and by the high number of ELLs (Rios-Aguilar, 2012). The teachers perceived that their students were not getting access to rigorous academic content, and that separation from their peers was not considered an effective teaching strategy (Rios-Aguilar, 2010).

Once an ELL student is reclassified as proficient through the AZELLA assessment, the student may be moved into the mainstream classroom, and the teachers receiving the student will need to continue to make adjustments to instruction to meet the needs of the ELL reclassified student. De Jong and Harper (2005) propose that teachers of ELLs in mainstream classrooms must go beyond

"just good teaching (JGT)"and should develop skills in addition to regular teacher preparation.strategies considered "just good teaching" may not address the ELLs needs in the "domain of language and culture" (p. 103). De Jong specifically identifies issues with teachers interpreting assessments; "when assessing reading comprehension, a common strategy that good teachers of native English speakers use is asking students to retell or summarize a text that has been read. Such production tasks can seriously underestimate the comprehension of ELs who can typically understand more than they are able to produce in the second language" (p. 103). This can be particularly important when determining if an ELL is proficient using the AZELLA, which may not capture the true comprehension of the ELLs and which may keep them out of the mainstream classroom.

Reclassification of English Language Learners

AZELLA is the gatekeeper assessment for ELLs in Arizona. Once a student is deemed proficient, then the student may receive instruction with their native English-speaking peers in a mainstream classroom, assuming the student was not on an Individual Language Learner Plan (ILLP) in a mainstream classroom due to having fewer than 20 ELLs in a grade level span. De Jong (2004) points out that there is "little agreement" on when ELLs are proficient and should be reclassified as no longer needing services for language. States and districts and schools within states may view reclassification of ELLs differently, with some states mandating certain scores on language assessments, standardized test scores, or teacher judgment (De Jong, 2004; Linquanti, 2001; Hakuta & Butler, 2000; Mahoney, 2005; Grissom, 2004). It is interesting to note that in the

Arizona technical manual to meet Federal AMAOs required by Title III, a baseline was established in 2003 using four other assessment for ELLs, not the current AZELLA assessment, which is currently under scrutiny from the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division (ADE, 2012).

There is also little agreement between supporters of English-only and supporters of bilingual education on the time it takes for ELLs to become proficient in English. There is abundant research available on how long it takes to learn English when applying bilingual models: transitional bilingual programs may take 3 to 5 years; dual-language or two-way immersion may take up to 7 years (Hakuta & Butler, 2000; Crawford, 1997; Cummings, 1984; Krashen, 1996). The SEI or ELD models use English as the language of instruction and focus on the ELL students learning English rather than focus on the ELL students learning academic content, yet there is less research on how long it takes to reach proficiency (De Jong, 2004). The Arizona ELD models expect to have students reclassified as proficient after one year of SEI instruction in a four-hour block and may use the AZELLA assessments to reclassify ELLs up to two times per year (ADE, 2011; Clark, 2009). Language proficiency is supposed to prepare the student for academic content after they are reclassified, yet little data exists to support that the reclassified ELLs perform as well as their native speaking peers on state academic exams. The Auditor General's report on the Arizona English Language Learner Program states the SEI models are "designed so that ELL students could become proficient in one year" and concludes in part that "although more students have attained English proficiency since the State adopted

the SEI models in fiscal year 2008, other factors could explain the higher reclassification rates" (ADE, 2011, p 3).

Standardized Testing and High Stakes Accountability

Language Assessment

The English language assessment tests like the AZELLA are very different from the standardized tests like the AIMS and are used for different purposes. The AZELLA is used to determine identification of ELLs as to their level of proficiency in English: pre-emergent, emergent, basic, intermediate, proficient, or advanced. Once a student is deemed proficient, the student may be placed in a regular education program and does not require four hours of SEI, unless after two years the student is tested again using AZELLA, and may be classified for a third time back into an SEI program (ADE, 2008; Auditor General, 2011). States use many different assessments to determine language proficiency, with some states using academic content assessments like the Stanford9 to determine ELL status (Mahoney, 2005; De Jong, 2004).

Arizona uses a language assessment (AZELLA) for ELL status and an academic content assessment for all students, the AIMS (Rios-Aguilar, 2012). Several recent studies noted that the AZELLA has been changed often, making comparisons of its effectiveness challenging, and as Martinez (2012) concludes may have inflated reclassification of students and exit ELLs too soon, which is recently supported by the Departments of Justice and Education directive to Arizona to change its assessment of its ELLs (USDOJ, 2012). The identification of students as English Language Learners has evolved over the time of this study

with different preliminary questions about the student and the family's home language driving the decision to assess the student in the English language using different versions of the AZELLA language assessment over this same period of time. Of course, if the students are tested to determine if they are an ELL student, the students are to receive instruction in English to learn English in the Arizona ELD Model, and if there is a concentration of ELL students of a number greater than 20 in a grade level span in a school, then the students are placed in ELD classrooms separate from English proficient students (Garcia, 2011). Recent settlements in March of 2011 and August 2012 between the Federal Government's departments of Justice and Education civil rights divisions and the Arizona Department of Education focus on the home language survey used to determine whether to assess an ELL, with the federal offices finding that the current assessment is insufficient to meet the needs of ELLs due to the under-identification of ELLs, and require an improved assessment to determine proficiency to exit ELLs, yet makes no specific recommendations to continue to change the current ELD model of instruction for targeted services for ELLs (USDOJ, 2012).

Academic Content Assessment (Reading & Math)

Tests like the AIMS or the Stanford 9 are designed to measure what students' levels of achievement are for reading and math. Standardized test scores may be misinterpreted, misreported, and fraught with validity issues, yet most all of the methods for analyzing comparative performance between and among students and student subgroups, districts, states, and the world use the

scores (Thompson, DiCerbo, Mahoney & MacSwan, 2002; Abedi, Hofstetter, & Lord, 2004). Wright and Choi's (2006) study recommended excluding ELLs from taking a high-stakes tests until they were proficient in English; the Arizona State Department of Education applied for this exclusion and was denied in 2006, as the NCLB Federal requirements were to require all subgroups to take state administered tests (Wright & Choi, 2006; ADE, 2006; Menken, 2006). The study also recommended that ELLs have access to their first language and access to a full curriculum (not just tested subjects of Reading, Math and Writing), possibly because teachers reported teaching more high-stakes subjects and less non-tested subjects, especially Science and Social Studies (Wright & Choi, 2006, Menken, 2006).

Tests are called "high stakes" when measured achievement are used either for the state or the federal accountability and may result in the schools and districts confronting reorganizing consequences including changing key staff, and/or closing schools (Menken, 2006; Porter, Linn &Trimble, 2005). The sanctions are serious and schools focus on the curriculum of the test (Abedi, 2004; Porter et al., 2005). The importance of test scores has increased with No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top (RTTT), competitive grants for both states and districts. Test scores are to be connected directly to teachers as a condition of receiving the grants, and Arizona along with other states has adopted guidelines to use test scores for performance evaluations at the classroom level, the school label level, and the district level (ADE, 2011). Schools in corrective action over not making AYP from the federal accountability requirements are usually lagging due

to students in subgroups of poverty, race and ethnicity subgroups, special education, and language learners (Porter, et al., 2005; Abedi, 2004). Arizona has added a new labeling system that weighs the bottom 25% of student tests scores twice, uses ELL reclassification rate-cut scores for points to meet a new A-F accountability labeling system (ADE, 2011). ELLs must be reclassified at 30% or more for a school to receive three points for the Arizona A-F label system, and 19% reclassification rates to meet Federal AMAOs under Title III.

For ELLs, the challenges of high-stakes tests not only include academic language content, as mathematics curriculum includes complex English more than ever (Bielenberg & Fillmore, 2005). State math tests use more English language with the word problems: students are measured on how to solve problems and math is not just computations with formulas anymore. Teaching to the standards-based and standardized tests usually drives English instruction "where language is purposefully used as the test preparation strategy" (Menken, 2006, p. 537; Bienlenberg & Fillmore, 2005). Arizona's AIMS 2010 test for Math was significantly different from the previous years; so different that the Arizona Department of Education indicated that test scores from prior AIMS data could not and should be compared with the new 2010 Math AIMS test as the test was more rigorous than in previous years and more dependent on language through the inquiry based word problems (ADE, 2010).

The stakes are indeed high for all students, schools, and district, but especially for ELLs, as many state tests do not offer accommodations consistently. Arizona does not offer the AIMs test in the first language of the ELL

as an accommodation and this omission will also lower student performance to what it otherwise would be (Menken, 2006; Abedi, 2004; Bielenberg & Fillmore, 2005).

Arizona's A-F Accountability System and ELL Points

State high-stakes assessments added in the last two years (2010-2011 &2011-2012) use the reclassification rate of ELLs to measure a portion of the school's performance label. If a school exits out ELLs at a rate of 30% or higher, it receives three more points towards their A-F grade calculation. The reclassification rates by school are not published in an easily accessible dataset at the time of this study, but the fact remains that how ELLs progress on the AZELLA assessment from pre-emergent, emergent, basic, intermediate to proficient is counted towards a state accountability label that comes with consequences of increased intervention from the state if a school or district does not attain a grade of C or better. It is interesting that the reclassification rate of ELLs required to meet Arizona's accountability is higher (30%) than that of the Federal government Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives requirement at 19%. The difference in the measures may indicate that more weight or more importance is given to the ELLs passing the language assessment (AZELLA) from a state perspective by the state's assignment of three points towards the state accountability measures, where the Federal AMAO's measure is more directly tied to the ELL subgroups' student achievement on the AIMS academic tests. Both the state and the federal goals for successful reclassification of ELLs are to

increase student achievement in academics, but as noted by both measures, there continues to be a gap in academic achievement for ELLs.

These high-stakes assessments and their consequences require a balanced review of all structured immersion models like the current Arizona ELD model and other integrated approaches to second-language instruction in language programs that use both first and second languages. The theoretical framework reviews language acquisition theories that support interaction of the student with the teacher and interaction with other students that are both ELL and native-English speakers. The methodological framework reviews data from urban public schools that have a concentration of ELLs and consequently will have the requirement to place their ELL students in the Arizona ELD Structured English Immersion model.

Chapter 3

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

Theoretical Framework

This theoretical framework contextualizes the research about acquiring a second language by reviewing the general idea of language, how one acquires a language, and the purpose of learning languages. Research questions concern how fast learners of English are reclassified from non-proficient to being proficient and how the English language learner performs on the academic tests of the AIMs in reading and mathematics. The interactionist theory of language acquisition is discussed, and the basis for choosing the interactionist framework for acquiring a second language is explained in the context of how and how much the English language learner interacts before and after the onset of the ELD model. Recall the model prescribes the amount of access the students have to the English language and to each other while learning the language. The methodological framework describes why the unit of study and the source of the data from urban K-8 public school districts that serve a high ELL population are important to asking the question of how fast the ELL students learn English. The possible impact of the model can be analyzed and discussed through changes in the reclassification rate of ELLs and/or the change in academic student achievement in reading and math. Interaction is a key component of the ELD model being studied, including by the student interacting with the instructor, interacting with other students, and accessing to opportunities to interact with the English language.

Interactionist Language Acquisition Theory

The interactionist theory of language acquisition is supported by the sociocultural model developed by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist who believed that a child observes first, then speaks and learns a language (Peregoy, 2005). This interactionist theory builds on the ability for humans to develop language when interacting with others. Children's interactions are a critical element in the acquisition of language. When adults interact with children, they help the children to make modifications and corrections so that speaking naturally aligns with the social and cultural appropriateness in the use of language (Peregoy, 2005).

Learning a language in the context of culturally appropriate use and development is one of the key contributions of this school of thought (Carey, 2007). He explains that this process can be compared to being able to understand the nuances of a joke, or understanding the idioms used in daily conversation like "kicking the bucket, or hanging one's head" that, without the practice through interaction, would not convey the intended meaning (Carey, 2007). Carey also points out that the sequence of learning a language is not orderly; that is, a child does not necessarily go from listening to speaking to reading then to writing in that order, but the child will skip around the four skills and that the skills are a part of a common "linguistic data pool" (Carey, 2007). Understanding the implications of learning a language in context is relevant for this study because as Cummins (1982), one of the leading researchers on second language acquisition (SLA) points out, "students can and do learn language through content and

content through language" and that this interaction is not made up of separate sequences (Carey, 2007). Cummins' (1982 &1999) early findings show that learning a second language is best acquired by developing first the literacy in the home or minority language, which then aids in the transfer of knowledge to the target or majority language, in this case in English. Cummins is the early leader as his work is cited extensively in later studies; his studies in the 1980s found that one's first language is interdependent with one's acquisition of second languages (Lugo-Neris, 2010). Subsequent studies continue to support those early findings that the use of the student's first language in instruction does increase the students' learning of the second language (Collier, 200, Genesee, 2005; McLaughlin, 2008; Coleman, 2010; Lugo-Neris 2010; Martinez-Wenzl, 2012).

Peregoy (2005) and Martinez-Wenzl (2012) specifically support Cummins' theory that a "common underlying proficiency (CUP)" allows knowledge transfer between the minority and the majority language. This transfer of knowledge is also supported by the interactionist theory and is again an important lens for this study as the reclassification of ELLS and the student achievement of ELLS may be impacted by the use of only the majority language in the Arizona ELD model (Collier, 2002; Genesee, 2005; Coleman, 2010; Lugo-Neris, 2010). Interaction and interdependence are evident with the common underlying proficiency development using the first language to understand the concepts, and then transfer the comprehension to the second language. Krashen (2007r) also discusses the importance of the interaction of the learner with the teacher and other students both in social settings using Basic Interpersonal

Communication skills (BICS) and in academic settings using Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency skills (CALPS) to express skills, ideas and concepts.

Findings from Thomas and Collier's (2002) national study of long-term academic achievement for ELLs demonstrate the importance of providing a socio-culturally supportive school environment for language minority students that allows natural language, academic, and cognitive development to flourish in the native and second language. They note that each school context is different, and significant elements within each context can strongly influence students' academic achievement. Bilingually schooled students outperform monolingually schooled students in all subjects after 4-7 years of bilingual education (Thomas, 2002). This connection of the interaction of the first language to the second language, and to culturally sensitive instruction, also supports the interactionist theory of language acquisition. Four to seven years to learn both a second language and to perform well academically is also directly counter to the one year short-term Arizona ELD model. The short term programs are not sufficient for ELLs to acquire proficiency in English, and certainly not in English only. "The strongest predictor of the second language (L2) achievement is the amount of formal first language L1 schooling" (Thomas, 2002, p.18). This theoretical framework of the interaction of language, students, culture, and sufficient time is logical and research based, and is the lens for which this study views the data.

Methodological Framework

Concentration of English Language Learners

The districts chosen for this study are located in an urban area within the metropolitan Phoenix area, are geographically adjacent and are similar in the ELL and SES demographics so as to have an opportunity to compare and contrast how student achievement scores have changed before and after the ELD Model was implemented over six years (2006-2007 through 2011-2012). Urban public K-8 schools are the focus of this study as many of the ELLs are in the lower elementary grades and will have a more consistent grouping by language in general education settings (Garcia, 2011). One of the six urban districts has been monitored and reported by the Arizona Auditor General as being fully in compliance with the ELD Model's requirements in the 2008-2009 school year (Arizona Office of the Auditor General, 2011). A district in compliance is one that has all three main features of properly testing/assessing students for proficiency; properly grouping students by proficiency; and to properly applying the four hours of instruction using a Structured English Immersion (SEI) model in English only (Arizona Office of the Auditor General, 2011).

This study does not, however, analyze the type or depth of implementation of the model, using instead the standard the Arizona Office of the Auditor General reports as a school district being in compliance with the ELD model (June, 2011 Report No. 11-06 State of Arizona Office of the Auditor General "Arizona English Language Learner Program"). The six K-8 elementary districts selected range in total student enrollment from 1,000 to 8,000 students; are 80% to 100%

free and reduced lunch; have 30% to 55% English Language Learners within a 5-6 mile radius of the center of Phoenix, and are considered “regular” elementary school districts (non-charter schools) in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Elementary School Districts in the City of Phoenix (May, 2011).

Sources of Publically Accessible Data

Data for this study are publically available for download from the Arizona Department of Education, AIMS results at http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/aims-assessment-results (ADE, 2012). Data for 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 were downloaded into Excel spreadsheets with the following attributes selected for the study: Fiscal Year, Local Education Agency or District (LEA), School Name, Grade (3-8), Math Mean Scale Score, Reading Mean Scale Score. The district demographics for poverty are downloaded from the ADE’s website for http://www.azed.gov/health-nutrition/frpercentages/ for the same schools years 2007-2012. The data collected to determine the concentration of ELL students is available online through the following links:

http://www.azed.gov/finance/, choosing "Submitted Files and Reports, http://www.ade.az.gov/Districts/EntitySelection.asp, then selecting the districts observed one by one through a drop down menu, http://www.ade.az.gov/Districts/Default.asp?EntityOwnerID=4256, then choosing "Reports/Data" tab, choosing "All Fiscal Years" from the Fiscal Year drop down menu and "ELLS" from the "System" drop down menu. The links for the ELL reports by school year are available, choosing the report "ELLS 10A Report" for each school year and each district.

Reclassification Rates for ELLs

The reclassification rate of ELL students is not yet available as an online reportable dataset by school or by district at http://www.azed.gov/english-language-learners/title-iii/, only if the school or district achieved the 19% reclassification indicated by a "yes" or a "no". If a school district reclassifies 19% or more of their ELL students, it is reported that the district has met their Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) under a federal Title III reporting requirement (ADE, 2012). The recent settlement from the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education refer to the under-identification of ELLs and directed Arizona to change the assessment method it uses to determine proficiency, a change which may alter how Arizona determines reclassification of ELLs in the future (USDOJ, 2012; Martinez, 2012).

Compliance with the Arizona ELD Model

Districts that are in compliance with ELD model as defined by the Arizona Office of the Auditor General are compared to districts that are not in compliance.

A district is deemed in compliance if the district separates ELL students from non-ELL students and provides instruction only in English to the ELLs for at least four hours per day. Other factors that might influence the rate at which students become proficient (or not) and the level of academic student achievement are reviewed and analyzed for level of impact using quantitative data analyses. Two key factors reviewed are the socio-economic status (SES: poverty as a percentage measured by students receiving free and reduced lunch) of the districts and the amount of concentration of ELLs measured as a percentage of ELLs of the district, data which are available by district on the Arizona Department of Education website. These key factors have been deemed to affect both academic student achievement and the rate which a student learns a second language (Hakuta, 1999). Measurements are quantitatively expressed through percent passing for the AIMs in Reading and Math tests for six urban elementary school districts and the State for grades 3-8, and changes in percentages of ELLs for the districts in the study as compared to percent reclassified by the State.

Home Language Survey Issues

When students are enrolled in a public school in Arizona prior to the Arizona ELD model requirement in 2009, parents were asked three questions about language: 1) What is the primary language used in the home regardless of the language of the student? 2) What is the language most often spoken by the student" and 3) What is the language the student first acquired? If any of the answers given were positive, then the student was assessed for English language proficiency using the state language assessment (Arizona English Language

Learners Assessment: AZELLA). In July 2009, the Arizona Department of Education reduced the number of questions asked from three to one question. The one question was 1)What is the primary language of the student?, The idea that this would simplify the process is countered by the idea that fewer students would be identified as possible ELLs, with fewer ELLs identified for services for the ELD model, and fewer students being reported for funding for ELL services. It is a bit of a catch-22 in that if fewer students are identified with a one-question home language survey, then fewer students would be required to be separated from their Native English speaking peers, but would not be required to be monitored for extra language services in a mainstream classroom, and fewer students would be counted for funding for language services. In March of 2011, the Departments of Justice and Education settled with the Arizona Department of Education to go back to the three questions on the Home Language Survey. Beginning in July 2011, all students enrolled for the 2011-2012 school year have had the three question survey administered. The results are available as of August 2012, and districts have been notified that they are to un-reclassify some portion of their students and classify them as needing ELL services and to be re-assessed and placed back into the ELD model (USDOJ, USDOE, 2012).

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

The research questions are analyzed over a six-year period from school year 2006-2007 through 2011-2012 to review what changes if any occurred over time beginning with two years before the ELD Model was required through four subsequent years for six school districts that had similar poverty and language learner populations. The districts are also compared to the State for both research questions on changes in AIMS Math and AIMS Reading measured by percent of students passing the tests, and changes in numbers of ELLs by district and reclassification rates of ELLs by State. The gap in achievement for students in the six urban districts is reported by calculating the difference in percent passing for AIMS Math and AIMS Reading between the individual districts to the State percent passing.

Tables capture information about the six urban school districts for poverty statistics measured by Free and Reduced Lunch data, the concentration of ELLs measured by the number of ELLs reported as funded for each district, and the number of students tested for each subject test over the 2007 to 2012 school years. These data show the demographic similarities of the urban schools districts with the only demographic difference captured for this study is whether or not the districts are in compliance with the ELD Model as reported by the Auditor General's report of 2011, of which only one is reported as fully compliant. Realizing that there are many other factors that might impact and influence the results of student achievement, this study focuses on student achievement trends

of urban districts over time as compared to the State, to report what changes in student achievement and numbers of ELLs each district and make recommendations for further study.

The changes in the number of ELLs over the 2007-2012 school year are reported by the number of ELLs funded by district with the assumption that decreases in the percentage of ELLs by district should correlate to the number of ELLS reclassified (unless they all left of their own accord). Although the reclassification rate of ELLs was not available by district at the time of this study, a comparison is made to the percentage of ELLs reclassified by the State, with references to the state level report from the Auditor General in 2011 regarding their findings on why the number of ELLs is reported as declining at least through 2010.

The differences in the variances of the percent passing are also analyzed by calculating average growth pre- and post- the new ELD Model by defining the school year of the ELD Model requirement and comparing the districts' average growth with the State growth in AIMS Math and AIMS Reading percent passing in the context of the ELD Model. These comparisons seek to find patterns and trends of student achievement over a period of time focusing on data that are pertinent to ELLs and time periods that span the ELD Model introduction.

Descriptive Statistics

The six districts are in close proximity geographically, in an urban core in the City of Phoenix. They districts have a minimum of 77 % Free and Reduced Lunch, which is considered high poverty by both state and federal guidelines, and

high concentrations of ELL students as shown in the following tables for the districts and the State. The districts in this study will be named District U through District Z, and the school years are for the study is 2007-2012. Tables 1 through 4 show the summaries on percentages for Free and Reduced Lunch, percentages of English Language Learners for the districts in the study and the average number students tested by year for both Math and Reading. The State level data show percentage of ELLs reclassified, percent of Free and Reduced Lunch as an average of all reporting districts in the state, and number of students tested in Math and Reading K-8. The trends that are depicted in these descriptive statistics are that poverty continues to be a main demographic for the districts in the study, and that the number of ELLs is decreasing over the time period of the study for the districts.

Table 1

Statistics for Percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch for Six Districts

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Std. Deviation
2006-2007	85.50	77	92	15	5.089
2007-2008	85.50	77	92	15	5.089
2008-2009	84.00	75	91	16	6.633
2009-2010	84.33	72	93	21	8.017
2010-2011	90.67	85	95	10	4.227
2011-2012	91.50	87	97	10	3.937

Source: Arizona Department of Education – Nutrition Department.

The pattern of increasing poverty over time for all the six districts in the study may impact the student achievement negatively. Hakuta (1999) points out that poverty is a key factor in student academic achievement, and that it is harder for students in poverty to perform well academically. It makes sense that students who have less resources at home will have less opportunity and access to printed material, technology, and even language development for either ELL or non-ELL students. The challenges and purpose for the public school system has always been to provide free and uniform access to education for all students. The districts in the study show that poverty is increasing from having 7 out of 10 students living below the standards set by the federal guidelines in 2006-2007 to 9 out of 10 students in poverty. Poverty is a factor that has always been used to calculate additional funding from the federal government, and accountability goals are created for students in poverty to learn more than a year's worth of academics in order to close the achievement gap. ELL students are also often students in poverty, as recent immigrants starting to establish their families will often not earn enough to meet or exceed the standard that a family of four earns $23,050 for the year in 2012 (Health and Human Services, 2012). That means that if both parents work 40 hours per week, that is less than $11/hour combined, or less than the minimum wage ($7.65/hour in Arizona for 2012) for both earners; either one is working less than full time or is unemployed.

The data for Group B ELL students is available through the Arizona Department of Education School Finance website. The number of average daily membership days for English Language Learners is a subset of all students in a

district's average daily membership. These numbers of students are used to fund both general education and incremental funding for ELLs for districts. Membership days are reported for the 100th day for each district, and the percentage of Group B ELL students is calculated by dividing the ELL membership days from the total student membership days on the 100th day. For the sake of explanation, a membership day is when a student is enrolled in the school. If a student is enrolled on the first day of school and is still enrolled at the 100th day of school (usually in late January or early February depending on the school's calendar) then that student has one full membership and is funded as one student. If a student leaves before the 100th day, for instance on the 90th day, then that student is funded at .9 and 90% of the funding will be calculated for that student. Conversely, if a student arrives after the first day of school, the funding is prorated/reduced for that student; for instance if a student arrives on the 20th day after school starts and stays enrolled through the 100th day, funding for that student is calculated at .8 or 80%. Data are uploaded every 20 days to the department of education to calculate membership days, in both general student counts and categories of student counts. If a student is identified as an ELL student through the home language survey and through the AZELLA language assessment, that student is counted as an ELL student for Group B categorical funding.

The six districts show the average percent of ELLs hover around 32% in 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 before the ELD Model; then starts to decrease a bit in 2008-2009 at 28%, then 23% in 2009-2010. The range and standard deviation for

percentage of ELLs show that there is more difference in concentration of ELLs in 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 (wider range), less in the years between 2008-2009 to 2010-2011, then more again in 2011-2012. This seems to be corroborated by the Auditor General's report that the State also experienced a reduction in ELL students, which the report attributed to ELLs learning English at a faster rate (being reclassified as proficient), some withdrawing from the program (15%), and less enrolling in Arizona schools (35% less) (Arizona Auditor General, 2011).

Table 2

Statistics for Percentage of Group B ELL Count for Six Districts

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Std. Deviation
2006-2007	32.25	20	43	23	8.073
2007-2008	31.75	23	38	15	6.140
2008-2009	28.50	21	34	13	4.626
2009-2010	23.14	15	28	13	4.664
2010-2011	18.39	12	24	12	4.769
2011-2012	17.33	11	32	21	7.608

Source: Arizona Department of Education School Finance (% is calculated).

With the number of Group B students by district by school year generally declining over the course of the years of this study, a look at the total number of students tested is important to review to see if there were changes over the same period of time in and were the changes in the same direction as the ELLs (decreasing).

The data in Table 3 show that there were an almost equal number of students tested in AIMS Math as there are in AIMS Reading in each district in each school year, a good check to see the same students took the same tests. There is a decline in number of students tested over the time period studied, with Districts Y and Z losing 3% and 7% of their students over six years, and Districts U and W losing 17% of their students, and District V losing 11%. If the number of students tested decreased by the same amount as the percent of ELLs also decreased, then the concentration of ELLs is fairly constant, and the number of students reclassified may not be as great, although the unit of data is not available. One can calculate mathematically that as general population decreases, the percent of the subpopulation targeted should be tracked to make sure the program is not just losing students. Many districts in Arizona experience declines in total student population due many factors (charter schools, decline in economy in the neighborhood, competition from other public schools).

Table 3

Mean Number of Students Tested in Math and Reading for Districts

Mean # Students Tested	District U	District V	District W	District X	District Y	District Z
Math 2007	829	843	270	377	791	131
Reading 2007	829	841	270	381	789	131
Math 2008	794	819	247	370	794	127
Reading 2008	795	819	247	370	794	127
Math 2009	780	802	238	351	800	128
Reading 2009	780	802	238	351	800	128
Math 2010	745	789	240	345	710	124
Reading 2010	744	789	240	345	710	124
Math 2011	689	756	225	330	741	123
Reading 2011	689	756	225	330	742	123
Math 2012	692	751	223	311	762	122
Reading 2012	692	751	223	311	763	122
Average 2007-2012	754.8	793.2	240.5	347.7	766.3	125.8
Change in number	-137	-90	-47	-70	-26	-9
Change in percent	-17%	-11%	-17%	-18%	-3%	-7%

Decline in districts notwithstanding, the State descriptive statistics have similar trends over time in number of ELLs, poverty, and number of total students tested. The Department of Education reports that the State has reclassified ELLs as proficient at increasing percentages from 2006-2007 to 2010-2011, 12% to 23% respectively. The state level reports of Free and Reduced Lunch also increase in poverty similar to the six districts in the study, but not as steeply with changes moving from 50% Free and Reduced to 59% from 2007 to 2012. The number of students tested also declines from 2006 at around 81,500 reduced to 79,000 third through eighth graders in 2012, similar in direction to the districts in the study, but less at the state level of -3-4% decline in students since 2007.

Table 4

English Language Learners % Reclassified and State Level Poverty

	% of ELLs Re-classified	% of Free & Reduced Lunch	# Students Tested Math	# Students Tested Reading	# of ELLS from Group B Counts for Title III Allocations
2006-2007	12	50	81,744	81,442	**
2007-2008	22	51	81,076	80,840	**
2008-2009	29	53	81,671	81,502	150,078
2009-2010	30	57	80,463	80,512	123,082
2010-2011	23	57	80,555	80,861	89,400
2011-2012	*	59	78,876	79,209	71,010
2012-2013	**	**	**	**	69,804
Change in number			-2,868	-2,233	-80,274
Change in percent			-4%	-3%	-53%

Source: Arizona Department of Education (*not yet reported, **not available).

Arizona Auditor General Report

As reported by the June 2011 Arizona Auditor General, the following data are available for the six urban school districts identified in this study as District U, District V, District W, District X, District Y and District Z. Student data were collected from the Arizona Department of Education Student Accountability Information system for sixty districts for the Audit report. The report stated that over two-thirds of the districts audited were not in compliance with the Arizona ELD model either by not grouping students separately if they were identified as

ELLs through AZELLA test data or, if less than twenty students were identified, there may not have been appropriate Individual Language Learner Plans (ILLPs) for the ELLs. Districts that did not have a Structured English Immersion (SEI) model as prescribed by the State's requirements were also found out of compliance. The districts in this study are identified by letters W-Z in Table 5, listing whether or not they were found partially compliant, fully compliant, or not audited. The report states that the data was collected for school year 2009-2010, in the second year of implementation of the ELD Model. In addition to student data collected, the data consisted of observations of classrooms, survey of responses from school districts, and monitoring data and letters from the Arizona Department of Education (Arizona Auditor General, 2011). The report also shows that there has been progress made in reclassifying ELLs, despite the non-compliance of over two-thirds of the districts, and recommends that more monitoring by the ADE be conducted to ensure increased and continued compliance with the Arizona ELD model requirements.

Table 5

District Compliance Status with Arizona Auditor General

District	SEI	ILLP	Fully Compliant
District U	YES	YES	NO
District V	YES	NO	NO
District W	YES	YES	NO
District X	YES	YES	NO
District Y	YES	YES	YES
District Z	Not Audited	Not Audited	Not Audited

Source: Office of the Arizona Auditor General, June 2011.

This study examines six urban districts over several years; one year before ELD and five years after ELD to study any changes in student achievement or changes in percentages of ELLs, with the identification of one of the six districts as being in full compliance with the ELD Model, namely, District Y. Changes in AIMS Math and AIMS Reading for the six districts are also compared to the State AIMS test scores for a point of reference to study the trends.

Research Question 1 Findings

1. Has the implementation of the English Language Development model produced changes in the academic achievement of English Language Learners as measured by AIMS (Reading and Mathematics)?

To begin to answer this question, the data are organized in the following charts to show the changes using trend lines over the period before and after the ELD model was in place for the six districts in AIMS Reading and AIMS Math.

The percent passing for all grade 3-8 students in Arizona is also plotted to provide a consistent reference point for both the group of six urban districts studied over the time period before and after the ELD model. Average percent passing for AIMS Math and AIMS Reading in grades three through eight are represented for Districts U, V, W, X, Y and Z as well as the State. The District Y trend line is bolded to highlight that it is the district that was reported as "Fully Compliant" with the Arizona ELD model as was indicated in Table 5.

Trends in Percent Passing in AIMS Math and AIMS Reading

Figure 6 shows the average percent passing of third through eighth grade students for each district in the study for AIMS Math compared to the State. In general, all six districts show the same trend in increases and decreases of all grade 3-8 students' percent passing AIMS Math, and these increases and decreases are all below yet closely parallel to the State, with the following noted exceptions. In school year 2007, Districts V and W had the lowest AIMS percent passing, Districts U and Y the next highest, and Districts Z and X the next highest, which are all lower than the State percent passing in AIMS Math. In 2008, the highest percent passing in AIMS Math occurred in Districts X & Z at 63% and 62% in 2008, compared to the State at 69% passing. The lowest percent passing in AIMS Math occurred in Districts V & W at 54% and 53% passing, with District U and Y in the middle of the high and low districts at 56% and 57% passing in 2008, respectively.

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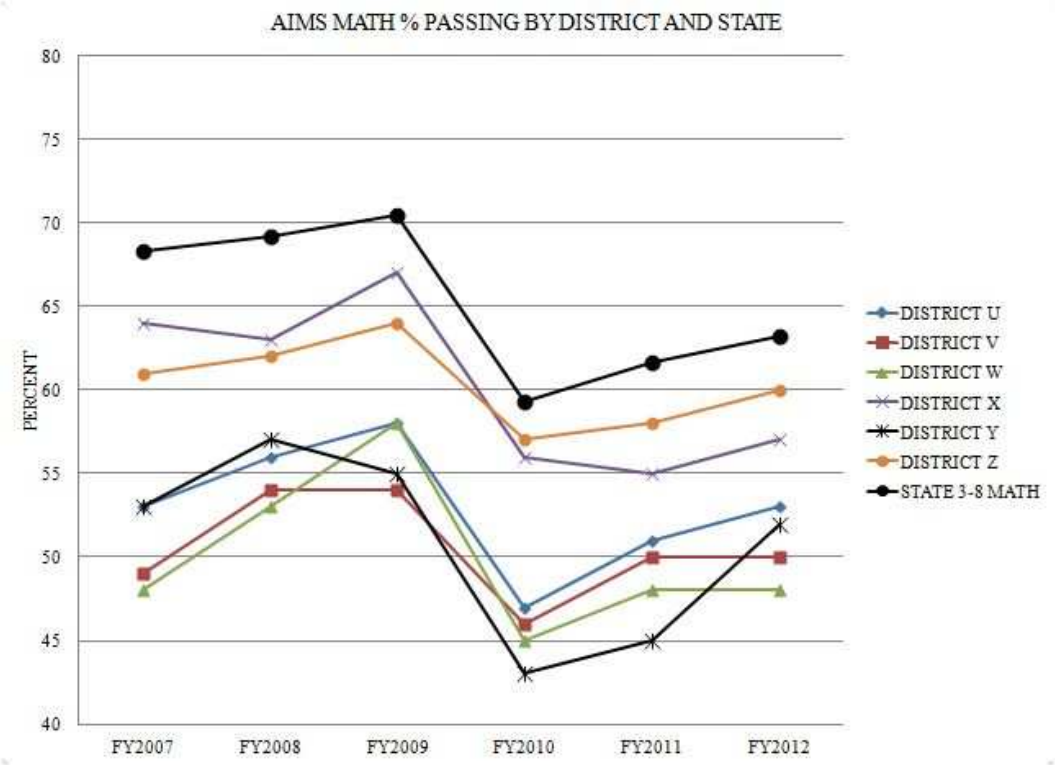
Figure 6. AIMS Math Percentage Passing by Districts and State 2007-2012.



Increases in percent passing in AIMS Math between 2007 and 2008 occurred both statewide and for all six districts except for District X, although District X is still the highest percentage passing in 2008. The year the ELD model is required to be implemented is school year 2008-2009, with test results for the districts showing more variance as follows: District X and Z, still having the highest % passing at 57% and 58% both show increases from 2008, while District V is flat at 54% and District Y decreases to 55%, District W and U both increase to 58% passing for 2009, in the first year of implementation of the ELD model.

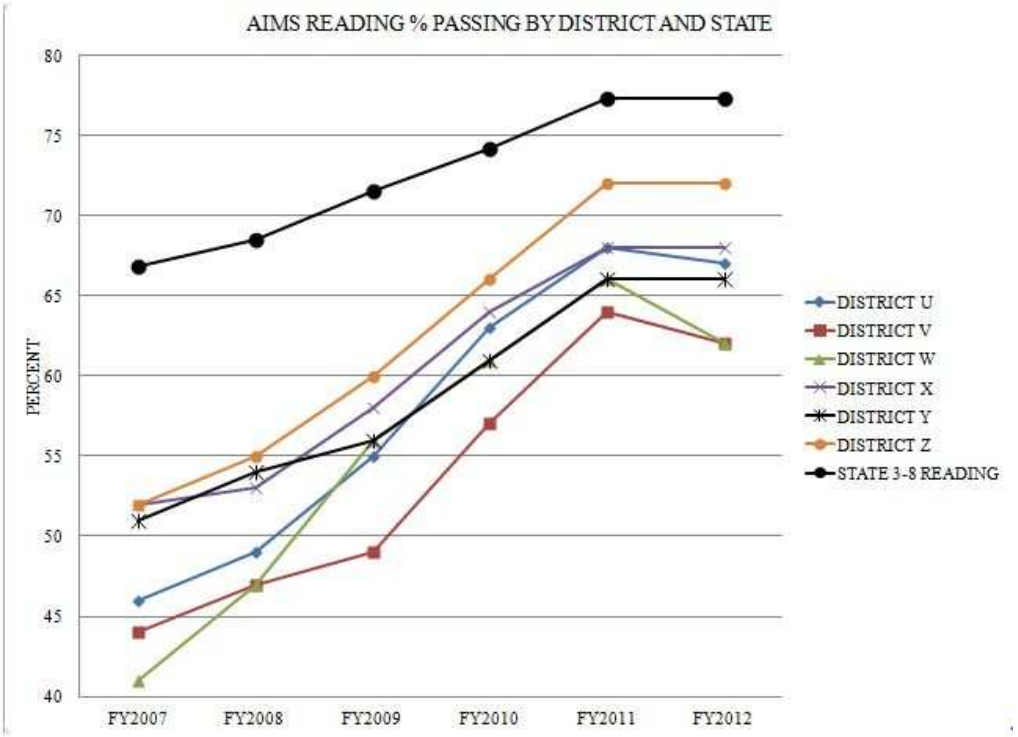
District Y is the district that has been deemed as fully compliant with both the Structured English Immersion model and Individual Language Learner Plans (for groups of students less than 20 in a grade span) and does not increase in

percent passing in Math in the first year of implementation and compliance, but in fact takes a dip from 57% to 55% passing. All districts and the State decreased in percent passing moving from 2009 to 2010, and in the same general amount of percentage points lost, District Y losing the most points.

The decrease of all six districts and the State in AIMS Math in FY2010 may be attributed to the change in the actual AIMS Math test. The Arizona Department of Education issued a statement that the AIMS Math test had changed dramatically and should not be compared to the previous year percent passing (ADE, 2010). All districts increased in percent passing for AIMS Math in 2011 and 2012, still following the same general increasing trend as the State, with the exception of District Y, which had more increases in AIMS Math percentage passing than the trends in the other districts and the State in 2012. District Y moved from the lowest of the group at 43% in 2010 to modest increases at 45% in 2011 moving from last in this group of six districts to third to last at 52% in 2012.

This sharper increase in 2012 for District Y as compared to the other districts and the State only occurred in the 2012 school year, and should be looked at more closely, as the factors of poverty and percent of ELL students did not change in the same sharper difference in any of the districts per the data in Tables 1 and 2, nor did the mean number of students tested change in the same sharper difference in Table 3. For the most part, the trends in AIMS Math percent passing in the six districts continue to be below and somewhat parallel to the State, indicating that the gap in student achievement for all students is not closed, and that the Arizona studied. This unclosed gap is also seen in the AIMS Reading.

Figure 7. AIMS Reading Percentage Passing by Districts and State 2007-2012.



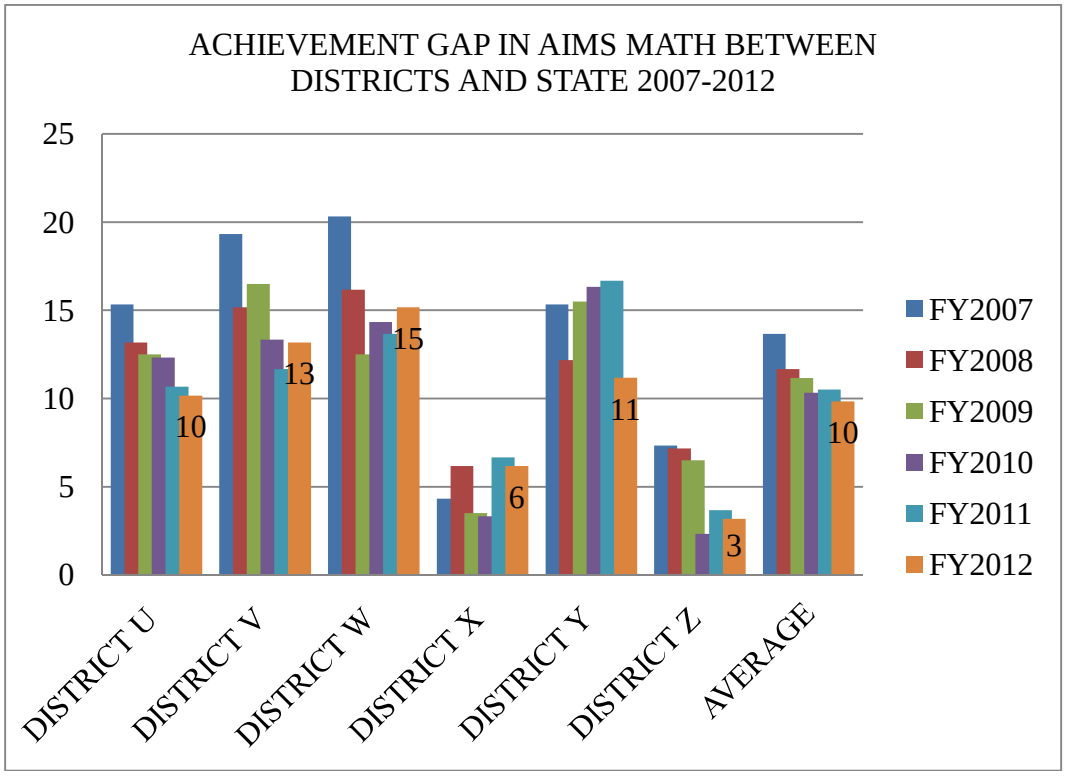
For AIMS Reading, the trend for all six districts is to increase similar to the increase for the State, although with some variance between the districts. District W started at the lowest percent passing for AIMS Reading at 41% passing, rising through the years up to 66% until 2011, then experiencing a decrease to 62% in 2012. Although the State also increases steadily until 2011, the percent passing for all grade 3-8 students is flat from 2011 to 2012 at 77.33%. District V is the next lowest at 44% passing in AIMS Reading in 2007, rising in percent passing to 64% until 2011, then a slight decrease to 62% in 2012. District U is the third lowest at 46% in 2007 up to 68% in 2011, with a one percentage point decrease to 67% in 2012. District Y, X, and Z follow in a similar pattern to each other and the State showing increases in percent passing steadily until 2011,

with no change to 2012 at 66%, 68%, and 72% passing in AIMS Reading, respectively. This mirrored the flat no increase from 2011 to 2012 of percent passing in AIMS Reading of the State, which prompted a second check of the data by grade level. There were definitely changes to percent passing between 2011 and 2012 between grades 3 through 8 in the State, and in Districts Y, X, and Z, yet the averages of the percent passing are equal in 2012, respectively. The increases in AIMS Reading between 2007 to 2012 show progress in the entire State and in the six districts studied, indicating that the improvements occurred, certainly good news in general. As will be demonstrated by the following analysis, the Arizona ELD Model did not produce changes in student achievement in AIMS Reading percent passing in the districts in the study. A look to what changes in the gap in student achievement between the six districts and the State follow in Figures 8 and 9 for AIMS Math and AIMS Reading.

Trends in Student Achievement Gaps

The gap in achievement is calculated by subtracting the average percent passing of each district to the average percent passing of the State in AIMS Reading and AIMS Math. The difference is then averaged for all the districts by year. Figure 8 shows that all districts lowered the points between the percent passing in AIMS Math from 2007 to 2012, with some increases in the gap in achievement between 2010 and 2011 for Districts X, Y, Z; and increases in the gap between 2011 and 2012 for Districts V and W.

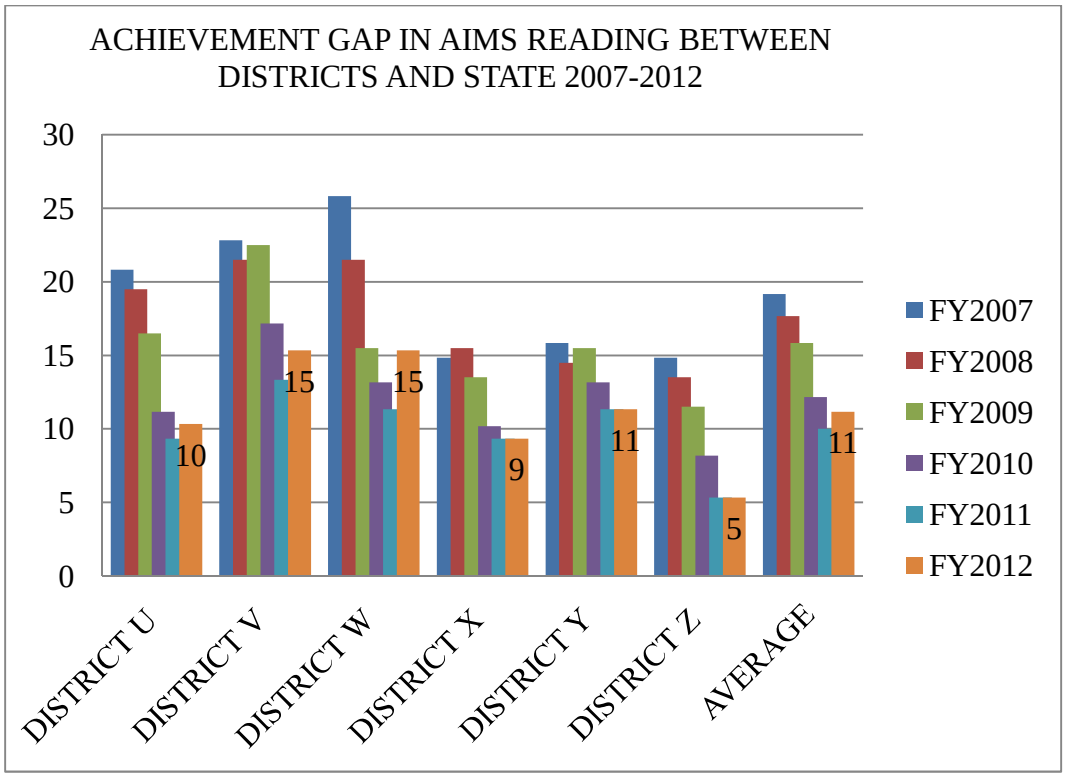
Figure 8. Achievement Gap in AIMS Math between Districts and State 2007-2012.



District U is the only district with continued decreases from each year to the next spanning 2007 to 2012. When averaged, the gap in achievement decreases each year except for a small two tenths (.2) percentage points increase between 2010 and 2011, recalling that there was a major change in the AIMS Math test in 2009, one indicator that all districts experienced similar challenges to the change in the test, with the average change for the districts' achievement gap slightly decreasing in 2012 by seven-tenths of a percentage point. Depending on the perspective of the Arizona Department of Education stating that the AIMS Math test scores should not be compared due to the change in the test, the data does show that the decreases in the districts studied were similar to the State. Decreases in the gap in achievement in 2012 in the districts are rank ordered from

lowest gap to highest in percentage points: District Z (3), District X (6), District U (10), District Y (11), District V (13), and District W (15). The gap in achievement does show progress, but the difference in District Y, the district in compliance, does not show much more favorable progress than the other urban districts in the study, as it is ranked 4th in within the six districts. The decreased gap in achievement in AIMS Reading follows a similar pattern, especially in the rank order of the gap in achievement measured by the difference in percentage points passing for each district as compared to the State.

Figure 9. Achievement Gap in AIMS Reading between Districts and State 2007-2012.



Again, the gap is calculated as the difference of percentage points passing in AIMS Reading for each district to the State percent passing. There is a decrease in the gap in achievement for all districts from 2007 to 2012, again with

some variances in between districts and in between the school years, culminating in the average change in the gap in achievement showing a slight increase from 2011 to 2012. Relative to the behavior of the percent passing of the State flat increase from 2011 and 2012 in Figure 7, the achievement gap moves one percentage point as an increase, certainly not in the direction of improving or closing the gap in the 2012 school year, but in general over the longer span of time between 2007 to 2012 a closing of the average achievement gap between the State and the six urban districts of eight percentage points in AIMS Reading.

Trends in Growth before and after the ELD Model

The percent passing of AIMS Math and AIMS Reading tests are key attributes to categorize performance and growth for the both the state and the federal accountability targets. Arizona's A-F Accountability system uses growth to assign points to the scores for schools, as well as the reclassification of ELLs to award points towards school and district performance.

Growth in percent passing in AIMS Math and AIMS Reading before the 2009 school year (pre-ELD) and after the 2009 school year (post-ELD) are reported in the following table and charts. The calculation used for this analysis is to subtract the 2006-2007 percent passing from the 2007-2008 percent passing in each subject area of Math and Reading. The same is calculated for the second growth point, subtracting the 2007-2008 from the 2008-2009 percent passing; these two growth points are then averaged together to determine average growth in percent passing for each subject area for pre-ELD growth measurement. The 2008-2009 school year was when the ELD model was to be started, measured and

monitored by the ADE and subsequently the Arizona Auditor General June 2011 report gathers data for 2009-2010 school year (the second year implementation was to have occurred) (Auditor General, 2011).

Subsequently, the 2008-2009 is considered the first year of implementation for this study and is not used to calculate growth to 2009-2010, due to the similar issues encountered with the change in the AIMS Math test in 2010, the data does not compare well in the first year of change. The post-ELD growth points are calculated by subtracting 2009-2010 from 2010-2011 and subtracting 2010-2011from 2011-2012, respectively. The state growth is also calculated on the same basis as the districts in the study.

Table 6

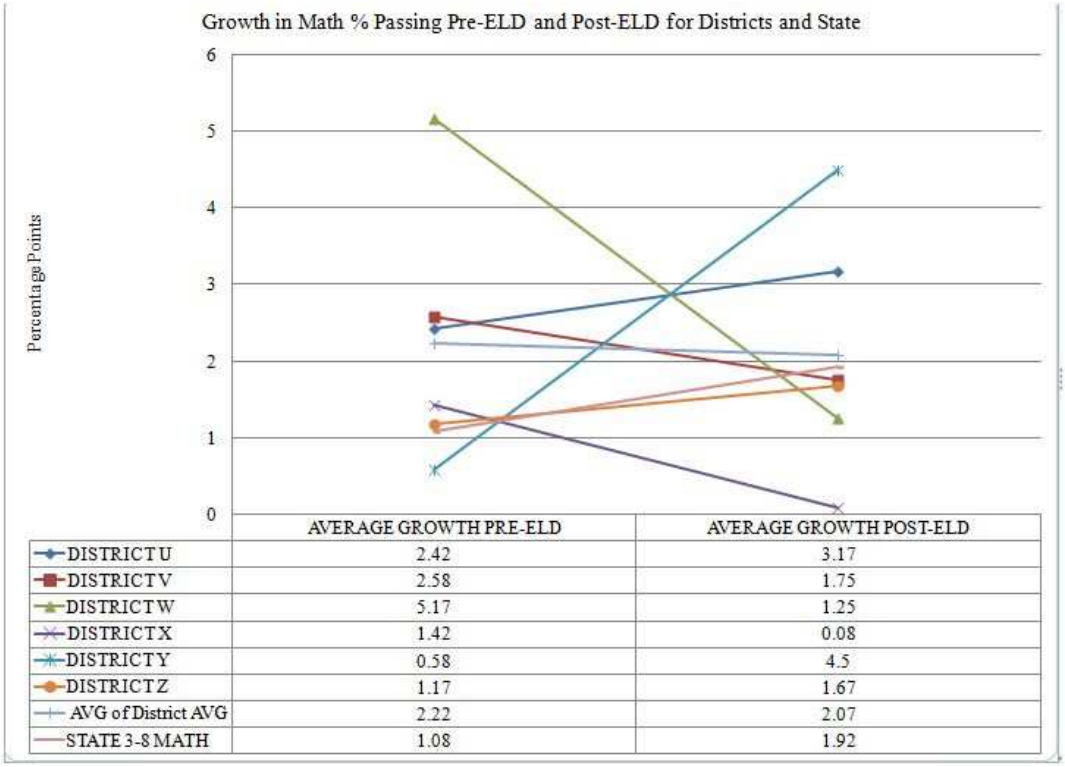
Growth in AIMS Math Percent Passing Pre-ELD and Post-ELD

	DIFF 2008-2007	DIFF 2009-2008	Average Growth PRE-ELD	DIFF 2011-2010	DIFF 2012-2011	Average Growth POST-ELD	DIFF POST-PRE-ELD
DIST. U	3.17	1.67	2.42	3.83	2.5	3.17	0.75
DIST. V	5.33	-0.17	2.58	4	-0.5	1.75	-0.83
DIST. W	5	5.33	5.17	2.5	0	1.25	-3.92
DIST. X	-1.5	4.33	1.42	-1.17	1.33	0.08	-1.34
DIST. Y	3.17	-2	0.58	2.5	6.5	4.5	3.92
DIST. Z	1.17	1.17	1.17	1.33	2	1.67	0.50
AVERAGE	2.72	1.72	2.22	2.17	1.97	2.07	-0.15
STATE	0.83	1.33	1.08	2.33	1.5	1.92	0.84

Both Table 6 and Figure 10 show the average growth in percentage points before the ELD Model and after the ELD Model was required in each district and the State, and also the average of the average of the districts. The average of the average growth pre-ELD and post-ELD for the districts is 2.22 and 2.07

respectively, showing slightly lower growth post-ELD, for a difference of -0.15. In contrast, the State shows slightly higher growth post-ELD (1.92) to post-ELD (1.08) for a difference of 0.84. The data from the average growth calculations supports the data calculated for the average change in the gap in student achievement for AIMS Math as previously depicted in Figure 8, and that the implementation of the ELD Model did not produce changes in the AIMS Math student achievement, neither for the State nor for the six districts in the study.

Figure 10. Growth in AIMS Math % Passing Pre-ELD and Post-ELD.



	AVERAGE GROWTH PRE-ELD	AVERAGE GROWTH POST-ELD
DISTRICT U	2.42	3.17
DISTRICT V	2.58	1.75
DISTRICT W	5.17	1.25
DISTRICT X	1.42	0.08
DISTRICT Y	0.58	4.5
DISTRICT Z	1.17	1.67
AVG of District AVG	2.22	2.07
STATE 3-8 MATH	1.08	1.92

Growth in percent passing for AIMS Math is attributed to the very distinct change in the AIMS Math test. More specifically, District Y showed the most growth pre- and post-ELD going from .58 to 4.5 average growths in percent passing in AIMS Math. District U showed growth pre- and post-ELD going from

2.42 to 3.17 over the calculated growth points. District V, W, Z and the State experienced average growth greater than one percentage point post-ELD, but District V, W, and X saw less growth, post-ELD, with District V losing 3.92 percent passing points between pre- and post- average growth points (see Table 6, last column to the right). As reported in 2010, AIMS Math scores dipped significantly statewide from 2008-2009 to 2009-2010; and it may be that it took a year to get used to the new Math standards to then see the growth between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011as schools, teachers and students adjusted to the new Math standards and the new AIMS Math test in 2010.

Results for average growth pre-ELD and post-ELD for AIMS Reading are summarized in Table 7 and Figure 11. AIMS Reading also shows growth pre-ELD, but less growth for the six urban districts and the State.

Table 7

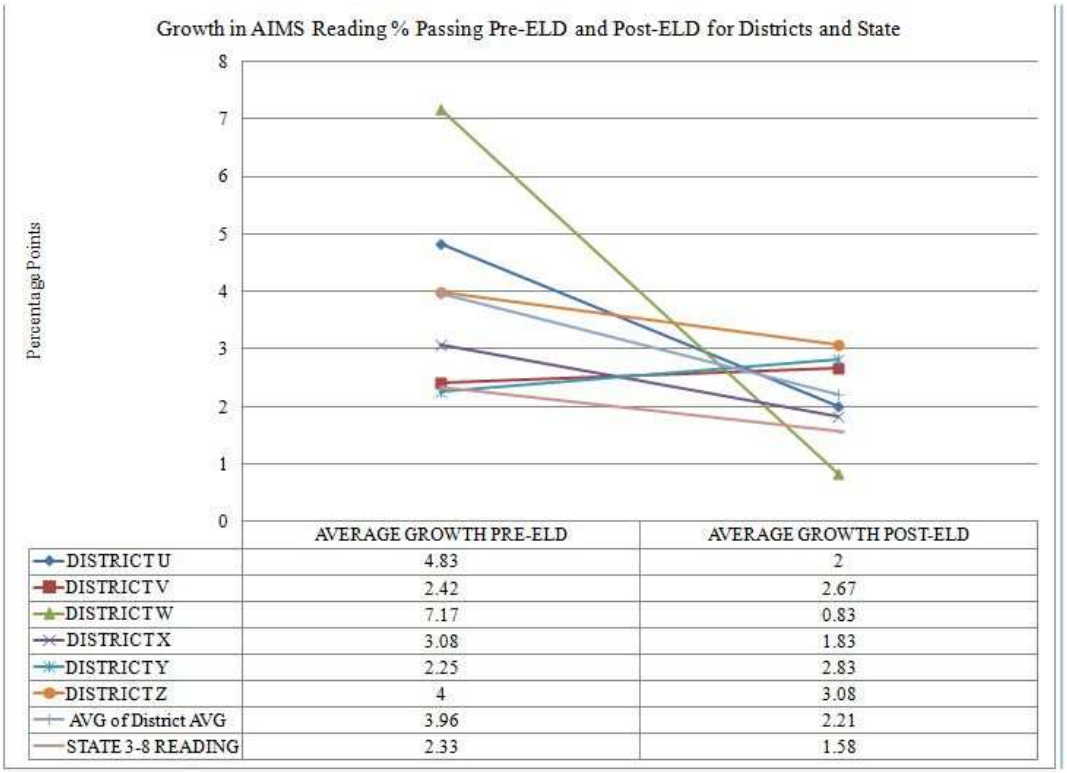
Growth in AIMS Reading Percent Passing Pre-ELD and Post-ELD

	DIFF 2008-2007	DIFF 2009-2008	Average Growth PRE-ELD	DIFF 2011-2010	DIFF 2012-2011	Average Growth POST-ELD	DIFF POST-PRE-ELD
DIST. U	3.17	6.5	4.83	5.33	-1.33	2	-2.83
DIST. V	3.67	1.17	2.42	6.83	-1.5	2.67	0.25
DIST. W	5.83	8.5	7.17	5.33	-3.67	0.83	-6.34
DIST. X	1.33	4.83	3.08	3.83	-0.17	1.83	-1.25
DIST. Y	2.67	1.83	2.25	4.83	0.83	2.83	0.58
DIST. Z	3.17	4.83	4	6.5	-0.33	3.08	-0.92
AVERAGE	3.31	4.61	3.96	5.44	-1.03	2.21	-1.75
STATE	1.67	3	2.33	3.17	0	1.58	-0.75

The data is also consistent with the decrease in the gap in student achievement in AIMS Reading from the data graphed in Figure 9, which shows

the slight increase in the gap from 2011-2012 (post-ELD) for the districts. The data in Figure 15 represents the data in Table 7, showing the average growth for all the districts, the average of the districts' average growth and the average growth for the State in AIMS Reading before and after the ELD Model was required in 2009.

Figure 11. Growth in AIMS Reading Percent Passing Pre-ELD and Post-ELD



	AVERAGE GROWTH PRE-ELD	AVERAGE GROWTH POST-ELD
DISTRICT U	4.83	2
DISTRICT V	2.42	2.67
DISTRICT W	7.17	0.83
DISTRICT X	3.08	1.83
DISTRICT Y	2.25	2.83
DISTRICT Z	4	3.08
AVG of District AVG	3.96	2.21
STATE 3-8 READING	2.33	1.58

The growth for AIMS Reading between pre-ELD and post-ELD for all districts and the state are less, but the average growth post-ELD is still positive for all districts and the State. The behavior of the average growth is more consistent in AIMS Reading than in AIMS Math, possibly indicating that as all districts make progress towards increased student achievement, the state is also seeing modest gains in average growth post-ELD in AIMS Reading and that the

change in the AIMS Math test affect the consistency. It is notable that District Y, which is the district that is reported as fully compliant with the ELD Model shows about the same growth pre-ELD as post-ELD with 2.25 and 2.83 respectively, with a .58 in average growth between pre-and post-ELD calculations (see Table 7).

An interesting outlier, District W grew the most before the ELD with 7.17 average growth in AIMS Reading, and shows little and the least growth after the ELD at .83 percentage points, even though it was found partially compliant in implementing the ELD model, with the Auditor General's report showing it did comply with having an SEI model and Individual Language Learner Plans in place during the audit period. Gathering more detail as to how and what District W might have experienced during the studied period may illuminate the differences in average growth in reading. There are many factors that may affect positive growth in student achievement that are not captured in these many views of the data, such as new reading and math programs. The second research question regarding the reclassification rate of ELLs and the relationship with student achievement are analyzed next, showing the trends in changes in numbers of ELLs.

Research Question 2 Findings

The second research question may be addressed by measuring changes over time of the percentage of ELLs and comparing that with State reclassification rates and the Federal Title III accountability measures for ELL subgroups. The Auditor General Report from 2011 attributes a decline in ELLs in

2008, 2009, and 2010 to several factors; "ELL students became proficient at higher rates, 15 percent withdrew from the program, and there were 35 percent fewer new ELL students" (Auditor General, 2011).

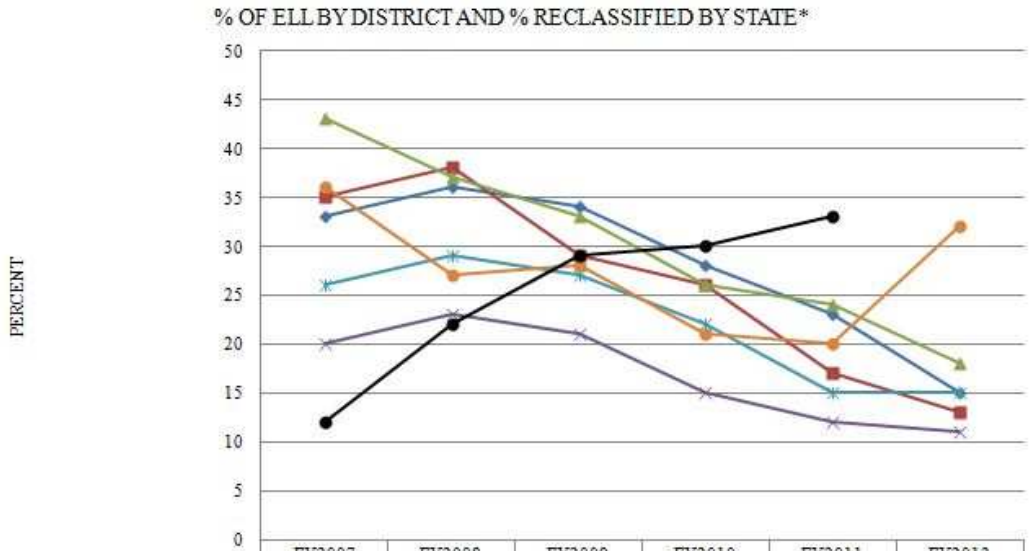
2. Has the implementation of the English Language Development model produced changes in the number of students identified as "English Language Learners"?

Trends in Reclassification Rates of ELLs

Reclassification rates of ELLs at the school and district level were not available at the time of this study, and only the State level reclassification data will be reported in Figure 16, along with Federal accountability measures from Title III for the Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs). Figures 8-13 reported the percentages of ELLs as compared to the percent passing for AIMS Math and Reading for six districts and the State.

Comparing the six districts' percentage of ELLs from 2007-2012 and the State's percentage of reclassification of ELLs shows an inverse relationship (Figure 12). As more ELLs are reclassified, there are fewer ELLs identified at the districts, which may mean that are exited out of the ELD program. With the exception of District Z in 2011-2012, all districts' ELL percentages decreased over the 2007-2012 time frames studied (State reclassification data are not yet reported for the last year of the study in 2011-2012).

Figure 12. Percentage of ELLs by District v. Percentage of Reclassified ELLs by State 2007-2012*.



	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012
DISTRICT U	33	36	34	28	23	15
DISTRICT V	35	38	29	26	17	13
DISTRICT W	43	37	33	26	24	18
DISTRICT X	20	23	21	15	12	11
DISTRICT Y	26	29	27	22	15	15
DISTRICT Z	36	27	28	21	20	32
STATE % RECLASSIFIED	12	22	29	30	33	

*State reclassification of ELLs not yet reported.

The trend in Figure 12 shows the percentage of ELLs funded for the districts in general decreases steadily for all districts except for district Z, which shows a jump from 2011 of 20% ELLs to 2012 at 32% ELLs, which is back almost to the 2007 percentage of 36% ELLs. All other district decreased to less than 20% ELLs in 2012. District X shows a lower percentage of ELLs than the other districts at 20% in 2007, but the trend for District X steadily decreases to 11% in 2012, behaving more like the other districts. The State percentage of reclassified ELLs starts at 12% in 2007 an increases more than double to 33% of

reclassified ELLs in 2011 (2012 data was not yet available statewide). This trend would indicate that as the percentage of ELLs decreased for these urban districts, the percentage of ELLs that are exited from the ELD model would increase.

Trends in Federal and State Accountability for ELLs

The targets for reclassification are less for the federal accountability measures at 19% than the state A-F accountability measures which require reclassification rates of 30%. Of course if the districts made sufficient progress to reach the state target of 30% reclassification they would also meet the Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) Federal requirements of 19%. The schools that met the state's 30% target for reclassification of ELLs are eligible to receive three extra points towards the state A-F labels, and all possible points are important, especially for high needs urban public schools. Data for the school level for this study is not available, but for the district levels, a "Y" for "yes" in the Title III AMAOs determination was present in all the districts in the study for years 2009, 2010, 2011 as Table 8 describes below. The "Yes" indicates that the district reclassified 19% or more ELLs based on the AZELLA assessment tests given to ELLs to determine if they may exit the ELD program.

Table 8

Statewide LEA Determinations for the Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) – Reclassified (Y/N

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
DISTRICT U	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DISTRICT V	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DISTRICT W	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DISTRICT X	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DISTRICT Y	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DISTRICT Z	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
YES = 19% OR MORE ELLS WERE RECLASSIFIED TO MEET AMAO						

Source: Arizona Department of Education - Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS, 2012).

Correlation between District % ELLs and State Reclassification of ELLs

Using a simple correlation statistics test, the percent of ELLs in each of the districts decreases from 2007 to 2012 and the percent of ELLs reclassified by the State increases. As shown in Table 9, the correlation coefficients are negative between all districts and the State. Correlation is strong if it approaches 1 or -1, with the positive correlation indicating that one variable behaves and moves in trends the same as the comparison variable. Negative correlation indicates that as one variable decreases, the comparison variable increases in the same way.

Table 9

Percentage of ELLs by District v. Percentage of Reclassified ELLs by State 2007-2011 Correlation Coefficient

DISTRICT	% ELL U	% ELL V	% ELL W	% ELL X	% ELL Y	% ELL Z	STATE % RE-CLASS-IFIED
U	1						
V	0.94	1.00					
W	0.80	0.87	1.00				
X	0.99	0.92	0.81	1.00			
Y	0.99	0.94	0.78	0.97	1.00		
Z	0.70	0.74	0.96	0.70	0.67	1.00	
STATE % RE-CLASSIFIED	-0.61	-0.78	-0.94	-0.60	-0.59	-0.92	1

The last row of Table 9 reflects a -0.61 negative correlation for District U, -0.78 for District V, -.94 for District W, -0.60 for District X, -0.59 for District Y, and -0.92 for District Z; from very strong negative correlations in Districts W and Z of 0-.94 and -0.92 respectively, and strong negative correlation for District U at -0.78; with Districts X and Y hovering at 0-.60 which is still considered closer to -1.0 for the same negative correlation direction. This makes sense because as the State reclassification percentage increased, meaning more ELLs scored proficient on the AZELLA, thus there are less ELLs in the budget formula to fund. The relationship between how the state counts and funds ELLs should be correlated to how the state counts ELLs that have been reclassified as proficient on the AZELLA assessment. Whether or not the AZELLA assessment is in fact related to student achievement is not studied in detail, as the data at the ELL student level is not used in this study, but the following Federal indicators tend to show that ELLs that are deemed proficient on the state language assessment (AZELLA) are

still not passing the state academic tests for Math and Reading (AIMS). Federal accountability for ELLs is calculated by whether or not ELLs met or exceeded the AIMS test in subgroups of 40 or more. If there are 40 or less ELLs in the subgroups of a district, then this calculation is not measured.

Trends in AYP for ELL subgroups

For the districts in this study, all districts had concentrations of ELLs as measured by the Group B ELL counts as a percentage of total students funded, which is not an official reclassification rate, but indicates a decrease in ELLs being identified or conversely can be an indicator of more ELLs being identified as proficient. It is important to note that the data for percentage of ELLs is collected from the ADE Group B counts, not from the actual counts of students passing the language assessment (AZELLA). Yet by reviewing the Federal accountability requirements for ELLs passing the AIMS, it is evident by the "NO" answer for all the Districts in 2012 that ELL subgroups did not make Adequate Yearly Progress in Table 10, even if they adequately reclassified as in Table 9, gathered from the data contained in the same Title III federal report of AMAOs. This means that for the majority of the six districts, of the ELLs that were deemed proficient, those proficient (reclassified) ELLs did not pass the AIMS and did not make progress (AYP) in the ELL subgroup in the following Title III AMAO determinations.

Table 10

Statewide LEA Determinations for the Title III Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) – ELL Subgroup Made Adequate Yearly Progress (Y/N)

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
DISTRICT U	No	No	No	No	No	No
DISTRICT V	No	No	No	No	No	No
DISTRICT W	No	No	No	No	No	No
DISTRICT X	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
DISTRICT Y	No	No	No	No	No	No
DISTRICT Z	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
YES = ELLS THAT ARE PROFICIENT IN AZELLA ALSO MET OR EXCEEDED (PASSED) AIMS TEST TO MEET AMAO						

Source: Arizona Department of Education - Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS, 2012).

District X had one year where they met the ELL subgroup Adequate Yearly Progress in 2010, meaning that either the ELL subgroup passed the AIMS tests, or there were not enough ELLs in the subgroup (less than 40) to count against the district per the Title III Accountability formula. Subsequently, District X did not have their proficient ELLs pass the AIMS test in 2011 or 2012. District Z had the most years where proficient ELLs passed the AIMS test in 2009, 2010, and 2011, but did not make AYP for the ELL subgroup in 2012, which is also the year District Z had an increase in ELLs that were not proficient going from 20% ELLs not proficient to 32% ELLs not proficient, as measured by the % of ELLs counted as their Group B reported ELL students. District Z is also the smallest district with approximately 130 students in six grades tested (3^{rd}-8^{th}). It is more likely that with 20 % ELLs for district Z that would mean about 26 total for the district in 2011, which is less than the 40 required to even have the calculation for ELL subgroups. It is possible that District Z made AYP for the ELL subgroup simply by not having enough to count for the accountability formula.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

The debates surrounding effective instruction for English Language Learners continue as the data show there is still a gap in achievement between ELLs and their non-ELL counterparts. Poverty and concentration of ELLs may affect the outcome as much or more than any instructional program or model (Garcia, 2005; Hakuta, 1999). The six urban districts in this study have similar concentrations of ELLs and poverty, and in general are increasing student achievement in both AIMS Math and AIMS Reading, and as a group are closing the achievement gap over the time of this study. This study informs the community that the Arizona ELD model is not decreasing the achievement gap nor does it use the interactive language acquisition theories that have been supported by the research (Carey, 2005; Peregoy, 2005). The Arizona ELD model does not conform to the language acquisition theories supported by the research, especially with the features of separating native English or proficient English students from non-proficient students; yet, as Martinez-Wenzl (year) and others have noted, Arizona chose to use a model that is not based previous research supporting language acquisition such as learning in an ELL's native language to assists and supports achievement for ELLs in other contexts and academics, but that points to English only structured immersion in a separate context, and separating students by language proficiency focused on using discrete skills and separate standards for English Language Development (Martinez, 2012).

Summary of Findings

Research Question 1

The first research question asked about changes in AIMS Math and AIMS Reading for the six districts. The study focused on analyzing trends of the six districts using percent passing in Math and Reading compared to the State, calculating the achievement gap from the percent passing for the tests, and finally looking closely at the growth in percent passing before the ELD Model requirement and after the ELD Model requirement over six school years 2007-2012. The implementation of the Arizona ELD Model did not produce changes in AIMS Math or AIMS Reading, as the gap in achievement between urban public school districts and the State continue to exist.

Percent Passing and Achievement Gap Trends

In general, the increases and decreases in percent passing were similar for all six districts and the State, which supports the conclusion that no real changes were produced in student achievement after the implementation of the Arizona ELD Model. The visual representation certainly showed the lines on the graph moving in the same direction. A closer look at the changes in the percent passing in the districts with relation to the State yielded a view of the trends for gaps in achievement between the districts and the State. Calculating the gaps in achievement for the districts compared to the State by subtracting the averages of all the districts in the study from the State showed increases in percent passing by only four percentage points in AIMS Math and by only eight percentage points in AIMS Reading over 2007-2012 school years.

Pre- and Post-ELD Growth in Percent Passing

Looking at trends over a shorter time span for two years before and two years after the ELD Model and skipping the middle time period shows a different view that again indicates the new ELD model does not produce changes in student achievement. In both AIMS Math and AIMS Reading the average growth for all districts was more in the pre-ELD section of time, 2.22 vs. 2.07 and 3.96 vs. 2.21 post-ELD. Student achievement in the State conversely grew more post-ELD than pre-ELD in AIMS Math with 1.92 vs. 1.08, which is not attributed with the ELD Model but to the change in the AIMS Math test. Student achievement in the State grew more pre-ELD in AIMS Reading 2.33 vs. 1.58, which tracks with the flat growth in AIMS reading statewide from 2011 to 2012. In general, the average growth of all six districts post-ELD was only fifteen tenths (.15) higher than the State in AIMS Math.

In AIMS Reading, District Y is the only district that maintained positive average growth in both pre- and post-ELD and also grew more in the post-ELD time frame of 2010 through 2012. District Z, although the smallest district that also was not audited for compliance with the ELD Model, showed the most growth post-ELD with 3.08 average growth. Overall, growth in AIMS Reading was more pre-ELD and less post-ELD for the six urban districts and the State, which confirms that the ELD Model did not produce changes in the AIMS Reading percent passing.

Research Question 2

The second research question focuses on the changes in the number of ELLs over the time period of the study and compares the changes in the districts Group B ELL student count to the changes in the State reclassification rate for ELLs. As the number of ELLs decreases over time for the districts, the number of ELLs reclassified at the State level increases, thus showing a strong negative correlation. The implementation of the ELD Model can be seen as decreasing the number of ELLs identified as the number of ELLs funded decreased and the number of ELLs reclassified increased, yet the recent developments with the Office of Civil rights point to the identification procedure being a factor to exit ELLs before proficiency was attained.

Number of ELLs Declining

The success of whether the districts' ELL subgroups passed the AIMS test is reported in the Title III AMAO determinations by district. For this, each of the districts in the study is reported as not making AYP for ELLs in 2012. This data is supported by the recent findings from the federal agencies that report that the AZELLA language assessment used by the State is exiting or reclassifying ELLs too soon, counting them as proficient in English, yet as evidenced by the ELL subgroups not passing the AIMS tests, the proficiency in English is not matching the non-proficiency in the academics. The ELL subgroups for the districts in the study are not passing the AIMS tests as measured by the Title III AMAOs report. There are many measures of success for ELLs, and learning English is of course

necessary for their success in learning academics, but the ELD Model and the various features of the Model is not meeting the needs of ELLs.

Lessons Learned

As shown by the data in this study, the Arizona ELD model which requires students to be separated and grouped by ability in language is not meeting the needs of Arizona's ELLs. Native English-speaking peers and ELLs that have been reclassified as proficient are grouped in regular or mainstream classes, but as shown by the Title III AMAOs, the reclassified students are not making Adequate Yearly Progress after four years of the ELD Model. Moreover, the data supports the interactionist language acquisition criticisms that separating non-proficient English and proficient children does not close the achievement gap.

The districts do not have any major differences between them in terms of the performance of their students on AIMS, regardless of their degree of compliance with the ELD Model, whether fully compliant, partially compliant, or not at all compliant. District Y that is fully compliant ranks fourth in closing the achievement gap for both AIMS Reading and AIMS Math over the 2007-2012 school years. This trend indicates that being fully compliant with the ELD model does not necessarily increase or decrease the student achievement, the reclassification, or the gap in achievement between the districts and the State.

Gaps the Study is Bridging

The gap that this study is bridging is to analyze the challenges for the urban public school districts as compared to the State. The trends over six years

for six very similar districts in that they have high concentrations of ELLs and poverty, and are geographically located in the urban core of Phoenix, Arizona show that more needs to be done to support the academic student achievement for the ELLs in the schools that have the most students in the ELL subgroups that are not making AYP.

Pedagogical Implications

The findings from this study inform that the ELD Model is not sufficient to meet the needs of the ELL subgroups in the six urban districts. Perhaps support for a student's first language, and allowing students to interact with their all of their peers would be a better model to support ELLs, if the literature on the topic is to be our guide The abundance of research supporting language acquisition theories that include extensive interaction for student to student, teacher to teacher, while also providing support to increase the literacy of the students in home language should be revisited, and at least allow districts to use alternative models to support their ELL students, especially in the urban core, where high concentrations of ELLs, along with high concentrations of poverty provide unique challenges that should be met with innovative approaches for all students. The opportunity for Arizona to heed the suggestions of the federal agencies to develop a better language assessment and support their ELL learners is here, now after several years of unsuccessful results from the current ELD Model.

Work has already been done by many urban districts that have submitted alternative models to the ELL Task Force to try to increase the support for their ELL students. Blending of the Common Core standards for English Language

Arts with the English Language Proficiency standards may be necessary to provide quality language development (QLD) in education with an emphasis on academic vocabulary for all students. Extra support for ELL students should be provided during the school day in all classrooms blended with many levels of language learners. English-speaking students in poverty can benefit from an alternative model focusing on rigorous vocabulary and English grammar, especially young elementary students.

Other Factors and Trends to Consider

Although the concentration of ELLs and high poverty are key factors that have been deemed to negatively impact both academic student achievement and the rate which a student learns a second language, there are many more factors that are important in considering what might affect student achievement. Other key factors that may impact student achievement are teacher quality, class size, cultural sensitivity, parent involvement, leadership quality, and general district stability (Peregoy, 2005; Combs et al., 2005; Crawford, 2000; Cahnman & Varghese, 2005; Stritikus & Garcia, 2005; Hakuta, 1999).

Challenges to Public School Funding

The trend for the entire state shows an increase in poverty, and Arizona is not the only state that has had to survive the challenges of the latest economic downturn which negatively impacted budgets for all public schools in Arizona and the nation. Millions of dollars were cut from local school budgets in Arizona during the span of time of this study. A report from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities states that "Arizona had the biggest decrease in per-student

spending since fiscal 2008 among the 48 states that publish education budget data. Since then, per-student spending dropped 21.8 percent, with the Arizona spending less per student since 2008 to 2012 (Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, 2011). Although the Federal government lent some assistance in 2009 and 2010 through ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) funding, which some districts used to save teacher jobs and focus on supporting language development and reading, this has now ended.

It is important to note that the ELD model did make school districts pay attention to how they delivered instruction to all students, especially to ELLs in urban schools as the concentration of ELLs in the six schools studied averaged 30 %., Even if ELL students were reclassified, the Title III AMAOs did not support the notion that ELLs moving to "proficient" were able to grasp the academic language enough to pass the Math and Reading AIMS tests.

The ELD program will require more research and its features may have to be customized to suit the school districts most impacted, that is the schools that have the most ELLs, whether reclassified or not.

Recent Developments with ELLs in Arizona

The percentage of ELLs to be served in 2012-2013 has to be recalculated based on these settlements between the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education civil rights divisions and offices and the Arizona Department of Education. The first agreement in 2011 to change the home language survey back to three questions was directed for the 2011-2012 school year, and some districts have been notified that they must un-reclassify some ELL students that had

previously been exited out of the ELD model requirements. The second settlement in August of 2012 states that although the ADE does not concur with the findings, the ADE agrees to create a different assessment tool to determine that the ELLs proficiency has been reached and matched more closely to the subgroups ability to pass the AIMS. Districts have been reclassifying ELL students based on the current AZELLA test which has been deemed unsatisfactory by the USDOJ and USDOE.

Opportunities for Further Study

It will be important for future studies to analyze the effect of any change in language assessment will have on how districts are to address the needs of English Language Learners in Arizona. These challenges address recent past and current years' student achievement and will only be more challenging with the new Common Core Standards that Arizona has adopted to be fully implemented in all grades by 2014. There is an opportunity that Arizona should pursue, allowing programs that serve both ELLs and non-ELLs together. Providing first-language support for ELLs in small group instruction using SDAIE or SIOP techniques and enriched academic vocabulary will assist all students to be successful. Fully supporting such programs with adequate funding, high quality teachers, and high quality of teacher training for ELLs, as well as culturally inclusive school/classroom culture, would be critical supports to ensure success.

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APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EDUCATION SETTLEMENT PRESS RELEASES

APPENDIX A

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Friday, August 31, 2012

Departments of Justice and Education Reach Settlement with Arizona Department of Education to Ensure That ELL Students Are Properly Identified and Not Prematurely Exited

The Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, and the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, today entered into a settlement agreement with the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) that requires ADE and Arizona public schools to offer targeted reading and writing intervention services to tens of thousands of English Language Learner (ELL) students who were prematurely exited or incorrectly identified as Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) over the past five school years. The agreement also requires ADE to develop proficiency criteria that accurately identify and exit ELL students.

"Proper classification of ELL students is essential to ensuring that students receive the services they need to help them overcome language barriers and participate equally in the instructional process," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division at the Department of Justice. "We commend Arizona's Superintendent of Public Instruction and ADE for voluntarily agreeing to take significant steps to address the needs of Arizona's ELL students."

"This agreement highlights our commitment to ensuring that all ELL students receive the services they need to learn," said Russlynn Ali, Assistant Secretary for the Office for Civil Rights at the Department of Education. "All students are entitled to equal opportunities, and this resolution will help to make sure Arizona students receive the education they deserve."

With the cooperation of ADE and Arizona school districts, the Departments of Justice and Education conducted an extensive investigation of the state's ELL policies and programs, and determined that tens of thousands of ELL students had been misidentified as IFEPs or exited from ELL services without sufficient English proficiency in reading and writing, which is key to academic success. Because of this, the Departments found that ADE was in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) as well as the Equal Educational Opportunities Act. While ADE disagrees with OCR's and DOJ's findings of noncompliance, ADE entered into the agreement to voluntarily resolve the matter.

The enforcement of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act, which requires state and local education agencies to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede students' equal participation in instructional programs, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bans discrimination on the basis of race and national origin by schools that receive federal funds, are top priorities of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. Additional information about the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department is available on its website at www.justice.gov/crt. Enforcement of Title VI is also a top priority of the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Additional information about the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights is available on its website at www.ed.gov/ocr.

12-1070 Civil Rights Division