

From: beth.laduca@state.or.us
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 10:51 AM
To: info@whatworks.ed.gov
Subject: IES Website: Contact Us: Publications, Quick Reviews,
Reference ID
Number: 1879324836

info@whatworks.ed.gov, this email was automatically sent through the
Contact
link on the WWC website.

From: beth.laduca@state.or.us

Message: I don't understand the following paragraph in your Quick Review
of
"Reading and Language Outcomes of a Five-Year Randomized Evaluation
of
Transitional Bilingual Education." If differences between the
groups are
all statistically insignificant, why are you citing effect sizes for two
of
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be due to error. Why are you highlighting these effect sizes with so
little
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received English instruction. At this time, differences in English-
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the
four outcomes, though, showed large enough differences favoring
structured
English immersion that the WWC considered them noteworthy: the effect
sizes
were roughly equivalent to the skill difference between the 50th and 61st
percentiles of English reading achievement."

From: WhatWorks

Sent: Friday, September 10, 2010 1:37 PM

To: 'beth.laduca@state.or.us'

Subject: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 2421)

Dear Ms. LaDuca,

Thank you for contacting the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC). When reporting a study's effects, the What Works Clearinghouse considers both the statistical significance and the substantive importance of the effect. As noted in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Appendix E

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/wwc_procedures_v2_standards_handbook.pdf>), a substantively important positive effect is considered to be a qualified positive effect—and therefore is noteworthy—even though it may not reach statistical significance in a given study. The threshold for determining substantive importance for effects mentioned in quick reviews is a student-level effect size greater than or equal to 0.25. The effect sizes for the two results mentioned in the paragraph you referenced in the quick review were greater than 0.25.

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From: LADUCA Beth [beth.laduca@state.or.us]
Sent: Friday, September 10, 2010 6:30 PM
To: WhatWorks
Subject: RE: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 2421)

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1. The use of the term “noteworthy” in the review does not seem to be in line with the term “qualified positive effect” used in the appendix. Why not say “the WWC considered them qualified positive effects” rather than “the WWC considered them noteworthy?”
2. The interpretation of the findings by the WWC is markedly different from the interpretation by the authors of the study.

Hearing Dr. Slavin and Dr. Gersten discuss this review would be most interesting.

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One more follow up comment. Please check this link for an example of the type of misunderstanding which may arise from the review: <http://edupdates2.blogspot.com/2010/09/wwc-compares-two-approaches-to-teaching.html>.

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Sent: Thursday, December 16, 2010 3:44 PM
To: WhatWorks
Subject: RE: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 2421)
[Any update on the Quality Review promised below?](#)

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From: WhatWorks
Sent: Friday, December 17, 2010 9:34 AM
To: 'LADUCA Beth'
Subject: RE: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC 2421)
Dear Ms. LaDuca,

The Quality Review Team is actively working on a response; however, we are currently unable to provide a timeline for its completion.

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From: What Works
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2011 11:39 AM
To: 'beth.laduca@state.or.us'
Subject: What Works Clearinghouse (QR2010017)
Attachments: QR2010017.pdf

Dear Ms. LaDuca,

Attached is a response to the questions you raised in your email concerning the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) quick review of "Reading and Language Outcomes of a Five-Year Randomized Evaluation of Transitional Bilingual Education."

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To: 'beth.laduca@state.or.us'
Subject: What Works Clearinghouse (QR2010017)

Dear Ms. LaDuca,

The changes detailed in the WWC Quality Review Team letter dated 1/31/2011 are now live on the WWC website. You may view the revised WWC quick review of “Reading and Language Outcomes of a Five-Year Randomized Evaluation of Transitional Bilingual Education” at <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/quickreviews/QRReport.aspx?QRID=155>.

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What Works Clearinghouse WWC

A central and trusted source of scientific evidence for what works in education.

January 31, 2011

Ms. Beth LaDuca
NAEP State Coordinator
Oregon Department of Education
beth.laduca@state.or.us

Reference: QR2010017

Dear Ms. LaDuca:

Thank you for your email concerning the WWC quick review of “Reading and Language Outcomes of a Five-Year Randomized Evaluation of Transitional Bilingual Education.” In response to your inquiry, the WWC quality review team undertook an investigation of the issues you raised. When a quality review is conducted, researchers who were not involved in the review independently assess the study in question and examine whether the WWC adhered to its procedures and protocols.

The quality review team first considered whether the review adhered to WWC standards in reporting effects that were not statistically significant but had effect sizes of 0.25 or greater. Under WWC standards, results that are deemed substantively important are reported as qualified positive effects. The default value for a substantively important result is a student-level effect size of 0.25 or greater (WWC standards are available [here](#), see page 22). The effect sizes for the reported results were 0.29 and 0.31. For these reasons, the quality review concluded that WWC standards were followed in reporting the results. The WWC has adopted this standard because large effect sizes are evidence that the program may be effective and that the sample size used in the study was not large enough to identify even a substantial effect with statistical significance.

The quality review team then considered the manner in which the results were reported. The quality review concluded that the quick review should follow the WWC standards by using the term “substantively important” instead of “noteworthy.” Use of the term “substantively important” will increase accuracy and clarity as the term has a specific technical definition in the WWC standards. The quality review recommended that the final paragraph of the quick review be revised to the following:

When the students reached fourth grade, they only received English instruction. At this time, differences in English-reading skills between the groups were all statistically insignificant. Two of the four outcomes, though, showed large enough differences favoring English immersion that the WWC considered them substantively important: the effect sizes were roughly equivalent to the skill differences between the 50th and 61st percentiles of reading achievement. The findings suggest that English immersion had a qualified positive effect on these English outcomes but the study sample for fourth grade outcomes was not large enough to test effectiveness.

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The quality review recommended the paragraph include the following footnote: “The WWC reports results for statistically insignificant effects if the estimated impact is 0.25 standard deviations or greater.”

You mentioned in your email that the WWC interpretation of the findings is different from the interpretation by the authors. The authors concluded that the findings suggest that students learn to read in English “equally well” under the two approaches. The WWC concluded that the effect of structured English immersion is substantively important. The difference in conclusions comes from the WWC’s standards for reporting substantively important effects even if they are not statistically significant.

Based on the findings of the quality review, we will be revising the quick review as recommended. I hope that this letter has addressed your concerns. If you have other concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the WWC through info@whatworks.ed.gov.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

Jill Constantine
Director, What Works Clearinghouse

cc: (b)(6)