Student Characteristics
Out of the total LLI student sample from Heinemann's LLI Data Collection Project (2009–2010), 925 of the kindergarten through fifth-grade students were reported to be English Language Learners (ELL). Of this group, 57.4% were male and 42.5% were female, 72.9% were Hispanic, 8.4% were Asian/Pacific Island, 7.1% were White, 6.9% were Black, and 1.4% were Multi-Racial. As an indication of students’ economic status, information on free/reduced lunch was collected and 62.8% fell into this category. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of the ELL LLI student sample size by grade and refer to Table 2 for a summary of the student demographics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Sample Size</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
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<td>6.8% (n=63)</td>
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Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Demographics</th>
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<tr>
<td>% Male</td>
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<tr>
<td>57.4% (n=531)</td>
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</table>

Table 2

Of the total group of ELL LLI students, 7.4% (n = 68) had individualized education plans that mandated that they receive support for Reading and 8.5% (n = 79) of the LLI students had an IEP for other support services.

Results — Reading Progress
Below is a summary of the reading progress of the 925 English Language Learner students who received LLI during the 2009–2010 school year. Of the total group, 28 of the ELL LLI students did not complete the full set of sessions offered to them because they moved, withdrew or were switched to a different intervention and thus, their data were eliminated from the analyses reported below. Furthermore, some of the data submitted by the LLI teachers contained missing or incomplete information. The reported results below also exclude cases with missing data.

LLI Groups and Student Attendance
LLI was designed to be delivered in a group of three students with one teacher, five days per week; however, delivery varied according to school and district limitations. Overall, each of the ELL LLI groups was comprised of between
1 and 6 students (M = 3.0, SD = .6) and the groups met between 2 and 5 days a week (M = 4.7, SD = .6) for 30 minutes per session (see Table 4).

The ELL LLI students who completed the full set of LLI sessions offered to them and for whom attendance information was available received LLI for an average of 16.9 weeks (range: 3-37, SD = 7.5) and they attended an average of 58.3 LLI lessons (range: 9-140, SD = 26.2) (see Table 4). It should be noted, however, that many students were not able to receive the full intervention as the school year ended and their LLI teachers indicated that they would receive more LLI the following year.

Reading Progress
The data were collected and reported for ELL LLI students only. No control group was identified and assessed and therefore, the ELL LLI student growth was compared to Fountas and Pinnell grade level criteria (see Table 3) to assess the group’s progress. Each student’s reading progress was determined by looking at their pre- and post- LLI instructional reading levels (ranging from Pre-A to Z) which are based on the F & P Text Level Gradient”.

• Obtaining Fountas and Pinnell Instructional Reading Levels
The Fountas and Pinnell instructional reading levels were obtained through the teachers’ reports of their students’ instructional reading levels which were determined by administration of the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System or Reading Records or by the conversion to Fountas and Pinnell levels of the teacher’s reports of their students’ score on other reading assessments including the DRA or DRA2, the Reading Recovery Observation Survey with Running Records, and the Rigby Benchmark.

• Conversion to Time Equivalent (TE) Score
Once each child’s instructional level at entry and exit was obtained, the levels were converted to a Time Equivalent (TE) score which represents the number of months of school a typically progressing student is expected to have completed when they demonstrate the reading behaviors associated with each level according to Fountas and Pinnell guidelines. The TE scores represent the number of months the student was in school and are based on a ten-month school year because children are not in school for two months of each year. If an instructional reading level is expected over more than one month, the TE score reflects the middle point of the expected band of time that the particular level is expected (see Table 3). For example, level C is expected at months eight, nine, and ten during kindergarten and the time equivalent for level C is month nine.

• Calculating Reading Gain
The difference between the entry and exit TE score reflects the gain (number of months of progress) the student made between entry and exit from LLI. For example, a student who enters LLI at level A and exits at level C has progressed from what is expected in the fourth month of kindergarten to what is expected in the ninth month of kindergarten and thus, the student’s reading gain is five months.
Overall, the ELL LLI students progressed an average of 8.1 months ($n = 82.1$, $SD = 4.5$) from entry until exit from LLI. This growth was achieved during participation in LLI for an average of 16.9 weeks. It should be noted that while the LLI teachers strove to provide all scheduled LLI lessons each week, vacation and absentee days often made this impossible. In spite of this, the ELL LLI students progressed an average of eight months in a little more than four months. At most grade levels, the ELL LLI students moved forward at an accelerated pace when compared to typical reading progress over time according to Fountas and Pinnell guidelines (see Table 4 and Chart 1 below).
The instructional reading level gain for the LLI students is depicted in Chart 2 below. Out of the total group, 73.1% of the LLI students demonstrated an instructional reading level at least three levels higher than their pre-LLI level and 14.2% raised their reading skills seven or more levels, which in all grades represents more than a year’s progress (see Chart 2).

The results reported for the ELL LLI students are extremely positive given the variation in the grade level of students, the degree to which they were reading below grade level, and the variability of delivery. Only a very small percentage of students made no growth and 73.1% made considerable progress.

**Grade Level Attainment**

The percentage of the ELL students who were below grade level or at or above grade level at entry and exit from LLI is depicted in Table 3 and Chart 3. Overall, 52.1% were at or within one text reading level of their expected instructional reading level when their LLI instruction ended (see Chart 3); and 67.3% were at or within two text reading levels of grade level expectation.
Key Findings

- On average, the 925 English Language Learner LLI students demonstrated reading progress over the span of time they participated in the intervention which is comparable to expected reading progress over eight months during the school year. This progress was achieved during participation in LLI for an average of 16.9 weeks.

- Post-LLI, 73.1% of the English Language Learner LLI students demonstrated an instructional reading level at least three levels higher than their pre-LLI level and 14.2% raised their reading skills seven or more levels.

- Post-LLI, 67.3% of the English Language Learner LLI students were within two text reading levels of grade level expectation and 52.1% were at or within one text reading level of grade level expectation.

Conclusions

Results of this evaluation indicate that as a group, the 925 English Language Learner struggling readers who received Leveled Literacy Intervention supplementary instruction demonstrated accelerated progress over the period they received LLI (Fountas and Pinnell 10-month guidelines). The ELL LLI students made almost twice the amount of reading progress when compared to typical reading progress over time (Fountas and Pinnell 10-month guidelines). These results suggest that LLI is an effective short-term intervention for struggling readers who are also classified as English Language Learners.