Contents

List of Tables	V
List of Figures	vii
List of Appendixes	vii
Preface	vii
Chapter 1 Background to the study	1
The CSMS (Mathematics) project	1
The CSMS fractions results	1
Comparison between problem and computation questions	2
Fractions and whole numbers	2
Avoidance of fractions	3
The use of diagrams	3
Equivalence and the addition of fractions	3
Suggested reasons for the errors observed in CSMS fractions	4
The existence of fractional numbers	4
The use of diagrams to illustrate fractions	4
The equivalence of fractions	4
Framework for the SESM research	6
Theoretical perspective	6
Research methodology	6
Form of the report: SESM fractions	7
Chapter 2 SESM interviews (Phase One)	8
The interview sample	8
The structure of the interviews	Ç
Models of fractions	ç
Fractions as numbers	10
Equivalent fractions	1(
Results of phase one interviews	1 1
Models of fractions	1
Fractions as numbers	16
Equivalent fractions	18
Other observations on the addition of fractions	24
Summary of findings from phase one interviews	25
1. Models	25
2. Fractions as numbers	24 25 25 25 26
3. Equivalent fractions	
Conclusions from interviews: elaboration of initial hypotheses	20

Chapter 3 SESM interviews (Phase Two)	27
Description of interview sample	27
Design of interview sample	27
Models of fractions	28
Fractions as numbers	28
Equivalent fractions	29
Results of second stage interviews	30
Models of fractions	30
Fractions as numbers	32
Equivalent fractions	34
Conclusions from interviews: the basis for development of the	
teaching module	41
Chapter 4 Teaching experiments	43
The teaching sequence	43
General principles	43
The design of the teaching module	44
The tests	45
The sample	46
Procedure	46
Marking the tests	46
Results of the teaching experiment: general observations	47
Results of the testing	48
Overall results	48
Detailed item results	50
Division items	50
Summary of division results	55
Equivalence results	55
Recognition of equivalence and its application to problems	62
Observations on the equivalence results	63
Number results	65
Observations on the number results	70
General implications	71
Further investigation	72
Chapter 5 Class trials	73
The sample	73
Procedure	74
Division results	80
Equivalence results	82
Number results	85
Feedback from teachers	85
Summary	86
Chapter 6 Summary and implications	87
The nature of children's difficulties with fractions	87
Summary and discussion of findings	87
1. Models of fractions	87
Summary	88
Discussion	88
2. The division aspect of a fraction	89
Summary	89
Discussion	90

3. Fractions as numbers	91
Summary	91
Discussion	92
4. Equivalent fractions	92
Summary	93
Discussion	93
5. The teaching module	94
Summary	94
Discussion	94
Implications for the teaching of fractions	95
Suggestions for further investigation	98
Appendixes	100
Bibliography	126
Index	127