

ENHANCING EARLY LITERACY: THE IMPACT OF PHONICS INSTRUCTION ON GRADE 1 LEARNERS TRANSITIONING FROM NON-ENGLISH KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effectiveness of a phonics-based instructional program in improving the early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners from non-English kindergarten backgrounds at Rattana Aue Wittaya School, Fang, Chiang Mai, Thailand, during the academic year 2025–2026. A quasi-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design was employed involving 59 learners from two sections. A validated Early Literacy Assessment Test was used to measure phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding skills. Descriptive statistics and a paired sample t-test were utilized to analyze the data. Results revealed that learners had a beginning level of early literacy skills in the pre-test ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.76$), which significantly improved to a proficient level in the post-test ($M = 16.88$, $SD = 3.64$). The computed t-value indicated a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level, confirming the effectiveness of the phonics instruction program. The findings suggest that systematic phonics instruction significantly enhances early literacy skills and is particularly beneficial for learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten programs.

Keywords

Phonics instruction, early literacy, phonemic awareness, word decoding, Grade 1 learners, quasi-experimental design, English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

INTRODUCTION

Early literacy is a fundamental component of learning that serves as the foundation for all future academic success, particularly in reading comprehension, communication, and content learning across subject areas. Among early grade learners, reading development is strongly influenced by their ability to recognize letter-sound relationships, decode unfamiliar words, and develop phonemic awareness. These foundational skills are essential in enabling learners to become independent readers in the early years of schooling. Research has consistently shown that early literacy proficiency is a strong predictor of long-term academic achievement, as learners who acquire reading skills early are more likely to perform better across disciplines (Hulme & Snowling, 2023).

In the present classroom context at Rattana Aue Wittaya School in Fang, Chiang Mai, particularly in the Excellent Language Program for Grade 1 learners, the researcher observed that many students transitioning from non-English kindergarten backgrounds experience difficulty in reading English words. Despite exposure to English instruction, some learners struggle to connect sounds with letters, while others rely heavily on memorization rather than decoding strategies. These difficulties often result in slow reading development, low confidence in oral reading, and limited participation during literacy activities. Such challenges are common among learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting, where exposure to the target language is often limited outside the classroom (Kim & Park, 2023).

The Excellent Language Program, which was newly implemented in the academic year 2025–2026, aims to strengthen English proficiency from the early grades. However, initial

classroom observations revealed varying levels of reading readiness among Grade 1 learners from Sections 1/1 and 1/2, with a total of 59 students. Some learners demonstrate emerging phonemic awareness, while others show minimal prior exposure to English literacy skills due to their non-English kindergarten background. This variation presents a challenge in delivering uniform reading instruction and achieving consistent literacy outcomes. According to recent research, heterogeneous literacy readiness among learners can significantly affect instructional pacing and overall classroom performance, requiring differentiated and targeted teaching strategies (Mesmer & Griffith, 2023).

Recent studies emphasize that phonics-based instruction plays a critical role in developing early reading skills, particularly for learners in multilingual or EFL contexts. Phonics instruction has been shown to improve decoding ability, word recognition, and reading fluency by systematically teaching the relationship between sounds and letters. Neuroscientific and educational research further support that structured phonics instruction strengthens neural pathways associated with reading and language processing (Potier-Watkins & Dehaene, 2023). Similarly, Hu and Park (2023) found that learners exposed to systematic phonics instruction demonstrate significantly higher reading accuracy and comprehension compared to those taught using non-systematic approaches.

Moreover, phonemic awareness, which refers to the ability to identify and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words, is widely recognized as a key predictor of reading success. Learners who develop strong phonemic awareness skills are better equipped to decode words and achieve reading fluency. According to Ehri (2023), phonics instruction facilitates orthographic mapping, allowing learners to store written words in long-term memory and retrieve them automatically during reading. This process is essential for developing reading fluency and comprehension in the early stages of literacy acquisition.

In addition, structured literacy approaches are particularly effective for young learners who lack prior exposure to formal English reading instruction, as they provide clear and explicit guidance in sound-symbol correspondence. Structured literacy emphasizes systematic, cumulative, and explicit teaching of language components, including phonology, orthography, morphology, and syntax. Studies have shown that such approaches are especially beneficial for struggling readers and learners in multilingual contexts, as they reduce cognitive load and provide a clear framework for learning (Castles et al., 2023).

However, despite the increasing recognition of phonics instruction as an effective early literacy approach, there is still a need for localized empirical evidence on its effectiveness among Grade 1 learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten programs in newly established English learning environments. Many existing studies have been conducted in Western or highly developed educational contexts, with limited focus on emerging English programs in Southeast Asian schools. This gap highlights the importance of conducting context-specific research that reflects the unique linguistic and educational conditions of learners in Thailand and similar settings.

This study is anchored on the principles of Structured Literacy Theory, which emphasizes systematic and explicit instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. It is also supported by the Simple View of Reading, which posits that reading comprehension is the product of decoding ability and language comprehension. Within this framework, phonics instruction plays a crucial role in strengthening decoding skills, which are foundational for reading comprehension. When learners develop strong decoding abilities, they are better able to focus on understanding the meaning of texts rather than struggling to recognize individual words.

Furthermore, the integration of phonics instruction in early literacy programs aligns with global educational priorities aimed at improving foundational learning outcomes. International

education reports have emphasized the need to strengthen early reading instruction to address learning gaps and improve overall academic performance among young learners. In multilingual educational settings, such as Thailand, where English is taught as a second or foreign language, phonics instruction provides a structured and effective approach to bridging language gaps and supporting literacy development (Kim & Park, 2023).

Hence, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of a phonics-based instructional program in enhancing the early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners in the Excellent Language Program at Rattana Auewittaya School. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether structured phonics instruction can significantly improve the reading performance of learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten backgrounds. By providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of phonics instruction in a localized context, this study contributes to the growing body of research on early literacy development and offers practical implications for improving reading instruction in similar educational settings.

Statement Of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of phonics instruction in enhancing the early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten programs at Rattana Auewittaya School in Fang, Chiang Mai, specifically in the Excellent Language Program for the academic year 2025–2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the pre-test level of early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners as measured through an early literacy covering:
 - 1.1 phonemic awareness;
 - 1.2 letter-sound recognition; and
 - 1.3-word decoding skills?
2. What is the post-test level of early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners after exposure to phonics instruction as measured through an early literacy assessment covering:
 - 2.1 phonemic awareness;
 - 2.2 letter-sound recognition; and
 - 2.3-word decoding skills?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test levels of early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners after the implementation of phonics instruction?
4. What is the overall effect of phonics instruction on the early literacy performance of Grade 1 learners?

Review of Related Literature

Early literacy development plays a critical role in the academic success of young learners, particularly in the foundational stage of reading acquisition. It involves essential skills such as phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, decoding, and early word reading, which are necessary for fluent reading development. Research emphasizes that learners who develop strong early literacy skills in the early grades are more likely to succeed in later academic tasks that require comprehension and language processing (Lonigan et al., 2023). These foundational skills serve as the building blocks for higher-order thinking and academic achievement across subject areas.

Phonics instruction is widely recognized as an effective structured literacy approach that supports early reading development by explicitly teaching the relationship between letters and sounds. It enables learners to decode unfamiliar words systematically and improves reading accuracy and fluency. Recent studies have shown that systematic phonics instruction significantly enhances decoding skills and word recognition among early grade learners, particularly those with limited exposure to English prior to formal schooling (Ehri et al., 2023;

Castles et al., 2023). According to Linnea Ehri (2023), phonics instruction facilitates orthographic mapping, a process that allows learners to store written words in long-term memory, leading to automatic word recognition and improved reading fluency.

In multilingual and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, phonics instruction is especially important because learners often enter Grade 1 with varying levels of language exposure. Structured phonics-based interventions help bridge the gap between non-English kindergarten backgrounds and formal English literacy instruction. Evidence suggests that explicit phonics training leads to improved reading outcomes when implemented consistently and systematically in early primary education (Zhang & Nation, 2024). Similarly, Kim and Park (2023) found that learners in EFL environments benefit from structured phonics instruction as it provides a clear and logical framework for understanding sound–symbol relationships, which is essential for decoding unfamiliar words.

Recent advances in reading research further emphasize the importance of phonological processing skills in early literacy acquisition. Phonemic awareness, in particular, has been identified as a strong predictor of decoding ability and reading fluency. Learners who develop the ability to segment, blend, and manipulate sounds are better equipped to connect spoken language with written text. This relationship is critical in early reading development, as it enables learners to move from recognizing individual sounds to decoding complete words efficiently (Ehri, 2023).

Moreover, neuroscientific evidence supports the effectiveness of structured phonics instruction in strengthening the brain’s reading network. Research by Potier-Watkins and Dehaene (2023) explains that systematic instruction in letter–sound correspondence activates neural pathways associated with language processing and visual recognition. This suggests that phonics instruction not only enhances reading skills but also contributes to cognitive development related to literacy acquisition. Such findings reinforce the importance of implementing structured phonics programs during the early stages of learning.

Teachers play a vital role in the development of early literacy skills through instructional strategies, classroom engagement, and scaffolding techniques. Effective phonics instruction depends on teachers’ ability to provide clear modeling, guided practice, and timely feedback during reading activities. Studies highlight that teacher-led structured literacy instruction significantly improves learners’ decoding and reading fluency outcomes in early grades (Shanahan, 2023). Furthermore, differentiated instruction is essential in addressing the diverse literacy needs of learners, especially in classrooms where students have varying levels of reading readiness (Mesmer & Griffith, 2023).

In addition, classroom environment and instructional support contribute significantly to learners’ reading development. Positive and supportive learning environments encourage participation, reduce reading anxiety, and promote confidence in early readers. When learners are exposed to consistent phonics instruction supported by interactive and engaging activities, they demonstrate higher levels of motivation and improved reading performance (Bowers & Bowers, 2024). Engaging instructional strategies such as word-building activities, guided reading sessions, and phonics games help sustain learners’ interest and promote deeper understanding of reading concepts.

Parental involvement also contributes to early literacy development. Home literacy environments that encourage reading practice, storytelling, and exposure to print materials enhance children’s reading readiness before and during formal schooling. Recent research indicates that learners with strong home literacy support tend to perform better in early reading assessments compared to those with limited parental engagement (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2023). Parents play a crucial role in reinforcing classroom instruction and providing opportunities for children to practice reading skills in meaningful contexts.

Furthermore, the integration of phonics instruction into early grade curricula aligns with global educational priorities aimed at improving foundational literacy outcomes. International education research highlights the importance of ensuring that all learners acquire basic reading skills in the early years to prevent long-term academic difficulties. Structured phonics instruction has been identified as one of the most effective strategies in addressing early literacy gaps and supporting reading development (Castles et al., 2023).

Despite the strong body of international evidence supporting phonics-based approaches, there remains a need for localized studies examining its effectiveness among Grade 1 learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten programs in emerging English instructional settings. Most existing studies have been conducted in Western contexts, which differ in terms of language exposure, instructional practices, and educational environments. Therefore, conducting context-specific research is essential to determine how phonics instruction can be effectively implemented in schools with newly established language programs, such as those in Thailand.

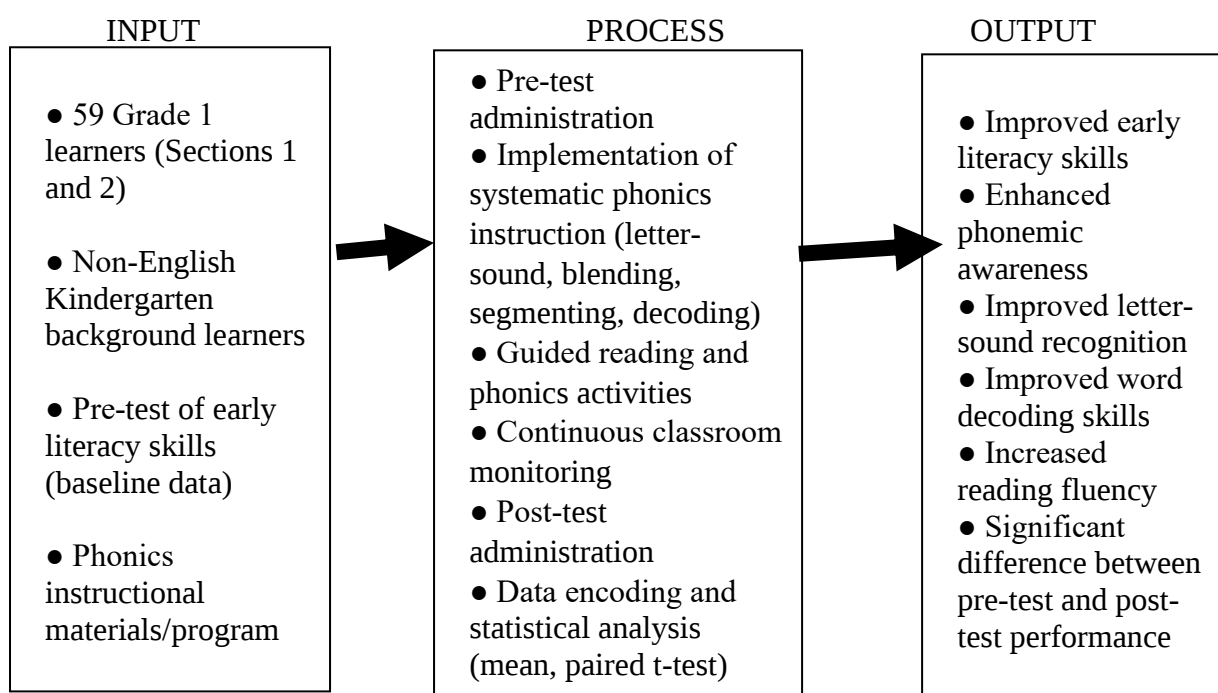


Figure 1. Input-Process-Output (IPO) Model Showing the Flow of Phonics Instruction Intervention and Its Effect on the Early Literacy Skills of Grade 1 Learners

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a quasi-experimental research design using a one-group pre-test and post-test approach. This design was considered appropriate as it aimed to determine the effectiveness of a phonics-based instructional program on the early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners by comparing their performance before and after exposure to the intervention. The absence of a control group is typical in educational settings where intact classes are utilized; however, the design remains effective in measuring learning gains within a specific group over time.

Specifically, the study sought to evaluate the impact of phonics instruction on learners' phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding skills, which are considered

core components of early literacy development. These variables were measured quantitatively to determine the extent of improvement following the instructional intervention.

The study involved 59 Grade 1 learners from two sections (1/1 and 1/2) at Rattana Auewittaya School in Fang, Chiang Mai, Thailand, enrolled under the Excellent Language Program for the academic year 2025–2026. The participants were selected through total population sampling, as all learners in the identified sections were included in the study. These learners were identified as coming from non-English kindergarten backgrounds, making them appropriate respondents for assessing the effectiveness of structured phonics instruction in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. The inclusion of all learners ensured that the results reflected the actual classroom population and minimized sampling bias. The scores from the three subskill components were combined to generate a composite early literacy score for analysis.

Prior to the conduct of the study, formal permission was obtained from the school administration. After approval was granted, the researcher coordinated with the class advisers and English teachers to organize the schedule for the administration of the pre-test, implementation of the intervention, and post-test within regular class hours. The study was conducted in a natural classroom setting to ensure ecological validity and to reflect authentic teaching and learning conditions.

The study utilized a validated Early Literacy Assessment Test to measure learners' phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding skills. The instrument consisted of multiple items distributed across the three subskills and was designed to assess learners' ability to identify sounds, match letters to corresponding phonemes, and decode simple words. The assessment tool had been previously validated by experts in early literacy instruction, ensuring its content validity and suitability for Grade 1 learners. The same instrument was administered for both the pre-test and post-test to maintain consistency and reliability in measurement. The Early Literacy Assessment Test consisted of multiple items designed to measure three core components of early literacy: phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding skills. However, for purposes of analysis, the scores were aggregated to produce an overall early literacy performance score. This approach was adopted because these subskills are highly interrelated and collectively contribute to reading development, providing a comprehensive measure of learners' literacy performance. Although the test measured three subskills, scores were aggregated to produce a composite early literacy score for analysis.

The research process began with the administration of the pre-test, which served as the baseline measure of learners' early literacy skills. This was followed by the implementation of a systematic phonics instruction program that was integrated into the regular English curriculum and conducted throughout the entire academic year (2025–2026). The intervention was delivered through structured and sequential lessons focusing on letter-sound correspondence, blending of sounds, segmenting of words, guided reading activities, and repetitive decoding practice.

The phonics program was implemented and monitored by two foreign English teachers, who worked collaboratively with the researcher to ensure consistency in instruction and adherence to structured literacy principles. These teachers played a crucial role in modeling correct pronunciation, delivering explicit instruction, and providing guided practice and feedback to learners. The use of foreign teachers helped ensure accurate phonological input and strengthened learners' exposure to authentic English language use.

Instructional strategies employed during the intervention included direct instruction, guided practice, interactive phonics activities, and formative assessment. Lessons were delivered in a systematic and cumulative manner, allowing learners to build on previously acquired skills. Repetition and reinforcement were emphasized to support mastery of phonics skills, while engaging activities such as word-building exercises, phonics games, and guided reading sessions were incorporated to maintain learner interest and participation.

At the end of the intervention period, a post-test using the same assessment instrument was administered to measure learners' progress and determine any improvement in early literacy skills. The collected data were checked for completeness, organized, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were computed to describe the level of early literacy skills in both the pre-test and post-test. To determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the two sets of scores, a paired sample t-test was employed at a 0.05 level of significance. This statistical test was appropriate for comparing two related samples and determining whether the observed changes in performance were significant.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. Approval from the school administration was secured prior to data collection. Considering that the participants were minors, the study adhered to ethical standards in educational research. Learners were informed that their participation formed part of an academic assessment activity, and their identities and responses were kept strictly confidential. Participation did not affect their academic grades, and all data collected were used solely for research purposes. Furthermore, the study ensured that no harm was caused to participants and that all procedures were conducted in accordance with accepted ethical guidelines for research involving children.

RESULTS

Table 1 on the next page presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the learners' pre-test scores in early literacy skills. The overall mean score of 4.08 (SD = 1.76) indicates a beginning level of performance. A majority of the learners, or 72.9%, scored within the beginning level (0–5), while only 27.1% reached the developing level (6–10). None of the learners achieved higher proficiency levels prior to the intervention. This finding suggests that most learners had limited skills in phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding at the start of the study.

Table 1. Pre-Test Level of Early Literacy Skills of Grade 1 Learners

Pre-Test Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
0–5 (Beginning)	43	72.9
6–10 (Developing)	16	27.1
11–15 (Approaching Proficiency)	0	0.0
16–20 (Proficient)	0	0.0
21–25 (Advanced)	0	0.0
Total	59	100.0
Mean = 4.08 SD = 1.76 Interpretation = Beginning Level		

Table 2. Post-Test Level of Early Literacy Skills of Grade 1 Learners

Post-Test Score	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
0–5 (Beginning)	0	0.0
6–10 (Developing)	0	0.0
11–15 (Approaching Proficiency)	20	33.9
16–20 (Proficient)	27	45.8
21–25 (Advanced)	12	20.3
Total	59	100.0

Mean = 16.88 SD = 3.64 Interpretation = Proficient Level
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Table 2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the learners' post-test scores after the implementation of the phonics instruction program. The overall mean score of 16.88 (SD = 3.64) indicates a proficient level of performance. A large proportion of learners, 45.8%, reached the proficient level (16–20), while 20.3% achieved the advanced level (21–25). Additionally, 33.9% were at the developing level. Notably, no learners remained at the beginning level after the intervention. These results indicate a substantial improvement in learners' early literacy skills following exposure to phonics instruction.

Table 3. Test of Significant Difference Between Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

Variable	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Decision
Pre-test	4.08	1.76			
Post-test	16.88	3.64	-24.90	0.000	Reject H ₀

Table 3 presents the results of the paired sample t-test comparing the pre-test and post-test scores of the learners. The computed t-value of -24.90 and p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance, indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The findings confirm that the phonics instruction program significantly improved the early literacy skills of the Grade 1 learners.

DISCUSSION

On the Pre-Test Level of Early Literacy Skills

The findings revealed that the Grade 1 learners demonstrated a beginning level of early literacy skills prior to the implementation of the phonics instruction program. This indicates that most learners had limited ability in phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding. Such results are expected among learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten backgrounds, where exposure to structured English literacy instruction may be minimal.

This finding is consistent with the work of Linnea Ehri (2023), who emphasized that early readers require explicit instruction in sound-symbol relationships to develop foundational reading skills. Without systematic exposure to phonics, learners often struggle with decoding and word recognition. Similarly, Castles et al. (2023) highlighted that insufficient early literacy instruction can result in weak phonological processing skills, which are essential for reading development. The low pre-test performance observed in this study therefore confirms the need for structured phonics instruction, particularly for learners with limited prior exposure to English.

On the Post-Test Level of Early Literacy Skills

The post-test results showed that learners reached a proficient level of early literacy skills after exposure to the phonics instruction program. This significant improvement indicates that the intervention successfully enhanced learners' abilities in phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding.

This finding supports the growing body of research emphasizing the effectiveness of phonics-based instruction in early reading development. According to Mesmer and Griffith (2023), systematic phonics instruction provides learners with the necessary skills to decode unfamiliar words and improve reading accuracy. Additionally, Hulme and Snowling (2023) explained that phonics instruction strengthens phonological awareness, which is a key predictor

of reading success. The structured and repetitive nature of the phonics activities used in this study likely contributed to learners' improved performance by reinforcing sound-letter associations and promoting automatic word recognition.

On the Significant Difference Between Pre-Test and Post-Test

The results of the paired sample t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, indicating that the phonics instruction program had a measurable impact on learners' early literacy development. The large increase in mean scores demonstrates that the improvement was not due to chance but was directly influenced by the intervention.

This finding is consistent with the conclusions of Castles et al. (2023), who argued that explicit phonics instruction is one of the most effective approaches for improving reading outcomes among beginning learners. Furthermore, Kim and Park (2023) found that phonics instruction is particularly beneficial in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, as it provides learners with a structured framework for understanding the relationship between sounds and written symbols. The significant difference observed in this study therefore reinforces the effectiveness of phonics instruction as a core strategy in early literacy education.

On the Overall Effect of Phonics Instruction

The overall findings of the study indicate that phonics instruction had a positive and significant effect on the early literacy performance of Grade 1 learners. The transition from a beginning level in the pre-test to a proficient level in the post-test demonstrates that systematic phonics instruction can effectively bridge learning gaps among learners with limited prior exposure to English.

This result supports the theoretical perspective that early literacy development is strongly influenced by phonemic awareness and decoding skills. Research by Ehri (2023) highlights that phonics instruction facilitates orthographic mapping, allowing learners to store and retrieve words more efficiently. Additionally, studies in multilingual contexts, such as those conducted by Kim and Park (2023), confirm that phonics-based approaches are highly effective in improving literacy outcomes among non-native English learners.

The findings also suggest that structured instructional strategies, including guided practice, repetition, and interactive activities, play a crucial role in enhancing literacy development. These strategies provide learners with multiple opportunities to practice and internalize reading skills, leading to improved performance. Therefore, the integration of phonics instruction into early grade reading programs is essential in promoting literacy development and academic success. While the assessment included multiple subskills, the analysis focused on overall literacy performance since early reading components function as an integrated system. Research indicates that phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, and decoding skills develop simultaneously and collectively influence reading proficiency (Ehri, 2023). Thus, combining these components into a single composite score provides a more comprehensive representation of learners' overall literacy development.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of a phonics-based instructional program on the early literacy skills of Grade 1 learners from non-English kindergarten backgrounds. Based on the findings, the learners demonstrated a beginning level of early literacy skills in the pre-test, indicating limited ability in phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding.

After the implementation of the phonics instruction program, the learners achieved a proficient level of performance in the post-test. The significant increase in mean scores, along with the results of the paired sample t-test, confirmed that there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. This indicates that the phonics instruction program had a positive and significant effect on the early literacy development of the learners.

Therefore, it can be concluded that systematic phonics instruction is an effective approach in improving early literacy skills, particularly for learners transitioning from non-English kindergarten programs. The structured activities, repetition, and guided practice provided learners with the necessary foundation to develop essential reading skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

School administrators should encourage the integration of systematic phonics instruction in early grade classrooms to support the development of learners' foundational literacy skills. This may be achieved through professional development programs that equip teachers with effective phonics-based teaching strategies, as well as the provision of appropriate instructional materials that facilitate engaging and structured literacy instruction.

Teachers should implement consistent and structured phonics activities that enhance learners' phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition, and word decoding skills. They should also design engaging and interactive classroom activities, such as guided reading, blending exercises, and word-building tasks, to promote active participation and reinforce learning. Additionally, teachers should provide continuous feedback and encouragement to help learners build confidence and improve their reading abilities.

Parents should be encouraged to support their children's literacy development at home by practicing letter sounds, reading simple words, and engaging in guided reading activities. They should also create a supportive learning environment that motivates children to practice reading regularly and develop positive attitudes toward literacy.

Future researchers may conduct similar studies using a control group or experimental design to further validate the effectiveness of phonics instruction. They may also explore additional variables such as reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and long-term retention of literacy skills to provide a more comprehensive understanding of early reading development.

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