THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PHONIC BASED APPROACH IN YOUNG ESL LEARNERS

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Abstract

In Pakistan, English is taught as a second language. Phonics based approach is considered as basic constituent of reading for English as second language learners.This study aimed to find the effectiveness of phonics-based approach at primary level andto check the accuracy of spellings and oral reading in young ESL learners. The participants of the study were exposed to oral reading of texts and a spelling test was adapted for data collection. The reading and spelling accuracy were measured from the data collected from the primary sources. The results showed that the phonics-based approach is 97.6% and 92.1% effective for reading and spelling accuracy, respectively, in young ESL learners. The phonics-based approach is effective to be applied to the primary schools of ESL context.

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Introduction

English is identified as the European language with deepest orthography. This account for the uproar of reading instruction. This uproar mainly involved conflicts between whole language and proponents of Phonics. After decade since 1980s, the reading wars seem to be ceased till recent years. Education ministries in all English speaking countries issue reports, based on relevant research, appreciate phonics as essential constituent of reading instruction both for native speakers and English as a second language learners. English is becoming the additional language for people all over the world. It is important to establish reading instruction practices for native and ESL learners. In Pakistan, teachers are not trained to provide phonological or phonemic awareness. Teachers working at private as well as public sector are not given formal training about teaching methodology, regarding Phonology. The teachers are degree holders of local universities i.e. universities of Pakistan and none of these universities offers systematic instruction in teaching of early reading.

In Pakistan, English is the language of literacy and learners are instrumentally motivated through formal examinations. Young learners are exposed to oral and written language simultaneously from the beginning. Learners are not given chance to get familiar with the totally new sound system of English. Recitation or singing of alphabets has been followed as a

rule. Few words of the initial letter of corresponding alphabet are taught instead of sounds. As a result, young learners are confused by undistinguished correspondences, such as *C Cat* or G Goat, with no explanation given by the teachers about the lack of sound correspondence between the two.

In phonics based approach learners are taught the sounds of letters. Learners come to associate the print of letters with its sound. Once the letter-sounds are mastered, learners are taught the blending of sounds together to read words. Similarly, learners taught through phonics based approach learn the spellings by sounding out the word.

Learning first language begins before school years, when a child learns that sounds 'encode' meaningand gradually becomes able to 'read' the underlying concepts. It begins when they first string sounds together to make words and then words to make sentences. Very early in their lives, children realize that language is a rewarding system that introduces meaning into their lives. They realize that language can offer them a useful tool to express their feelings, share their experiences and not only communicate but also satisfy their needs (Caldwell, 2002). Reading aloud to children is "the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills eventually required for reading" (Adams, 1990).

The change from early learning at home to first real reading and writing activities looks smooth and natural but it is not thatsimple. Learning written language is not natural. According to Vygotsky (1978), it is a second-order meaning representation which requires great demand on the individual (learner). Even though, there are many young ESL learners who acquire reading skills effortlessly, and some found it a great struggle. Studies shows that majority of young learners should be offered skill based reading instructions (Reid, 1990; Oakhill & Beard, 1999).

Phonics based approach views reading as a bottom-up approach (Hoover & Gough, 1990; Stanovich, 1990). This means that acquiring reading skills in early stages depends upon word decoding skills and phonemic awareness (Juel, 1988; Stanovich, 1986). Reading acquisition precedes reading comprehension (Xue & Meisels, 2004). Systematic phonics-based approach provides explicit teaching of distinctive visual symbols corresponding to units of sound (Bowey, 2006; Goswami, 2005; Stuart, 1999). Young learners are taught different skills through synthetic or analytic phonics-based approach.

This study focuses on synthetic Phonics approach which is teaching phonemes and graphemes in correspondence. Letter-sound correspondence is taught by systematic development of blending and segmenting different

phonemes. Young learners learn to sound out words i.e. (/bat/=/b/, /a/, /t/). Learners are encouraged to blend sounds into words (Bowey, 2006). Synthetic phonics-based approach is systematic "beginning with the most straightforward combination of vowel-consonant-vowel words and gradually introducing more complex patterns" (Bald, 2006). Young learners learn spellings at the same time with reading.

1.1 Statement of the problem:

This study proposes the effectiveness of phonics-based approach in young learners of English as second language. The study focuses the skill of reading and spelling skill at primary level in private institutions of Mardan.

1.2 Objectives:

The objectives of this study are to access the effectiveness of phonics-based approach in young ESL learners in the context of Mardan. The study was conducted:

- To find out the oral reading accuracy of young ESL learners exposed to phonics-based approach.

- To find out the early spelling skills of young ESL learners exposed to phonics-based approach.

Oral reading accuracy refers to the number of words read accurately by the young learners to be tested.

1.3 Research questions:

The following questions underlie this study:

- How much accurate the young ESL learners are (exposed to phonics-based approach) in reading?

- How much effective the phonics-based approach is at the spelling level?

1.4 Hypothesis:

Learners of ESL exposed to phonics-based approach are accurate readers and accurate spellers.

1.5 Significance of the study:

This study signifies the efficiency of phonics-based reading for young ESL learners. This study will extend current knowledge by evaluating the potential effectiveness of a phonics-based approach for reading and spelling skills at primary level and examining differential response to this approach in different contexts. The study also adds to the literature by exploring the questions using a larger sample of children than has been included in prior works.

1.6 Limitations:

Due to limited time, a known text was used as a material for the learners as it was difficult to train the learners in a short time for a completely unknown text reading. The reading accuracy of young ESL learners could be understood more significantly if we had understood their reading skills in L1.

Linguistic Independence Hypothesis states that literacy skills in L1 can predict L2 reading skills (Verhoeven, 1991).

Literature Review

Studies conducted in countries and regions that include Nigeria (Sheperd, 2013; Eshit, 2014), India (Dixon et al., 2011), Malaysia (Johnson & Tweedie, 2010; Jamaludin et al., 2015), Japan (Allen-Tamai, 2000), PR China (Ashmore et al., 2003; Bing et al., 2013), Hong Kong (Yeung, 2012; Yeung et al., 2013), and Taiwan (Chu et al., 2007; Lin and Cheng, 2008; Lai et al., 2009; Yang, 2009; Li and Chen, 2016).

According to Kachru (1990), the use of English in the above-mentioned areas can be summarized into two categories: the outer circle and the expanding circle. The outer circle refers to settings where English is not the native language but has widely used in chief institutions of the country and plays an important role in a multilingual setting (Crystal, 2003). These countries and regions include India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Hong Kong, Pakistan and over 50 other territories. In these territories English is taught as a second language. The expanding circle include nations where the importance of English is recognized as an international language, though they do not have a history of colonization by English-native countries nor have they given English any special role in government. In countries belonging to the expanding circle, English is taught as foreign language and considered to be of

high priority and great importance for academic success. Countries of this category include China, Taiwan, Japan, etc. However, the English learning situation of young learners in the two circles, i.e. outer circle and expanding circle, did not differ much regarding the studies involved in the analysis. English was taught as a school subject, and the daily instruction was mediated by the native language in most of the studies, expect for the study by Dixon (2010), where English was the medium of instruction. The number of English lessons students took each week ranked from two to five, with the median of three. Each lesson lasted from 30-40 mins. This is very limited exposure compared to their counterparts in English-dominant context.

Eleven studies reported the socioeconomic status (SES) of schools or learners. Five studies were conducted in schools in rural areas and of low SES (Johnson and Tweedie, 2010; Dixon et al., 2011; Shepherd, 2013; Eshiet, 2014; Jamaludin et al., 2015. Two studies were performed in schools of mixed levels of SES (Yeun, 2012; Yeung and Chan, 2013). Four studies were conducted in schools of middle or high SES (Allen-Tamai, 2000; Ashmore et al., 2003; Bing et al., 2013; Li and Chen, 2016).

Similarly, another study was conducted in EFL context which studied the early literacy skills in the schools of mixed socio-economic status (Nikolaos, 2005). The study by Dixon (2010) was conducted in the schools of

low socio-economic status. In Pakistan, English is given the status of second language. English is not a native language of the country, but it has a wide range of social and official use. Therefore, the learning and teaching trend of English is high in this context. The basic learning and teaching focus is on communicative purpose of English language which requires a high degree of spoken aspect. The phonics-based approach is more in trend due to the ever-growing demand of English language fluency. The command on fluency of language can be achieved by learning the basic literacy skills. Besides the basic four literacy skills, the communicative purpose of language requires accurate spelling skills as well, which is the focus of this study.

A number of studies compared the effect of phonics and holistic approaches to early spelling. The first study yielded inconclusive results (Horn, 1954). In 1964, Hahn was not able to find positive correlation between phonics and spelling skills, concluding that "intensive phonics instruction in reading does not increase spelling ability, with pupils in the primary grade". In 1998, Bruck reported benefits for phonics group. In the last decade studies showed major benefits of systematic phonics instruction and its effect on young learners spelling. Ehri et al. (2001), the Clackmannanshire report (Johnson & Watson, 2004) and Trogerson et al. (2006) suggested benefits for phonic groups in spelling when compared to non phonics groups. Standardized

spelling tests commonly assess spelling by asking the participants to spell the "whole word correctly" from the list of words (Calhoon, Greenberg & Hunter, 2010). Sometimes these words are known to the participants while other times the words are unfamiliar ones or even non words (Daffern, 2014).

The current study was conducted to check the effectiveness of Phonics-based Approach based on the skills of reading as well as spellings. This study was conducted in the private schools of high socio-economic status in the context of Mardan, as the learners of low SES are not introduced to the Phonics-based Approach. In this study both familiar and unfamiliar texts were illustrated to the participants for finding the effect of phonics based approach. Previous studies were conducted like the one discussed in this paper but, of course, with different participants and a different context and the addition of spelling accuracy to literature.

Research Methodology

In this chapter the participants and the context of the research are presented. More specifically, the detailed account of the participants' introduction to reading in English as a second language, focusing on the way Phonics-based approach is implemented, is provided. The details of tools and techniques used for investigation of participants' oral reading skills are provided. The rationale used in the spelling assessment is also presented.

3.1 Participants:

Participants in this study were 100 young ESL learners (50 girls and 50 boys), aged 8-9 years, studying English language as a subject in grade III. These participants were the students of five private sector schools of Mardan, 20 learners were selected from each school. The selection of these learners was based on their previous method of instruction i.e. learners exposed to the phonic-based approach in their previous grades. The government sectors schools were ignored in this study because they lacked phonics-based approach in language teaching.

3.2 Sampling:

In Mardan, there were twenty private schools that provided the universe for this research. The reason for choosing only five among them was based on quality education and course standard that fulfilled our needs. Among those five schools the selection of learners was based on their school background and the language teaching methodology to which they were exposed. The schools with same course books were selected for research. Due to shortage of time, a limited number of 20 learners per school were selected as sample. Number of learners lower than 20 would have made the sample a smaller one. The age factor was mainly focused, only 8-9 years old learners of grade III were selected for the study because at this level the learners are more exposed to explicit spelling instructions and reading. They learn accurate

spellings of the new vocabulary as a part of their homework, class activities and tests. The selection of sample was purely based on learners exposed to phonics-based approach throughout their educational sessions.

3.3 Research Context:

In majority of previous studies, the participants were older than the ones in this study. Therefore, the context for this study was fairy different. Both known and unknown texts were illustrated to the participants in order to facilitate comprehension for the young ESL learners. Before the data collection, a sort of interview with the English teacher of each class was conducted and they were asked questions regarding the methods used previously in their English language classes. The background data was collected through informal interview related to approaches used in teaching of reading and spellings. The teachers were also asked to draw a rough profile of the participants to make the research environment comfortable and relax for data collection. Each participant was called by name to create a sense of familiarity and they were told that they should not worry about making mistakes. They were also allowed to omit words that they found hard to pronounce. Each young participant was also given treat at the end.

3.4 Materials:

The participants were asked to read a known text from their course textbook, Oxford Modern English Book 3. The text given was from unit 5 and

unit 13 for reading. The reason for choosing these units was that the participants were much familiar with these units and were more exposed to reading and listening activities of these units. For reading accuracy check different passages were selected to accommodate the participants' needs.

For unknown text reading, a passage was selected from the book, Heidi Level 4. The passage was selected from page number 27-28 because it contained less naming words. This text was used by other schools at the same level which was appropriate for our participants. The phonemes of this book were like the ones to which our participants were exposed in their earlier grades.

For spelling accuracy, a test was designed with 15 blanks each blank comprised of simple decodable words which were appropriate for the participants. The decodable words included birthday, decorate, party, cut, daytime, jigsaw, imitate, display, strawberry, explain, contain, soundtrack, combine, winner and something.

3.5 Tools and Techniques:

In this study semi-structured interview was conducted to check the effectiveness of phonics-based approach at reading accuracy level and a test was adapted to check the effectiveness of phonics-based approach at spelling level in young ESL learners.

3.5.1 Oral Reading Accuracy:

In most of the studies measuring oral reading accuracy participants are asked to read a connected text, unknown to the participants, with a specific word limit not exceeding fifty words (Hudson et al., 2005; Fuchs et al., 2001; Shinn, et al., 1992). To measure oral reading accuracy, in this study the participants were first allowed to read unknown text consisting of fifty words. The text was not the part of their course, but the reading was conducted during their routine English class to avoid the external stress factors. Then, the number of words read inaccurately by each participant was counted. Then that number from the total number of words read was subtracted. The result was the total number of words that participant read correctly which was loaded to the statistics tool. A variety of reading material was used in the measurement to accommodate the participants' learning experiences and needs. After the collection of data for unknown text, the participants were allowed to read known text from their textbook. The same method was used for data collection and the figures obtained were loaded to the statistics tool.

3.5.2 Spelling Accuracy:

For the purpose to test the spelling accuracy of the participants they were given a spelling test during one of their English classes. Each participant was given a photocopy of a blanked test. The text including the missing words which the participants had to fill in correctly was read out. The text was read

to them twice in a slow pace. The tests were then rated in a straightforward way: every word containing even a slightest misspelling was considered incorrect. All words that were spelled accurately by each participant were added and were given a final spelling score with 15/15 being the highest and 0/15 the lowest one.

The decision to offer the participants a contextualized spelling activity was a conscious one and was based on several principles.Anthony (1973) and Zimmerman (1997) were among the first researchers to suggest that lexical knowledge of any kind is a very intricate aspect of L2 learning. For this reasonwords should be addressed within a context. Therefore, communicative approaches base course content on contextualized activities (Zimmerman, 1997). Therefore, to test vocabulary the same contextualized way was opted. In making spelling test the following criteria were resolved for the choice of words:

Studies with laboratory tasks, such as paired associate learning, word recognition and free recall, conducted by psycholinguists consistently report better performances on concrete words (Nelson & Schreiber, 1992;Hulstijn, 1997). Psycholinguists have tried to explain these concreteness effects by offering certain hypotheses. One of these hypotheses, qualitative in nature, is the image ability hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, people are more

likely to produce images in mind for concrete words. This happens because according to (Plaivio 1976-1986;Hulstijn, 1997) abstract words are connected only with the verbal sub-system that exists in our semantic memory, while concrete words are also connected with a visual sub-system. This double storage of concrete words could explain why they are easily recalled.

Words looking the same either phonologically or orthographically can be often confused. These are words known as "synforms"; some synforms are similar in sound (bun/ban) and some in morphology (price/prize). This can then lead to what is known as "synformic confusions" and is one of the factors contributing to the phenomenon Laufer (1997) describes as "words you think you know".

Before making the final decisions about which of the words we would be including in our test we took into consideration certain factors that were related to the way in which our participants had been instructed English:

a. Phonemic complexity:

The words chosen for the spelling test were decodable by the participants this means that we included words that were challenging for participants and easy to read.

b. Exposure to the words:

Words to which the participants had not been exposed were avoided. A careful examination of the syllabi of the first three years was quite helpful in this direction.

Data Analysis and Findings

Data was collected separately for checking the reading accuracy and spelling accuracy of young ESL learners. To check the effectiveness of phonics-based approach at the level of reading accuracy semi-structured interview was conducted. The learners were allowed to read a known text from the book, Oxford Modern English Book 3. A variety of text was chosen for the participants. The numbers of inaccurate words were noted down. If the number of inaccurate words was 2, the learner will score 48 points out of 50. The changed pronunciation of names was not considered as a mistake and the repetition of words was ignored. The number of inaccurate words was subtracted from total number of words i.e. fifty.

Table 1 Data collected for reading accuracy of known text

Type of text	Number of participants	Total number of words	Number of accurate words (Mean value)
Known text	100	50	49.45

Similarly, the learners were asked one by one to read the unknown text i.e. the passage selected from the book, Heidi level 4. The number of inaccurate

words was noted down and was subtracted from the total number of words i.e. fifty. The result was the number of accurate words read by the participant.

Table 2 Data collected for reading accuracy of unknown text

Type of text	Number of participants	Total number of words	Number of accurate words (Mean value)
Unknown text	100	50	48.22

Then the overall value for reading accuracy of young ESL learners was obtained from the mean values of known (M= 49.45) and unknown texts (M=48.22). The following table has shown the overall reading accuracy of young ESL learners, learning through phonics-based approach.

Table 3 Data for reading accuracy

Type of text	Number of participants	Total number of words	Mean value
Unknown text	100	50	48.22
Known text	100	50	49.45
			48.83

The overall mean value of reading accuracy was 48.83.

To check the spelling accuracy of young ESL learners, data was collected from the 'fill in the blanks' type of test. Each blank had one mark and total 15 blanks were there. Even a slightly misspelled word was considered as inaccurate. The number of accurate words was added, and the highest score given was 15/15 and the lowest score was 0/15.

Table 4 Data for spelling accuracy

	Number of participants	Total score	Score obtained (Mean value)
Spelling test	100	15	13.82

After the spelling accuracy test, the data was collected and the mean of scores obtained was 13.82.

4.1 Analytical Tools:

To analyze the data collected for reading accuracy, the data was loaded to get its means value for both known and unknown texts, as shown in table 1 and 2 respectively. Then the final mean of both texts was found out (M=13.82). The overall mean value shows the average number of accurate words read by the participants during the reading test. Then standard deviation of the known text and unknown text was calculated.

Table 5 Standard deviation of reading accuracy

Type of text	No. of participants	Total no. of words	No. of accurate words (Mean)	Standard Deviation
Known	100	50	49.45	1.02
Unknown	100	50	48.22	1.98
			48.83	1.5

Statistically, a significant difference among the known text accuracy and text accuracy was not found. To analyze the data more specifically, the descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation did not show any significant difference between the two texts.

According to Cohen (1988), the magnitude of difference between the known text accuracy and unknown text accuracy is smaller one. This means that the effect size, when measured, was less than 1.10 i.e. $\eta 2 = 0.78$. Similarly, standard deviation for spelling accuracy test was measured.

Table 6 Standard deviation of spelling accuracy

	No. of participants	Total score	Score obtained (Mean)	Standard deviation
Spelling test	100	15	13.82	1.19

The effect size of spelling accuracy, when measured, was less than 1.10 i.e. $\eta 2=0.99$. The effect size is small in this case showing that the effect is a real one.

4.2 Results:

Finally, the correlation between all the results for spelling accuracy and reading accuracy of young ESL learners, exposed to phonics-based approach, was drawn. For this purpose, the correlation coefficient was used to find out the relation between overall reading accuracy and spelling accuracy of young ESL learners. In the measurements of reading accuracy and spelling accuracy the correlation was significant at the level of 0.05.

According to Cohen (1988), when the resultant value lies between the range of 0.50-1.0 this indicates that there will be a large correlation between the values. Therefore, a strong correlation was measured between the reading accuracy and spelling accuracy i.e. $r=0.94$ which is statistically significant with probability less than 0.0001, $p<0.0001$.

The accuracy results showed that the overall reading accuracy of young ESL learners, exposed to phonics-based approach, was 97.6% and the spelling accuracy was measured to be 92.1%. These results showed that the phonics-based approach is 97.6% and 92.1% effective for Young ESL learners at reading and spellings level respectively.

Discussion

The hypothesis that the young ESL learners exposed to phonics-based approach are accurate readers and accurate spellers was almost proven. The overall measurements showed that the learners exposed to phonics-based approach are efficient in reading and spellings. However, there was found a slight difference between the reading accuracy and spelling accuracy. Reading was measured to be more accurate as compared to spelling accuracy. Even then, the overall results showed a consistency in favor of phonics-based approach which is a clear indication that phonics-based approach is effective in terms of spelling and reading accuracy.

Through this study, it is confirmed that reading skills can be tested through oral reading and this method proved to be a valid one. The known text oral reading and the unknown text oral reading enabled a proper assessment of young learners' reading accuracy. The context and methodology of oral reading accuracy test reinforced the strong correlation.

According to Cohen's eta squared test, the effect size of both variables was smaller one i.e. less than 0.10. These results showed that it is effective to apply the results to the overall population. According to the results drawn in the previous chapter the phonics-based approach proved to be a valid and

effective method. Therefore, the effectiveness of phonics-based approach cannot be ignored in teaching of language as a second language. The young learners read an enormous number of accurate words, the highest of accurate words read by each learner was 50 and the lowest number of accurate words noted was 45, in case of known text. In case of unknown text, the highest number of accurate words read by the learners was 50 and the lowest number noted was 43. On the average, the accurate words noted were 49.45 and 48.22 for known and unknown texts respectively. The reason for this slight difference was that in case of unknown text the learners were unfamiliar with the lexical items as compared to the known text.

As the results showed no significant difference between the known text reading accuracy and unknown text reading accuracy. There are certain reasons; firstly, the learners were familiar with the texts. The unknown text was first illustrated to the learners before the actual reading and the known text was already the part of their course book. Secondly, this sense of familiarity with the text minimized the anxiety and stress level of the learners. Therefore, the learners were at ease during their actual reading test. Thirdly, the learners were provided with the comfort of their routine English classes. Therefore, 68 learners scored the highest marks in case of known text reading and 37 learners scored highest marks in case of unknown text reading. The

main point to be noted here is the effect of phonics-based approach. The learners frequently attempted self-correction instead of avoiding words. The learners exposed to phonics-based approach are risk-takers. Their phonemic awareness helped them to read and decode the unknown text. The exposure of young learners to phonics-based approach is the important factor behind the high accuracy in unknown text reading.

The results for spelling accuracy exposed that young ESL learners were 92.1% accurate. The spelling test was conducted in a contextualized manner i.e. explicit instruction was given before the test and the words were dictated as done in their normal spelling activities. The spelling test was in the form of blanked text which was the part of their weekly test routine. Therefore, this method of assessment proved to be a valid one. Only 8 out of 100 learners left the blanks empty while others attempted to fill the blanks even if they did not know the accurate spellings. The factor behind this attempt was the phonics-based approach that enabled the learners to be daring as in case of reading. This approach enabled the learners to construct the spellings of even the unknown words through the combination of sounds.

In the spelling test of young ESL learners, the most challenging word was cut only 27 out of 100 spelled it accurately. This was an unexpected result because the learners were also familiar with the word present in their text

book, Oxford Modern English book 3, unit 3 and unit 11. They mostly wrote the word with k. This mistake was due to the specific phonics taught with grapheme correspondence. The overall effectiveness regarding the significant results of young ESL learner were, since, these young learners were given a dedicated phonics instruction (in their early grades) relating the words, their meanings, and sentence structure with each other to avoid drill and practice method. The method used for teaching language was through literature which provides an esthetic material for reading.

Hence, the results drawn from the data collected proved to be effective for primary level ESL learners. The phonics-based approach is significant for ESL learners at reading and spelling level.

Conclusion

This study was an attempt to check the effectiveness of phonics-based approach for oral reading and spellings accuracy at primary level. Even though, no significance difference was found between the measurements, but the results proved that phonics-based approach is effective for reading skills and should be introduced in all the private and public-sector schools of Mardan.

In any case, our findings advocated the introduction of phonics-based approaches to early ESL language classes "in a judicious balance with other elements"(Trogerson et al., 2006). Such elements are already used in the schools of Mardan at primary level.

Recommendations

The current study has shown a clear significance that phonics-based approach is effective for accurate reading skills of young ESL learners at primary level. As this approach has proven to be effective for young learners so it is beneficial to apply this approach to the same learning classes in ESL context. In case of spelling accuracy, the test adaptation was a valid one and can be recommended for future researches for reliable results.

It was the phonics-based approach that produced high percent results. To check the effectiveness of other approaches, it is recommended to use the same method. A comparative study can also be carried out between different approaches. Similar studies can also be conducted in different contexts and with different participants. Other recommendations include the use of different materials for the learners of any context, the check of other skills through the same methods and the comparison of control and experimental groups for different skills in any context.

The success of phonics-based approach is based on trained teachers. In any study and any context, it is, therefore, recommended that the teachers should be trained through well-organized training programs. The training of language teachers is the foremost element in case of ESL context.

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