



Alphabetic Knowledge and Phonological Awareness: A comparison between Malaysian Preschool Children from Public and Private Kindergartens

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ABSTRACT

Alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness are essential skills in learning to read. This research examined the level of acquisition on alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness among 60 preschoolers from private and public preschools in Kuching, Sarawak. The mean age of the children was 5.58. The children were administered letter name and sound knowledge, and letter naming fluency tests to examine their alphabetic knowledge; Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing and Yopp-Singer Phoneme Segmentation Test to examine their phonological awareness. Higher achievement in alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness was found among preschoolers from private preschools compared to those from public preschools. This study discusses the implications for practice and ways teachers could explicitly foster alphabetic knowledge and phonological awareness skills in classroom.

Keywords: Learning to read; Alphabetic knowledge; Phonological awareness; Preschool children.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning to read is important in early literacy development. Many researchers have demonstrated that alphabetic knowledge (AK) and phonological awareness (PA) are two fundamental skills that children must

acquire in learning to read. The National Early Literacy Panel [NELP] (2008) claimed that the foundation for conventional reading is formed by emergent literacy skills which are the multiple skills associated with early reading ability. These skills include AK and PA, two strong predictors that provide consistent positive impact on students' later decoding and reading comprehension abilities when taught in combination (Shanahan & Lonigan, 2013).

Alphabetic Knowledge

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