Wadi AlShatti University
Journal of Human Sciences

مجلة جامعة وادي الشاطئ
للعلوم الإنسانيَّة

Special Issue for the Second International Conference on Educational Science Studies.p254-269

ISSN: 3105-8779

عدد خاص بالمؤتمر الدولي الثاني لدراسات العلمية التربوية، ص254-269

تاريخ التسليم:2024-08-08.	تاريخ انهاء التعديلات:2024-09-25.	تاريخ القبول:2024-09-29	تاريخ النشر:2025-12-15

JOLLY PHONICS FOR IMPROVING THE PRONUNCIATION OF 1ST YEAR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Pronunciation is a crucial component of foreign language learning (FLL), directly impacting students' English language skills. Unfortunately, a lot of elementary school teachers concentrate only on teaching the basic 26 letters and fail to introduce students to the other sounds in the language at an early age. Students' ability to read and write words correctly and fluently is hampered when they are taught letters alone without the sounds that go with them. One of the most widely used strategies in British schools to improve students' literacy and pronunciation while making learning fun is Jolly Phonics. The purpose of this study is to examine how well first-year primary school students' pronunciation can be improved through Jolly Phonics instruction. The primary method involved running an experiment with two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group of five students received Jolly Phonics instruction for three months, while the control group of five students received traditional classroom instruction focused solely on letter recognition. Both groups' pronunciations were assessed before and after the experiment using standardized tests. The results were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The findings revealed that Jolly Phonics and multisensory learning methods significantly improve the pronunciation of young learners. This study will benefit primary school teachers, as well as course book and curriculum designers, by demonstrating effective instructional strategies for teaching pronunciation in early language education.

Keywords:- : Jolly Phonics; Phonics Pronunciation; Primary school students

منهج الجولي الفونيكس لتعليم الصوتيات لتطوير النطق لطلاب الصف الأول ابتدائي من التعليم الأساسي

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قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، علم اللغة التطبيقي، كلية اللغات، الأكاديمية الليبية (جنزور) ليبيا[1].
قسم اللغة الانجليزية، كلية التربية زويلة، جامعة سبها، ليبيا[2].
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الملخص

يُعدّ النطق عنصرًا أساسيًا في تعلّم اللغات الأجنبية، إذ يؤثر بشكل مباشر على مهارات الطلاب في اللغة الإنجليزية. لسوء الحظ، يركز العديد من معلمي المرحلة الابتدائية على تعليم الأحرف الستة والعشرين الأساسية فقط، ويتجاهلون تعريف الطلاب بالأصوات الأخرى في اللغة في سن مبكرة. تتأثر قدرة الطلاب على قراءة وكتابة الكلمات بشكل صحيح وسلس عندما يتم تعليمهم الأحرف فقط دون الأصوات المصاحبة لها. تُعدّ طريقة "جولي فونيكس" إحدى أكثر الاستراتيجيات شيوعًا في المدارس البريطانية لتحسين مهارات القراءة والكتابة والنطق لدى الطلاب مع جعل التعلم ممتعًا. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بحث مدى فعالية "جولي فونيكس" في تحسين نطق طلاب السنة الأولى من المرحلة الابتدائية. اعتمدت الدراسة بشكل أساسي على إجراء تجربة شملت مجموعتين: تجريبية وضابطة. تلقت المجموعة التجريبية، المكونة من خمسة طلاب، تعليمًا باستخدام "جولي فونيكس" لمدة ثلاثة أشهر، بينما تلقت المجموعة الضابطة، المكونة من خمسة طلاب أيضًا، تعليمًا تقليديًا في الصف الدراسي يركز فقط على تمييز الأحرف. تم تقييم نطق المجموعتين قبل التجربة وبعدها باستخدام اختبارات معيارية. تم تحليل النتائج نوعيًا وكميًا. كشفت النتائج أن منهج جولي فونيكس وأساليب التعلم متعددة الحواس تُحسّن بشكل ملحوظ نطق المتعلمين الصغار. ستفيد هذه الدراسة معلمي المرحلة الابتدائية، بالإضافة إلى مصممي الكتب الدراسية والمناهج، من خلال توضيح استراتيجيات تعليمية فعّالة لتدريس النطق في المراحل المبكرة من تعليم اللغة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : جولي فونيكس؛ نطق الصوتيات؛ طلاب المرحلة الابتدائية.

1. Introduction

Pronunciation is one of the language's elements that contribute to smooth communication and should be taught at all levels of language learning. When working with a young learner, the approach to teaching how to pronounce phonemes, syllables, words, and sentences is different than when educating a teen or adult. Finding an appropriate and innovative strategy to develop and improve children's English pronunciation is a challenging task. According to Udosen and Ukpak (2005), the majority of preschool students arrive with a basic understanding of reading sounds, and teachers are unaware of how many children struggle to decode words.

Jolly Phonics is a phonics method that was first introduced in 1987 but has only recently gained popularity in English education. It uses the synthetic method to teach letter sounds in a fun, multi-sensory way. This method enables children to become fluent readers in a short amount of time (Consuegra and Anglesos, 2018). According to Okoroafor, et al (2024), 'Jolly simply means fun while phonics refers to letter sounds used for reading'.

Jolly Phonics, like many other phonics approaches, teaches reading and writing by associating letters with the sounds they produce in the English spelling system. It lists 42 letter sounds in order of complexity, beginning with the most commonly occurring alphabet sounds, then digraphs, which require the combination of two alphabets, and finally the remaining single-letter alphabet sounds.

1.1.Aim of the research

The primary aim of the study is to determine whether or not Jolly Phonics instruction improves the pronunciation of young learners (1st year primary school students). This study aims also to,

- improving young learners' pronunciation through an engaging and effective approach
- Improving student reading and writing skills.
- Encourage teachers to use the phonics approach as the primary method for teaching pronunciation.

1.2. Background and Problem of the research

In, the English language curriculum (English for Libya) taught to first-grade students is primarily phonics-based (see Appendix 1). The first unit of the curriculum focused on teaching letters. The other units focused on teaching English words using 42 sounds rather than letters. The second unit of (English for Libya) began with the first group of sounds (/s/, /a/, t/, /i/, /p/, /n/), which is similar to Jolly Phonics, and the last unit ends with the sound /ar/, which is also similar to Jolly Phonics instruction (See Appendix 2).

The research's problem is that most primary school teachers ignore to teach by the phonics approach. More clearly, teachers ignore to teach the actual sounds of the letters throughout the year, and only teach the English letters. Students who are taught letters are merely rendered incapable of identifying how to pronounce each letter correctly. Students won't be able to correctly and fluently read and write the words by the end of the year.

1.3.Research question

"*Does 'Jolly Phonics' help to improve the pronunciation for first year primary school students in Zawilah city*, how?" is the main research question.

1.4.Significant of the research

This study is important because it will provide a fun means of enhancing pronunciation in primary school pupils. By teaching students the techniques for dividing and combining sounds to form words, it will also help to raise their awareness of the true structure of words. Students who possess this kind of awareness are better able to retain the words as well as pronounce them correctly.

1.5.Scope of the research

This study is restricted to first-year primary school students at Zawilah City's public school; "Zawilah of Basic Education".

2. Literature review

2.1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a key element of second language learning (ELL). The Reform Movement in Europe emphasized pronunciation as essential to language instruction (Setter, 2018). However, pronunciation has often been overlooked in favor of reading and writing. Houdek (2020) argues that inadequate pronunciation knowledge hampers effective communication and impacts other language skills.

Effective language learning links pronunciation with reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Mastery of pronunciation is vital for learners to communicate clearly with diverse audiences (Setter, 2018.

2.1.1. What is pronunciation?

Pronunciation is the production of meaningful sounds (Hornby, 1995). Dalton (1998) defines it as more than just articulation, encompassing speech components such as phonemes, syllables, words, and pitch. Chromčáková (2022) adds that pronunciation includes the distinct sound system of a language, often modeled by educated speakers in southeast England. Jolly phonics is an act of reading through play.

2.1.2. Importance of pronunciation for young learners

Young learners are particularly sensitive to phonetic contrasts relevant to their native language by around 12 months (Zsiga, 2013). Castillo and Elizondo (2015), in this regard, highlight that children actively engage in language learning, distinguishing phonemes and understanding form and meaning. This flexibility makes early pronunciation instruction crucial. Houdek (2020) recommends using songs, chants, and implicit methods, alongside explicit instruction with organized charts.

2.1.3. Strategies of teaching and learning pronunciation for young learners

Effective pronunciation teaching requires diverse activities, as children's needs vary. Young learners benefit from songs, chants, coloring pages, flashcards, and games like Bingo (Nixon & Tomlinson, 2005). The multisensory approach, incorporating tactile, kinesthetic, and visual cues, has proven effective (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). Using familiar materials and integrating technology further enhances pronunciation learning.

2.2. Jolly phonics

2.2.1. What is jolly phonics?

Jolly Phonics is a method designed for teaching reading and writing in English as a foreign language, utilizing synthetic phonics to help students understand letter sounds in the context of reading and writing. This approach is particularly suitable for preschool and early childhood education (Merino, 2017). According to Ariati et al. (2018), Jolly Phonics is a systematic and engaging program aimed at enhancing the reading and writing skills of young or novice readers.

Originating in the United Kingdom, the method was developed and refined by Sue Lloyd during extensive testing at a school in Suffolk (Merino, 2017). Consuegra and Anglesos (2018) describe the Jolly Phonics program, co-created by Sue Lloyd and Sara Wernham, as a fun, child-centered approach to teaching reading and writing through synthetic phonics. This method begins by teaching letter sounds and progresses to blending these sounds to form complete words. The following picture shows the division of letter sounds into seven groups:

Groups	Letters
Group 1	s a t i p n
Group 2	c k e h r m d
Group 3	g o u l f b
Group 4	ai j oa ie ee or
Group 5	z w ng v oo oo
Group 6	y x ch sh th th
Group 7	qu ou oi ue er ar

Picture (1): Jolly Phonics' seven groups

Merino (2017) highlights a distinct difference between the 42 phonetic sounds taught in phonics

instruction and the 26 letters that represent them, despite their correlation.

The initial group of sounds (s, a, t, i, p, n) is selected because these letters can form more straightforward three-letter words than any other combination of six letters. Sounds such as /b/, /d/, and /p/ are intentionally introduced in separate groups to minimize confusion. Additionally, digraphs such as /ð/, /ʃ/, /ee/, and /er/ are introduced in later groups to help young learners differentiate between single sounds and compound sounds. For instance, the letter 't' represents the single sound /t/ in "ten", but when combined with 'h', it forms two digraphs: /ð/ in "*father*" and /Θ/ in "*three*", as outlined in the sixth group of Jolly Phonics.

However, it is important to recognize that there are several stages in Jolly Phonics that must be followed to effectively teach these 42 sounds.

2.2.2. Jolly Phonics stages

Several research studies have mentioned the five phases of Jolly Phonics. According to Consuegra and Anglesos (2018), stages are as follows:

1- Learning the letter sounds:

In this stage, children are introduced to the 42 primary letter sounds.

- They learn both the individual sounds of the alphabet and digraphs—combinations of two letters that produce a single sound (e.g., sh, th, ai, ue). Certain digraphs, such as (oo) and (th), can generate multiple sounds, which is why they are represented in different forms (see Picture (1) above).
- Associating actions with each sound helps children remember the corresponding letters more effectively.
- It is advisable to teach one letter sound per day. As children become more confident, they may no longer need the associated actions.
- Children should learn the sound of each letter rather than its name; for instance, the letter 'h' should be pronounced as /h/ instead of /eich/. This approach enhances their ability to blend sounds.
- For sounds that can be represented in multiple ways, only one form is taught initially. For example, the sound 'ai' as in "*fail*" is introduced first, followed by the alternative spellings 'ae' or 'ay' that produce the same sound.

2- Learning letter formation:

The children need to learn how to hold a pencil correctly in this stage. This involves using their thumb and first two fingers to form a "tripod" grip.

- To improve writing skills, children must first learn how to write each sound correctly. With assistance from their teachers, they can then practice writing longer words and sentences.
- Cursive writing in joined up script should be taught to kids. It makes writing and spelling better, for example, by producing letters that are easier to transfer into joined-up writing and have a joining tail at the end, or "exit" strokes.

3- Blending:

Blending involves articulating each individual sound in a word and then swiftly combining them to produce the complete word.

- Through this process, children learn to blend sounds to read and write new words effectively.
- When encountering digraphs (combinations of two letters), children should pronounce the digraph as a single sound rather than articulating each letter separately. For instance, in the word "ship," the digraph 'sh' should be pronounced as /ʃip/ rather than as /*es'hip/.

4- Identifying the sounds in words (Segmenting):

Finding each individual sound in a word is known as segmenting.

- In order to get better at spelling, children need to hear a variety of sounds.

In order for children to pronounce and recall words with ease, they need to learn how to segment them.

5- Tricky words:

Words that have irregular spelling and pronunciation are considered tricky.

- Children need to learn a variety of challenging words with irregular spellings.
- These difficult terms can be taught to children one at a time or even in sentences.

Ariati et al. (2018) recommend that teachers teach two to three new tricky words to their students each week when teaching tricky words. Many strategies can be used to accomplish this, like the flashcard exercise where students were required to construct sentences using the challenging words that the teacher had introduced to them through the cards.

2.3. Jolly phonics for teaching pronunciation in young EFL classroom

Jolly Phonics has been shown to improve pronunciation, reading, and writing skills in young learners. Studies report that it enhances pronunciation, especially in distinguishing minimal pairs like /I/ vs /i:/ and /ð/ vs /θ/ (Herrera et al., 2016). The VAKT (Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic-Tactile) approach is particularly effective for accommodating diverse learning styles. Merino (2017) notes that Jolly Phonics fosters creativity and imagination, enhancing both language skills and learner engagement. Stories and songs play a key role in practicing pronunciation and improving word recognition and writing skills.

In conclusion, Jolly Phonics offers an engaging and effective method for teaching English pronunciation, reading, and writing skills for young learners.

3. Methodology

3.1. Methods

We employed two primary methods in this study: an experiment and a test. Here are some additional details:

3.1.1. Experiment

The first research method used in this study is experimentation. Jolly Phonics is being used in an experiment to teach English to young students. The experiment's goal is to better understand how the phonic approach, or Jolly phonics, helps young learners pronounce words more clearly. According to Brown and Rodgers (2002), conducting an experiment is one of the best ways to find an answer to a query about language instruction or acquisition.

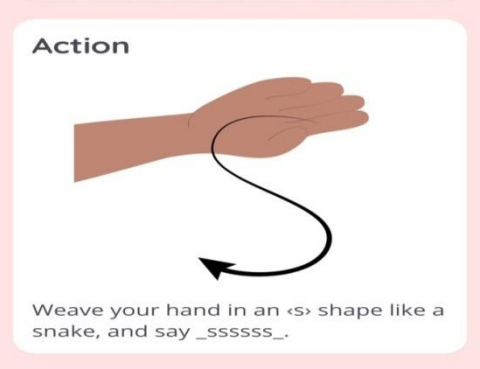
3.1.1.1. Steps of Multisensory teaching by Jolly Phonics instruction (the experiment)

We used a multisensory approach (using multiple senses or intelligences at once) when instructing the experimental group. These are the steps or methods used to teach the Jolly Phonics lessons:

Step 1: Teaching the sound:

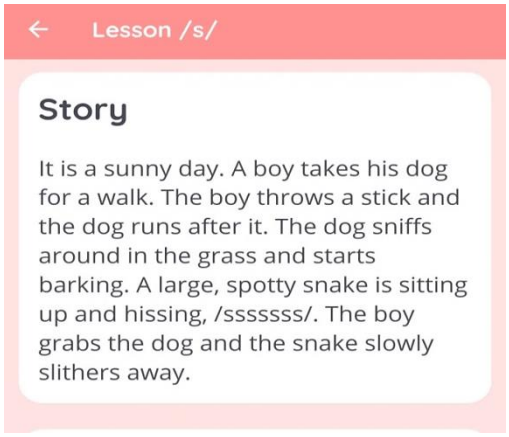
This step's objective is to teach the 42 fundamental sounds in the same sequence as the seven Jolly Phonics groups that were discussed in chapter two. In this step, we will:

1- Say the sound and allow the students to hear it;
2- Move the body or hand to make the sound and allow the students to use their motor intelligence as shown in the following picture:



Picture 2: The sound movement: /s/

3- We narrate a story about the sound, allowing the students to imagine and make up ideas.



Picture 3: The sound's story of /s/

4- Play the sound song and allow the students to sing along with it using rhymes.



Picture 4: the sound's song of /s/

5- We exercise and play games to make the atmosphere lively and enjoyable. These are a few of the games and tasks that were utilized in this phase.

Additional game and exercise examples can be found in Appendix (3).

Game 1: The sound in the balloons



Picture 5: The balloon sounds game

The student's task in this game is to recognize the sound that can be seen on the balloon. The teacher gives the balloon to the student as a motivating reward if he answers correctly; if not, the teacher pops the balloon with a rolling pin.

Game 2: Cards game

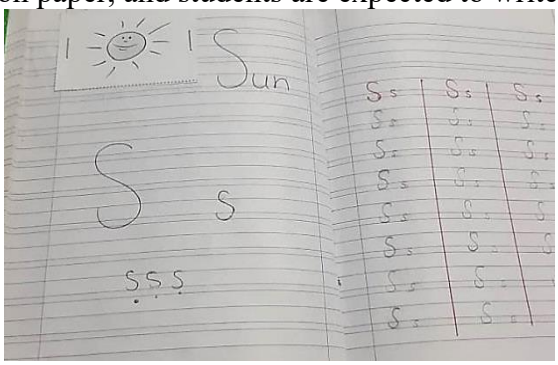
Students are required to play this game in pairs. Two different kinds of cards; a sound card and a picture card (that shows the movement of the sound) will be distributed to the students. Next, the students have to match the sound card to its movement.



Picture 6: The card game

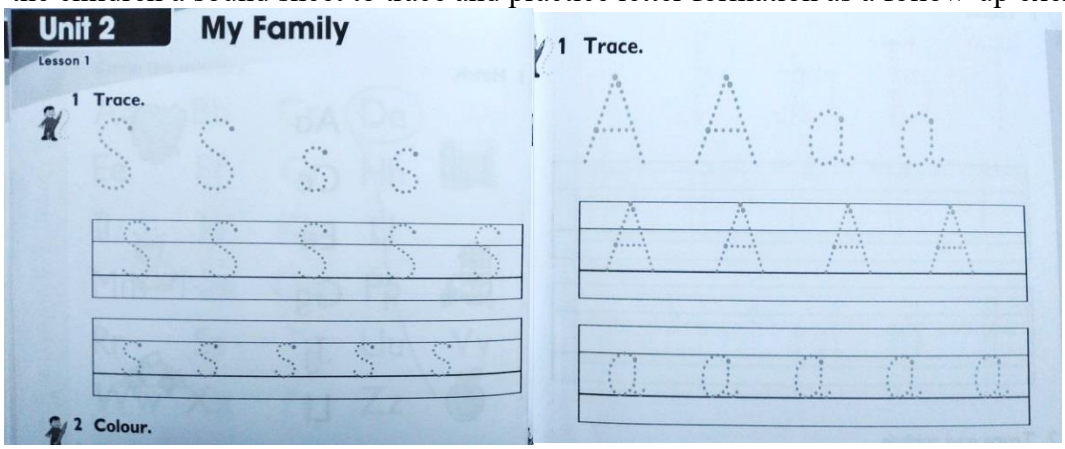
Step 2: Teaching the letter formation

The aim of this step is to enhance students' awareness of the accurate formation of sounds. This phase also aids children in holding their pencils properly, which in turn assists them in writing letters correctly ensuring they are placed appropriately and shaped accurately. During this step, the sounds are dictated on the board or on paper, and students are expected to write the sounds accurately.



Picture 7: Word formation process (Notebook writing)

We gave the children a sound sheet to trace and practice letter formation as a follow-up exercise.

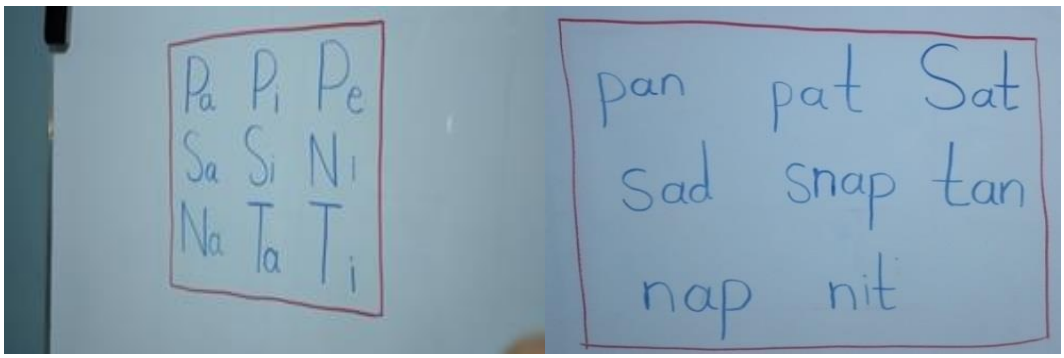


Picture 8: word formation process (ready handouts)

- Students wrote the sound on the board after teachers announced it through the use of dictation.
- Furthermore, we presented a range of images to the students, asking them to determine which ones began with the letter sound they were practicing.

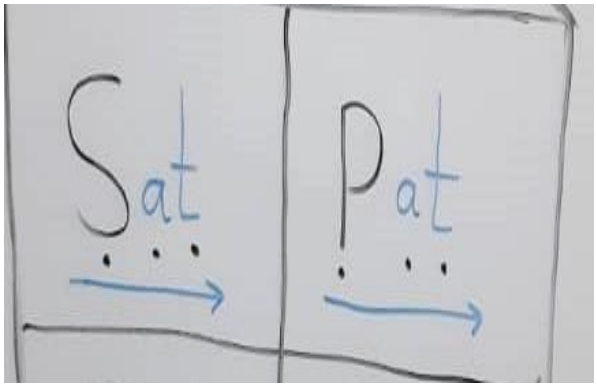
Step 3: Teaching blending

- Teaching the students how to blend the word to say it as a whole is the goal of this step. After instructing each group on (s, a, n, t, p, and I), we move on to teaching the students how to pronounce word parts, such as (pa, pi, sa, si, na, ni, ta, and ti). Next, in the same group, students practice (simple words) like (pan, nit, sad, snap, tan, pat, sat, and nap). As they pick up new sounds and so forth, new words will be added.
- Many strategies were employed, such as assigning each person a specific task, like pronouncing a single flashcard with two or more sounds.



Picture 9: Teaching blending

We worked with the students to pronounce the words correctly when they had trouble blending them; a dot (.) was written under each sound in a word to help the students understand the position of the sound in the word as well as its form and pronunciation. This was done to encourage them to take responsibility for themselves.



Picture 10: A dot under each sound while blending

Step 4: Segmenting

The aim of this step is to teach the students how to identify the sounds in words. In this step,

- We teach the students how to cut the words into separate sounds. For example, the word 'sat' is divided into three sounds (s/a/t) while the word '*chair*' is divided into three sounds (ch/ai/r) as the following picture:



Picture 11: Segmenting

- This step helps students understand how sounds are combined. It will also help to improve long-term memory, which will encourage maintaining the spelling of the words easily and for a long time.

Step 5: Teaching tricky words

Tricky words are ones like "the", "I," "was," "are", "my," "eight", "one", "any", and so forth that have irregular sounds and can "trick you." For a list of the challenging words in Jolly Phonics, see appendix (4). Working them apart is the solution, though, as many students might find it difficult to pronounce them correctly because they do not adhere to the standard pronunciation. Thus, in this step, we gave the students words and brief sentences so they could start reading. We informed the students that this word is difficult to pronounce and reminded them to practice it whenever we encountered one.

3.1.2. The test

The second method employed in this study was testing, which included both a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test was administered prior to the experiment, while the post-test was conducted at its conclusion. Each student was allotted 10 to 15 minutes to pronounce a list of words. This oral test required students to pronounce words that were written on paper, aligning with the study's focus on assessing pronunciation proficiency among participants.

To facilitate later transcription of responses, participants' answers were recorded using a mobile phone. The primary aim of the test was to compare students' pronunciation levels before and after the experiment, allowing researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of the Jolly Phonics method in improving pronunciation within the experimental group. According to Dörnyei (2007), the purpose of the test is to provide insights into the participants' performance in the study. In English language research, it is common to conduct pre-tests and post-tests to statistically analyze score changes between groups that may have been influenced by the intervention. This statistical approach helps to isolate group differences and yields more accurate results (Field, 2009).

3.1.2.1. The test design

The test consisted of ten words: *sun, fish, tree, rain, red, happy, pencil, father, snake, and six*. The correct transcriptions for the pre-test and post-test words can be found in Appendix (5).

This test was adapted from a similar study by Consuegra and Anglesos (2018) due to its relevance to our research. We made minor modifications to the original test to better align it with the vocabulary that first-grade students in Libya are expected to learn, which includes topics such as numbers, animals, weather, emotions, and school supplies.

We specifically selected two straightforward words, "*six*" (a number) and "*red*" (a color), to ensure that the sounds are relatively easy for children to pronounce. The word "*happy*" was included to evaluate the pronunciation of the initial /h/ sound, as we anticipated that many students might struggle with it. "*Snake*" was chosen to assess whether students pronounce the vowel sound 'a' as /ei/ rather than /æ/, especially when the final 'e' is added. For "*pencil*", we aimed to determine if students would articulate the letter 's' as /s/ or /k/, as some might pronounce it as /penkil/. The word "*fish*" was included to gauge students' ability to accurately pronounce the final /sh/ sound. "Sun" was selected to observe whether children not using Jolly Phonics would pronounce the vowel "u" as /ʌ/. Finally, "*tree*" and "*rain*" were chosen to evaluate the ability of students using Jolly Phonics to read words containing the digraphs "ai" and "ee," while "*father*" was included as it represents a challenging word for pronunciation.

3.2. Research instrument

1. Student book (English for Libya - Primary 1)
2. Jolly Phonics handbook instructions on (Jolly Phonics- Pupil book 1).
3. Test (pre-test and post-test).

3.3. Participants and sittings

Ten primary school students in the first grade are involved in the study. The children are all seven years old who attend Zawilah School of Basic Education, a public school in Zawilah city. Zawilah is a city in Southwest of Libya. +Two groups were created out of them: the control group and the experimental group. There are five students in the control group (two girls and three boys) and five students in the experiment group (three girls and two boys).

3.4. Procedure

Initially, we conducted research on the topic and completed a course on teaching with Jolly Phonics. Subsequently, we moved to the practical phase, which involved selecting participants for the study. The participants were divided into two groups: the experimental group and the control group. We met with both groups and administered the pre-test on a separate day prior to commencing the Jolly Phonics instruction. Each group underwent oral testing with ten words, as outlined in the test design, and we recorded their responses using a mobile phone. The results of the pre-test were then analyzed and presented in tabular form.

Following this, we taught the experimental group using Jolly Phonics for approximately three months outside regular class hours, while the control group did not receive any phonics instruction. Instead, they continued to be taught by their teacher at school using traditional methods that focused solely

on letters, without emphasizing sounds. At the end of the experiment, we administered the same post-test to assess the progress of both groups regarding pronunciation.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Jolly Phonics approach, we analyzed the results from both the pre-test and post-test both qualitatively and quantitatively. We also compared our findings with results from other studies in the discussion section. Finally, we formulated our conclusions, findings, and recommendations based on the collected data.

3.5. Data analysis

This study utilized two approaches to data analysis: qualitative and quantitative. The experimental results were analyzed qualitatively, focusing on describing the learning experiences associated with Jolly Phonics. In contrast, the quantitative analysis provided detailed information about the test scores and outcomes from both the control and experimental groups. The following chapter will offer a more in-depth presentation of the results derived from the analysis of the data collected through the experiment and the testing.

4. Findings and discussion

This section will cover the analysis and conclusions drawn from the data gathered through an oral exam and experiment. Lastly, in the discussion section, we will provide a clear answer to the research question and connect our results to those of other studies.

4.1. Analysis

The research question is displayed first among the results below: The topic of the study is: " *Does 'Jolly Phonics' help to improve the pronunciation for first year primary school students in Zawilah city, how*?". Two tests (pre and post) were conducted with two groups, an experimental group and a control group, in order to address this question. The results are displayed in the following tables, beginning with the control group's pretest results:

4.1.1. The results of pre test

Table 1: The results of the pre-test (control group)

	Words		St 1	St 2	St 3	St 4	St 5
1	sun	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
2	Fish	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
3	Tree	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
4	Rain	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
5	Red	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
6	Happy	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
7	Pencil	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
8	Father	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
9	Snake	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
10	six	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Mark		0	0	0	0	0
	Per		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Mean				0%		

(-) = No answer st= student per= percentage
Tr = transcription of the answer M= the mark

All of the students in the control group are unable to pronounce the words correctly in this table. The experimental group's pre-test results are displayed in the following table.

Table 2: The results of the pre-test (experimental group)

	Words		St 1	St 2	St 3	St 4	St 5
1	sun	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
2	Fish	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
3	Tree	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
4	Rain	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
5	Red	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
6	Happy	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
7	Pencil	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
8	Father	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
9	Snake	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
10	six	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
	Total Mark		0	0	0	0	0
	Per		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Mean				0%		

(-) = No answer st= student per= percentage
Tr = transcription of the answer M= the mark

The earlier group's results were similar, with 0% of the students unable to pronounce the words. Except for a few who studied the letters exclusively in kindergarten, all of the students in this stage did not previously study the English language curriculum, so this result makes sense for both groups. It was discovered that even students in kindergarten who had studied English received zero points for word pronunciation. The post-test results will be displayed in the following sections.

4.1.2. The results of the post test

Table 3: The results of the post-test (control group)

	Words		St 1	St 2	St 3	St 4	St 5
1	sun	Tr	/*s---/	-	/*s/	-	-
		M	0.5	0	0.5	0	0
2	Fish	Tr	-	-	/*f/	-	-
		M	0	0	0.5	0	0
3	Tree	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0

4	Rain	Tr	/*ai/	-	-	-	-
		M	0.5	0	0	0	0
5	Red	Tr	-	-	-	/*ed/	-
		M	0	0	0	0.5	0
6	Happy	Tr	/*etʃ/	/*etʃap/-	/*etʃ/	-	-
		M	0	0.5	0	0	0
7	Pencil	Tr	-	-	-	/*e/	-
		M	0	0	0	0.5	0
8	Father	Tr	-	-	/*fa/	-	-
		M	0	0	0.5	0	0
9	Snake	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
10	six	Tr	-	-	-	-	-
		M	0	0	0	0	0
	Total marks		1	0.5	1.5	1	0
	Per		10%	5%	15%	10%	0%
	Mean				8%		

(-) = No answer st= student per= percentage
Tr = transcription of the answer M= the mark

In this table, the percentages for the test results were 10%, 5%, 15%, 10%, and 0%, indicating that all participants exhibited poor pronunciation skills. Only a few students showed minor improvements in their pronunciation of words. For instance, two participants correctly pronounced the /s/ sound in the word "*sun*", while one student articulated only the /f/ sound in both "*fish*" and "*father*". Additionally, another student pronounced only the /e/ sound in "pencil" and produced /*ed/ for the word "*red*." One participant pronounced only the vowel sounds in "rain" as /ai/. Three participants mispronounced /h/ as /*etʃ/, resulting in /*etʃap/ for the word "*happy*".

These findings clearly indicate that none of the participants were able to pronounce the entire words correctly; they could only produce individual sounds, despite having received regular classroom instruction for over three months. The following table will present the results of the experimental group after the treatment.

Table 4: The results of the post-test (experimental group)

	Words		**St 1**	**St 2**	**St 3**	**St 4**	**St 5**
1	Sun	Tr	/sʌn/	/sʌn/	/sʌn/	/sʌn/	/sʌn/
		M	1	1	1	1	1
2	Fish	Tr	/ɟɪʃ/	/ɟɪʃ/	/ɟɪʃ/	/ɟɪʃ/	/ɟɪʃ/
		M	1	1	1	1	1
3	Tree	Tr	/trɪ: /	/trɪ: /	/trɪ: /	/trɪ: /	/trɪ: /
		M	1	1	1	1	1

4	Rain	Tr	/reɪn/	/reɪn/	/reɪn/	/reɪn/	/reɪn/
		M	1	1	1	1	1
5	Red	Tr	/red/	/red/	/red/	/red/	/red/
		M	1	1	1	1	1
6	Happy	Tr	/hæpɪ/	/hæpɪ/	/hæpɪ/	/hæpɪ/	/hæpɪ/
		M	1	1	1	1	1
7	Pencil	Tr	/*penkl/	/*penkl	/pensəl/	/pensəl/	/pensəl/
		M	0.5	0.5	1	1	1
8	Father	Tr	/*ʃat(r)/	/ʃaðə(r)/	/ʃaðə(r)/	/ʃaðə(r)/	/ʃaðə(r)/
		M	0.5	1	1	1	1
9	Snake	Tr	/*snæk/	/*sənkɪ/	/sneɪk/	/sneɪk/	/*sni:k/
		M	0.5	0.5	1	1	0.5
10	Six	Tr	/sɪks/	/sɪks/	/sɪks/	/sɪks/	/sɪks/
		M	1	1	1	1	1
	Total marks		8.5	9	10	10	9.5
	Per		85%	90%	100 %	100 %	95%
	Mean				94%		

(-) = No answer st= student per= percentage
Tr = transcription of the answer M= the mark

In this table, the test results showed the following percentages: 85%, 90%, 100%, 100%, and 95%. All participants achieved higher scores, indicating a strong level of pronunciation for simple words. The first participant received a score of 8.5, making only three minor errors: she pronounced /*ʃat(r)/ instead of /ʃaðə(r)/, /*penkl/ instead of /pensəl/, and /*snæks/ instead of /sneɪk/. The second participant scored 9, making similar errors with the words "snake" and "father." The third and fourth participants achieved full marks with no mistakes. The last participant scored 9 but made one error, pronouncing "*snake*" as /*snak/.

4.2. The findings

Following the analysis of the test results, the first key finding was a significant difference in pronunciation between the two groups. Despite over three months of regular classroom instruction, the control group scored only 8% in pronunciation, while the experimental group achieved an impressive 94%. This stark contrast highlighted that the primary reason for the control group's poor performance was the focus on teaching letters alone. In contrast, the experimental group showed marked improvement in pronunciation after three months of Jolly Phonics instruction. The Jolly Phonics approach emphasized multi-sensory learning, which engaged and motivated students.

Additionally, the following findings emerged from the Jolly Phonics teaching experience:

1- The Jolly Phonics method proved to be both easy and enjoyable for teaching.
2- Students became more relaxed and confident in their advanced classes due to their improved pronunciation.
3- There was noticeable harmony and acceptance of the curriculum among students, as it engaged all their senses through games, materials, and stories.
4- Rapid improvement in pronunciation was observed from the first lessons in the initial group.

5- Students also demonstrated noticeable advancements in their reading and writing skills.
6- There were no difficulties for students in distinguishing between sounds and letters in English, as teachers made concerted efforts to clarify these differences in every lesson.
7- Despite their young age, all participants were able to learn a substantial number of sounds in a relatively short time.

4.3. Discussion

The results of this study clearly show that Jolly Phonics and multisensory learning methods significantly improved pronunciation among first-year primary students in Zawilah City. The experimental group demonstrated notable progress in pronunciation, while the control group showed no improvement in terms of pronouncing words. After just three months of instruction, the experimental group also displayed better reading and writing skills.

These findings align with other research. Chromčáková (2020) confirmed that Jolly Phonics enhanced young learners' pronunciation. Similarly, Consuegra and Anglesos (2018) also found significant improvements in pronunciation, reading, and writing among first-grade students using Jolly Phonics. Ekpo et al. (2007) reported similar results in a study involving 168 primary students, where the experimental group showed improved reading skills. Udosen and Ukpak (2005) also noted significant reading improvements in students using Jolly Phonics. Additionally, Farokhbakht and Nejadansari (2015) found that children taught with Jolly Phonics outperformed those taught with traditional methods.

In conclusion, the study supports the effectiveness of Jolly Phonics in enhancing pronunciation and overall language skills in a short period.

4.3.1. How to applying Jolly Phonics in Primary Classrooms

Jolly Phonics can be effectively applied in primary classrooms by following a structured, multisensory approach that engages young learners and enhances their reading, writing, and pronunciation skills.

1. Introducing Letter Sounds

- **Method**: Teach the 42 letter sounds, focusing on phonemes rather than letter names. Begin with simple sounds that can form three-letter words (e.g., /s/, /a/, /t/, /i/, /p/, /n/) (Lloyd, 2007).
- **Strategy**: Use actions, visual aids, and songs to reinforce each sound. For example, students may associate the sound /s/ with a hissing snake motion (Consuegra & Anglesos, 2018).

2. Teaching Blending

- **Method**: Once students are familiar with the sounds, teach them to blend sounds to form words (e.g., /c/, /a/, /t/ becomes "cat").
- **Strategy**: Focus on blending sounds gradually, starting with simple three-letter words and progressing to more complex words (Farokhbakht & Nejadansari, 2015).

3. Segmenting for Spelling

- **Method**: Practice segmenting words by identifying individual sounds (e.g., in “dog”, segmenting into /d/, /o/, /g/).
- **Strategy**: Use flashcards or interactive games where students break words down into sounds (Merino, 2017).

4. Writing and Letter Formation

- **Method**: Teach students the correct formation of each letter using a tripod grip. Encourage writing both letters and words.
- **Strategy**: Incorporate activities like tracing, drawing, and writing to reinforce learning (Consuegra & Anglesos, 2018).

5. Tricky Words

- **Method**: Introduce "tricky words" that don't follow phonetic rules (e.g., "the," "said").
- **Strategy**: Use repetition, flashcards, and sentence-building exercises to help children recognize and memorize these irregular words (Ariati et al., 2018).

6. Multisensory Activities

- **Method**: Engage multiple senses to enhance memory and learning. Use tactile, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic methods.

- **Strategy**: Activities like singing phonics songs, using physical gestures for sounds, and showing pictures with words can help reinforce learning (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; Farokhbakht & Nejadansari, 2015).

7. Consistent Practice and Feedback

- **Method**: Provide regular opportunities for students to practice pronunciation, reading, and writing. Offer feedback on their progress.
- **Strategy**: Use interactive games, role-playing, and guided reading sessions to reinforce pronunciation skills while offering corrective feedback (Herrera et al., 2016).

By using Jolly Phonics' systematic, multisensory approach, primary school teachers can support young learners in developing strong pronunciation, reading, and writing abilities, ensuring a solid foundation for further language acquisition

5. Conclusion

Introducing the pronunciation of English sounds and words at an early age is essential, especially given that English has become the primary language of global communication. The most effective way to acquire a new language is to emulate the learning processes of native speakers, while also considering the unique challenges faced in non-native contexts like Libya. Previous research indicates that Jolly Phonics is a widely recognized method in British schools, designed to make language learning enjoyable while enhancing communication skills. Consequently, the Libyan curriculum has incorporated the Phonics approach, as it has demonstrated efficacy in non-native settings as well.

The researchers aspire to conduct further studies in this area with larger participant groups and across broader regions. They hope this paper serves as an inspiration for educators seeking to improve children's English language skills and related competencies through the Jolly Phonics method.

5.1. Recommendations

In this section, we will introduce some recommendations regarding ensuring better teaching using the Jolly Phonics method.

- It recommended that Jolly Phonics must be taught to students at an early age, as stated in most studies that have done in this field. The children at an early age have the ability to learn pronunciation better. As administrated by the National Institute for Literacy recommended, Jolly Phonics should be completed by the end of first grade.
- For the best result to improve pronunciation, the teacher should carefully plan the lessons with regard to the children's' needs and abilities.
- It is recommended that when teaching by the phonics approach, the teacher must design exercises and activities in each lesson based on the different types of intelligence and personality of each student. This was asserted by several studies, including Katechaiyo and Wirawattantana (2015), who argue that teachers must understand that students have different learning styles and thus plan a variety of class activities that different types of learners enjoy. For example, some students are visual learners, meaning they learn best by watching, whereas kinesthetic learners learn best by doing. Using Jolly Phonics materials such as songs, stories, flashcards, magnetic alphabets, etc. wisely can help enhance learning for all types of learners.
- To make sure that the students remember every sound they have learned before moving on to the new sounds, it is advised that the teacher revise the previous sounds with them at the start of each class.
- Jolly Phonics teachers should receive training, before they begin teaching the students. This is due to the fact that the fundamentals of phonics deal with the ability to hear, understand, and pronounce the sounds associated with the letter prints.

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