RUNNING HEAD: Acquisition of alphabet knowledge in Kindergarten

Acquisition of alphabet knowledge in Kindergarten: Impact of Multiple Means of Representation

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December 15, 2011

Author Note:

This classroom action research project was supported by the Gheens Institute for Innovation and Spalding University, with graduate-level course instruction led by Dr. Marco A. Muñoz, Evaluation Specialist from the Accountability, Research, and Planning Department in Jefferson Country Public Schools (JCPS). However, the contents do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the funder, and endorsement by JCPS should not be assumed.

Abstract

Learning the alphabet is essential to learning how to read. This study focuses on teaching Kindergarten students the alphabet using multiple means of representation. The 24 Kindergarten students in this study have been exposed to activities that reflect their learning styles, interaction among various group settings, and they have been allowed to self-monitor, using goal setting strategies. The data collected for the study, demonstrated that letter identification did not show a statistical significance, however, a statistical significance was shown in the components of sounds and word recognition. The treatment that the teacher researcher implemented within the classroom was beneficial and did impact the students' learning. Implications for practice are discussed.

Keywords: Alphabet, Elementary Education, Goal Setting, Instructional Effectiveness, Kindergarten, Learning Styles, Literacy, Multiple Means of Representation.

Acquisition of alphabet knowledge in Kindergarten: Impact of Multiple Means of Representation

Low literacy is strongly related to crime. 70% of prisoners fall into the lowest two levels of reading proficiency (Ellis, 1998). Low literacy is strongly related to unemployment. More than 20% of adults read at or below a fifth grade level – far below the level needed to earn a living wage (Ellis, 1998). Evidence shows that children who do not read by third grade often fail to catch up and are more likely to drop out of school, take drugs, or go to prison (Ellis, 1998).

Historically first grade was the grade where students were taught to read. However with the pressures of No Child Left Behind, and its focus on minority reading achievement, this is no longer the case. No one questions the importance of reading (NAEYC, 2009). Whether it happens in kindergarten or in the first grade, we all know it is necessary. The question at hand is "How do we ensure that all students learn to read?" There has been very strong evidence to support "that children's alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness are significant predictors of their later proficiency in reading and writing" (NAEYC, 2009).

Many circumstances impact a student's reading ability such as their family factors (parents reading level, amount they witness reading or are read to at home), as well as prior educational exposure, such as attending a formal preschool or daycare (Burgess, S. R., Hecht, S. A., & Lonigan, C. J. (2002). These circumstances weigh heavily as barriers that aid in predicting the encounters students may face as they learn to read.

Because children are curious by nature, they approach learning and life in a way that is more comfortable for them; as a result this influences and or motivates many of their actions and decisions. The comfort zone that children create, allows them to explore and discover in such a

way that enables them to input information and store it in their brain. We call these comfort zones channels for learning. The channels for learning include modalities for learning and intelligences. A modality of learning is a way in which we process and understand information that is presented to us, a route through which we subconsciously choose to interpret stimuli and make sense of the world around us (Middendorf, 2008).

Students are called on to use their perceptual modalities or "sensory input channels" as they engage new information or ideas. Sensory input channels may include one or more of the following: visual, auditory, or tactile/kinesthetic (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008). Matching students' input channels is often cited as one way to individualize learning experiences for different students (Dunn & Dunn, 1978).

An intelligence is an innate talent or strength. We use our intelligences to demonstrate our understanding of the world as well as to organize the information that our senses feed to us (Middendorf, 2008). Children may seem to execute one area of their intelligences and excel to a mastery level, but children may have strengths in other areas, but due to not having opportunities to explore them, their other intelligences lie undeveloped.

We cannot assume that all children begin school ready and willing to learn, or that they are naturally enthusiastic about learning. Teachers notice the differences in children in their classrooms, sometimes the differences are big, especially in their readiness to learn and their speed of learning (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008). Some students need to be inspired, others need to be stimulated, and others seek challenges, this is where classroom learning experiences comes into play.

Learning experiences are connected to the classroom. The classroom is where the students get their sense of belonging. By building a good solid foundation of personal relationships with students, students will perform much better, due to feeling comfortable, safe, and valued as worthwhile individuals (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008). Whenever students feel empowerment, acceptance, and safety to take risks and try new things that are hard for them, they like school better and learn more (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008).

Each individual learning experience may have its own grouping (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008). Grouping students has many benefits; they are able to process information in different ways as well as witness how others learn, providing them with multiple reference points (Marzano, 2001). One example of grouping is cooperative learning. In cooperative learning groups, students work together in small groups on structured activities. Organizing students in cooperative learning groups has a powerful effect on learning (Marzano, 2001).

In cooperative learning groups, students are individually accountable for their work, and the work of the group, as a whole is assessed. Cooperative groups work face-to-face and learn to work as a team. In small groups, students can share strengths and also develop their weaker skills. They develop their interpersonal skills and learn how to deal with conflict. The groups are guided by clear objectives and students engage in numerous activities that improve their understanding of the subjects they explore.

Over the past twenty-five years, the use of small- group learning has greatly increased (“Thirteen Ed. Online”,n.d.,para.1). Cooperative learning became especially popular in the

1980's and has matured and evolved since. Research suggest that cooperative and collaborative learning brings positive results such as deeper understanding of content, increased overall achievement in grades, improved self-esteem, and higher motivation to remain on task ("Thirteen Ed. Online",n.d.,para.1).

Learning occurs when teachers use learning modalities to determine how students learn; grouping allows students the opportunity to practice what they have learned. When students get involved in goal setting for their own learning, they learn more (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008). In addition, when students make set goals, either by themselves, with a teacher, or together, they are motivated to accomplish them (Gower, R., Haley-Speca, M., & Saphier, J., 2008).

Motivational processes are the foundation for coordinating cognitive goals and strategies in reading. For example, if a person is intrinsically motivated to read and believes she is a capable reader, the person will persist in reading difficult texts and exert effort to resolve conflicts and integrate text with prior knowledge. A learner with high motivation will seek books known to provide satisfaction. The cognitive abilities needed to find books, avoid distractions while reading, and assimilate new ideas are activated if the text is fulfilling internal goals. This is consistent with both a cognitive science of reading and a situated account of the acquisition of expertise (Greeno & The Middle School Mathematics through Application Project Group, 1998; Lorch & van den Broek, 1997), as well as the development of intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971). In some, becoming an excellent active reader involves attunement of motivational processes with cognitive and language processes in reading (Gutherie & Wigfield, 2000, pg.408).

From "Learning to Read" to "Reading to Learn"

Previous literature on reading has recognized that students who are not phonemically aware have reading problems severe enough to hinder their total academic progress. "Research has identified some risk factors that contribute to literacy and language acquisition. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are exposed to less literacy promotion in the home than middle-to upper-class children (Dowell, 2010, p.4). Thus, this population is at greater risk for lower achievement scores and less academic success. Research also indicates that some environments, coupled with parental attitudes and beliefs, are critical influences on a child's achievement" (Dowell, 2010, p.4). Atterman (1997) states that learning to read is crucial in the formative years in order for students to develop higher-order thinking skills that are needed in older grades, when students are reading to learn. If students do not have the necessary reading skills they are behind, and run the risk of never catching up; as a result they will fall behind in other areas of instruction and result to dropping out at a higher rate.

Our nation is in the midst of educating students who, without the acquisition of adequate literacy skills, will be unable to function successfully unless we whole-heartedly act to change this reality. A major effort to enhance reading skills is underway so that today's children succeed. Hopefully by teaching language instruction in all primary classrooms, students will not only learn to read more rapidly than in the past, but develop an interest and passion for reading to last a lifetime (Atterman,1997). Therefore, knowing the impact that a student's ability to read has on his or her educational experience, it is the responsibility of the educator to motivate, differentiate instruction, and meet the needs of that student. In order to be effective in promoting a student to success, teachers must create meaningful classroom experiences for the student. By embedding entertaining ways to learn, teachers can facilitate the growth of his or her student.

With this being said, it is our goal to determine if multiple means of representation aid Kindergarten students in acquiring alphabet knowledge.

Method

Participants

The school is a part of the Jefferson County Public School System, and is located in the far eastern part of the county. The school is comprised of 750 elementary school students (Pre K – 5th). The school has 50.6% free and reduced lunch. The ECE (Exceptional Child Education) is 14.8%. The racial demographic make-up is 39.5% African American, 6.7% Hispanic, 5.1% Asian and 39.7% Other. The 24 students that participated in this study were all from a Kindergarten class, age range 4 to 5 years in age (see Table 1 below).

Table 1

Characteristics of Kindergarten Participants (N=24)

		N	%
Gender	Male	16	66.6
	Female	8	33.3
Race	Black	11	45.8
	White	8	33.3
	Hispanic	3	12.5
	Other	2	8.3
Lunch	Free	9	39.1
	Reduce	1	4.1
	Paid	14	58.33
ECE		4	16.6
ESL (English as a Second Language)		4	16.6
Previous Schooling		19	79.1

Instrumentation

The study took place during the second six weeks of school; conducted by the teacher researcher. The teacher research developed a treatment that consisted of lessons and activities that used modalities consisting of visual, auditory and tactical/ kinesthetic approaches along with student goal setting. A survey was used to gain information to develop a learning profile for each student. (See Appendix A "Learning Style Inventory)

A research- based instrument used by Jefferson County Public Schools, the Marie Clay, was also implemented.(See Appendix B "Marie Clay Observation Survey) The Marie Clay is used for reading diagnostics. "This instrument is derived from the theory of how young children come to master the complex task of reading and writing continues text" (Clay, 2002). In addition, research has shown that, the information gathered from the Marie Clay reduces uncertainties and improves instruction and holds strong reliability and validity (Clay, 2002). The Marie Clay was administered to each student to collect the following information: Alphabet ID, Letter sounds, Letter word association, Hearing and Recording sounds.

Design and Procedures

The study used a quasi-experimental design with switching replication (Trochim, 2006). This switching replication design used the same group of students as the treatment and control group .The first set of data collected contained results without treatment and the second set of data was collected after the treatment had been applied, then the results were compared. All data were analyzed using an independent sample t-test in Microsoft Excel. The independent sample t-test is the most commonly used methods to evaluate the differences in means between two groups. Then the results of the independent sample-t test were computed into effect sizes. Effect

sizes are used to determine the average effect of a given technique. The effect size expresses the increase or decrease in achievement of the experimental group (the group of students who are exposed to a specific instructional technique) in standard deviation units (Marzano, 2001). The study used a mixed method design using both quantitative and qualitative data.

The principal and teacher assistants were briefed on the study. The learning survey was discussed with all parents and goal setting contract information sheets were distributed. (See Appendix C "Goal Setting Contract") A cover letter was also sent, explaining the purpose for gathering the information and how it would impact instruction. Parents were encouraged to return the forms completed and in a timely manner (reminders were used to ensure the return of all forms). The teacher researcher will conduct the district RDA, the Marie Clay on each student. The teacher researcher will only collect data for the Alphabet ID, Letter sounds, Letter word association for this study. The data will serve as the pretest.

A goal setting contract will be used between the teacher, parent and student. This contract aided students in developing and setting goals. Students, parents, and teachers track student progress using student goal sheets. (See Appendix D "Student Goal Sheet") The teacher researcher will meet with each student, then conference with him/her to establish a goal for letters that he/she did not know. The student will be given a goal sheet as a reminder of which letters he/she will be working on. The teacher researcher will record the student's progress weekly, as well as, sending a copy of the student's progress home to the parent, using a Weekly Parent Informational Goal Sheet. (See Appendix E "Weekly Parent Informational Goal Sheet")

Over the course of the second six weeks the teacher researcher will implement the treatment, consisting of lessons and activities that used modalities; consisting of visual, auditory

and tactical/ kinesthetic approaches. These lessons will occur during morning meeting, the literacy block, which includes shared reading, guided reading, literacy stations and phonics instruction. These approaches are delivered daily and are comprised of an introduction activity and are closed with a summarizing activity.

In addition to quantitative data that was collected, the teacher researcher also collected qualitative data to attain perspective on implementation of the treatment. A group of consisting of Kindergarten parents and building colleagues (instructional and non-instructional) made classroom observations and used a classroom observation rubric to provide feedback for the teacher researcher.(See Appendix F "Classroom Observation Rubric") From their feedback, the teacher research was able to reflect, revisit and revise activities that needed to be adjusted for the treatment. The group members conducted two observations, one during the first six weeks, before the treatment was implemented in the classroom and another during the second six weeks, while the treatment was being implemented.

Findings

The data showed that on average, participants in the treatment group indicated higher post- than pre-test scores in the alphabet ($M = 48.67$, $SD = 11.64$ and $M = 42.17$, $SD = 14.97$, respectively), sound ($M = 20.21$, $SD = 7.12$ and $M = 11.58$, $SD = 10.21$, respectively), and words ($M = 18.29$, $SD = 8.01$ and $M = 6.63$, $SD = 7.67$, respectively).

A t-test was used to test the effects of the treatment on understanding (a) alphabet, (b) sound, and (c) words. The independent-samples t-test indicated a non-significant difference between pre- and post-test scores in the alphabet, $t(43) = 1.68$, $p > .05$; however, statistically significant gains were observed in (a) sound, $t(43) = 3.39$, $p < .05$ and (b) words, $t(46) = 5.15$, p

< .05. Due to Alphabet ID indicating a non-significant difference between pre and post test scores, the findings were not analyzed. However, a t-test was used to test the effects of the treatment on understanding (a) alphabet, (b) sound, and (c) words. The analysis data based on gender showed that on sound, the males scored a pre test average of 11 out of 26 sounds and a post test average of 15 out of 26 and the females scored a pre test average 11 out of 26 sounds and a post test average of 20 out of 26. The females showed a larger increase in sounds, as shown in figure 1.

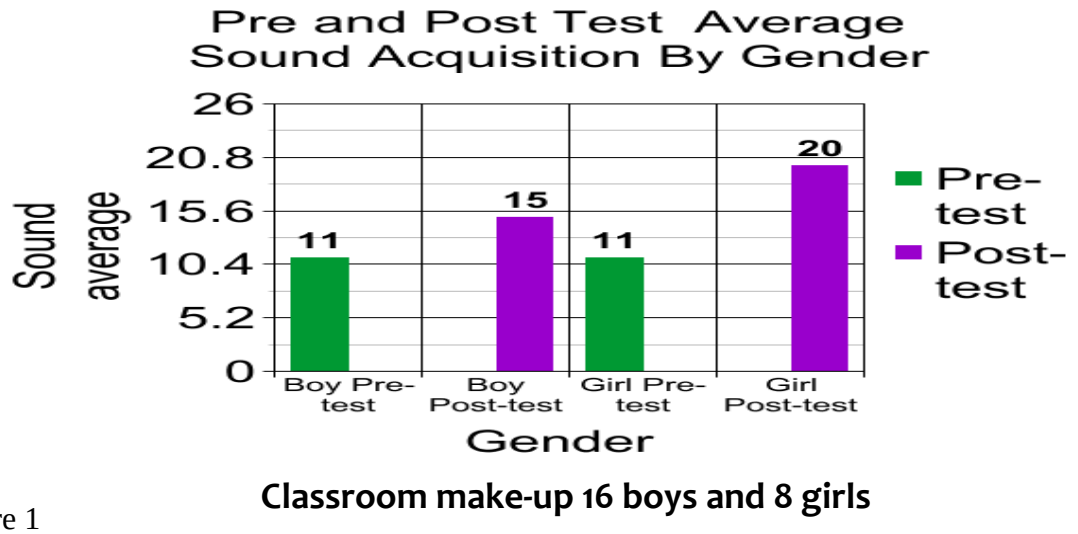


Figure 1

Another analysis of the data based on sounds, the minority students scored an average of 7 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 18 out of 26. The non-minority students scored an average of 18 out of 26 on the pre test and a post test average of 23 out of 26. Thus showing that in ethnicity, the minority students made the greater increase in sounds, as shown in figure 2.

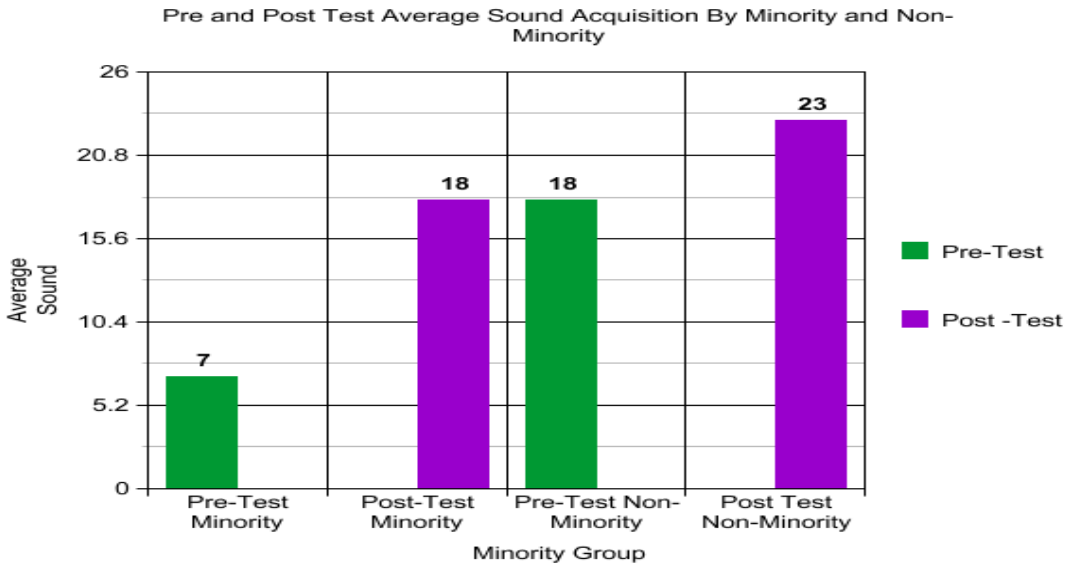


Figure 2

A third look at the data based on sounds revealed that students with previous schooling scored an average of 13 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 21 out of 26 and students with no previous schooling scored an average of 8 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 17 out of 26. Both groups of students demonstrated an equal increase in sounds, as shown in figure 3.

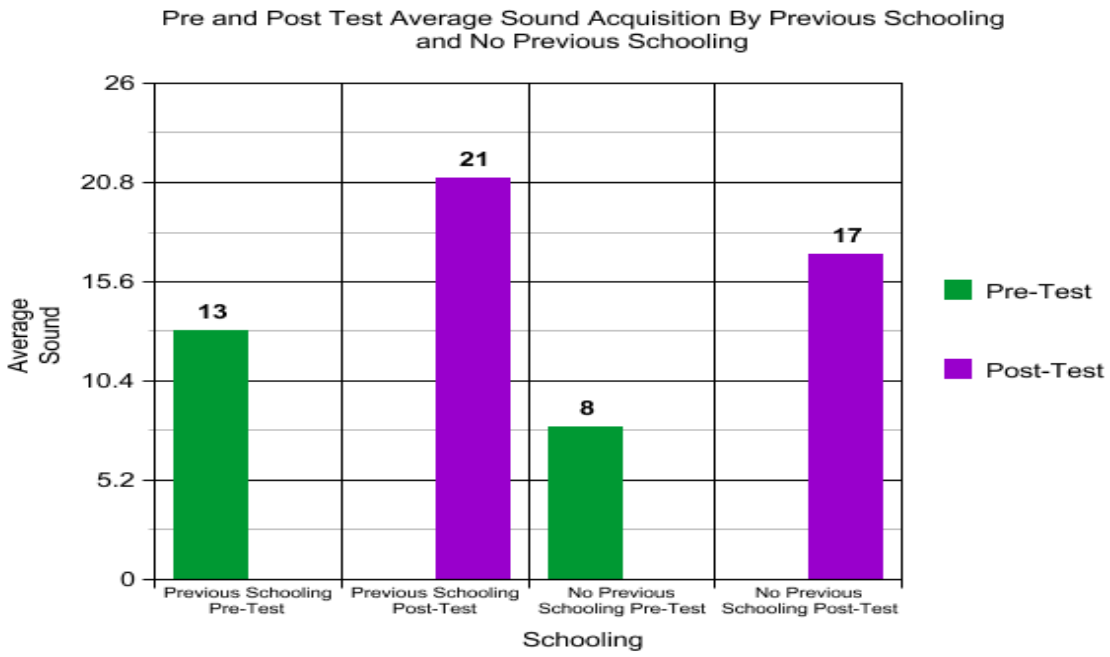
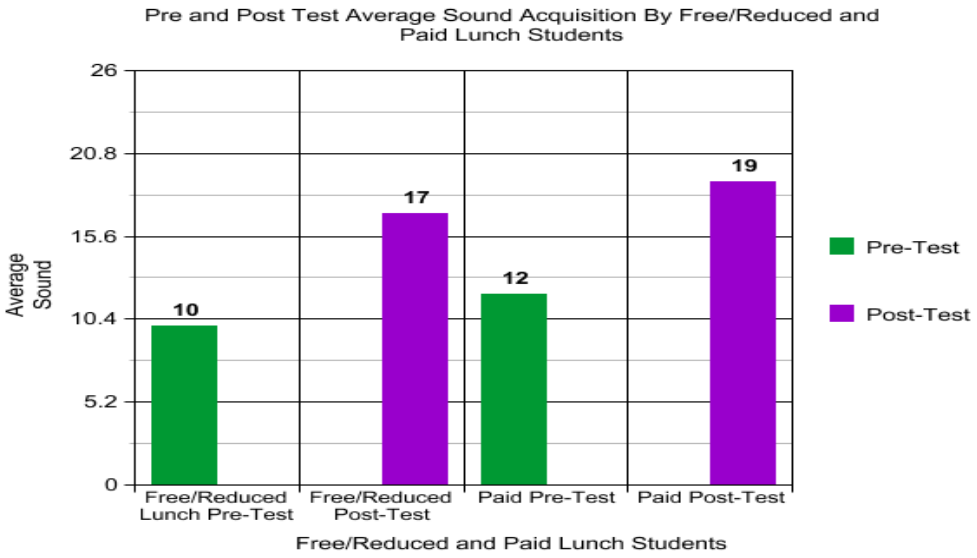


Figure 3

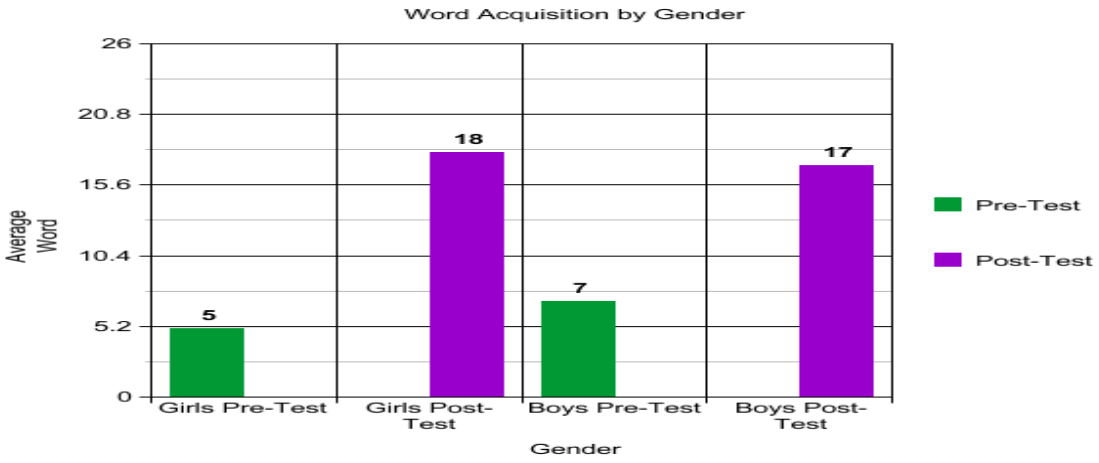
Also, the data showed that students under the pay lunch status scored an average of 10 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 17 out 26 and students under free/reduced status scored an average of 12 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 19 out of 26. Both of group of students demonstrated the same amount of growth, as shown in figure 4.



10 Free/Reduce Lunch and 14 Paid

Figure 4

The analysis data based on gender showed that in word recognition, the males scored a pre test average of 7 out of 26 words and a post test average of 17 out of 26 and the females scored a pre test average 5 out of 26 sounds and a post test average of 18 out of 26. The females showed a larger increase in sounds, as shown in figure 5.



Classroom make-up 16 boys and 8 girls

Figure 5

Another analysis of the data based on word recognition, the minority students scored an average of 5 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 17 out of 26. The non-minority students scored an average of 4 out of 26 on the pre test and a post test average of 19 out of 26. Thus showing that in ethnicity, the non minority students made the greater increase in word recognition, as shown in figure 6.

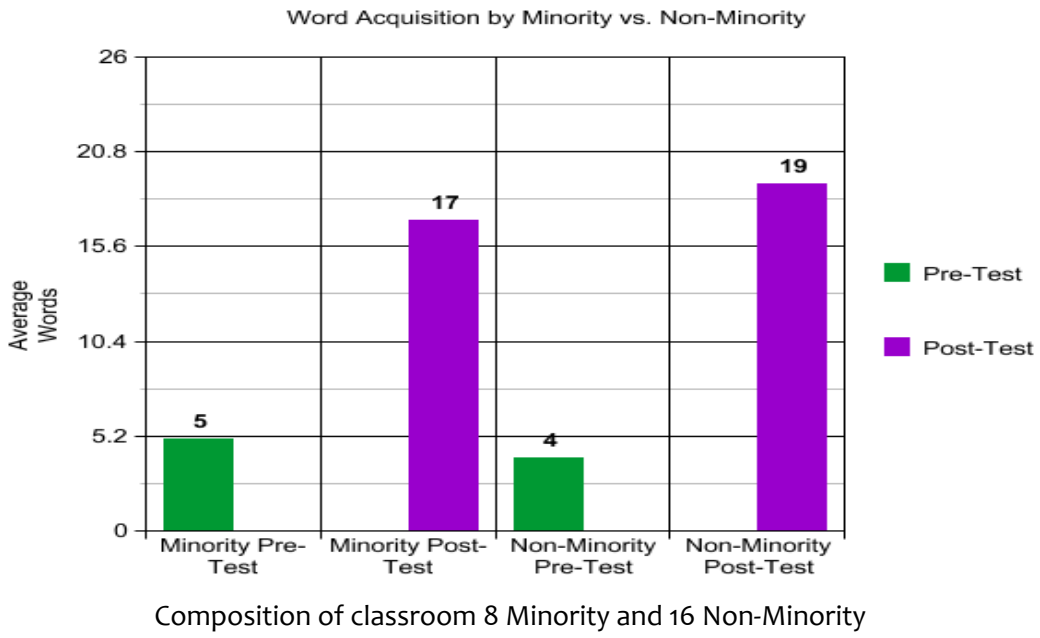
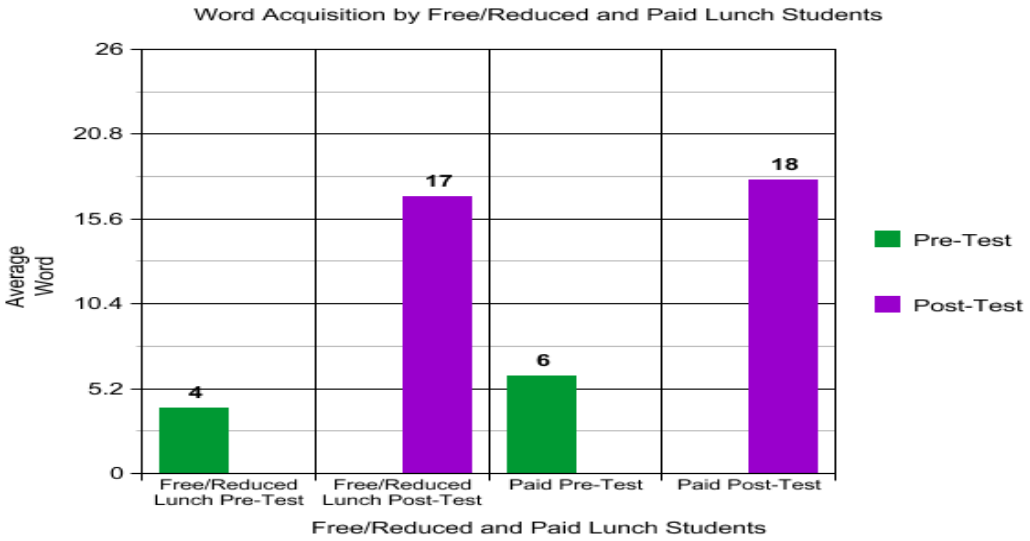


Figure 6

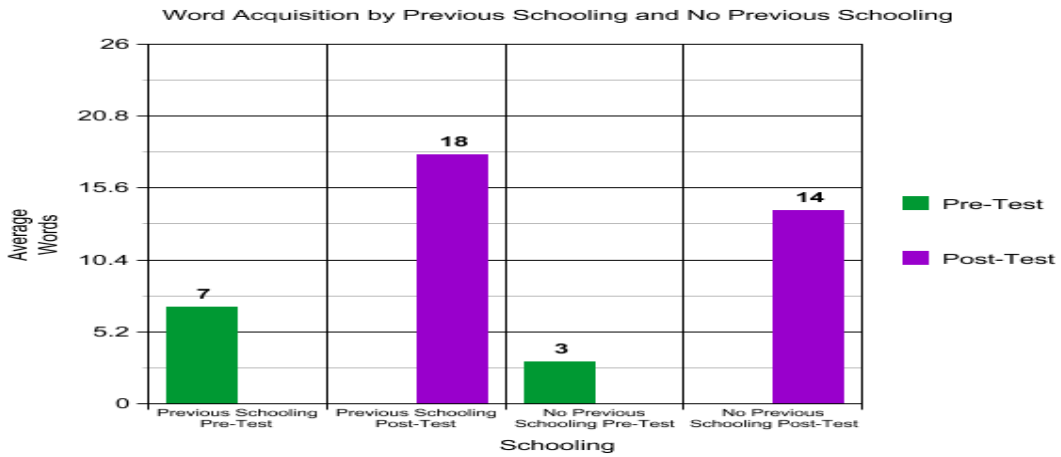
Also, the data showed that students under the pay lunch status scored an average of 4 out of 26 word recognition on the pre test and a post test average of 17 out 26 and students under free/reduced status scored an average of 6 out of 26 sounds on the pre test and a post test average of 18 out of 26. Both of group of students demonstrated the same amount of growth, as shown in figure 7.



10 Free/Reduce Lunch and 14 Paid

Figure 7

Another look at the data based on word recognition revealed that students with previous schooling scored an average of 7 out of 26 words on the pre test and a post test average of 18 out of 26 and students with no previous schooling scored an average of 3 out of 26 word recognition on the pre test and a post test average of 14 out of 26. Both groups of students demonstrated an equal increase in word recognition, as shown in figure 8.



19 Students with previous schooling and 5 Students with no previous schooling

Figure 8

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to conduct a treatment, which consisted of mixed methods for a period of six weeks. Within the six weeks, alphabet instruction was specific and explicitly implemented in a Kindergarten classroom of 24 students. The teacher researcher collected pretest data during the first six weeks before any treatment was administered. Then, the teacher researcher collected data during the second six week period, with treatment in place.

The results as stated in the findings, demonstrated that the Kindergarten students increased their knowledge of alphabet sounds and word recognition. Although it assumed that children learn to name letters of the alphabet, this was not necessary the case. Despite long periods of instruction, some children still had difficulty in learning to name all of the letters.

The teacher researchers felt that family factors do weigh heavily as a barrier, instead of aiding students in facing the encounters of learning to read. Each student's family in this study was informed of the needed collaboration between parent/child, teacher/student, and teacher/parent and how valuable these relationships were to this study. Each family was informed of the statics relating to low literacy and high crime. The parents also engaged in a conversation about their involvement and other behaviors could impact their student's reading ability.

The Kindergarten classroom in this study operated with the intentions being that alphabet knowledge may be affected by various means of representation. The teacher researcher matched the students' sensory input channels to provide the students with the best possible learning experiences, in order for them to achieve success. Each student in the classroom was active

participants in the level in which he/she were capable and felt most comfortable. By doing so, each student was able to progress at his/her own pace in learning alphabet concepts.

The teacher researcher also want each student to be a part of his/her learning, so by familiarizing the students with goal setting, the teacher researcher was able to get the students motivated about learning. The weekly goal setting conferences that the teacher researcher held with the students allowed the students to receive specific feedback about their progress and provided the teacher opportunity to plan with the student on how he/she was going to meet them.

The teacher researcher provided learning experiences that included differentiation of instruction. There was a variety of structures and formats for students to obtain learning. The teacher researcher used groupings such as large groups, small groups, one-on-one grouping and self grouping to aid the students in mastering alphabet knowledge. The groupings consisted of activities like, phonics chants and songs, alphabet/sound bingo, teacher-student flash card games, and alphabet computer games.

To guarantee the faithfulness of the teacher researcher to this study, the Kindergarten classroom had a site visit from a team of professionals from JCPS, the Gheens Institute for Innovation, and Spaulding University. A rubric was used by the team (see Appendix), which gives a brief description of the instruction that was implemented in this study. The teacher researcher shared the rubric with other Kindergarten teachers within the school, in order to introduce a plan of action for future use.

Limitations of the Study

The teacher researcher found several limitations of the study. The first was the amount of time it took to administer the RDA (Marie Clay) to each individual student. The RDA requires a

minimum of 15 minutes per student to administer. The teacher researcher had required instructional time, plus fit in time in order to administer the RDA on all 24 Kindergarten students. Administering the RDA took five days to administer. The RDA served as both the pre test and the post test, so the teacher researcher had to administer it twice to all 24 Kindergarten students.

Another limitation of the study for the teacher researcher was deciphering through all the data from the RDA, and deciding from the collected data, what actually would best suit the study. The RDA (Marie Clay) has four components: Alphabet ID, Letter sounds, Letter word association, Hearing and Recording sounds. The teacher researcher collected data in all of the component areas, but found some of it to be of no use for the study.

A third limitation of the study was the length of time in which the study was conducted. The study was conducted within a 12 week period. The first six weeks was used to collect data for the pre test. The second six weeks was used for implementation of the treatment. The treatment phase was not really long enough for the teacher researcher to implement strategies to the students, in order for all of them to acquire process and demonstrate understanding.

Another limitation of the study was that the teacher researcher questioned if the Tier III students really benefited from the treatment. Tier III refers to a level, in which students are placed according to scoring from their RDA (Marie Clay). These students usually score very low, meaning two grade levels behind (usually students who fall into this category are not placed until second semester) and will need some type of intervention plan. All of the Kindergarten Tier III students have required pull-out intervention sessions throughout the day. These students are in the classroom for five to ten minutes at the start of treatment each day, but pulled out for

interventions and return after the literacy block is over. Thus, the students missed all opportunities to engage in the learning activities that were planned for the treatment.

Conclusion

Studies have shown that having low literacy skills results in higher percentage rates of crime, school drop-outs, and drug usage. Many students struggle to catch up, but still obtain reading levels lower than their peers. The question at hand is "How do we ensure that all students learn to read?" There has been very strong evidence to support "that children's alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness are significant predictors of their later proficiency in reading and writing" (NAEYC, 2009).

The teacher researchers have observed family factors that act as barriers for student success. Being able to see some of the factors, give the teacher researchers the advantage to intervene and devise a plan of action that includes a treatment, to supply the family with basic background knowledge of learning to read. The knowledge includes alphabet concepts, like letter ID, letter sounds and word association.

The intent of this study was to investigate the hypothesis of if by integrating multiple means of representation in the classroom, if students would increase their alphabet knowledge. The data collected for the study, demonstrated that letter ID did not show a statistical significance, however, a statistical significance was shown in the components of sounds and word recognition. The treatment that the teacher researcher implemented within the classroom was beneficial and did impact the students' learning. From this study, the teacher researchers learned that in order for Kindergarten students to learn to read, they must have basic knowledge of the alphabet.

The teacher researchers noted that the more ways that the kindergarten students were exposed to the alphabet, the more the students were able to internalize concepts of the alphabet. The teacher researcher also concluded that whenever you teach a concept in a variety of ways, you greatly increase the chances of reaching each student. So, the teacher researchers see that the study was insightful and proved to hold true and plan on continuing the implementation of multiple means of representation within the classroom. The teacher researchers feel that their role is to invite students to learn through a nurturing, supportive environment that offers vast opportunities for learning in many different ways.

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Appendix A – Learning Style Inventory Survey

Learning Style Survey

Mark the statements that are the truest about your child. It important that you reflect about your child's personality and activities; respond to what you know about you child or what you see in your child, not the qualities that you wish for your child. Completing this survey accurately will help me know your child's learning style; which will help me develop lessons that meet your child's learning style needs.

My child:

Enjoys singing and/or does it fairly well.	
Enjoys playing word games (I'm thinking of a color word that starts with the letter /r/ what is it?	
Enjoys working jigsaw puzzles.	
Can follow picture directions.	
Follows oral directions and may ask questions when s/he doesn't understand.	
Looks at pictures in stories is able to retell the story (or make up one)?	
Would rather listen to music.	
Gets along well with different types of people.	
Likes to draw pictures about his/her feelings.	
Is concerned about protecting the environment.	
Enjoys caring for pets and other animals.	
Likes drama and acting out things.	
Is good at making up stories (from scratch).	
Understands math concepts easily.	
Enjoys playing musical instruments or pretending to.	
Enjoys sports or dancing.	
Enjoys playing alone (is content playing by him/herself.	
See or is able to recognize patters easily.	
Enjoys and/or learns best from or by doing hands on activities	
Enjoys working with plants or in the yard.	
Enjoys solving problems.	
Enjoys quiet time.	
Enjoys reading or being read to.	

Along with your child's learning style I will provide you more information about the learning style profiles. Thanks.

Appendix B – Marie Clay Observation Survey

LETTER IDENTIFICATION SCORE SHEET

Date:

Name: Age: Test Score: + /54

Recorder: Date of Birth: Stanine Group:

	A	S	Word	I.R.		A	S	Word	I.R.
A					**a**				
F					**f**				
K					**k**				
P					**p**				
W					**w**				
Z					**z**				
B					**b**				
H					**h**				
O					**o**				
J					**j**				
U					**u**				
					a				
C					**c**				
Y					**y**				
L					**l**				
Q					**q**				
M					**m**				
D					**d**				
N					**n**				
S					**s**				
X					**x**				
I					**i**				
E					**e**				
G					**g**				
R					**r**				
V					**v**				
T					**t**				
					g				
	+ /26	+ /26	+ /26	**TOTALS**		+ /28	+ /28	+ /28	

Confusions:

Letters Unknown:

Comments:

Recording:

A - Alphabet Response: Tick (check)

S - Letter Sound Response: Tick (check)

Word – Record the word the child gives

IR – Incorrect response: Record what the child says

TOTAL SCORE: + /162

Appendix C- Goal Setting Contract

Dear Families,

We have spent the first six weeks of school establishing routines and setting expectations as the foundation for academic learning. The stage is set and now we are ready to begin.

Student's ability to read is directly related to their ability to recognize letters (upper and lower case) and their ability to say their sounds. Research has shown that when students are evolved in setting and monitoring their own goals, they are more likely to achieve them. Putting this information into practice is going to require a partnership between teachers, students and families.

Your student has been evaluated using the Marie Clay Diagnostic Assessment; which is one the reading assessment used by JCPS for K-2 grade. We used this assessment to identify what your student knows; and where there is opportunity for growth.

Over the next six weeks we will be focusing on the alphabet. Your student will receive a file folder that will be used to help them visually monitor their acquisition of the alphabet (it will be kept at school). Each week I will help your student set a goal (identify the letters that they will focus on learning). We will place those letters on their desk and send a copy of that goal home so that you are informed and are able to do your part. Remember this is a partnership so here are our roles.

Parents:

- Create opportunities for your student to practice
- Have conversations with your student about their goal and their progress
- Review the goal letters daily; practicing how to identify them and saying their sounds

Teacher:

- Assist students in setting goals
- Create opportunities for students to practice and learn
- Have conversation with students about their goals and their progress

Students:

- Set goals
- Know their goals
- Practice identified letters daily

KNOW YOUR ROLE (I could not resist)! Keep an eye out; I will send the previous weeks goal home on Monday's (this gives me an opportunity to record their progress over the weekend). So on Mondays you will get the current week's goal and the previous week's goal update. This is a new practice for me so there may be some additional information that I may share with you. If you have any questions please let me know.

Parent _____

Teacher _____

Date _____

Appendix D – Student Goal Sheet

ABC Goal Sheet					ABC Goal Sheet				
Letter Sound					Letter Sound				
Lower Case					Lower Case				
Upper Case					Upper Case				
Letter Name					Letter Name				

Appendix E- Weekly Parent Informational Goal Sheet

Name _____ Week _____

Previous Weeks Goal				
Letter sound				
Lower case				
Upper case				
letter Name				

Current Weeks Goal				
Letter sound				
Lower case				
Upper case				
letter Name				

Appendix F- Classroom Observation Rubric

Representation	Full Implementation (4)	Partial Implementation (3)	Minimal Implementation (2)	No Implementation (1)
1 .Activities that was kinesthetic/tactical in nature? ***Students are participating in an activity by which they are carrying out a physical activity.***	Students have access to **more than one activities** that are kinesthetic/tactical in nature and the **students are participating** in the activities.	Students have access to at least **one activity** that is kinesthetic/ /tactical in nature and the **students are participating** in the activities.	Students have access to at least **one activity** that is kinesthetic/ /tactical in nature but **students are not be engaging** in the activity.	Students **do not have access** to activities that are kinesthetic/ /tactical in nature.
2. Activities that was auditory in nature? ***Students are participating in an activity by which listening and speaking is their main way of learning.***	Students have access to **more than one activities** that are auditory in nature and the **students are participating** in the activities.	Students have access to at least **one activity** that is auditory in nature and the **students are participating** in the activities.	Students have access to at least one activity that is auditory in nature but may not be engaging in the activity	Students do not have access to activities that auditory in nature.
3. Activities that was visual in nature? ***Students are participating in an activity by which images are associated with learning***	Students have access to **more than one activities** that are visual in nature and the students are participating in the activities.	Students have access to at least one activity that is visual in nature and the students are participating in the activities.	Students have access to at least one activity that is visual in nature but may not be engaging in the activity	Students do not have access to activities that are visual in nature.
Grouping				
1. Students working independently? ***Students are participating in an activity that is designed for one person.***	Students have access to more than one activities that are or can be completed independently and the students are participating in the activities.	Students have access to one activities that are or can be c independently and the students are participating in the activity.	Students have access to one activities that are or can b completed independently and however students are not participating in the activity	Students do not have access to activities that are independent in nature.
2. Students working in small groups with other students? ***Students are participating in a cooperative with other students.***	Students have access to more than one activities that are or can be completed cooperatively and the students are participating in the activities.	Students have access to one activities that or can be completed cooperatively and students are participating in the activities.	Students have access to activities that or can be completed cooperatively however students are not participating.	Students do not have access to cooperative activities.
3. Students working in small groups with teachers? ***Students are participating in an activity facilitated by teacher (or assistant).***	Students have access to one or more activities that is teacher facilitated and the students are participating in the activity.	Students have access to one small group activity that is teacher facility and students are participating	A teacher is available to facilitate small groups however she is performing other duties.	Students do not have access to teacher facilitated small group activities.
4. Students working one on one with a teacher? ***Students are participating in a 1on1 activity with a teacher or assistant.***	Students have access to at least one activities that is 1 on 1 with a teacher or assistant and a student is participating in the activity.	Students have access to at least one activity that is teacher facilitated and the students are participating in the activity	A teacher is available to work with students 1 on 1 however she is performing other duties.	Students do not have access to one on one activities with teacher or assistant
Goal Setting/ Plan of Action				
1. Do students know what they need to get better at? ***Students are able to state that they are working towards learning the alphabet by sight and sound.***	***Students are able to state that they are working towards learning the alphabet by sight and sound.***	***Students are able to state that they are working towards learning the alphabet by sight or sound.***	***Students are able to state that they are working towards a goal but are unclear of the details.***	***Students are unable able to state that they are working towards learning the alphabet by sight and sound.***
2. Do students know their current status? What letters they are working on (current week). ***Students are able to identify letters that they are currently working on.***	***Students are able to identify letters and sounds that they are currently working on using their tracking device.***	***Students are able to identify letters or sounds that they are currently working on using their tracking device.***	***Students are able to identify some letters or that they are currently working but are unable to use the tracking tool to do so.***	***Students are unable to identify letters or sounds that they are currently working.***
3. Do students know who can work/help them? ***Students know who help them with them practice the letters and sounds.***	***Students are able to identify family members and teachers as people know who help them with practicing their letters and sounds.***	***Students are able to identify family members or teachers as people know who help them with practicing their letters and sounds.***	***Students know that they should practice/work to meet their goal.***	***Students do not identify any activities as necessary for working towards***
4. Do students know how they keep track of their goal? ***Students know who help them track their goals and the method they use to keep track of their goal.***	***Students know who help them track (keep up) with their goals and the method they use to keep track of their goal.***	***Students know who help them track (keep up) with their goals or the method they use to keep track of their goal.***	***Students are aware of the goal sheet but are not able to tell how they are used.***	***Students have no idea that they are receiving help for a specific goal nor are they aware of a tracking method.***