

Developing Phonics Learning Activities Integrating Play Based Learning for Promoting English Phonics Ability for Preschool Students at an International School in Thailand

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Abstract: The research had four main objectives: (1) to develop and evaluate a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning; (2) to compare the mean scores of English Phonics Ability before and after implementing a set of Play-based learning activities; (3) to study preschool students' English Phonics learning motivation after implementing those activities; and (4) to study the Phonics learning activities attracts Preschool students after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning. Pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest was used. The sample included 12 4-year-old Pre-K 3 kids from a Bangkok international school. The 12 Phonics learning activity lesson plans, an English Phonics Ability Pre-test and Post-test, a learning motivation questionnaire, and a Students Observation Form were used. Analysis of quantitative data included mean, standard deviation, and Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The main findings were: (1) The 12 play-based phonics lesson plans comprised 12 letters and sounds and were rated by three experts at the Very high level ($M=4.96$, $SD=0.06$); (2) Preschoolers' post-test English Phonics Ability scores were substantially higher than their pre-test scores using Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (z -value=3.07, $sig=0.00$); (3) The average mean of preschool students' motivation after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning was high ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.59$); and (4) Lesson plans No.1, 4, 8, and 10-12 attracted preschool students to actively participate in Phonics learning activities at a very high level.

Keywords: Phonics learning activities, play-based learning, English Phonics Ability, preschool students, English learning motivation.

1. Introduction

English has increasingly become the medium of communication around the world both in global and many local contexts. Due to the importance of English, every country asks its people to become well equipped as for English performance. Learning English language has become an important competence of living in a globalized world and this has in turn increased the importance of communicating with each other around the globe.[1] Because of the importance of English, several schools and institutes offered children English classes at an early age to help young children progress faster in learning to read and write the language. However, reading difficulties were observed among every group of second language learners, particularly preschoolers and kindergarteners. As a result, many schools encountered the magnitude of this situation. At the beginning of learning to read, children would pronounce the words very slowly and probably had difficulties making connections between letters and sounds that could cause trouble with their reading.[2]

Due to children's reading problems, many English teachers tried to develop many effective methods of Reading teaching. Phonics instruction is an approach of teaching reading that emphasizes the learning of letter-sound relationships and their use in reading and spelling. The focus of phonics instruction is to help beginning readers learn how letters are linked to sounds to form letter-sound correspondences and spelling patterns and to help them learn how to apply this knowledge in their reading. [3]

In the UK, synthetic phonics is recommended as the prime approach to teaching children to read. Children are taught in discrete, daily phonics sessions using multi-sensory approaches which use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic teaching methods. Jolly Phonics is a student-centered synthetic phonics program. It was first devised by Sue Lloyd, a primary-school teacher, in 1992 for primary use with UK children aged four to seven years. [4]

Ariati et al. [5] conducted a study to see the effectiveness of Jolly Phonics in improving the children's early English literacy. It was found that children who were taught by using Jolly Phonics had better performance on reading, spelling and literacy compared to those who were conventionally taught. However, the findings of this study were not in line with Lloyd, where it was suggested to introduce 1 sound per day. The teacher adapted the program into a longer one, due to the children's multicultural language background, so the section for the sound's introduction was maximized by introducing only 1-3 sounds per week. This action was in accordance with Ehri, et al and Boyadzhyan who propose that phonics should be systematically taught as a part of literacy program and, it should be adapted based on children's ability.

Another popular Phonics program called a multisensory approach in phonics instruction is Zoo-Phonics Program. Zoo-Phonics Program incorporates auditory, verbal, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile stimuli into preschool and Kindergarten pre-reading education. Joshi et al. [6] reported that kindergarten students exposed to the Zoo-Phonics Program throughout the school year made significantly greater advancements in letter recognition and letter-sound awareness compared to previous kindergarten students who had not received instruction via Zoo-Phonics Program.

Play based learning provides opportunities for children to actively and imaginatively engage with people, objects, and the environment. Symbolic representation is a critical aspect. When playing, children may be organizing, constructing, manipulating, pretending, exploring, investigating, creating, interacting, imagining, negotiating, and making sense of their worlds. It promotes the holistic development covered physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative of a child and depending on how it is utilized, may also support a broad range of literacy and numeracy skills. [7]

As the researcher was an English teacher of PreK 3 students who were 2 – 3 years old at an international school in Thailand. The researcher noticed that some students had difficulties in learning pronunciation. These problems led to the lowering of the students' language performance. The researcher was interested in applying Highlight of Jolly Phonics Strategy, Zoo-Phonics Program, and Play based learning to be a set of Phonics learning activities that were suitable for 3 years old children and the context of an international school in Thailand. By implementing a set of Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning, the researcher aimed to enhance students' English phonics ability, and promote their English language learning motivation.

2. Statement of the Objectives:

- 2.1 To create a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand.
- 2.2 To compare the mean scores of English Phonics Ability between before and after implementing Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand.
- 2.3 To study the level of English Phonics learning motivation of Preschool students after implementing a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand.
- 2.4 To investigate Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning that attracted Preschool students to more actively contribute in learning activities to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand.

3. Research Questions

- 3.1 What were the components of the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning developed to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand?

- 3.2 What was the result of the comparison of the mean scores of English Phonics Ability before and after implementing the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand?
- 3.3 What was the level of English Phonics learning motivation of Preschool students after implementing the Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand?
- 3.4 Which Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning attracted Preschool students to more actively contribute in Phonics learning activities to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand?

4. Hypothesis

The Mean score of English Phonics Ability after implementing a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand was higher than that one before.

5. Literature Review

5.1 Phonics learning activities: Effective Techniques to Teach Phonics to ESL/EFL Students: [8]

5.1.1 Introduce the sounds: Begin by introducing the individual sounds of the English language. Focus on the most common sounds first, such as short vowels, long vowels, consonant sounds, and digraphs (two letters representing a single sound, e.g., "th" in "that"). Use visual aids, gestures, and examples to demonstrate each sound.

5.1.2 Use phonics charts: Utilize phonics charts that display the sounds and corresponding letter combinations. Show students how specific letters or letter combinations make different sounds. Practice identifying the sounds and matching them to the correct letters or groups of letters.

5.1.3 Word-building activities: Engage students in word-building activities to help them understand the relationship between sounds and letters. Provide word cards with different phonetic patterns (e.g., CVC words like "cat," "sit") and have students arrange the cards to form new words. This activity reinforces their understanding of phonetic patterns.

5.1.4 Word families: Teach word families (also known as phonograms or word chunks), which are groups of words that share a common sound or letter combination. For example, the "at" family includes words like "cat," "bat," "mat," etc. Teaching word families helps students recognize patterns and apply their knowledge to new words.

5.1.5 Multi-sensory activities: Incorporate multi-sensory activities to enhance phonics learning. For instance, have students trace letters on sandpaper or in the air while saying the corresponding sound. Use tactile materials like letter tiles or magnetic letters for hands-on manipulation. These activities reinforce learning through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities.

5.1.6 Phonics games: Make learning phonics enjoyable by incorporating games. Engage students in activities like phonics bingo, word races, or phonics board games. These games make learning interactive and provide opportunities for students to practice their skills in a fun and engaging way.

5.1.7 Reading aloud: Encourage students to read aloud regularly. Provide them with decodable texts that contain words they can read using their newly acquired phonics knowledge. Practice reading in a one-on-one or small group setting, allowing students to receive personalized feedback and guidance.

5.1.8 Dictation exercises: Conduct dictation exercises where you pronounce words or sentences, and students write them down. Focus on specific phonetic patterns or sounds, and gradually increase the complexity of the dictation exercises as students' progress. This activity helps develop listening skills and reinforces the connection between sounds and letters.

5.1.9 Contextualize phonics: Connect phonics instruction to real-life situations and reading materials. Encourage students to identify phonetic patterns and apply their knowledge while reading signs, labels, or age-appropriate books. This application of phonics in authentic contexts reinforces their learning and promotes reading comprehension.

5.1.10 Review and reinforcement: Regularly review previously learned phonics concepts to ensure retention. Incorporate periodic review activities, quizzes, or assessments to assess students' progress and identify areas that require additional support.

5.2 Multisensory Phonics Learning Programs:

5.2.1 Jolly Phonics Program: Jolly Learning Ltd. developed a brand-new synthetic education program called Jolly Phonics in the U.K. By connecting letters with sounds, learners commonly create English spelling sequences, Jolly Phonics, like various phonemic awareness approaches, methodically encourages writing and reading. The cost of Jolly Phonics materials and training can be a barrier for some schools and educators. It is important to consider the availability of resources and the financial implications of implementing a program like Jolly Phonics. [5]

5.2.2 Zoo Phonics: Adventures in learning Program: Zoo-phonics incorporates auditory, verbal, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile stimuli into preschool and Kindergarten pre-reading education. The Zoo-phonics program was designed in accordance with research in phonics instruction and aims to help students to develop an awareness of the relationship between letters and their corresponding sounds in speech. [9]

5.3 Play based learning: Play based learning is teaching approach that involves the infusion of plays in teaching and learning process inside and outside the classroom. [10]

5.3.1 Theories on Play based learning:

5.3.1.1 Montessori's theory of play: Mielonen and Paterson [11] said that Montessori schools permit children to learn at their own pace since much of the classrooms resemble workshops that encouraged hands on learning.

5.3.1.2 Piaget's theory: This theory was developed by Jean Piaget who contended that play permit children to construct knowledge. When children play, they construct knowledge through accommodation and assimilation. [12] Play is a means of information processing concerning the outside world and assimilating it in the individuals' scheme (schema) of understanding that has already been developed through previous experiences. [13]

5.3.1.3 Vygotsky's theory: Vygotsky [14] alleged that children developed literacy skills and acquired new ideas as they communicate to and listen to one another during play as they constantly use language. Social interactions involving language that learners use during play assists them develop their literacy skills. Vygotsky assumed that children can scaffold for themselves through play.

5.4 Motivation:

5.4.1 Motivation refers to the processes of initiating and sustaining behavior. For decades, educators and educational researchers have known about the central role of motivation in learning. When people are unmotivated, they are unlikely to continue participating in an activity. Motivation, clearly, has important implications for school, teaching, and learning. In fact, a recent meta-analysis demonstrated that motivation is associated with persistence, success, and well-being. Reading researchers, too, have demonstrated the important role of motivation in reading outcomes. [15]

5.4.2 The Six C's of Motivation: High [16] states that the Six C's of Motivation is intrinsic motivation that can be identified primarily through open-ended tasks as follows: Choice, Challenge, Control, Collaboration, Construct meaning, and Consequences.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Population and Sample

6.1.1 Population: The population consisted of Pre-K 3 students aged 3-4 years old, 12 students in each academic year in an international school in Bangkok, Thailand.

6.1.2 Sample: The sample consisted of 12 Pre-K 3 students aged 3-4 years old in an international school in Bangkok, Thailand in the first semester of academic year 2025 by using Purposive sampling because the researcher was assigned this task by the school administration for teaching these students.

6.2 Research Instruments: There are two groups of Research instruments in this study:

6.2.1 The first group: A set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand validated by the three experts was at the Very good level ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 0.01$).

6.2.2 The second group: Data collecting instruments covered English Phonics Ability Pre-test and Post-test, English Phonics learning motivation questionnaire, and Students Observation Form of Phonics learning activities attractiveness for Preschool students.

(6.2.2.1) English Phonics Ability Pre-test and Post-test analyzed by using the reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha of 0.83;

(6.2.2.2) English Phonics learning motivation questionnaire analyzed by using the reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha of 0.86;

(6.2.2.3) Students Observation Form of Phonics learning activities attractiveness for Preschool students analyzed by using the reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha of 0.82.

7. Data Collection

Data was collected as follows:

- 7.1 Pre-test: The pretest was done before treatment intended to obtain students' English Phonics Ability scores.
- 7.2 Treatment: The treatment was the learning with the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability scores.
- 7.3 During some learning activities based on Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability scores, the assistant researcher evaluated the Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning which attract Preschool students to more actively contribute in Phonics learning activities for Preschool students.
- 7.4 Post-test: The post-test was given at the end of the research.
- 7.5 The English Phonics learning motivation questionnaires were performed by Preschool students after implementing a set of Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning to promote English Phonics ability.

8. Data Analysis

Data was analyzed as follows:

- 8.1 The validity of the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was analyzed by using Mean and Standard deviation.
- 8.2 Comparison of pre-test and post-test of English Phonics Ability scores was analyzed by using Wilcoxon signed ranks test by using the SPSS program.
- 8.3 The level of English Phonics learning motivation of Preschool students after implementing a set of Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning to promote English Phonics ability was analyzed by using Mean and Standard deviation.
- 8.4 Evaluation of Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning which attract Preschool students to more actively contribute in Phonics learning activities for Preschool students was analyzed by using Mean and Standard deviation.
- 8.5 The quantitative data from the Students Observation Form of Phonics learning activities attractiveness for Preschool students during implementing Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning were analyzed by using frequency and percentage.

9. Results

9.1 The set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand was composed of 12 Lesson plans and evaluated by the three experts at the Very high level (M=4.96, SD=0.06).

Table 1: Components of a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand.

Week	Lesson plan No.	Contents	Periods of time (30 minutes per period)
1	1	S, /s/	4
2	2	A, /a/	4
3	3	T, /t/	4
4	4	I, /i/	4

Table 1 (continued)

Week	Lesson plan No.	Contents	Periods of time (30 minutes per period)
5	5	P, /p/	4
6	6	N, /n/	4
7	7	E, /e/	4

8	8	H, /h/	4
9	9	R, /r/	4
10	10	M, /m/	4
11	11	D, /d/	4
12	12	C/K, /c/, /k/	4
		Total	48

Regarding Table 1: The set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand was composed of 12 Letters and sounds in 48 periods. The letters and sounds composed of Lesson plan (1) S, /s/; (2) A, /a/; (3) T, /t/; (4) I, /i/; (5) P, /p/; (6) N, /n/; (7) E, /e/; (8) H, /h/; (9) R, /r/; (10) M, /m/; (11) D, /d/; and (12) C/K, /c/, /k/.

Table 2: Effective level of the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand by the three experts' opinions (n=3)

Lesson plan No.	Content	Play-based learning	M	S.D.	Level
Lesson plan 1	S, /s/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 2	A, /a/	Flashcards, I spy game, Worksheets	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 3	T, /t/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 4	I, /i/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	4.98	0.03	Very good
Lesson plan 5	P, /p/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 6	N, /n/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 7	E, /e/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	4.98	0.03	Very good
Lesson plan 8	H, /h/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	4.98	0.03	Very good
Lesson plan 9	R, /r/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	4.96	0.06	Very good
Lesson plan 10	M, /m/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 11	D, /d/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
Lesson plan 12	C/K, /c/, /k/	Songs, Flashcards, Stories, Bingo game	5.00	0.00	Very good
	Average		4.99	0.01	Very good

Regarding Table 2: The mean of the effectiveness of the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand evaluated by the three experts was at the Very good level (M = 4.99, SD = 0.01).

9.2 The Post-test mean scores of English Phonics Ability of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after taught by using a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability were significantly higher than the pre-test mean score used Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (z-value=3.07, sig=0.00).

Table 3: Different scores of the Pre-test and the Post-test of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand who were taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability.

No	Primary Students	Pre-test scores	Post-test scores	Post-Pre	Different
1	Student 1	14	52	52-14	38
2	Student 2	12	53	53-12	41
3	Student 3	18	57	57-18	39
4	Student 4	18	51	51-18	33
5	Student 5	11	44	44-11	33
6	Student 6	14	53	53-14	39
7	Student 7	07	34	34-07	27
8	Student 8	19	59	59-19	40
9	Student 9	09	46	46-09	37
10	Student 10	22	61	61-22	39

11	Student 11	14	55	55-14	41
12	Student 12	21	48	48-21	27
Average		M=14.92	M=51.08		
Standard deviation		SD=4.74	SD=7.37		

Regarding the Table 3: The mean scores of the Preschool students in the school in Thailand before taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability were 14.92 (SD=4.74) and after taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability the mean scores were 51.08 (SD=7.37).

Table 4: Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was conducted to compare the Pre-test score and the Post-test score of English Phonics Ability of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand before and after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability.

No	Time	n	M	SD	z-value	df	Sig.
1	Pre- test	12	14.92	4.74	3.07**	11	0.002
2	Post- test	12	51.08	7.37			

**p >0.01

Regarding Table 4: There was a significant difference in the Pre-test scores and the Post-test scores (z-value=3.07, sig=0.00) of English Phonics Ability of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand before and after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability. Hence, the Post-test scores were significantly higher than the pre-test mean score. The hypothesis was accepted.

9.3 the Average mean of the Motivation of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was at the High level (M=4.13, SD=0.59).

Table 5: The mean, standard deviation, and level of the Motivation of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability.

No	Items	n	M	SD	Level
1	Did you enjoy studying English Phonics?	12	4.33	1.30	High
2	Do you feel you know all 12 consonant sounds?	12	3.67	1.30	High
3	Would you want to continue studying more English Phonics?	12	4.67	0.78	Very high
4	Do you enjoy studying English Phonics with your friends?	12	4.67	0.78	Very high
5	Do you enjoy studying English Phonics alone?	12	3.33	1.44	Medium
Average		12	4.13	0.59	High

Regarding Table 5: The Average mean of the Motivation of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was at the High level (M=4.13, SD=0.59).

When each question was analyzed, it was found that the Preschool students were motivated with the continue studying more English Phonics and studying English Phonics with their friends equally at the Very high level (M=4.67, SD=0.78). Additionally, the Preschool students were motivated with studying English phonics at the High level (M=4.33, SD=1.30), as well as the students were motivated with all 12 consonant sounds at the High level (M=3.67, SD=1.30). Moreover, the Preschool students were motivated with studying English phonics alone at the medium level (M=3.33, SD=1.44).

9.4 The Average mean of the level of the results of observation of the assistant researchers about Phonics learning activities attracts Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was at the high level (M=4.46, SD=0.42).

Table 6: The mean, standard deviation, and level of the results of observation of the assistant researchers about Phonics learning activities attract Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability.

No	Lesson plans	n	M	SD	Level
1	Lesson plan 1	2	4.55	0.36	Very high
2	Lesson plan 2	2	4.40	0.48	High
3	Lesson plan 3	2	4.34	0.51	High
4	Lesson plan 4	2	4.50	0.44	Very high
5	Lesson plan 5	2	4.44	0.41	High
6	Lesson plan 6	2	4.48	0.37	High
7	Lesson plan 7	2	4.33	0.56	High
8	Lesson plan 8	2	4.57	0.37	Very high
9	Lesson plan 9	2	4.37	0.48	High
10	Lesson plan 10	2	4.51	0.37	Very high
11	Lesson plan 11	2	4.51	0.37	Very high
12	Lesson plan 12	2	4.57	0.37	Very high
Average		2	4.46	0.42	High

Regarding Table 6: The Average mean of the level of the results of observation of the assistant researchers about Phonics learning activities attract Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was at the high level (M=4.46, SD=0.42).

When each Lesson plan was analyzed, it was found that the Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning which attract Preschool students to more actively contribute in Phonics learning activities at the very high level were Lesson plan No.1, 4, 8, and 10-12 (M=4.55, SD=0.36; M=4.50, SD=0.44; M=4.57, SD=0.37; M=4.51, SD=0.37; M=4.51, SD=0.37; and M=4.57, SD=0.37).

10. Discussion

10.1 It was found that the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability for Preschool students at an international school in Thailand was composed of 12 Lesson plans and evaluated by the three experts at the Very high level (M=4.96, SD=0.06). The reason for this research result may be due to the researcher used effective techniques to teach Phonics to ESL/EFL Students such as (1) Introduce the sounds by using visual aids, gestures, and examples to demonstrate each sound; (2) Use phonics charts that display the sounds and corresponding letter combinations and practice identifying the sounds and matching them to the correct letters or groups of letters; (3) Word-building activities by engaging students in word-building activities to help them understand the relationship between sounds and letters; (4) Word families that helps students recognize patterns and apply their knowledge to new words; (5) Multi-sensory activities to enhance phonics learning; (6) Phonics games to make learning phonics enjoyable; (7) Reading aloud for practice reading in a one-on-one or small group setting, allowing students to receive personalized feedback and guidance; (8) Dictation exercises for helping develop listening skills and reinforces the connection between sounds and letters; (9) Contextualize phonics by connecting phonics instruction to real-life situations and reading materials; and (10) Review and assess students' progress and identify areas that require additional support. [17] Moreover, the result of this study related to Aiyarakarnjanakul [2] who found that some Thai teachers used Phonics instruction for teaching English reading and the students learn individual letter-sound correspondences then blend together to form words and the results showed that phonics instruction positively affects young learners 'reading ability.

10.2 It was found that the Post-test mean scores of English Phonics Ability of the Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after taught by using a set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability were significantly higher than the pre-test mean score used Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test (z-value=3.07, sig=0.00). The reason for this research result may be due to the researcher integrated Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability. Play-based learning was supported by Vygotsky's theory. This theory maintains that play permit children to realize their cognitive potential level. According to Syomwene and Mwaka [12], play promotes early literacy skills through their interactions with adults (older children and teachers) who are known as 'More Knowledgeable Others. Vygotsky [14] alleged that children developed literacy skills and acquired new ideas as they communicate to and listen to one another during play as they constantly use language. Social interactions involving language that learners use during play assists them develop their literacy skills. Vygotsky assumed that children can

scaffold for themselves through play. The result of this study was related to Heidecker [18] who determined the effectiveness of Play based learning on phonemic awareness and phonics skills in kindergarten. This study aimed to determine whether Play-based learning materials such as letter tiles, cards, timers, and Literacy based games were an effective way for kindergarten students to acquire skills such as segmenting, letter sounds, and sight word recognition. Play based learning materials were then offered to small groups of students during our regular literacy time, and data was collected using Fast Bridge after two weeks of implementation. After analyzing the data, it was determined that play-based learning was in fact an effective way for the kindergarten students to acquire phonemic awareness and phonics skills.

10.3 It was found that the Average mean of the Motivation of the Preschool students at an international school in

Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was at the High level ($M=4.13$, $SD=0.59$). The reason for this research result may be due to the researcher applied some games and playtime activities that integrate language learning with fun to develop motivation to learn English Phonics for the Preschool students. Games and playtime activities in this study related to the constructivist learning theory developed by Piaget and Bruner also supports the importance of using culturally relevant pedagogy to promote motivation. The Preschool students actively construct new knowledge based on their prior knowledge and experiences. The Preschool students were inherently active, self-regulating students who construct knowledge in responses to interactions with environmental stimuli. Accordingly, Phonics instruction in this study was authentic and meet real-life expectations; this allows Preschool students to make connections and increase the relevance of learning certain tasks. [13] Additionally, Games and playtime activities in this study related to the Six C's of Motivation of intrinsic motivation. The Six C's of Motivation can be identified primarily through open-ended tasks covered (1) Choice: First, these tasks provide students with choice, allowing them to choose a variety of topics and media options, when choice is offered, students are rarely bored because they can select topics that interest them while taking ownership of their own learning; (2) Challenge: Learning tasks must also provide an appropriate challenge for the student based on their ability level monitored through progress goals and feedback; (3) Control: Based on Bandura's construct of self-efficacy, students engage more readily in activities where they feel competent and capable, there must also be control that encourages self-evaluation and allows students to take ownership; (4) Collaboration: Collaboration is also a foundation of the Six C's of Motivation, collaboration provides an opportunity for students to share ideas while receiving feedback about their work; (5) Construct meaning: this allows students to make connections on why learning is important, therefore, any attempt to divorce a learning task from the known and purposeful world of the child diminishes the task's pedagogical utility; and (6) Consequences: consequences must be clear and completed tasks should be celebrated in a positive way, this method also supports a constructive approach to failure, where students can learn to adjust their strategies rather than giving up trying to achieve the desired result. [18] Moreover, the result of this study was related to Patria (2022) who improved students' motivation in learning Phonics through games. It is classroom action research with two cycles. The procedures of each cycle were planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The research subjects in this research were 21 Kindergarten 2 students of Tunas Bangsa Kindergarten. The data collected qualitatively by using classroom observation, interview, and documents. The research finding showed that the students' motivation in learning Phonics through games has increased due to the application of games during teaching and learning process. As well as, Zhen and Rimanich [20] determined the effects of phonics instruction on the motivation of young Chinese learners of English. Two third-year elementary school students were participants in this study; student A was 7 years old and student B was 9 years old. Surveys and semi-structured interviews were used for data collection. The results indicated that the two participants involved in this study responded favorably after exposure to explicit phonics instructions. Decoding new words, reading aloud, as well as word memorization has become much easier by incorporating the rules of phonics in decoding new words with the help of phonics instruction. As a result, for the two participants in this study, learning English became a more intrinsic and extrinsic process after accepting explicit phonics instruction.

10.4 It was found that it was found that the Average mean of the level of the results of observation of the assistant

researchers about Phonics learning activities attracts Preschool students at an international school in Thailand after being taught by the set of Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based learning to promote English Phonics Ability was at the high level ($M=4.46$, $SD=0.42$). Additionally, the Phonics learning activities integrating Play based learning which attract Preschool students to more actively contribute in Phonics learning activities

at the very high level were Lesson plan No.1, 4, 8, and 10-12 ($M=4.55$, $SD=0.36$; $M=4.50$, $SD=0.44$; $M=4.57$, $SD=0.37$; $M=4.51$, $SD=0.37$; $M=4.51$, $SD=0.37$; and $M=4.57$, $SD=0.37$). The reason for this research result may be due to when phonics was taught in an engaging and meaningful way, Preschool students were more likely to retain what they learned and developed a lifelong love for reading. The researcher selected Phonics learning activities attract Preschool students were as follows: Word games, Rhymes, Storytelling, Song, Hands-on activities, use visuals, and use multi-sensory activities. These activities were related to British Council in Malaysia [21] states some examples of games and playtime activities that integrate language learning with fun as follows: Word games, Storytelling, Songs, and Tongue twisters, as well as Learning without Tears Staff [22] state Phonics learning activities attract Preschool students as follows: (1) Incorporate Games and Interactive Activities: Learning through play is an effective way to engage young learners. Games like Phonics Bingo, Word Hunts, and Sound Matching can make phonics practice exciting; (2) Use Music and Songs: Music is a powerful tool for learning. Integrate phonics songs and chants into your lessons to help students remember letter sounds and spelling patterns; (3) Incorporate Storytelling and Reading Aloud: Storytelling and reading aloud are excellent ways to contextualize phonics instruction; (4) Engage in Hands-On Activities: Hands-on activities such as letter crafts, word-building with magnetic letters, and phonics-based art projects can make learning tangible and memorable; and (5) Utilize Technology: Integrating technology into phonics instruction can captivate students' interest. The result of this study was related to Akbar et al. [23] who conducted action research to gain an understanding of the phonics awareness through activity-based learning. The subject of this study was 13 students of prep class at a low-paid private school located in a slum suburban area. The academic performance was evaluated through dialogues with and observation of students. For this study 20 sessions with students were conducted with different activities to develop phonics and its effect on the personalities and level of learning and understanding of prep class students. The results of the study showed that the students tend to learn phonics more actively when they are exposed to activity-based learning.

11. Conclusion

The Phonics Learning Activities integrating Play-based Learning are highly effective in enhancing the English Phonics Ability of preschool students and having been evaluated by experts at a "Very High" level, the curriculum serves as a high-quality instructional tool tailored specifically for the international school context in Thailand. Integrating play-based learning into phonics instruction not only yields significant academic gains in literacy but also maximizes student engagement and motivation. Beyond academic achievement, the play-based approach successfully fostered a positive learning environment. This pedagogical framework is therefore a highly recommended strategy for early childhood educators seeking to bridge the gap between structured phonetics and active, child-centered exploration.

12. Recommendation

12.1 Recommendations for Practice: Based on the findings, it was found that the integration of Play-based Learning is an effective intervention for developing English Phonics Ability in preschool learners. The researcher would like to suggest as follow:

12.1.1 Integration into the School Curriculum: The school should transition from treating these "Play-based Phonics Activities" as a supplemental intervention to making them a core component of the early years literacy framework as follows: Structured Play and Resource Development: Create a "Play-based Phonics Toolkit" containing the specific materials and activity guides used in the research to be shared across all preschool classrooms.

12.1.2 Professional Development for Educators: For the results to be replicated across other classrooms, teachers need to understand the mechanics of how play facilitates phonemic awareness. The school should prepare the Workshops where teachers can see these activities in action to understand the balance between student-led play and teacher-guided instruction.

12.1.3 Parent and Community Engagement: Since the setting is an international school in Thailand, students are likely in a multilingual environment. The school should set the Phonics Workshops for Parents: Brief sessions to explain the transition from traditional rote memorization to play-based phonics, ensuring buy-in from the school community.

12.1.4 Differentiated Instruction: While the mean scores increased significantly, the researcher would like to recommend teachers to use the play-based model to target specific learner needs. The schools should do Assessment through Observation: Encourage teachers to use formative assessment

during play (observing how a child interacts with sounds during a game) rather than relying solely on formal paper-and-pencil tests.

12.2 Recommendations for Future Research: Building upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations will be suggested for future research:

12.2.1 Longitudinal Studies on Long-Term Impact: Some researchers should conduct a longitudinal study to track these specific students into Kindergarten and Grade 1. This would determine if the Play-based Learning (PBL) foundation leads to better reading fluency and spelling accuracy in the long term compared to students taught via traditional methods.

12.2.2 Expansion of the Sample and Setting: Due to this study focused on an international school, which often has smaller class sizes and more resources. The researcher would like some researchers replicate the research in Thai government schools or diverse socio-economic settings. This would test the adaptability of the "Phonics Learning Activities" in classrooms with different teacher-to-student ratios and varying levels of English exposure at home.

12.2.3 Comparative Analysis of Pedagogies: Due to this study found that play based learning is better than the pre-test baseline, but some researchers should study how it stacks up against other modern methods: such as perform a comparative study between Play-based Learning and other specific frameworks, such as Technology-Enhanced Learning (using phonics apps/tablets) or the Montessori method. This would help identify which specific elements of "play" are the most effective drivers of phonological awareness.

12.2.4 Impact on Different Learner Profiles: Because International schools often have a mix of Native Speakers, English as a Second Language (ESL), and English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners. Some researchers should investigate the effectiveness of the integrated play-based activities across different language proficiency levels or play-based phonics benefit EAL students more significantly than those who speak English at home.

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