

# Example of phonological interventions for reading disorder literature review

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Though reading for a majority of children may seem like second nature to them as they progress in classes, for some who suffer from reading disorders, it is a nightmare. This is because these children find themselves unable to master that ability of decoding words in print in an efficient manner. In a bid to cure this malady, several interventions have been undertaken amongst children. Nonetheless, of all interventions that have been undertaken over the years, phonological awareness intervention has elicited the most significant interest and attention. It is also the case that speech-language pathologists who work in preschool and work with other school children are embracing phonological awareness intervention with much enthusiasm. Research and literature published in this growing area of psychology points to the fact that phonological intervention holds a significant promise in improving the reading performance amongst children. A number of activities are encompassed in phonological awareness intervention . This paper shall conduct a review of the literature published in this area and also examine the effects of this kind of intervention in alleviating learning disorders in children.

It is essential to understand what phonological awareness intervention entails from the outset. Phonological awareness essentially means the explicit understanding of a word's sound structure. It fundamentally entails the detection and manipulation of sounds at these three crucial levels of sound structure. These sound structures include syllables, phonemes and onsets and rimes. The knowledge and appreciation of these tasks is demonstrated through a number of tasks. The assumption usually is that an individual performing these tasks must be aware of the units of sound in

order to perform an operation. Research studies conducted demonstrate that children with a history of speech-language impairment are more likely to have difficulties in reading as compared to the general population.

Phonological awareness is simply a hearing or auditory skill that is developed through a variety of activities that expose students to the sound structure of the language. It must also be made clear that exposure to sounds is not enough since traditional actions that go along with songs and rhymes focus on helping students to become alert to the meaning of words rather than being attentive to sounds. The difficulties that result are usually difficult to remedy and usually necessitate specific interventions to enable them acquire fluent and efficient reading skills.

Goldstein reports of an investigation into the efficacy and effect of phonological intervention conducted on pre-school children hailing from humble backgrounds. A multiple baseline design was used to assess the effects of phonological training awareness on rhyme and letter sound knowledge. It was found that rhyme intervention had a boosting effect on the children's rhyme production and identification. The study also reported an enhanced alliteration among children and sound fluency skills after undergoing initial sound intervention. The same results were found among all the 13 participant-children. In addition, teachers were able to perceive meaningful and significant changes in rhyme as well as letter-sound production. Teachers and interventionists expressed their satisfaction with the procedures and results of this mode of intervention. This is because there was a notable improvement in emergent literacy skills for children that stood at a high risk of having reading impairments. Phonological awareness

is interlinked to success in both reading and spelling. It is the case that among the vast majority of children, those with a sound phonological awareness were adept readers as compared to those who had less phonological awareness.

On the other hand, Kirk C and Gillon GT examined the longitudinal effects of phonological intervention on morphological awareness in children suffering from speech impairment. The study which they conducted focused on an examination of the performance and morphological awareness development amongst two groups of children with speech difficulties and who were exposed to different kinds of intervention. The children who were the subject in this study were aged between the years 7. 6 to 9. 5 years. In this study, the first group received a preschool intervention in a quest to enable phonological awareness and improve speech production. The second group in this study also received a preschool intervention though it focused only on the improvement of speech intelligibility. A number of tests were then administered with the first of the tests assessing the recognition of words among the children while the second test tested the non-word decoding. In addition, there was also an administration of two tests of morphological awareness. One of the tests focused on the spelling of morphologically complex words while the other tested the oral generation of the base form of derived words. Upon examining the results of the study, it was found that for children in group one who were subjected to a phonological awareness intervention performed better on non-word decoding. Similar impressive results were also reported among these children on the spelling of morphologically complex words compared to those children whose

intervention focused only on speech. At the same time, there was no much difference reported in the ability to orally generate base words. From this study, it may be summed up that children with speech impairment and who had received phonological intervention became proficient readers. These people also showed an ability to make use of morphological awareness in the spelling process that was akin to that of their contemporaries suffering from speech difficulties.

Bus and Van Ijzendoorn conducted a quantitative meta-analysis where they sought to investigate the effects of phonological awareness training on reading. The study found that phonological awareness intervention is a necessary and essential condition though not a sufficient condition for early reading. The authors report that the effect of phonemic training on phonological awareness was impressively strong while it had a moderate effect on reading. From this published literature, it may well be stated that phonological training is efficient to a significant extent in improving the phonemic skills for a particular child. However, this train has a little or no effect on the ability to read, spell and understand while reading. We, therefore, argue that phonological awareness is only a predictor of reading, but also its strongest predictor. In addition, this training produces a most potent force when combined with other methods such as letter training. We can safely state that children are able to benefit in a much significant way when they are exposed to print and also informed that there lies a nexus between spoken words and written letters than from the mere playing of spoken phonemic games.

Gaill Gillon further proceeds in his exploration of the efficacy of phonological

awareness intervention for children with spoken language impairment. His study was conducted amongst children who had suffered from an early reading delay. A total of 91 children were involved in the study and suffered from developed speech and language difficulties. These children were subjected to different methods of intervention with one of them being an integrated phonological awareness program. The second group of children was subjected to minimal intervention control program over a four and half year period. The third group received a traditional speech-language intervention control program aimed at articulation and linguistic skills. The study examined the effects of the interventions applied to the children on phonological awareness ability, reading performance and speech production. Gillon states that the study found that children who received phonological awareness intervention showed significant gains in phonological awareness ability and reading development than those subjected to other intervention models. Though there had been significant delays in phonological awareness before training, children who underwent phonological intervention were able to demonstrate same levels of performance in terms of speech and language skills at the post-test assessment. The same children also reported an improved articulation in speech.

The suggestion being put forward by these numerous studies and literature reviews is that an integrated model of phonological intervention is an efficient method of improving phonological awareness, reading and speech development. I do agree with the conclusions made by the various authors on the viability and the need to incorporate this phonological awareness intervention in helping children with a reading disorder. However, I must

state that this intervention is only a necessary step of remedy the reading disorder. It is not entirely dispositive of the matter and needs to be backed up by other interventions and measures.

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