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CARRERA DE EDUCACIÓN

**THESIS TO OPT THE DEGREE OF
TEACHING CAREER OF ENGLISH FOR I
AND II CYCLE OF THE B.G.E.**

THESIS

**PHONEMIC AWARENESS ASSESSMENT
ACCORDING TO THE NEW ENGLISH
CURRICULUM GOALS IN THE FIRST GRADE
CLASSROOM IN JOSE MORA VALVERDE
SCHOOL DURING THIRD TRIMESTER, 2017.**

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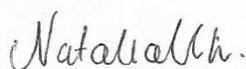
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Tibás, 24 de abril, 2018

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Carrera: Licenciatura en Enseñanza del Inglés

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La estudiante, **Natalia Montero Chacón**, cédula de identidad número 113100558, me ha presentado, para efectos de revisión y aprobación, el trabajo de investigación denominado *PHONEMIC AWARENESS ASSESSMENT ACCORDING TO THE NEW ENGLISH CURRICULUM GOALS IN THE FIRST GRADE CLASSROOM IN JOSE MORA VALVERDE SCHOOL DURING THIRD TRIMESTER, 2017*, el cual ha elaborado para optar por el grado académico de Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés.

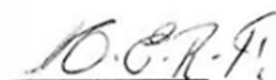
He verificado que se han incluido las observaciones y he hecho las correcciones indicadas, durante el proceso de tutoría y he evaluado los aspectos relativos a la elaboración del problema, objetivos, justificación; antecedentes, marco teórico, marco metodológico, tabulación, análisis de datos; conclusiones y recomendaciones.

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Los suscritos, Elena Redondo Camacho, cédula de identidad número 3 0447 0799 y Daniel González Monge, cédula de identidad número 1 1345 0416, en calidad de filólogos, revisamos y corregimos el trabajo final de graduación que lleva por título *Phonemic awareness assessment according to the new English curriculum goals in the first grade classroom in José Mora Valverde school during third trimester, 2017*, sustentado por Natalia Montero Chacón.

Hacemos constar que se corrigieron aspectos de forma, redacción, estilo y otros vicios del lenguaje que se pudieron trasladar al texto.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my daughter Lucía, this is for you.

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I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to my thesis advisor, Ms. Marta Eugenia Rojas Fernandez. I am thankful for the patience whenever I had a question about my research or writing.

I would also like to thank the school José Trinidad Mora Valverde, the English teacher and the sweet students who were involved in the validation of this research project

I would also like to acknowledge all the teachers of the Education School at Universidad Hispanoamericana who were part of my Licenciatura.

CHAPTER I: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

1.1.1 Background of the problem

In 2016, the Ministerio de Educación Pública [MEP] launched a new English curriculum to be implemented at the beginning of 2017 with first graders groups in public elementary schools. The main purpose of this updated curriculum is to create a new citizen profile, starting with the first graders. As it is mentioned in the official curricular document, what it pretends is that: “Lessons can follow a task-based sequence that will focus on linguistic and non-linguistic items such as: phonemic awareness, language forms, vocabulary, oral or written comprehension and oral or written production, development of cognitive or socio-affective strategies, etc.” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, p. 24).

The emphasis of this research is to reflect on the importance of phonemic awareness [PA] in the understanding of sounds in English spoken words: “The idea of implementing and teaching phonics in English is to help learners to decode words by sounds” (Diaz, 2017, p. 43). This is one of the main purposes of changing the curriculum to the one that focuses to work integrated skills and pronunciation.

It is significant that this change has been made beginning first year of primary school, due to the relevancy of acquiring this knowledge since the first steps of bilingual formal education. “Learners in their first year of school have to start implementing phonemic awareness and sound instruction as their first and most important procedure in the learning of English as a foreign language” (Diaz, 2017, p. 14). The results to a long term education could be successful in order to achieve the

main purpose of study of this research, which is phonemic awareness: “In phonemic awareness, children must be able to break apart a whole word in to the different phonemes that make it up (i.e., /c/ /a/ /t/) then be able to blend the sounds together again to say the word correctly” (Gorgyan, 2015, p. 33-34).

One of the biggest changes in the curriculum is the addition of phonemic awareness as an isolated topic which can be developed in the classroom to achieve the oral curricular framework for first cycle: “Phonological awareness has the biggest role in phonemes that helps apprentices develop oral skills” (Diaz, 2017, p. 46). Furthermore, there are skills, as reading, that students may reach which leads to reinforce skills needed for second cycle: “Success in phonemic awareness is just the beginning to becoming a life-long reader” (Gorgyan, 2015, p. 36).

It is important to emphasize that age is a determinant factor to develop specific skills: “Phonemic awareness is an advanced concept of phonological awareness that tends to develop toward the end of the preschool years or in the beginning of the kindergarten years” (Withrow, 2014, p. 4). Additionally, this curricular modification with a new program should strive to achieve better English learners: “Many studies establish that as longer the time children are exposed to phonemes, and phonemic awareness, will increase their ability and opportunity to improve the manipulation of sounds, referring to phonics” (Salazar, 2013, p. 22).

Finally, it is determinant to have good teachers for a successful implementation, which is required to work in more strategies “If early childhood educators do lack basic understanding of phonological awareness, it might be assumed that teachers with low phonemic awareness knowledge would, in turn, have

students who were low performers on phonemic awareness measures” (Harris, 2016, p. 93).

1.1.2 The statement of the problem

In 2017, the Ministerio de Educación Pública [MEP] of Costa Rica launched a new English curriculum for first grade, in order to replace the last version from 2005. The intention is to address new educational politics to conceive the learner as a new citizen, which means a new perspective of what it has been doing in the English public classrooms. According to the official document published by the MEP “Education for a new citizenship reinforces the need of 21st century learners who integrate proactively in a globalized world while strengthening their national and global identity” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, p. 2).

Last year, many English teachers from public schools around the country received a training, in which the MEP developed a set of procedures that are required to follow to accomplish the goals of a new curriculum. This program is intended for first grade for 2017, then it pretends to be implemented gradually in the other grades.

Phonemic awareness is a strength topic that is added to this new curriculum. It is the first time that focuses in this area in the communicative approach in public English classrooms. Due to this may represent a challenge for English learners and teachers, it is important to develop this research to be able to know if what is written in paper can be successful developed in the classroom.

1.1.3 Justification

As there are many new projects or ideas nowadays, changes in curriculum need to be put in to practice to know strengths and areas to improve for further years. The curriculum is a guide that teachers need to follow in public schools as a mandatory process. Within the curriculum, there are parts we can improve depending on the community we are working with.

For Jose Trinidad Mora Valverde School, this project may represent a diagnosis of the implementation of this new curriculum in one of its stages which is phonemic awareness. By developing this research, teachers can work in specific aspects that need to be improved in the classroom to assure the appropriate assessment.

In addition, this research may be helpful to identify key topics or phonemes that need to be worked with more emphasis. The first grade students may be led to better strategies that can be used to work the phonemic awareness classes in the next years.

Finally, this research may develop strategies, guided by teachers, to work with the phonemic awareness and achieve successfully the goals set by the MEP.

1.2 THE PROBLEM

How phonemic awareness assessment is, according to the new English curriculum goals in the first-grade classroom at Jose Mora Valverde School during third trimester, 2017?

1.3 OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 General objective

Analyze how the phonemic awareness assessment is developed according to the New English curriculum goals.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- Identify relevant aspects of the phonemic awareness assessment in the first-grade classroom.
- Contrast aspects from the phonemic awareness assessment during the classroom practice and the goals set in the new English Curriculum.
- Recognize the results of the current classroom practice during phonemic awareness assessment to achieve the new English Curriculum goals.

1.4 SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE PROBLEM

1.4.1 Scope

This study takes place in Jose Trinidad Mora Valverde School located in Calle Fallas, Desamparados, with five first grade groups. The study takes an average of 10 students of one group during English classes. They receive three lessons per week of 40 minutes each, one of the weekly lessons is dedicated to work phonemic awareness as it is requested by the Ministerio de Educación Pública new curriculum.

This particular group that it is included in this study takes the English Classes each Tuesday and Friday. Tuesday classes consists in phonemic awareness, since it

is just one lesson of 40 minutes dedicated to the production and recognition of new sounds.

This study includes the contents intended to put in practice in third trimester of 2017 for first-grade according to new program, which goes from October 2nd, 2017 to December 11th, 2017.

1.4.2 Delimitations

The study takes place during the third trimester in which schools usually are closing the school year and many activities take place during this period, such as Asociación Nacional de Educadores Congress, Sindicato de Educadores Costarricenses National Meeting and Christmas Festival.

Also, there are students which absenteeism affects the classroom development because, in first-grade, they still have the routine from kindergarten in which they used to play with no much responsibility.

The social environment where the school is located is from low economic development, many parents do not know English, so it is difficult to practice it and develop fluency with school knowledge.

CHAPTER II: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 HISTORIC FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Ministerio de Educación Pública and English Curriculum

Within the framework of a renewed conception of educational and comprehensive vision that we call *Educación para una nueva ciudadanía*, different innovative initiatives are implemented in this new curriculum. These include more dynamic management processes and ambitious projects with an integral impact within the Ministry of Public Education and evidently a series of substantive changes in the field of education. The curricular transformation that has produced a new study for the 2017 school year is a clear example of this (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

The main purpose of this new curriculum is to prepare learners to challenges they may face in a globalized world in a near future, as it is explained in the curricular document: “speaking English fluently is one of the abilities a 21st Century learner must develop to have access to better life opportunities” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, p. 4).

The new program launched in 2016 is looking forward to standardizing English language in all public schools following Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR), that divided the acquired knowledge in stages from A.1, which is the lowest level of language knowledge, to B2, which is the highest level, close to a native English speaker.

Figure 1. Common European Framework of Reference for languages.

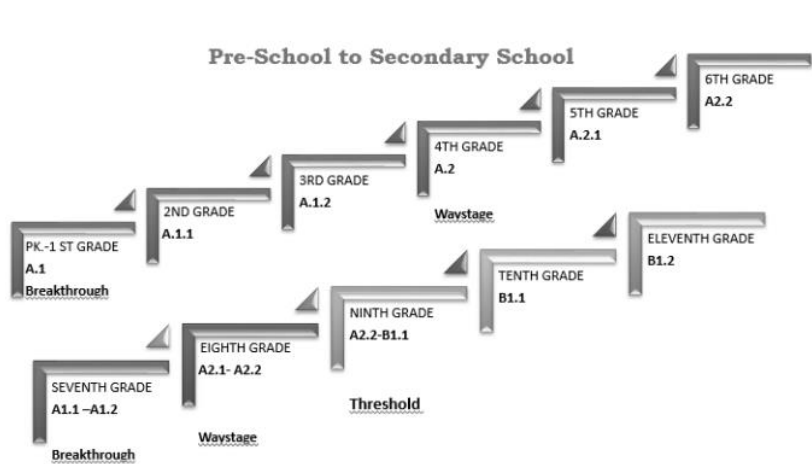


Figure 1. Presents the proficiency levels articulated in the CEFR as it applies to the English language curriculum in Costa Rica across the grade levels

According to figure 1, MEP uses this reference to set the goals in English teaching for different grades as it refers in the curriculum which explains that it is expected an “English proficiency of A2 when completing primary education” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, p. 4).

Some of the main goals according to the curricular plan (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016) expected as basic user in the CEFR are:

- Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows, and things he/she has.
- Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.
- Can understand and use familiar everyday language in the interpersonal and transactional domain and formulaic expressions

aimed at the satisfaction of needs that are concrete and level-appropriate.

- Can show limited ability to use grammatical structures (e.g., punctuation, capitalization, and sentence patterns).

2.1.2 Calle Fallas socioeconomic development

It is fundamental to know the context in which this research takes place, since it is a community that has its own needs and sociocultural environment. As many authors refers it is important to know the background of the students and families which attends school, especially in first grade:

Supporting students strategically begins with knowing the children. Educators should converse with families to learn about children's experiences with language and literacy; their attitudes, interests, and expectations; and their prior schooling (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 164).

Calle Fallas is a district of Desamparados which has small towns such as Bellavista, California, Calle Angulo, Calle Contadores, Calle Jorco, Calle Naranjos, Capilla, Carmen Murillo, Centro de Amigos, Cerámica, Ciudadela Cucubres, Cruce (Parte Oeste), Florita, Jardín, Los Duraznos, Monseñor Sanabria, Monte Claro, Retoños, Río Jorco, Sabara, San Esteban Rey, San José, San Roque, Tica Linda, Torremolinos and Urbanización García Monge. Most of the students come from one of the places around the school, mentioned before.

It is important to emphasize that this is mainly a low-income area, which is located in an urban area that it is near to Desamparados town, which is nationally known as a high population mobility city, where people from other countries and Costa Rica towns move in to try to get more social economic stability.

From years ago, Calle Fallas is known in the news by its criminal rates and lack of social cohesion since it is known as a town where police are not present. There is a high population density. There is not a proper district layout plan for housing, since many places do not count with regulation, main services and have poor infrastructure. Houses are located in marginalized lands in which rivers and hills are closed to houses, causing risk situations and natural problems such as floods and solid waste accumulation. This is an ethnically mixed location, since the majority of people living in the town are from other cities and they did not born and were not raised in Calle Fallas.

Many Calle Fallas residents do not own their land since they rent their accommodation with poor infrastructure. Landowners around the school often lack the financial resources to construct proper houses.

Most residents have low income levels, unemployment levels are high. Many residents are active in the informal sector of the local economy and derive an informal income.

Typically, the parents of the students are workers of factories, stores or car shops that are known in the town. Families are different, from single families to extended ones who live with grandparents, aunts or uncles.

2.1.3 School background

The school was inaugurated in 1964 as Calle Fallas School. In the year 1970, as a fair recognition, it was named after the illustrious teacher Jose Trinidad Mora Valverde, who was characterized by his effort, education, work and honesty.

The school Jose Trinidad Mora Valverde was for a long time a pedagogical unit, but due to the growth of the student population the administration was divided. At present, the School is a Direction 5 and since 2003 the institution has been incorporated into the priority schools program of the Ministry of Public Education, in order to influence the improvement of the quality of education and students' community life.

According to the latest update of the documentation, these are the mission, vision and institutional values of the school (JTMVS, 2016):

- Mission: to contribute to the integral formation of the students, based on the quality of education and humanistic development of the person, considering the socio-cultural and economic context of the community, providing tools to face the challenges of the modern era.
- Vision: to be a quality education center that achieves the effective integral formation of its students, according to the needs of the current society.
- Institutional values: as an educational center, one of our primary goals is the integral formation of children, so that their knowledge interacts with their ethics not only in their work, but also in daily coexistence. Therefore, all values are important; however, our school promotes fundamentally the following:
 - a. Responsibility: we are proud of the training we receive. We act responsibly to collaborate in the development of our society.

- b. Respect: we promote individual expression and dialogue as innate rights. We value sociocultural differences.
- c. Solidarity: we support individual and group growth. We bring our help when required.

The services provided in the school are:

- I and II cycle of Basic General Education
- Interdisciplinary Team: Orientation, Psychology and Sociology
- Special Education that provides support in: Fixed Support in Learning Problems, Language Therapy, Emotional and Behavioral Problems.
- PRIN: Children's Integral Recovery Project
- English language
- Musical education
- Religious education
- Physical education
- Everyday life (home education)
- Library service
- Educational computing laboratory
- School cafeteria
- Soda

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.2.1 Previous Curriculum from 2005

Previous curriculum from 2005 (Annex 1) followed the guidelines issued by the Council Higher Education, that showed that the only axis of the Costa Rican curriculum refers to values. In this way, the systematic approach to values in the national curriculum pretended the socio-affective and ethical development of the students, from the expressed humanist position in the Education Policy and in the Fundamental Law of Education (MEP, 2005).

Each transversal theme and the respective competences are explained in the following paragraphs:

- Environmental Culture for Sustainable Development, which intended to the construction of a culture environmental protection of people and societies, depending on to achieve sustainable human development. It aims that, from that knowledge and through assessment and respect activities, the students take ownership of reality, so that the educational community participate actively in the detection and problem solving at the local level, but with planetary vision.
- Based on the Policies of Integral Education of the Expression of Human Sexuality (2001), a mature experience of human sexuality requires integral education, which is why the physical, biological, psychological aspects, sociocultural, ethical and spiritual, cannot be reduced to the biological reproductive aspects, nor be carried out in a context devoid of

values and ethical and moral principles about life, love, family and coexistence.

- Education for health is a fundamental right of all children and adolescents. The state of health is related to their school performance and with their quality of life. So, when working in education for health in educational centers, according to the needs of the student population, in each stage of their development, they are forging citizens with healthy lifestyles, and therefore, people who build and seek to have quality of life, for themselves and for those around them.
- Experience of Human Rights for the Democracy and Peace Costa Rica is a consolidated democracy but in permanent status of review and feedback, by which the validity of human rights is inherent in the commitment to strengthen a culture of peace and democracy.

With regard to didactic planning, the transversality should be visualized in the columns of mediation activities and values and attitudes. After the identification made from the Study Programs. The process of transversality in the classroom should consider the characteristics of the student population and the particularities of the environment mediate and immediate for the achievement of more significant learning.

2.2.2 New Curriculum 2017

New programs (Annex 2) are launched as a requirement to make up for the low English level that students from public schools had. The strengths they need to reinforce in language are compiled in this new curriculum, they refer as “The

programs were developed to provide students with an up-to-date English curriculum that reflects the 21st century knowledge, skills and abilities to successfully communicate in different contexts and real-life situations” (Diaz, 2016, n. p.).

This new curriculum is based on the requests of the school and requirements that Costa Rica has as a society. It is important that diagnosis stage made from 2015 to 2016, had the opportunity to challenge the curricular planning because “prior to the development of the Study Program, the MEP developed a needs assessment with the participation of 237 teachers, 19 regional advisers, 321 students and 11 specialists from public and private universities” (Diaz, 2016, n. p.).

English is declared a national interest to improve the country’s competitiveness to bolster the productive sector (Decreto Ejecutivo 34425-MEP-Comex, La Gaceta N°61, 2008). To accomplish this, MEP has taken the following concrete steps towards increasing the English Language Proficiency of both teachers and students.

The English curriculum reform responds to four main concerns: First of all, learners needs an updated curriculum that reflects the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to communicate in a range of language use contexts and to succeed in the information age as 21st century learners. The desire analysis that informed this reform suggested that some of the target contents of preschool, elementary and secondary school’s curriculum had lost pertinence as manifested by anecdotal reports collected from teachers and students. Secondly, learners who receive English lessons in elementary and high schools are not reaching the expected English proficiency levels after eleven or twelve years of instruction.

Among other things, these shortcomings could be attributed to the fact that the current curriculum fails to specify the English language proficiency level that students are expected to attain at the end of each cycle and to the fact that the assessments in both classroom and standardized testing contexts are not systematically aligned with curriculum and instruction. Thirdly, for citizens to communicate effectively in the global context and to face the challenges of an interconnected world, they need to possess a number of competences.

2.2.3 Peace Corps cooperation

Peace Corps is a United States mission that helps people around the world in which they promote social and educational programs to them. This organization is part of this new program which consisted in advising MEP authorities in regards to content, implementation and training of this new curriculum. According to Diaz (2006):

Subsequently, the development and validation of the new programs included collaboration from: National English Advisers, National English Advisers to Technical Education, Technological Resources, Institute for Professional Development, Management and Evaluation Quality, primary and secondary English teachers, preschool, primary and students with Fulbright internships, public and private universities, national and international specialists in academia and professionals, volunteers from the Peace Corps and experts whose participation was made possible through of the United States Embassy (p. 1).

Their contribution is significant since it helped the teachers to understand the curricular framework of the program and the methodology that can be used to have a successful implementation. According to this, MEP refers as “thanks to the joint work between the U.S. Embassy, Peace Corps and MEP the monitoring strategy will be implemented in 54 schools and high schools. Peace Corps volunteers and MEP

English regional advisors will visit schools and high schools every week, for eight months” (US Embassy in Costa Rica, 2017, n. p.).

2.2.4 First Grade Assessment

In first grade of I cycle, the assessment is made based on a qualitative performance of the students and not a summative, as other levels of primary school. Usually the report shows which is the achievement of the students and it is a document delivered by the teacher to the parents or in charge of their students at the end of each period of the first year. It is the reference that allows them to be informed about the progress, achievements or difficulties learning or in the development of skills and attitudes, according to the curricula and didactic planning (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2014).

The evaluation is made according to levels of achievement of the student's performance. These achievement levels are high, medium and low. The low level is that the student does not achieve the objective even with teachers support; in the medium level student needs constant support to achieve the learning process and then, in the high level, the students fulfill the achievement of the objective (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2014).

The new programs are built using the Common European Framework of Reference (CEF), curriculum design, diagnosis, materials development, to measure the level of understanding and oral and written expression of living languages (Diaz, 2016).

It is fundamental to understand that this process helps students to transition from kindergarten, which is a formative environment, to school, which is a summative

environment. “Informal and formative assessment is also important as it can be done naturally and without putting students in any level of stress” (Anaguano, Molineros & Soto, 2015, n. p.).

2.2.5 Phonological awareness

In terms of this research, phonological awareness is an important part that we refer to understand the framework of the MEP curricular proposal that is developed from this year and on “Phonological awareness is the awareness of and ability to manipulate the sound units in spoken language. It includes attending to syllables, onsets and rimes, or phonemes, the smallest unit of sound in a spoken language” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 152).

One of the main efforts the MEP is doing, is to pay special attention to phonological awareness, since it is fundamental in the speaking part that reinforces the pronunciation and phonemes production. “In the process of pronunciation teaching two aspects should be highlighted: accuracy (the ability to pronounce particular sounds properly) and fluency (a smooth joining of phonemes and large elements of an acceptable speed of delivery)” (Pawlak, 2008, p. 171).

In first grade, this topic is important to reinforce the production of small units of speaking called phonemes, since in this early stage they can acquire the language easily: “The acquisition of phonics and word recognition skills and the development of phonemic awareness are significant foci of the early years as development of these skills provides children with access to written language” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 156).

In English as a foreign language as it is applied in the Costa Rican educational system, in which the mother tongue is Spanish and the target language is English: “That is, if the learner’s observed difficulties pertain to the phonology of the second language, the phonological systems of both languages ought to be compared and contrasted” (Johnson, 2004, p. 24).

Also, it is important to know that the acquisition of their mother tongue is part of the process of learning or acquiring a new language, depending on the stage they are: “They save valuable time by not reteaching what children already know. Instruction in foundational skills in English is differentiated based on similarities and differences between ELs’ native language phonology and writing systems and English” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 162).

Speaking in their native language is important since it addresses the correct acquisition of the language. “ELs who already know how to blend phonemes in their primary language are able to transfer this phonological awareness skill to English” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 106).

Phonological awareness is important in early stages since it fosters other essential skills during the next school years, such as reading: “Children who experience difficulty with phonological awareness are likely to have difficulty becoming independent readers and writers, assessment is crucial and should be followed by appropriate additional, highly targeted instruction” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 248).

2.2.6 Phonemic awareness

The main objective of this research is to focus on phonemic awareness which according to many authors “It is essential that children develop phonological awareness early in the elementary school years, with the goal of attaining phonemic awareness, the most difficult and important level, by the end of grade one, if not well before” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 153).

The theory stress in phonemic awareness as individual sounds which is the focus of this research, since is what is taught in the primary levels of formal education in Costa Rica. “Phonemic awareness is crucial for developing an understanding of the alphabetic principle, which is that individual sounds in spoken words can be represented by letters or groups of letters in print” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 153).

The single production of sounds is useful at early stages, since it is what precedes the blended sounds and the correct pronunciation. “Children become familiar with the purposes of English symbols, and they learn how the alphabetic code works, that is that sounds in words are represented by letters or combinations of letters” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 156).

As this study focuses in first grade, it is fundamental to know that “In grade one, phonemic awareness instruction is tied closely to decoding. Children use letters to represent the sounds comprised by words they hear” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 248).

As phonemic awareness refers “In terms of decoding and word recognition, children entering grade one ideally possesses two critical skills: (1) a developing

understanding of the phonological basis of spoken language, and (2) knowledge of letter-sound correspondences” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 249).

This is a process that need to be acquired in early stages followed by complex structures.

The following list of phonemes are the ones used in English language and are also used in the new MEP curriculum.

Figure 2. English Phonemes

Symbol	As heard in . . .	Symbol	As heard in . . .
/ā/	angel, rain	/g/	gift, dog
/ă/	cat, apple	/h/	happy, hat
/ē/	eat, seed	/j/	jump, bridge
/ĕ/	echo, red	/l/	lip, fall
/ī/	island, light	/m/	mother, home
/ī/	in, sit	/n/	nose, on
/ō/	oatmeal, bone	/p/	pencil, pop
/ō/	octopus, mom	/r/	rain, care
/ū/	up, hum	/s/	soup, face
/oo/	oodles, moon	/t/	time, cat
/oo/	put, book	/v/	vine, of
/ə/	above, sofa	/wh/	what, why
/oi/, /oy/	oil, boy	/w/	wet, wind
/ou/, /ow/	out, cow	/y/	yes, beyond
/aw/, /ô/	awful, caught	/z/	zoo, because
är	car, far	/th/	thing, health
ôr	four, or	/th/	this, brother
ûr	her, bird, turn	/sh/	shout, machine
/b/	baby, crib	/zh/	pleasure, vision
/k/	cup, stick	/ch/	children, scratch
/d/	dog, end	/ng/	ring, finger
/f/	phone, golf		

Figure 1. List of English Phonemes used in English Teaching. California Department of Education (2015). English Language Arts/ English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools. California, USA.

2.2.7 Assessment of Phonemic Awareness

Assessment refers to all the strategies used to collect information on a learner's knowledge, skills, and abilities, usually at the classroom level, relating in this specific case to phonemic awareness (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

The assessment is a crucial part of this research since it is what need to be shown as an indicator of the results that are needed to prove. In terms of this research it is recognized that “ongoing formative assessment and interim assessments of children’s developing skills are crucial in determining the targets of instruction for each child and tailoring instruction to meet their needs and advance their skills” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 893).

By the end of first grade, many goals may be achieved. For example, “By the end of grade one, conventional spellings are used for words with common spelling patterns” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 156).

One aspect we may not forget is that phonemic awareness is reflected in standard pronunciation, but this varies depending on the context where the class is located “In the area of fluency, teachers are aware that pronunciation differences do not necessarily reflect inaccuracies in decoding. Sometimes, pronunciation differences are due to influences of the child’s primary language, home dialect of English, or regional accent” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 162).

Assessment is a purposeful, continuous, contextualized, authentic, reflective, investigative, systematic and multiphase process, which in this specific context responds to these four fundamental questions: Why assessing learning? What to assess? How to assess it? Which are the pedagogical implications? (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

According to the Ministerio de Educación Pública (2016) General Principles for Assessing Language Competences Performance, assessment is based on three cornerstones:

- Diagnostic assessment: it assesses what the learner already knows or the nature of difficulties that the learner might have, which, if undiagnosed, might limit their engagement in new learning. It identifies the starting line to develop the competence. It also identifies students' needs and areas of intervention. This is usually done at the beginning of the school year.
- Formative assessment: is used to monitor student learning. It helps to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work and to recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately. It can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and improve students' learning. For this research, this has a major importance since it is focus on the evaluation done in first grade which is mandatory guideline in the MEP.
- Summative assessment is centered in the strategies implemented to develop competence. This assessment is used from second grade to fifth grade of primary school.

For the purpose of this research, it is needed to go on the essential assessment aspects that are taken into account. These aspects are taken from the curriculum of the Ministerio de Educación Pública (2016) in the last unit 6, which is the one that is part of this project and helps to identify the short vowels in spoken word, using technically designed instruments such as checklists and rubrics for self and co-assessment and with the guidance of the teacher and the learner.

2.2.8 Mediation Strategies in Phonemic Awareness lessons

The mediation strategies can vary depending on context, resources and time. The theory suggests that “In terms of phonemic awareness, short, well-planned lessons focused on blending and segmenting phonemes, along with a few letter-sound correspondences, delivered frequently during the week to small groups have positive effects for most children” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 165).

Most of the strategies involve visual aids as mean to transmit the knowledge in a compressive way so that students can know the purpose: “Children may view pictures of mouth movements, talk about what happens when they produce a sound, and watch the teacher’s mouth or their own mouths using mirrors as they produce sounds. Accurate pronunciation is important” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 166).

Reading fosters phonemic awareness, since those are skills that goes together in English teaching: “Interactive read aloud are also an effective way to develop young children’s general academic and domain specific vocabulary, especially when texts are read aloud repeatedly” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 167). For example, short stories and poems are useful resources that can be used in English teaching “Discussing what is happening in books and devoting explicit attention to vocabulary is important for all children, but it is critical for EL children because school may be the only place where this occurs in English” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 168). Usually this is a suggest activity in the production stage in which students can create and authors explains “The class environment continues to support phonological play as children recite and compose

poems and songs that manipulate sounds and listen to and interact with books that prominently feature play with phonemes” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 248).

The ideal environment to acquire a language requires to have time to be in contact with the language “Children should have ample opportunities to practice decoding and encoding words that reflect the letter-sound and spelling-sound correspondences they are learning” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 160).

Promoting activities in which students can use the language is fundamental as teaching and learning strategy since “Children learn that spoken words consist of smaller units (syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes), and they manipulate and reflect on those units as they sing, recite poems, engage with books, and play language games” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 182).

In first grade, it is useful to use ludic activities due to it is the natural state of most kids “The focus is on general phonological sensitivity early in the year as children engage in rhyming activities and manipulate syllables and onsets and rimes” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 214).

In mediation strategies the teacher has a key role since is the person whom students are learning from “Teachers model the activities (thinking aloud and talking about the manipulations) and closely observe children’s cognitive, social, and emotional responses to activities” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 183).

2.3 HYPOTHESIS

According to the prior observation of the classroom, important aspects were set to follow the path of this research. The first is related to the relation of the classroom assessment that mirrors the learning goals, content of instruction and instructional practices, therefore, curriculum, teaching and assessment must be coherent for learning goals to be achieved and learners' communicative competence to be developed (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

Also, the school has an important part of English Phonemic awareness since is where language is developed: "Discussing what is happening in books and devoting explicit attention to vocabulary is important for all children, but it is critical for EL children because school may be the only place where this occurs in English" (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 168).

Finally, the curricular goals that need to be achieved have an intrinsic importance with the development of this research: "The what of assessment involves having clarity about the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that learners have to develop as established in the curriculum goals or can-do performance descriptors" (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, n. p.).

- **Phonemic awareness assessment is consistent with the new English curriculum goals in the first-grade classroom in Jose Mora Valverde School during third trimester, 2017.**

2.3.1 Phonemic Awareness Assessment

The importance to recall that “Classroom assessment mirrors the learning goals, content of instruction and instructional practices, therefore, curriculum, teaching, and assessment must be coherent for learning goals to be achieved and learners’ communicative competence to be developed” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, n. p.).

The assessment is a crucial part of this research since it is what need to be shown as an indicator of the results that are needed to prove. In terms of this research it is recognized that “Ongoing formative assessment and interim assessments of children’s developing skills are crucial in determining the targets of instruction for each child and tailoring instruction to meet their needs and advance their skills” (California Department of Education, 2015, p. 893).

There is a lesson of phonemic awareness each week. The phonemic awareness lessons follow all the stages: pre-teaching, pre-task, task rehearsal, task completion and task assessment (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

2.3.2 Curricular goals

As curricular suggestion the assessment scenario is a goal–driven, coherent activity that involves the completion of a range of tasks in order to meet the scenario goals in which mediation strategies can be developed (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

Additionally, this research focuses in “the goal is successful action and accomplishment of tasks in a particular scenario and domain aligned to the learner’s

life experience and personality” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, n. p.).

Furthermore, according to MEP guidelines the evaluation is made according to levels of achievement of the student performance (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016).

2.4 OPERATIONALIZATION OF HYPOTHESIS

According to Méndez (cited by Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017) the operationalization of the hypothesis is to break down the variable into indicators by means of a logical deduction process.

Hypothesis	Concepts	Variables	Indicators
Phonemic awareness assessment	Ongoing formative assessment and interim assessments of children’s developing skills are crucial in determining the targets of instruction.	Assessment	First grade Phonemic awareness objectives. Mediation strategies for phonemic awareness
The new English curriculum goals	The goal is successful action	Curricular goals	

	and accomplishment of tasks		Formative Assessment in first grade List of curricular goals in phonemic awareness lesson. Language curricular goals
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CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 RESEARCH TYPE

3.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to contrast the theory with the classroom dynamic and the real setting, the theory refers as:

In research there is a theoretical justification when the purpose of the study is to generate reflection and academic debate on existing knowledge, confront a theory, contrast results or make epistemology of existing knowledge [...] This study does not pretend to develop the solutions or strategies to scenario presented in the reality as the applied research (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

3.1.2 Temporal dimension

In this research, the dimension is transactional and requires to collect data in a single moment (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014). Not as the difference from the longitudinal designs, “which collect data at different times or periods to make inferences about change, its determinants and consequences” (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014, p. 113).

3.1.3 Methodology Frame

For the purpose of this research, the methodology frame is micro since it is taking into account just one level, from one school and just from one subject. The total population is 110 students, but for the purpose of the study is going to take just 50 students to detail in the results of the research. As the theory explains, “micro frame of research refers to a part, an element, a sub-theme or a micro-space, over which or where the researcher will do his research” (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014, n. p.).

3.1.4 Methodology nature

For the purpose of this research, the nature is qualitative since its priority is not to measure as quantity research but to qualify and describe the social phenomenon from the determining features as perceived by the very elements that are within the situation studied (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

3.1.5 Methodology Scope

There are four different scopes which are exploratory, descriptive, correlational and explanatory. The exploratory research is done to know about a little researched subject, in the descriptive research the purpose is to present in detail the phenomenon that is occurring, the analytic-interpretative research seeks first to know the factors or conditions that propitiate a problem, to be able to explain and understand it (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

For this research, the one to be used is the descriptive “is the ability to select the fundamental characteristics of the object of study and its detailed description of the parts, categories or classes of that object” (Bernal, 2010, p. 113).

3.2 SUBJECTS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3.2.1 Primary source

The first source is the primary which is taken from documents as theses of the universities that are online and research works of recognized organizations (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017).

Author	University or Organization	Country	Year
Karen Diaz	Universidad Hispanoamericana	Costa Rica	2017
Paola Salazar	Universidad Hispanoamericana	Costa Rica	2013
Dana Harris	Northwest Nazarene University	United States	2016
Satine Gorgyan	California State University	United States	2015
Karla Withrow	California State University	United States	2014

3.2.2 Secondary source

This section refers to books used during research, both as reference sources and bibliographical sources (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017).

Author	Title	Year
Álvarez Venegas, R.; Paredes Hernández, L. y Arteaga Pérez, J.	<i>Guía Metodológica para la Elaboración de Proyectos de Investigación en Posgrado.</i>	2015
Barrantes, R.	Investigación: Un camino al conocimiento.	2014
Bernal, C.	Metodología de la investigación administración, economía, humanidades y ciencias sociales.	2010
González Vallejo, L.; Evans Meza, R y Pérez Fallas, D.	Manual: Vancouver, APA citas y referencias bibliográficas	2017
Hernández Sampieri R.; Fernández Collado C. y Baptista Lucio, P	Metodología de la Investigación.	2014
Ministerio de Educación Pública	Programa de estudio de Inglés.	2016
Ministerio de Educación Pública	Teacher's Guide for the New English Curriculum First Grade	2016
Universidad Hispanoamericana	Guía, Trabajos Finales de Graduación, Tesinas y Tesis en Ciencias Sociales.	2017

3.2.3 Third source

In this section the sources are from scientific articles from recognized and indexed journals, expert articles (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017).

Title	Magazine	Number	Year
A Philosophy of Second Language Acquisition. Arizona	Vail Ballou Press	07	2004

3.3 SAMPLING SELECTION

3.3.1 The population

The population constitutes the total universe on which research is done and can be made up of communities, groups, people, situations, organizations (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For this research the population is: one group of first grade students from José Trinidad Mora Valverde School.

3.3.2 The sample

The sample is a representative subgroup of the population, identical in all its extremes (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For this research, the sample is 10 students from 110 first graders in the school.

This sample is chosen for the best attendance during the school, year since it the class participation is important during the activities, in order to have the results needed for the analysis.

3.3.3 Non-probabilistic

This sample depends on the characteristics of the research and the decision making of a person or group (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For this research, the sample is selected as the top 10 students with the best attendance in English classes from each group (five total), since it is important to observe the students in the classroom setting no matter of their academic performance.

3.4 DESCRIPTION OF THE TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

3.4.1 Observation

For this research, the major technique is the observation process that implies to go deep into social situations and maintain an active role (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014).

- Direct observation: this type of observation allows the investigator to obtain reliable and direct information (Bernal, 2010).

3.5 CONCEPTUAL, OPERATIONAL AND INSTRUMENTAL DEFINITION OF THE VARIABLES

3.5.1 Assessment

- Conceptual definition

The conceptual definition refers to the theoretical clarity of the variable (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For the purpose of this research, it is going to refer assessment as “ongoing formative assessment and interim assessments of children’s developing skills are crucial in determining the targets of instruction for

each child and tailoring instruction to meet their needs and advance their skills”

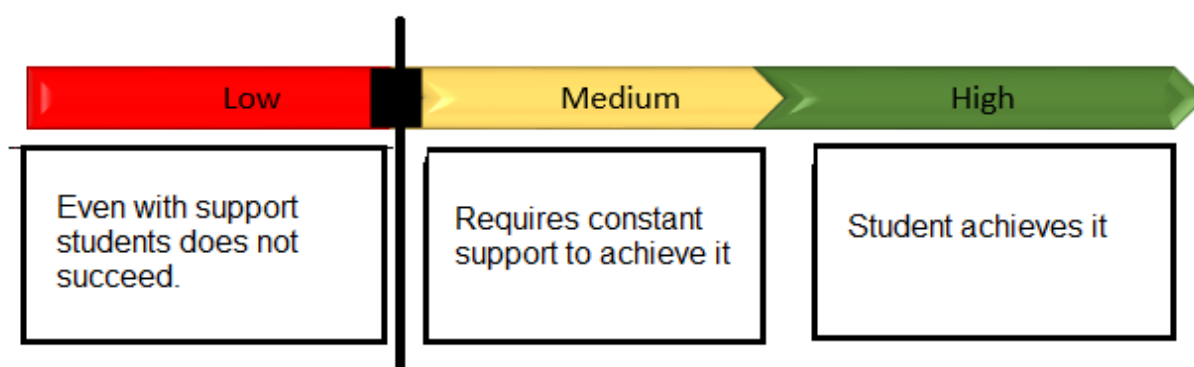
(California Department of Education, 2015, p. 893).

- Dimension

This refers to the categories of analysis of the variables of interest (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). The categories are first grade phonemic awareness objectives, the mediation strategies for phonemic awareness and the formative assessment in first grade.

- Operational definition

This refers to translate into indicators that allow direct observation of the variable (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). In first grade of I cycle, the assessment is made based on a qualitative performance of the students and not a summative as the other levels of primary school. The indicators of achievement are descriptions of observable behaviors, which provide indirectly necessary information to carry out the evaluation process of school activities. They serve as a reference to assess the acquired learning and describe the levels of achievement of skills, competencies and attitudes (Ministerio de Educación Pública 2014). For this reason, the indicators are as follow, in order to measure the variable,



Medium and high are indicators that allow the measurement of the achievement of the variable for the purpose of this research. Low indicates that the indicator is not achieved.

- Instrumental definition

This refers to the techniques and instruments to be used for the collection of data (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For the purpose of this study, the observation and the interview are the techniques used. In the participatory observation the observer is part of the situation, emphasizes in an observational sheet to guide it (Bernal, 2010). The structured interview is done to get the necessary information and it is done from a scheme or format of previously prepared questions (Bernal, 2010).

3.5.2 Curricular goals

- Conceptual definition

The conceptual definition refers to the theoretical clarity of the variable (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For the purpose of this research “the goal is successful action and accomplishment of tasks in a particular scenario and domain aligned to the learner’s life experience and personality” (Ministerio de Educación Pública, 2016, n. p.).

- Dimension

This refers to the categories of analysis of the variables of interest (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). The categories are the list of curricular goals in phonemic awareness lessons and the language curricular goals.

- Instrumental definition

This refers to translate data into indicators that allow direct observation of the variable (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For the purpose of this research the learning and linguistic goals are the indicators to measure the variable. When the assessment is done, and the objective may be accomplished, depending on the results of the students, the indicator shows 0 if not accomplished and the performance is low or 1 when is achieved, and the performance is medium or high according to the variable of assessment. To show achievement, the completion must be 80 percent or higher in the total sum of each goal:

Goals	Not Achieved (Low)	Achieved (Medium or High)
Identifies the short vowels in spoken word.	0	1
Identifies the short vowels /a/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.	0	1
Identifies the short vowels /e/, in spoken word if attached to a picture.	0	1
Identifies the short vowels /o/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.	0	1
Identifies the short vowels /u/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.	0	1
Total:		

- Operational definition

This refers to specify the techniques and instruments to be used for the collection of data (Universidad Hispanoamericana, 2017). For the purpose of this study, the observation and the interview are the techniques used. In the participatory observation the observer is part of the situation, emphasizes in an observational sheet to guide it (Bernal, 2010). The structured interview helps to get the necessary information and it is done from a scheme or format of previously prepared questions (Bernal, 2010).

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

The research is made to identify how new English curriculum is implemented in the first grade English classroom, specifically in the phonemic awareness section of the new program. This is important since is new in the program and requires a new perspective from the English teacher to be able to implement it in the class and a new set of skills that are not being developed in the previous program.

4.1 OBSERVATION

The observations were made in four different weeks during a month, since there is just one lesson a week that is dedicated to phonemic awareness.

The observation was performed during the development of Unit 6 for first which scenario is Playtime in which it is included four themes:

1. Fun Games and Activities
2. I need a Rope to Play
3. My Favorite Game and Activities
4. Show Me How to Play

The phonemic awareness objective for this unit is identify the short vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /u/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.

The lessons have different stages in order to develop the knowledge acquisition.



The instrument that was used was the observation during the English lessons with the regular teacher. The English teacher planned the lesson according to the objectives and goals set in the new program, using teaching strategies such as modeling and videos to interact with the students and emphasize the lesson in the phonemic awareness goals.

The four observations are focus in at least one phoneme as short sound. Students should study one at a time each week. The purpose of the curriculum is to identify the production of each phoneme according to the strategies suggest in the teacher's guide. The ones for the unit 6 are:

- /a/ as in apple and arm.
- /e/ (egg, elephant)
- /o/ (on, off)
- /u/ (umbrella, uniform)

It is important to be able to identify one, to study the next phoneme. At the end of week four, in unit 6, students should be prepared to identify all of the phonemes to prepare the mini project at the end of the six weeks unit plan.

4.1.1 First observation

For this first lesson the theme is "Fun Games and Activities". The phonemic awareness content is /a/ as in apple or arm. The objective is to identify the short vowel in spoken word and the goal is to identify the short vowels /a/ in spoken word if attached to a picture. The duration of the lesson is 40 minutes average.

The classroom seating is a traditional individual row of 6 to 7 students each. Students are in the class after one 15 minutes break, in which they had a snack break. They started the class with a greeting conversation in which the teacher asks for how students are, the weather and how they feel. Then she checks for weather using flashcards as initiation routine every day. Then she writes down the date in the top of the board. At this time students already have the English notebook on their desks.

At the same time, they are copying the date, the teacher plugs the computer in to the TV in order to display the PowerPoint presentation that she will use to display the digital flashcards to illustrate the lesson.

The first thing as pre-task activity is the identification of sounds. As main activity the teacher shares orally goals with the students that are set in the program. Then, the teacher reviews past unit sounds to activate students' background knowledge that is from unit 5 but is not part of this present study. She asks the students about what they recall from past week, she does first in English; she doesn't get any response from the group, she repeats the question in Spanish. The group mentioned general words, some students participate using their mother tongue

(Spanish), just two students respond to the teacher question using the target language (English). They say keywords used in past lesson.

The teacher shows pictures in a PowerPoint presentation displayed on the television and models the initial sound of the example words beginning with the /a/ sound.



The teacher uses as example, apple, arm, alligator, ant and astronaut. The teacher exaggerates the sound in order to let the students know the identification of the sound /a/ and she explains that it is represented by letter a, and she produces *ei* even when the phoneme pronunciation and grapheme are different.



At this point, the teacher mentions that it is not recommended to print the words on the pictures since the goal is to make the students hear, notice and distinguish the initial sounds of the words when they are heard. The teacher uses the video to get additional ideas and play it on the television inside the classroom to clarify the sound. Students repeat the previous sounds using the picture provides by the teacher. The teacher also mimes and say the sentence: I stretch my arm to grab the apple.



The task rehearsal students repeat the letter sound and the words right after the teacher. Then they repeat the sentence chorally with the teacher's help. Then, students practice listening for the /a/ sound as the teacher says words from previous lessons and includes words with the A sound including apple, arm, activities, answers. The teacher asks students that when they hear the /a/ sound they raise their arm, some students does the exercise as it is requested, others do not get the objective of the activity.

In task completion activity students line up in front of the picture of the arm and the apple tree. As each one comes to the picture they point to the arm and say arm and point to the apple and say apple.

In task assessment the teacher says in order to emphasize the /a/ sound: we are going to assess this activity. Raise your arm if you think you were excellent. Raise your arm if you think you need to practice.

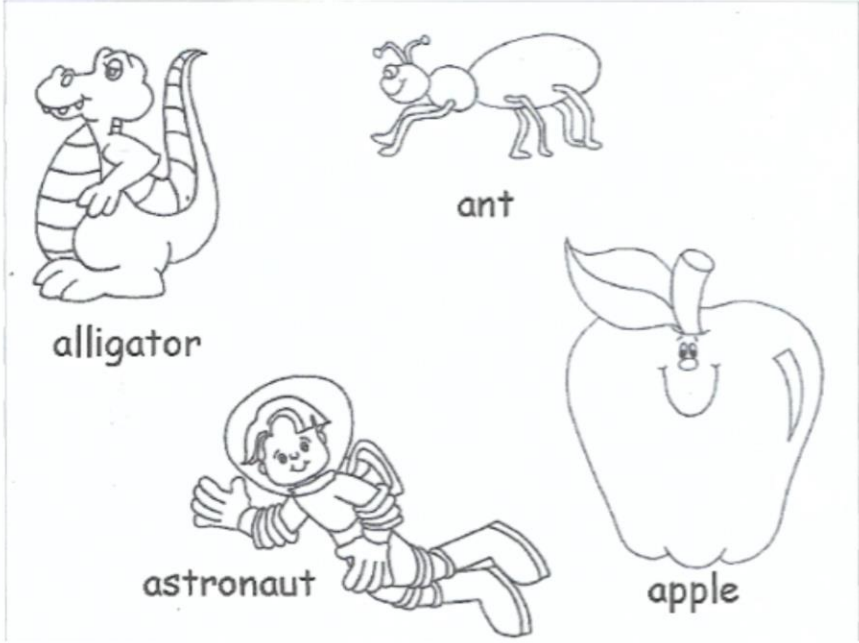
The post task students work orally in the worksheet given by the teacher.

Phonemic awareness assessment #1

PA Content	/a/ (apple, arm)
PA Objective 1	Identifies the short vowels in spoken word.
Goal	identify the short vowels /a/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.

Student's name: _____

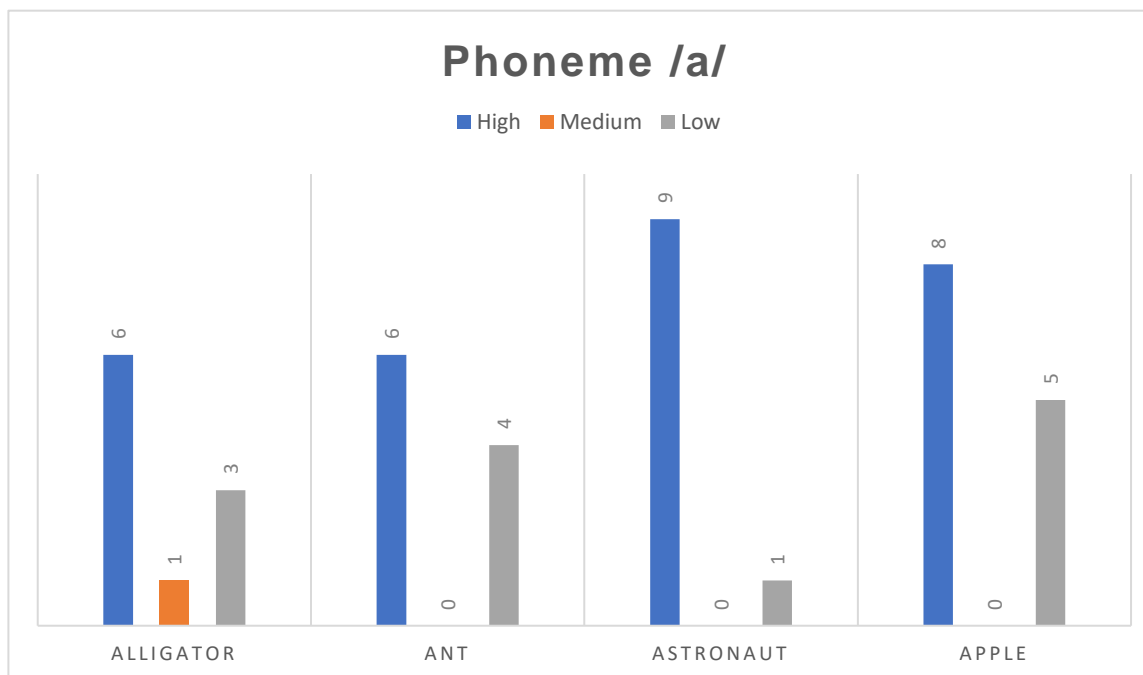
Instruction: Identify the picture according to the word that is pronounce by the teacher.



Even when the assessment is oral, the students get this worksheet as proof of their classwork in their notebooks. Ideally, the students review the phoneme /a/ sound production at home.

4.1.1.1 First observation assessment

The goal is set in the beginning of the lesson, the assessment is successful when the student is able to identify the phoneme /a/ in the words that are shown. The teacher asks students individually to go in front and point the word she says. For example, the teacher says apple, the students have to point the apple in order to complete the assessment successfully.

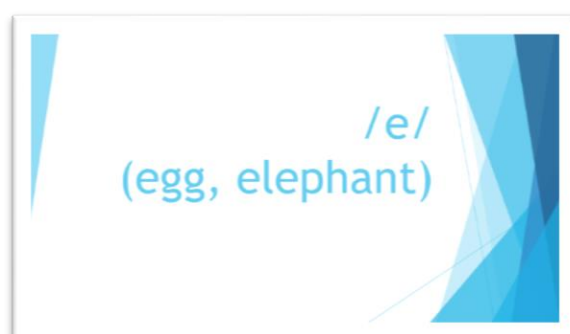


Most of the students achieved the goal of the phonological awareness class. Four students identified all the words at the first attempt and got the high score in the formative assessment for the four words. Then, two students had a low performance in most of the words recognition. Others got a better recognition in common words as apple and cognate words as astronaut. Students hesitated in the recognition of alligator, since those are words not included in daily vocabulary or books.

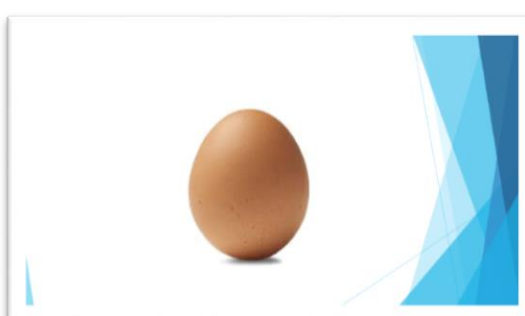
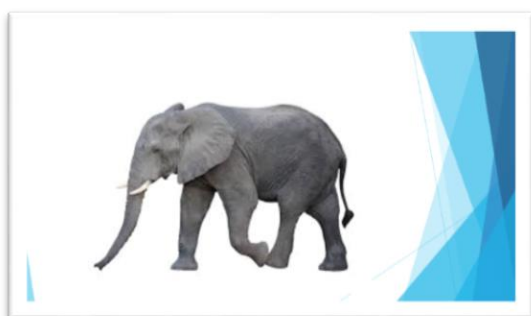
4.1.2 Second observation

For this second lesson the theme is I Need a Rope to Play. The phonemic awareness content is /e/ as in egg or elephant. The objective is to identifies the short vowel in spoken word and the goal is to identify the short vowels /e/ in spoken word if attached to a picture. The duration of the lesson is 40 minutes.

The pre-task activity requires the identification of sounds the teacher shares with the students and reviews past unit sounds /a/ to activate students' background knowledge, some students remember apple and then the teacher continue the lesson. The teacher shows pictures and models the initial sound words beginning with /e/ sound.



The teacher uses the following examples: egg, elephant, eleven and empty. The teacher exaggerates the sound as the goal is to make the students hear, notice and distinguish the initial sounds of the words when they hear them, and she explains that it is represented by letter e, and she produces *i* even when the phoneme pronunciation and grapheme are different.





The teacher uses this video to get additional ideas. Students repeat suggested sounds using the pictures that follow the lesson plans and the sentence: The elephant eats an egg.



In task rehearsal the students repeat the letter sound and the words right after the teacher. Then they play the game of hopscotch. Group can be divided into three groups with each getting a turn at playing at each hopscotch diagram in order to practice the words egg and elephant.

In task completion, when the students conclude their time at the game they come to the teacher who shows the picture of the elephant and the egg and students point to each and say the word.

In task assessment the teacher says (emphasizing the /e/ sound in excellent):
 We are going to assess this activity. Raise your arm if you think you were excellent.
 Raise your arm if you think you need to practice.

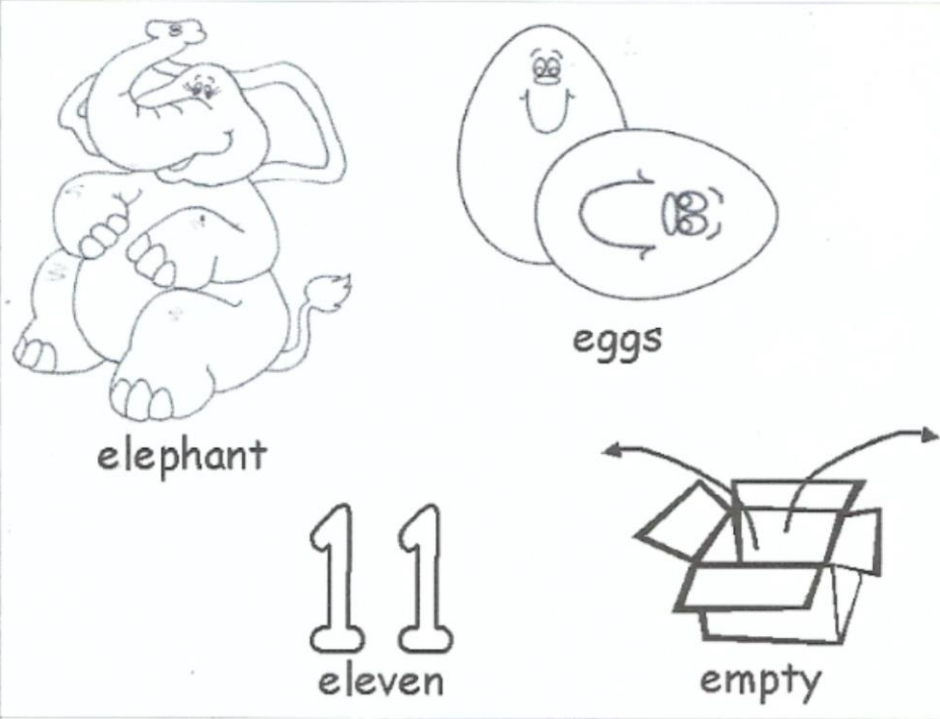
The post task students work orally in the worksheet given by the teacher.

Phonemic awareness assessment #2

PA Content	/e/ (egg, elephant)
PA Objective 1	Identifies the short vowels in spoken word.
Goal	identify the short vowels / e/, in spoken word if attached to a picture.

Student's name: _____

Instruction: Identify the picture according to the word that is pronounced by the teacher.



elephant

eggs

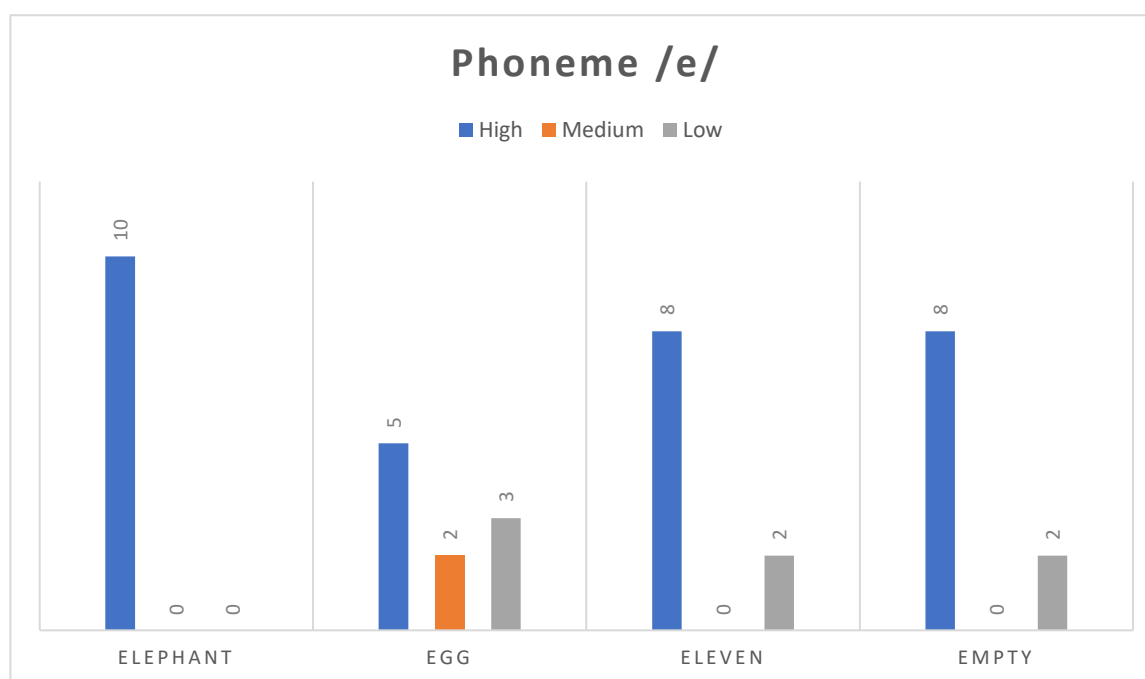
eleven

empty

4.1.2.1 Second observation assessment

The goal is set in the beginning of the lesson, the assessment is successful when the student is able to identify the phoneme /e/ in the words that are shown. The

teacher asks students individually to go in front and point the word she says. For example, the teacher says elephant, the students have to point the elephant in order to complete the assessment successfully.



Most of the students achieved the goal of the phonological awareness class. All the students identify elephant word, as before the word elephant is a cognate word and also a common work in English lessons. They do not have the same pattern with the word egg in which most of them failed in identify the word even when the teacher mimic for them.

4.1.3 Third observation

For this lesson the theme is My Favorite Game and Activities. The phonemic awareness content is /o/ as in off and on. The objective is to identifies the short vowel

in spoken word and the goal is to identify the short vowels /o/ in spoken word if attached to a picture. The duration of the lesson is 40 minutes.

Pre-task activity regards to the identification of sounds. The teacher shares goals with the students. Then she reviews past unit sounds to activate students' background knowledge of phoneme /e/. Later, the teacher shows pictures and models the initial sound of words beginning /o/ as in on, off.



The teacher exaggerates the sound. The goal is to make the students hear, notice and distinguish the initial sounds of the words when they are heard with the words on, off, octopus, olives, ox and ostrich.





The teacher can use these videos to get additional ideas. The students repeat suggested sounds using the pictures that follow the lesson plans and the sentence: I eat ice cream and watch the iguana turn the light on and off.



In the task rehearsal students repeat the letter sound and the words right after the teacher. Students form two circles, one inside the other. The two circles face one another so that pairs are formed. The teacher shows the picture and the students in the inside circle repeat the word for 30 seconds and then the students on the outside circle repeat the word for 30 seconds. The inside circle shifts to the next person and the next word is practiced. They practice with the words on and off.

In task completion students stand up when they hear the word in a list of words beginning with other letters. They then repeat the word aloud and point at the right picture.

In task assessment the teacher says: We are going to assess this activity. Raise your arm if you think you were excellent. Raise your arm if you think you need to practice.


In the post task students work orally in the worksheet given by the teacher.

Phonemic awareness assessment #3


PA Content	/o/ (on, off)
PA Objective 1	Identifies the short vowels in spoken word.
Goal	identify the short vowels /o/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.

Student's name: _____


Instruction: Identify the picture according to the word that is pronounce by the teacher.




octopus



ostrich



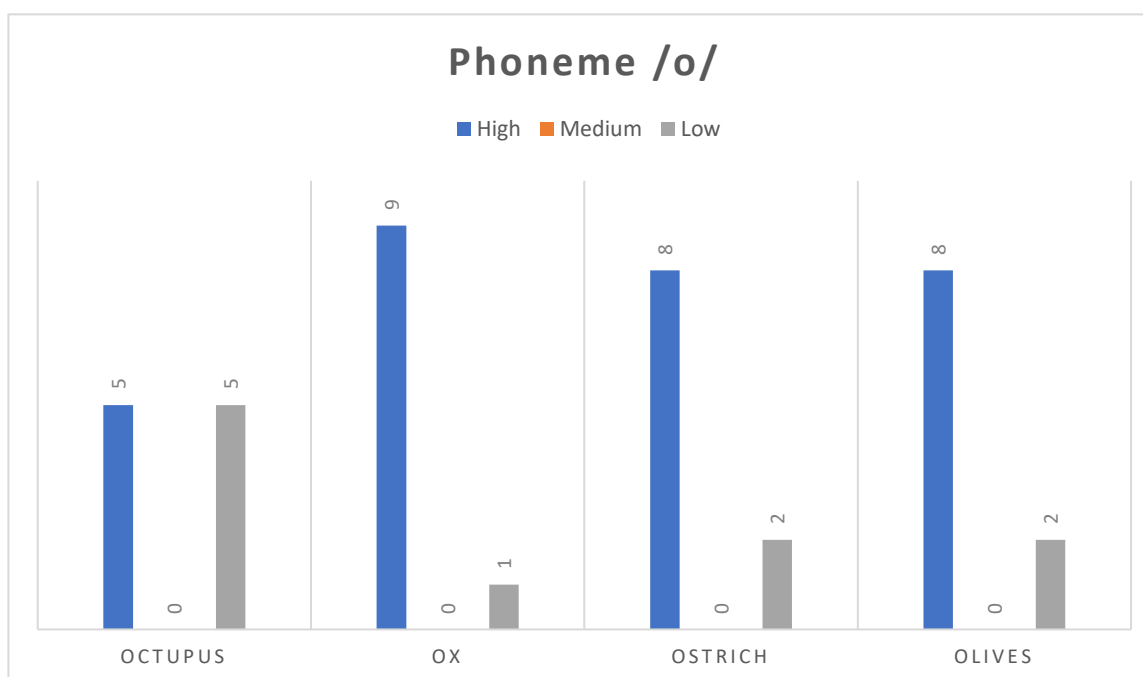
ox



olives

4.1.3.1 Third observation assessment

The goal is set in the beginning of the lesson, the assessment is successful when the student is able to identify the phoneme /o/ in the words that are shown. The teacher asks students individually to go in front and point the word she says. For example, the teacher says on, the students have to point the one picture in order to complete the assessment successfully.



In this case, the task is difficult for the students since it includes words that are not common for them. They think the word ox is funny and easy to remember because they refer to that specific word, but octopus and ostrich are difficult for them to understand and even more to produce, although it is not the objective of the task. Olives is a transparent word that they could identify easily.

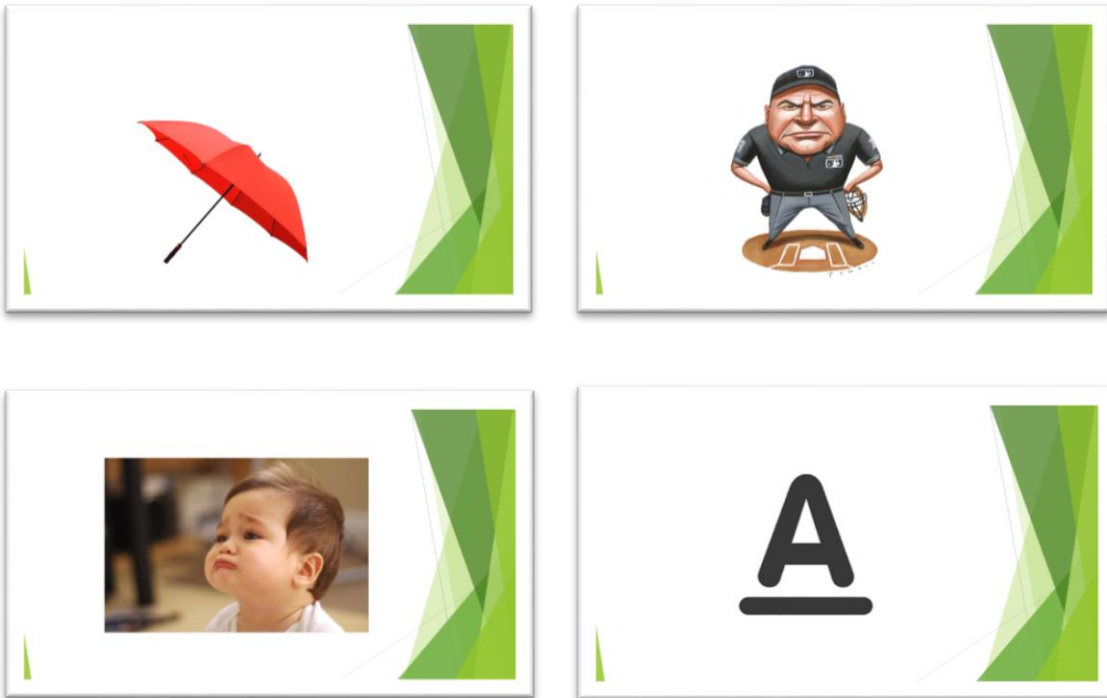
4.1.4 Fourth observation

For this lesson the theme is Show Me How to Play. The phonemic awareness content is /u/ as in umbrella and uniform. The objective is to identify the short vowel in spoken word and the goal is to identify the short vowels beginning with /i/ as in iguana and ice cream, /u/ in spoken word if attached to a picture. The duration of the lesson is 40 minutes.

The pre-task activity is the identification of sounds. The teacher shares goals with the students. Then, the teacher reviews past unit sounds to activate students' background knowledge. Next, the teacher shows pictures and models the initial sound of words beginning with /u/ as in umbrella, uniform.



Teacher exaggerates the sound of the words umbrella, unhappy, umpire and underline. The goal is to make the students hear, notice and distinguish the initial sounds of the words when they are heard. The teacher uses these videos to get additional ideas.



Students repeat suggested sounds using the pictures that follow the lesson plans and the sentence: Use your umbrella and keep your uniform dry.



In task rehearsal students repeat the letter sound and the words right after the teacher. Students form two circles, one inside the other. The two circles face one another so that pairs are formed. The teacher shows the picture and the students in

the inside circle repeat the word for 30 seconds and then the students on the outside circle repeat the word for 30 seconds. The inside circle shifts to the next person and the next word is practiced.

In the task completion, students stand when they hear the word in a list of words beginning with other letters. Then they repeat the word aloud and point at the right picture.


In the task assessment the teacher then says: We are going to assess this activity. Raise your arm if you think you were excellent or not. In the post task students work orally in the worksheet given by the teacher.

Phonemic awareness assessment #4


PA Content	/u/ (umbrella, uniform)
PA Objective	Identifies the short vowels in spoken word
Goal	Identify the short vowels /u/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.

Student's name: _____


Instruction: Identify the picture according to the word that is pronounce by the teacher.



umbrella



umpire

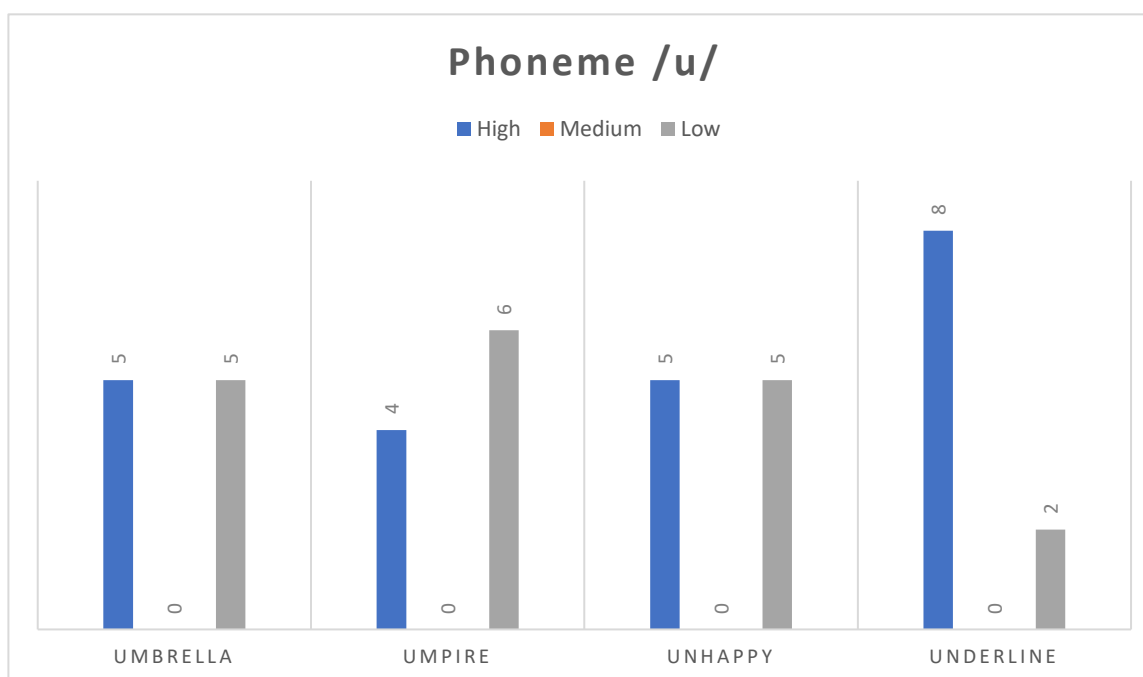


unhappy

underline

4.1.4.1 Fourth observation assessment

The goal is set in the beginning of the lesson, the assessment is successful when the student is able to identify the phoneme /u/ in the words that are shown. The teacher asks students individually to go in front and point the word she says. For example, the teacher says umbrella, the students have to point the picture in order to complete the assessment successfully.



In this case, the task is difficult for the students since it includes words that are not common for them. The words umpire and underline are not used in normal speaking, it is an advance level of English. None of them are cognate or transparent words, so this task is difficult for them.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research shows the assessment in the English classroom in relation to the goals of the new English curriculum for first grade. There are positive aspects that are found in the classroom practice and areas of improvement of the new program. It is a new curriculum for a new population, and it starts with the first grade which is a level with challenges for teachers, parents and students.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

According to the objectives of the research, the conclusions are the following:

- The relevant aspects of the phonemic awareness assessment in the first-grade classroom is the identification of /a/, /e/, /o/ and /u/ phoneme as beginning sound in different words.
- The students are able to identify phonemes when they are related to the word, for example the phoneme /a/ for apple, the phoneme /e/ for elephant, the phoneme /o/ for on and the phoneme /u/ for umbrella.
- A majority of students are able to identify the word related to the picture in which is included the phoneme.
- The activities, that are made in the classroom, relates the phoneme with the spoken word and the word with the picture. There is no relation in the activities that phoneme is linked to the picture; for example, asking the student which picture contains the phoneme /e/.
- It is easy for the students to identify the pictures that are related to cognate or transparent words such as elephant or astronaut.

- The main goal in each lesson is to identify the phoneme with the picture, but activities suggested an emphasis in the recognition of the written word with the picture.
- The teacher prepares the lesson with different activities to engage students to participate in tasks and be able to identify the pictures.
- There is no oral production during the classroom by students, the teacher guides all the activities orally and expect student's response using their gestures, movement or hands.
- Many activities are shorter than planned since there is a 40 minutes lesson to include more than four new words and a sentence related to the same phoneme. There is a lot of previous preparation to be able to maximize the productive time during the lesson.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the conclusions of the research, the recommendations are the following:

- The phonemic awareness objectives can go further in the first-grade classroom and not just in the identification of /a/, /e/, /o/ and /u/ phoneme. Students need to be encouraged by the teacher to produce sounds appropriate for their age, they are capable of understand and reproduce in the classroom setting along with the teacher's assistance in the learning process.

- The students are able to identify phonemes when they are related to previously known vocabulary so teachers can look for words that includes the target phonemes as beginning sounds and not just the included in the program.
- If students have more time to reinforce the phoneme, they are able to recall it later and not for just one week, since the majority of students are able to identify the word related to the picture in which is included the phoneme. The phonemic awareness lesson should be more than 40 minutes per week.
- The activities that are made in the classroom can relate the phoneme to the picture; for example, asking the students which picture contains the phoneme /e/.
- There are creative ways to reinforce the new knowledge such as poems, songs and games.
- It is easy for the students to identify the pictures that are related to cognate or transparent words, the teacher can encourage the students to look for those words as homework.
- Students should be encouraged to perform oral production during the classroom activities by using a communicative approach in which they feel the need to use the target language, for example songs, poems and stories.
- The teacher does a lot of preparation to prepare the class for the lesson, she does not own the classroom or TV system. Ideally, the

teacher should have their own space to organize the appropriate materials for the students, so it is ideal to own an English classroom to have an appropriate setting.

- Due to lack of time in the phonemic awareness lesson, principals should make necessary adjustments to modify English teachers' lessons from three per week, and group to five at least, as the new MEP guidelines set.

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GLOSSARY

Activity: situation in which a lot of things are being done, usually in order to achieve a particular purpose.

Assessment: the learner's ability to reflect on the results of his/her learning process.

Attitudes: expressions of positive or negative feelings towards the learning of a foreign language.

Awareness: acquaintance, consciousness with knowledge.

Belief: an acceptance of a thing, fact, statement etc.

Communication: Activity or process of giving information to other people or other living thing, using signals such as speech, body movements or radio signals.

Communicative Competence: The ability not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences, but also to know when and where to use these sentences and to whom. It includes knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary of the language. Knowledge of rules of speaking, (knowing how to begin and end conversations, what topics may be talked about in different times of speech events, knowing which address forms should be used with different persons.) Knowing how to use language appropriately.

Curriculum: knowledge, skills, materials, learning activities and terminal behavior required in teaching of any subject.

Cultural Component: The part of the language which includes the total set of beliefs,

attitudes, customs, behavior, social habits, etc. Of the members of a particular society.

Epistemology: the theory of knowledge, ESP. The critical study of its validity, methods and scope.

Environment Conditions: circumstances, etc., affecting people's life.

Evaluation: the whole process of determining the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Feedback: monitoring and adapting one's actions on the basis of the perceived effect on the environment. In Language activities, it is a response to the reactions of listeners and readers.

Formal Component: the part of the language which includes the linguistic patterns (structures).

Formative Evaluation: a learning activity through which the students learn from their own mistakes.

Function: A Communicative purpose of a piece of language.

Functional Component: A part of the language which refers to it as an instrument of social interaction rather than a system that is viewed in isolation. Language is often expressive and social. Language is often described as having three main functions: descriptive, expressive and social.

Global Development: the insertion of individual and national working forces into the world development.

Group work: work in which the class is broken into small groups of few students. They may work simultaneously on the same topic but with different material on each table.

Input: oral or visual stimuli from the formal or informal learning setting.

Integration of Skills: the teaching of the language skills in conjunction with each other, as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking.

Interaction: communication between two people.

Learner: a person who is learning a subject or a skill.

Learning Strategy: a way in which a learner attempts to work out the meanings and uses of words, grammatical rules, and other aspects of language.

Learning Styles: the particular way in which the learner tries learning new things. There are four different learning styles.

Mediation: action of changing events, experiences or sets of circumstances.

Methodology: the study of the whole process of language teaching with the aim of improving its efficiency.

Monitoring Learners: try to any correct errors what they have just said. The teacher may help them to do it by imitating her/him.

Pair-work: work in which two students perform a task or different tasks simultaneously.

Principle: general rule you follow to achieve something.

Procedure: action or series of actions to be completed in order to carry out a process.

Process: a series of actions that are carried out in order to achieve a particular result.

Profile: amount of language learned at the end of the process.

Role –Play: drama-like classroom activities in which the students take the roles of different participants in the situations. They may act out which might typically happen in that situation.

Skill: knowledge and ability that enables you to do something well. Linguistic skills enable you to fulfill the communication needs.

Student/Learner: in a communicative approach, a student/learner is the person on whom the learning process is centered. The student learns by doing. She/he becomes an independent and interdependent learner.

Sub-Skills: a division of the skills, such as discriminating sounds in connected speech, understanding relations within a sentence identifying the purpose and scope of a presentation.

Syllabus: an educational program which states:

- a.) The educational purpose of the program (the ends).
- b.) The content, teaching procedures and learning experiences which will be necessary to achieve this purpose.
- c.) Some means for assessing whether or not the educational ends have been achieved.

Tasks: steps or actions, which are carried out during an activity.

Teacher: monitor of the learning process, and responsible of the quality of Education.

Warm-up: to stimulate the interest and the participation of the learner in an activity.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. PREVIOUS PROGRAM FROM 2005 (UNIT 6)

STUDY BLOCK	COGNITIVE TARGETS			
MY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION	Expressing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to take care of plants and animals • Ways to take care of natural resources 			
LINGUISTIC OBJECTIVES	FUNCTIONS AND LANGUAGE	PROCEDURES	VALUES AND ATTITUDES	EVALUATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES
LISTENING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying basic information on different topics. • Understanding familiar language spoken at near normal speed. • Reacting to directions, commands and requests. • Grasping the gist of short statements. SPEAKING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing animated and inanimate items. • Responding with single words or short phrases to what is seen or heard. 	FUNCTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying objects and different types of animals. • Understanding information from different sources. LANGUAGE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resources: river, lake, beach, volcano, rock, tree, plants, water. EXPRESSIONS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a tree. • The lake is clean. • Water the plants. • Let's plant a tree. • Use the trash can. • Put garbage in the trashcan. • Protect the animals, plants and rivers. • Save energy. • Don't pollute the rivers. 	The students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the language introduced by the teacher. • Identify basic language in oral and aural form. • Perform instructions given by the teacher. • Act out meanings. • Match meanings with visual images such as pictures, drawings and charts. • Describe visual materials and pictures. • Participate in oral tasks such as puppets shows and games. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for the environment • Concern about the environment. • Ability to use reasonably raw material. • Sensitivity to biodiversity problems. 	The students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify sounds, words and short statements on a given topic through repetition. • Recognize ways of taking care of plants and animals orally and aurally. • Produce short sentences in the target language. • Perform commands given by models.

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ANNEX 2. NEW PROGRAM FROM 2017 (UNIT 6)

Unit 6 Scope and Sequence				
Scenario: Playtime				
Enduring Understanding	Our playtime is filled with fun games and activities played with people we like.			
Essential Question	What makes playtime special?			
Assessment and Goals				
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Theme Fun Games and Activities Assessment: L.1. Recognizes spoken words similar to the language with which they are familiar. R.1. Participates in choral reading. R.P.A.3 Identifies the short vowels in spoken word. S.P.1. Names some common activities in familiar environments.	Theme I Need a Rope to Play Assessment: L.3. Recognizes words, names, and numbers when heard in a short, simple recording delivered at a slow pace. S.I.1. Asks for something when pointing or gesturing. R.P.A.3 Identifies the short vowels in spoken word. W.1. Organizes drawings or pictures within a graphic organizer.	Theme My Favorite Game and Activities Assessment: R.2. Sequences pictures to show understanding of text heard or read. R.P.A.3 Identifies the short vowels in spoken word. S.P.2. Expresses likes and dislikes using simple, standard expressions. W.2. Represents an event or character from a picture story or one main idea.	Theme Show Me How to Play Assessment: L.2. Recognizes simple instructions when expressed slowly and clearly. R.P.A.3 Identifies the short vowels in spoken word. S.P.1. Names some common activities in familiar environments. W.3. Says words for teacher to write.	Assessment Instruments for Process/Product <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sticky notes ✓ Anecdotal note cards ✓ Checklists ✓ Inside and outside circle Week 6 Suggested Integrated Mini project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mini-book with pictures and sentences about their favorite games and activities using recyclable materials.
Goals:	Goals:	Goals:	Goals:	

<p>L.1. recognize spoken words similar to the languages with which they are familiar (e.g., ball, music).</p> <p>R.1. participate in choral reading (clapping and chanting) in response to the rhyme and rhythm of a predictably patterned song or picture story that is read aloud</p> <p>R.P.A.3. identify the short vowels /a/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.</p> <p>S.P.1. name some common objects in familiar environments (e.g., ball, doll, bike).</p>	<p>L.3. understand words, names, and numbers previously learned when heard in a short, simple recording delivered at a slow pace.</p> <p>R.P.A.3. identify the short vowels /e/, in spoken word if attached to a picture.</p> <p>SI.1. ask for something when pointing or gesturing supports the request. (e.g., kick, run, catch)</p> <p>W.1. organize drawings or pictures within a graphic organizer (sequence).</p>	<p>R.2. sequence pictures to show understanding of text heard or read that is supported by pictures in a heavily patterned book to include a clear beginning, middle, and end.</p> <p>R.P.A.3. identify the short vowels /o/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.</p> <p>SP.2. express likes and dislikes using simple, standard expressions.</p> <p>W.2. draw pictures of an event or character from a picture story or one main idea.</p>	<p>L.2. understand simple instructions, such as «turn left», «turn right», or «turn off» when expressed slowly and clearly, possibly with accompanying gestures and pictures.</p> <p>R.P.A.3. identify the short vowels /u/ in spoken word if attached to a picture.</p> <p>S.P.1. name some common activities in familiar environments.</p> <p>W.3. dictate words for teacher to write.</p>	<p>Function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Naming and labeling games and fun activities 	<p>Function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking for and giving information about games and activities 	<p>Function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking about likes and dislikes 	<p>Function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving and following instructions 	<p>Discourse Markers</p> <p>– and</p> <p>Grammar & Sentence Frames</p>	<p>Discourse Markers</p> <p>– and</p> <p>Grammar & Sentence Frames</p>	<p>Discourse Markers</p> <p>– and</p> <p>Grammar & Sentence Frames</p>	<p>Discourse Markers</p> <p>– and</p> <p>Grammar & Sentence Frames</p>
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<p><u>S-V)- (S-V-C) sentences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I play _____ . (ball, soccer) - I _____ the ball. (catch, throw) - She likes _____ , doll, jacks, jump rope) 	<p><u>Question/Answers with BE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is this? (Ball, bike, doll) <p><u>Numbers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - He has _____ cars. - They have _____ dolls. - I have _____ jacks. 	<p><u>(S-V)- (S-V-C) sentences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I play _____ . (ball, soccer) - I _____ the ball. (catch, throw) - She likes _____ , doll, jacks, jump rope) <p><u>Question/Answers with BE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is _____ fun/ boring? Yes/No (using vocabulary list) - Is _____ difficult/ easy to play? Yes/No (using vocabulary list) 	<p><u>Prepositions (on, in, under, in front of, near, behind, up, down)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Throw the jacks <u>on</u> the table. - Kick the ball <u>in</u> the net. - Stand <u>in front of</u> the net. <p><u>Imperative sentences</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn right/left. - Stand up., Sit down. - Look at me. <p><u>Frequency adverbs:</u> (always, sometimes, never)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I _____ play soccer on Monday - She _____ walks to school. - He _____ stand up. 	<p><u>Phonemic Awareness</u></p> <p>/a/ (apple, arm)</p> <p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p><u>Fun Games and Activities</u></p>
<p><u>Phonemic Awareness</u></p> <p>/e/ (egg, elephant)</p> <p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p>I need a rope to play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dolls, rope, jacks, ball, bike, cards, 	<p><u>Phonemic Awareness</u></p> <p>/i/ (iguana, ice cream) /o/ (on, off)</p> <p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p>My favorite game and activities</p>	<p><u>Phonemic Awareness</u></p> <p>/u/ (umbrella, uniform)</p> <p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p>Show me how to play</p> <p><u>Actions Verbs:</u></p>	<p><u>Phonemic Awareness</u></p> <p>/u/ (umbrella, uniform)</p> <p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p>Show me how to play</p> <p><u>Actions Verbs:</u></p>	<p><u>Phonemic Awareness</u></p> <p>/u/ (umbrella, uniform)</p> <p><u>Vocabulary</u></p> <p>Show me how to play</p> <p><u>Actions Verbs:</u></p>

<p><u>Games</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multimedia, Cards, - Memory games - Hopscotch - Treasure hunt - Jump rope <p><u>Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ride a bike - Play with dolls/balls/cars - Play jacks - Sing a song 	<p><u>Cardinal numbers:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1-30 	<p><u>Expressions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I like... - I don't like... <p><u>Adjectives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - difficult, easy, fun, boring <p><u>Days of the week</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - play, throw, kick, catch, run, ride, jump, tum, start, stop <p><u>Adverbs:</u></p> <p>Move to the right, move to the left</p>	
<p>Psycho-social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respecting rules of the games, teammates <p>Socio-cultural idioms/ phrases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expressing gratitude, appropriate use of please and thank you. 	<p>Psycho-social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showing intercultural awareness (games in other cultures) <p>Sociocultural Idioms/phrases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showing social interaction manners and politeness when taking turns and following rules - I pass. 	<p>Psycho-social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showing intercultural awareness (games in other cultures) <p>Sociocultural Idioms/phrases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expressing likes and dislikes - He/she is the MVP (most valuable player). 	<p>Psycho-social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing teamwork skills, persistence, perseverance <p>Sociocultural Idioms/phrases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Showing social interaction manners and politeness when taking turns and following rules - If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. 	