

Developing beginner-level young learners' reading skills in Kazakhstani public schools

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Abstract

This dissertation focuses on examining how English teachers develop reading skills of primary EFL learners in public schools in Kazakhstan. This qualitative study was carried out using semi-structured interviews with 15 English teachers working in primary public schools across Almaty, Kazakhstan. The findings suggest that a lot of English teachers use the phonics method to teach reading to primary school learners. Teachers find the phonics method to be more effective than other methods. The results of the study indicate that teacher training and gaining experience in the primary EFL classroom play the biggest role in teaching reading better. Teacher training programs should pay more attention to teaching methods aimed at primary EFL learners. The phonics method should be part of the English teacher-training curriculum.

Keywords: teaching reading, English teachers, phonics method, primary EFL.

Аңдатпа

Бұл диссертация Қазақстандағы орта мектептерде ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінің шет тілі сабақтарында оқушылардың оқу дағдыларын қалай дамытатынын зерттеуге бағытталады. Сапалық зерттеу Алматы қаласындағы орта мектептерінің бастауыш сыныптарда сабақ беретін 15 ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерінен жартылай құрылымдалған сұхбат алу арқылы жүргізілді. Зерттеу нәтижелері көптеген ағылшын тілі мұғалімдері бастауыш сыныптарына ағылшын тілінде оқуды үйрету үшін phonics әдісін қолданатынын көрсетті. Мұғалімдер үшін phonics әдісі тиімдірек болып табылатыны анықталды. Бастауыш сыныптарында ағылшын тілінде сабақ беруде мұғалімдердің дайындығы мен тәжірибесінің маңызы зор екені тұжырымдалды. Шет тілі мұғалімдерді дайындауда бастауыш сыныптарына арналған әдістерге көбірек мән берген жөн. Phonics әдісі ағылшын тілі мұғалімдерін даярлау бағдарламасының бір бөлігі болуы керек.

Кілт сөздер: оқуды үйрету, ағылшын тілі мұғалімдері, phonics әдісі, бастауыш сыныптарына ағылшын тілін оқыту

Аннотация

Эта диссертация посвящена изучению того, как учителя английского языка развивают навыки чтения у учащихся начальных классов английского языка как иностранного в государственных школах Казахстана. Это качественное исследование было проведено с использованием полуструктурированных интервью с 15 учителями английского языка, работающими в начальных государственных школах Казахстана в городе Алматы. Результаты показывают, что многие учителя английского языка используют метод phonics для обучения чтению учащихся начальной школы. Учителя считают, что метод phonics более эффективен, чем другие методы. Исследования показывают, что подготовка учителей и приобретение опыта в классе начального английского языка как иностранного играют самую большую роль в улучшении обучения чтению. В программах подготовки учителей следует уделять больше внимания методам обучения, ориентированным на учащихся начального уровня изучающий английский язык. Метод phonics должен быть частью учебной программы для учителей английского языка.

Ключевые слова: обучение чтению, преподаватели английского языка, метод phonics, начальное обучение английскому языку.

1. Introduction

The first years of teaching reading are found to matter to students' achievement (Azam & Kingdon, 2015; Weidman & Nurshatayeva, 2018). Primary school students' experiences of learning to recognize and pronounce letters and words is important. Schmoker (2008) mentions that young learners have a unique pathway of acquiring reading skills. In the work of Kelly (2007), reading is mentioned as an active process as readers tend to interact with the printed words and comprehend the idea of an author. Palincsar, Peterson, and Simington (2009) identified strategic, interactive sides of the reading process. Yusuf (2009, 2010) supported and tried to show that learning to read is a significant part of any academic achievement. Several studies noticed that the first graders, who perform poorly at the beginning of the schooling, show bad results at the end of primary school (Juel, 1988; Lundberg, 1984). At the same time, Shaywitz et al. (1995) wrote that children with a lower level of reading abilities could increase their skills over time relative to peers with better reading support.

In Kazakhstan, the issue of teaching reading to young learners is becoming increasingly important due to the fact that the starting age for learning English as a foreign language has been lowered to first grade in the public schools. Furthermore, some students start studying English as early as in kindergarten. However, to the best of my knowledge, the university-level programs training English teachers are heavily focused on preparing English teachers for higher grades of secondary schools. This implies that English teachers working with primary school students are less than prepared for such work and there is a need for studying their challenges and coping strategies as primary school level reading skills are very important for students' subsequent language learning.

Aim of research

This dissertation aims to examine the challenges and best practices in teaching reading to primary EFL learners in public schools in Kazakhstan. This research is a qualitative study of developing beginner-level young learners' reading skills in Kazakhstani public schools from the teachers' perspective.

Research questions

This qualitative research is aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What method do EFL teachers most commonly use to teach reading to primary school students?
2. What challenges do EFL teachers face during teaching reading to primary school students?
3. How do EFL teachers overcome the challenges of teaching reading to primary school students?

Significance of the study

From the theoretical perspective, the dissertation provides new evidence about the difficulties and best experiences in teaching reading to primary learners in Kazakhstan and thus expands the evidence base of existing (predominantly western-oriented) theories of teaching reading.

The practical value of the work is that primary school teachers can use the given information during the English lessons. The results can also be used in professional development or teacher training courses.

The rest of the thesis consists of the literature review, methodology, results and conclusion.

2. Literature review

2.1 The link between reading proficiency and language learning

Literacy is the key skill necessary for a student's subsequent academic achievement. Without reading skills, children would almost inevitably struggle academically, socially, and even emotionally in school and later life (Pikulski, 2002). Reading skills in English become more important as educational institutions and even entire countries implement English-medium instruction (Nurshatayeva, 2020; Nurshatayeva & Page, 2020) and utilize advanced technological solutions to support students (Nurshatayeva et al, 2020). The aim of reading instruction is not only to help students acquire complex language skills, but also to direct and equip students with excellent reading strategies and skills.

Huang (2005) is of the view that some language learning would be involved in a lot of reading, as does English learning. Those who are good at English all have read extensively; in other words, those who read a lot will learn English effectively. In particular, there is an evidence that first-grade reading achievement is a strong indicator of subsequent reading achievement, and that children, who do not read in third-grade independently, are likely to have reading problems for the rest of their lives (Pikulski, 2002).

Reading is not only an aim in itself; it is also a way of acquiring a foreign language. When reading a text, the student reviews sounds and letters, vocabulary and grammar, memorizes the pronunciation of terms and the meaning of words and the combination of words, reviews grammar and perfects the command of the foreign language.

2.2 Phonics method

Phonics instruction is an approach to teach beginner readers how to read by sounding out or, in phonics terminology, by blending sound spelling patterns. Adams (1994) suggests that the

phonics method is an efficient way to teach students the alphabetical code, developing their skills to interpret unfamiliar words.

The phonics method is perhaps the most well-known and widely applied approach to teaching reading and writing in English. Teaching students to understand the alphabet and letter-sound connections is critical for good reading. Failure to provide students with clear and systematic phonics instruction tends to impact learning of a foreign language, which also results in dissatisfaction, disengagement and underachievement of learners (Schmoker, 2008).

Researchers distinguish three main approaches to teaching phonics: 1) synthetic phonics, 2) analytic phonics, and 3) analogy phonics (Brand, 2004).

Synthetic phonics uses a part-to-whole technique that introduces learners a letter-to-sound (grapheme-phoneme) relationship in a precisely defined gradual sequence. Children are taught small groups of letter sounds during brief everyday lessons so that they can start blending (synthesizing) when reading and positioning letter sounds in words when spelling. For example, after teaching letters and sounds, you should support students to combine these letter sounds to read terms. It is important to stress the initial, medial and final sounds when blending. Students may also segment sounds in these words and write them down.

Analytic phonics instruction refers to teaching students to read entire words. Students are taught to examine letter-to-sound relationships after a word and its meaning have been introduced. For instance, an instructor might write a letter p followed by a few words put, pig, pen, play. The instructor helps students read the words by noting that each word starts with the same sound associated with the letter p.

Analogy phonics allows students to use written terms that they already know to classify unfamiliar words. Students are taught to notice words that sound similarly, e.g., words like tent,

rent, cent, etc. Teaching children to notice such patterns is important as it allows them to be able to read words they have not seen before based on their ability to recognize that this new word is similar to a word they studied before.

2.3 The use of the phonics method

In her book *Learning to Read*, Chall (1967) observed that early readers who were systematically taught phonics performed higher than those who did not. Later research confirmed that children learn to read well when phonics training is well structured (Collins & Gwynne, 1997). Further, the National Reading Panel of America (2000) found that first graders who were taught phonics were better able to decode and pronounce and showed substantial gains in their ability to understand language. It has been estimated that 70 percent of children can learn to read regardless of how they are instructed, but can read more quickly if phonics are introduced, and without phonics, the remaining 30 percent will have actual reading difficulties.

In the book *Beginning to Read: Dreaming and Learning about Text*, published in 1990, Marilyn Adams explained what phonemic knowledge is and laid out the main principles of teaching phonics. Phonemic knowledge is the perception of what sounds the letters make and the understanding of how sounds are routinely joined together to make words. According to Adams (1990), once phonemic knowledge is developed and some sound correspondence is understood, the brain starts to identify new patterns on its own. After acquiring phonemic knowledge, students continue to improve their phonological awareness or ability to rhyme, distinguish onset tones, and remember syllables (Armbruster, 2001).

Yet there are critics of phonics instruction. Specifically, some critics say that English spelling is inconsistent for phonics instruction to actually help children learn to read words (Smith, 1973; Foorman, 1991). Flesch (1950) argued that reading services that provide

unstructured teaching in phonics perform not so well. Most people might say that spelling out terms is too complicated for every letter in every word to be understood by the human mind; as a result, phonics alone is not enough to develop good reading skills. This is because learning to read and write in fact takes place in a social context (Gass & Selinker, 2001).

Nevertheless, the phonic approach as a technique for teaching beginners how to learn has been demonstrated to be effective in several studies. Eshiet (2015) argued that the method is more appropriate and beneficial in the growth of literacy, i.e., how to read and write. Center (2005) states that the phonics method helps to learn how to decode print and understand what printing entails.

It should be noted that phonics training is never a complete instruction in reading (National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy, 2005). Students need regular opportunities to learn and apply their skills growth. The use of easily decodable texts is often recommended to improve phonics instruction. Authentic, well-structured, informative materials are preferable in primary schools, as many books written for young children also contain a high degree of repetition, especially of high-frequency phrases (Rose, 2006; Loudon, et al., 2005).

The phonics method is utilized across the world for teaching both native speakers of English and those whose first language is other than English. In 2005, the Australian government enquiry concluded that systematic, direct and explicit phonics instruction was important in an integrated approach to reading teaching (Australian Government. Department of Education Science and Training, 2005). In England, the government enquiry into the teaching of early reading reached a narrower conclusion (Rose, 2006). Rose's recommendation was that schools use synthetic phonics as their preferred method of teaching.

The sample lesson plan presented in Appendix A illustrates how the phonics method can be used in the first-grade EFL classroom. This lesson plan utilizes common phonics method activities, phonics songs and colorful materials. The lesson objectives indicated in the lesson plan are to teach learners to read and write the letter M and pronounce basic words correctly.

According to the lesson plan the process of phonics instruction starts in the middle of a lesson. A teacher shows Chicken Liken character and asks students to read aloud the letters they already learned. Using this activity learners review previously learned letters by calling them out and showing them on the pictures. Then the students read those letters one by one. In order to check their ability of pronouncing the sounds correctly a teacher shows the students a phonics song video.

The next step is demonstrating a new letter M. A teacher shows the letter and says how it is pronounced. A teacher uses a phonics song related to the new letter for better pronunciation of the sound M and new words with this sound/letter. In this particular lesson plan, a phonics song is used for repeating sounds like “M for monkey. M for mommy. [m], [m], [m]”. The teacher explains how the letter is written and explains similarities and differences in writing the letter M. At the end of the lesson, the teacher distributes flashcards with various pre-selected words and asks students to learn the words at home.

3. Methodology

Interviews

To answer the posed research questions, I used semi-structured interviews with primary school English teachers. The interview questions were aimed at exploring teachers' practices, difficulties and coping strategies in teaching reading at the primary school level. I also aimed to examine their opinions as to the benefits, potential and challenges of phonics instruction in the teaching English reading in primary schools. The language of the interview was English, as all of the respondents were teachers of English. The interview protocol is presented in Appendix B. The participation in the study was voluntary. During the interviews the participants of the study were informed of its aims, structure, procedures and duration. All participants read and signed the consent form presented in Appendix C.

Participants

I approached many primary school English teachers with the request to participate in the study. Eventually, 15 of them agreed to participate.

All participants of the study were female; their age range varied between 22 and 45. The teaching experiences of the selected group were different as well. Some teachers were recent graduates with just one year of teaching experience while some participants had as much as 15 years of teaching experience.

Data Collection and Analysis

The semi-structured interviews with the participants were conducted in December 2020. I conducted the interviews and audio-recorded and transcribed all of them.

The responses to open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively (categorized into rubrics and interpreted). The information obtained during the interviews was reduced to a number

of categories for easier analysis and interpretation following the guidelines for analyzing qualitative data in Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014).

To verify the accuracy of the data analyses, I used member checks. Specifically, interview participants were given a written draft of the ‘results and their interpretation’ section of the study report so that they could check the content and correct any misunderstandings related to their responses in the interview.

4. Results

This chapter presents the analysis of the data on teaching reading for primary school students, methods of teaching reading in Kazakhstani primary schools, the usage of the phonics method, and difficulties and solutions of phonics instruction in primary schools.

This chapter is organized according to the themes and categories that emerged from the research questions. The first section shows the importance of teaching reading to primary students according to the participant teachers. The second section presents the number of methods that are used by the participants for teaching reading. The third section presents the impact of the phonics method on reading and difficulties of using them in primary school. Finally, the chapter gives a conclusion summarizing the main findings.

4.1 Participants' reflections of teaching reading to primary school students

Most of the teachers agree that reading is important for the successful language learning. Students learn foreign languages by reading books as it helps to understand the language. Reading is instrumental in helping young learners achieve success in learning a foreign language, along with other components of literacy. For example, one participant explained the role of reading in learning English as follows:

"I think teaching reading is one of the most important things in teaching language, since I myself learn languages through reading mostly"

Some teachers believe that success in academic performance is closely connected with a student's ability to read and understand the content that is taught. The reading skills of a child are important to their school success as they will enable them to access the curriculum's scope and develop their language and communication skills. Here is another participant's perceptions of the role of reading to overall success in academic achievement:

"In my opinion, teaching reading is important to children's success in school as it will allow them to access the breadth of the curriculum and improve their communication and language skills."

For several educators reading and books are vital for entertaining and educating learners. They are sure that reading for fun makes a huge difference to the educational success of children. In reading tests, children who read for fun every day not only do better than those who do not, but also gain a larger vocabulary, improved general knowledge and a better comprehension of other cultures. They think reading books with illustrations can be used for primary school learners, as discussed by the following participant:

"Picture books can be helpful for children to learn new English words through association with an illustration."

One of the participants mentioned that reading is a way of developing young learners' communication skills in general and interest in reading per se. An instructor plays a significant role in helping to keep students interested in books, regardless of whether a learner is only just starting to learn to read or whether they are fluent. Here is an example from one of the participants:

"You have to work hard to learn to read, and you have to work hard to become human. It is the labor that a person puts into himself that forms these qualities in him."

This vignette illustrates that teachers realize the importance of developing reading skills not only for academic achievement but also for students' personalities and overall humanistic development.

Excellence in speaking and writing is based on and supported by solid reading skills.

Primary school EFL teachers note that young learners' thinking skills depend on reading skills.

This is well illustrated in the words of one of the study participants below:

"Teaching reading for primary school students is very important because it fosters critical thinking skills; also reading skill improves also writing and speaking skills"

However, one of the instructors emphasizes that before learning reading in English, it is better to have a good knowledge of a native language:

"I think it's difficult for primary school students. Because some students cannot even read in their own language."

Like other participants, this teacher believes that students learning English and continuing to improve their native language may have better academic achievement than students learning English at the expense of their first language.

4.2 Participants' use of the phonics method

Most of the participant teachers used the phonics method. Phonics instruction gives students the opportunity to access the letter-sound relationship information, including letter pattern knowledge, to pronounce written words correctly. Learning these relationships allows students to easily understand common words and to read words that they have not seen before.

Here is how one of the participants described the process of teaching to read in primary school as follows:

"I use the phonics method. The phonics method can help a child learn how to break words down into sounds, translate sounds into letters and combine letters to form new words."

The use of songs appears to be particularly popular among the study participants. Teachers use various phonics songs that teach the sounds of the alphabet to children as well as capital letters and small letters. For example, participant 7 shared that for making the process of phonics teaching more attractive for students it is better to use special songs for phonics learning:

"Everything begins from the alphabet. First, we teach every letter and sounds, then syllables and then the whole word. In order to make a lesson interesting I use the special phonics songs to teach the letters.

Reading a letter or word aloud and asking students to repeat is another common strategy utilized by the participants. This practice is so rooted in the thought and behaviors of many people that it is difficult to see language learning as a central part of it without this practice.

Among specific preferred techniques, teachers mentioned the "look and say" technique. Instead of breaking the word down into individual letters or groups of letters, the look and say approach encourages students to read words as entire units. Children are frequently told the word when the written word is seen, maybe followed by an image. Here is how one of the participants put it:

"It's important to help students to recognize symbols and "look and say" method is still the easiest and effective method."

Interestingly, this was the only participant who could say the name of this technique. Other respondents were able to describe what they do and I identified the "look and say" technique based on their descriptions. This suggests that a lot of English primary-level teachers teach intuitively, without fully being aware of which techniques and methods they use.

The findings revealed that most of interviewed teachers had positive attitudes towards using the phonics method. For instance, several teachers pointed out that pupils quickly learn sounds and letters when phonics method is used:

"The phonics method can help to the children learn how to break words down into sounds, translate sounds into letters and combine letters to form new words."

The next interesting point is that participants argued that the phonics method helps students who tend to struggle to learn reading in English. Here is an example of a teacher who was able to teach a low-achieving student to read well by using phonics method and the student could understand the relationship between phonemes and graphemes:

"She could not differentiate some similar words' sounds. Because of it, I used phonics method to help her. As a result, she could overcome her struggling."

Junior teachers (those who have up to one year of experience in teaching) were particularly positive about the phonics method:

"The teaching of phonics is extremely efficient. One of my students learned to read well because of this method and especially game form of that method. Students sorted objects into two baskets on the floor that are labeled with initial consonant sounds. It was a lot of fun to learn to teach too."

4.3 Difficulties of teaching reading at the primary level

As for the difficulties in teaching reading and using phonics in primary school, several interview participants noted the challenge of teaching the new blends that look similar but sound different:

"It could hardly to explain sounds like a ch/ sh/ th/ ph."

Another common difficulty is teaching children to blend sounds into words. Here is how one of the study participants described this difficulty:

"They cannot tell the syllables separately, however when it comes to the word itself they may pronounce differently."

Here is the summary of the most commonly noted difficulties with implementing the phonics method:

- 1) Similar looking letters.
- 2) Often, when children are learning to read, they guess the end of the word based on the beginning sound.
- 3) As children progress in phonics there are many new blends to be learned that look similar but sound different.

4.4. Coping strategies

The challenges discussed in the previous section push teachers to seek and try out various coping strategies. A very common coping strategy was to get additional training and gaining as much teaching experience as possible:

"I try to improve myself as a teacher. I think that I need to be highly qualified teacher in order to overcome difficulties in teaching in primary school.

Participants expressed their interest in learning about how they could help students improve their reading skills and at the same time developing their vocabulary so that they could develop other language skills later. However, teachers would like to receive more training in teaching their students to understand the basics such as the phonemic values and syllables.

Another common coping strategy is to teach blends separately. One of the participants even argued that this approach helped her overcome the challenges of the phonics instruction:

"I teach blends separately, every time students learn a new one I remind them of they already known and I ensure they remember the old one and practice new one."

Yet most of the interview participants recommended starting by teaching sounds separately. Here is how one of the participants described her approach to teaching phonics:

"When children start to recognize the letters it can often be confusing. It is important to teach these letters separately but then to recap them together pointing out the little differences. Make students to split up the word into its individual letters sounds and repeat them and ensure their hearing all the sounds before re-blending them together."

It is important to teach and practice phonics to a degree where comprehension becomes typical and automatic. In this way, students can correctly and effortlessly recognize and produce recognizable words easily and be more able to recognize and produce words that are unfamiliar to them successfully. The development of automated word recognition would help and increase learning.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the findings show that teachers tend to use the phonics method to help students learn to read. Teachers find the phonics method to be the more effective than other methods. Next, although teachers face similar challenges in teaching reading to primary EFL learners, the findings suggest that teachers use different approaches to overcome them. Self training is the most common coping strategy used by the study participants.

The results indicate that teacher training and gaining more experience in the primary EFL classroom play the biggest role in teaching reading better. Teacher training programs should pay more attention to teaching methods aimed at primary EFL learners. The phonics method should be part of the English teacher training curriculum.

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**Appendix A. Sample lesson plan for teaching reading using the phonics method (from
smk.edu.kz)**

LESSON 1:Unit3 My family and friends	School:	
Date:	Teacher name:	
Grade: 1	Number	absent:
Learning objectives(s) that this lesson is contributing to	<p>1.UE7use personal subject pronouns to identify things</p> <p>1.S 5produce words in response to prompts</p> <p>1.S 1make basic personal statements and simple statements about objects</p> <p>1.W2form some <u>lower case</u> letters of regular size and shape</p>	
Lesson objectives	All learners will be able to:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write letter Mm with support • pronounce basic words and expressions intelligibly • name some members of family with teacher’s support 	
	Most learners will be able to:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write letter Mm with limited support • name some members of the family without teacher’s support 	
	Some learners will be able to:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write letter Mm without support • name all members of their family 	
Previous learning	Students learned colors, the words for 10 classroom objects and alphabet letters from A to L, numbers 1-10.	
Value links	Respect, Cooperation	
Language objective	Learn new letters (M), learn new words (father, mother, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, family)	
Cross-Curricular Link	Self-study, Art	
Use of ICT	PPT, video	
Intercultural awareness	The role of family in modern world	
Kazakh culture	The role of family in Kazakhstani society	

Pastoral Care	Assure you met all learners' emotional, mental and physical needs	
Plan		
Planned timings	Planned activities (replace the notes below with your planned activities)	Resources
Beginning 10 min (IPW)	<p style="text-align: center;">Greeting, Warm Up and Letters</p> <p>Greet the students. "Hello, children!"</p> <p>Warm-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children sing a song "How are you?" ➤ Ask questions in a circle "How are?" ➤ Teacher: You are musicians today. Play your musical instruments. <p>Each three pupils play one musical instrument:</p> <p>Trombone - [r]</p> <p>Guitar – [ð]</p> <p>Drums - [t, d]</p> <p>SPEAKING</p> <p>Teacher takes out a puppet Look here, please. Who <u>is</u> this? Yes. It is Chicken Liken-our little friend. Teacher: Let's ask several questions to know about him. Pupils: 1. What is your name? (My name is Chicken Liken) 2. How are you? (I am fine, thank you.)</p> <p>Objectives of the lesson</p> <p>Letter Reading Practice Teacher: Show Chicken Liken how many words and letters you know (Letters are on the smart board) Review old letters by calling them out and showing pictures then having students read the ***Differentiation: Less capable pupils work in pairs.</p> <p>Demonstration of a new letter "Mm"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Teacher shows letter "Mm": Pronounce it! ✓ Teacher shows how to write it. Practice writing them with boards. 	<p>The Phonics Song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hq3yfQnllfQ</p> <p>Overwriting Worksheet #1</p> <p>Mm song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUOc-UwTVBA</p>

	<p>✓ Give students a stamp or a sticker for successful completion. Assign new letters for homework. Teacher: Look the picture (of mother). Who is it? - This a mum. Chicken Liken also has a mother. Listen</p>	<p>How to write the Letter M https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wAUBMt-LeQ</p>
<p>Middle 25 min (IPW)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Dynamic break</p> <p>➤ Students are suggested a video about Chicken's family to watch. They are asked to move while watching.</p> <p>Introduction of the topic "My family and friends" Teacher: Can you guess the topic of the lesson. The topic of the lesson is My family</p> <p>➤ Teacher draws students' attention to the board (PPT) and drills the vocabulary in chorus.</p> <p>Focus on: <i>She is.... He is...</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>➤ Practice: Trace the letters in each row to write the names of family members. Then draw a line to match each family member name to its picture.</p>	<p>Chicken Family - funny song https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-7HgBQmqOc Finger Family (chicken family) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocnVCIUeuqs</p> <p>PPT video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHaObkHEkHQ</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Overwriting Worksheet #2</p>
	<p>✓ Students do the coloring task, and then present it to the class naming the members of the family. ***Differentiation: Less able pupils can name only one or two members of the family</p>	<p>Coloring worksheet #3</p>

		
<p>End 5 min (W)</p>	<p>Closing Reflection/Self-Assessment & Goodbye</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Look at the picture of the family. Where do you hear the letter Mm? Yes, <i>Mum</i>. Game: Pupils clap their hands when they hear this sound in the <u>words</u> teacher names. <i>Father, brother, sister, mother, grandfather, mum, acrobat, fox, mummy</i> ✓ Using the same thumbs up motions, ask students: <i>Did you like the lesson?</i> ✓ Students stand up and sing the goodbye song. 	<p>Goodbye Song Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xcws7UWWDEs</p>
Additional information		
<p>Differentiation – how do you plan to give more support? How do you plan to challenge</p>	<p>Assessment – how are you planning to check learners’ learning?</p>	<p>Health and safety check</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More support: These students may work with a stronger student to support them during the vocab activities. • More-able learners: Encourage very strong students to model answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be assessed through the controlled practice activity • Through observation • Through speaking activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure power cords/outlets are not a tripping hazard • Everyday classroom precautions

<p>Reflection</p> <p>Were the lesson objectives/learning objectives realistic?</p> <p>What did the learners learn today?</p> <p>What was the learning atmosphere like?</p> <p>Did my planned differentiation work well?</p>	<p>Use the space below to reflect on your lesson. Answer the most relevant questions from the box on the left about your lesson.</p>
<p>Summary evaluation</p> <p>What two things went really well (consider both teaching and learning)?</p> <p>1:</p> <p>2:</p> <p>What two things would have improved the lesson (consider both teaching and learning)?</p> <p>1:</p> <p>2:</p> <p>What have I learned from this lesson about the class or individuals that will inform my next lesson?</p>	

Appendix B. Interview protocol

1) What do you think about the importance of teaching reading for primary school students?

(Quote: What are the peculiarities of teaching reading for primary school students?)

2) How do you teach reading skills to primary school students?

(Quote: What methods of teaching reading do you use in your everyday teaching? What is your favorite method for teaching reading to young learners?)

3) Do you use phonics instruction to teach English to primary students?

(Quote: How do you teach primary students to connect sounds and letters? What teaching materials do you use to teach phonics?)

4) How well do you think students learn to read by the phonics method?

(Quote: Can you tell me a story about your students who learned to read well by the phonics method?)

5) What challenges do you face when using the phonics method?

(Quote: Can you tell me about some of your particularly struggling students? What were the most challenging topics to teach? Can you describe one lesson that you thought you could better?)

6) What do you do to overcome these challenges?

(Quote: Can you tell me a story or give an example to illustrate this?)

Appendix C. Consent form for participants

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the research project. I am going to be interviewing you about your experience of teaching reading to primary school EFL learners. I would like to ask you about methods you use to teach reading to primary school students and the challenges you experienced and what you do to overcome those challenges.

The interview will take about 30-45 minutes. I do not anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, and you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from this research at any time.

This consent form is necessary to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Please sign this form to certify that you approve that the interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced and that any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed

By signing this form, I agree that;

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
2. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described;
3. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
4. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions.

If you have any further questions or concerns about this study, please contact:

Name of researcher: Dauletkyzy Karakat

E-mail: 191323007@stu.sdu.edu.kz

I have read the above information regarding this research study, and consent to participate in this study.

Printed Name:

Signature:

Date: