Phonics in the EFL Children Classroom
الصوتيات في فصل تعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية للأطفال

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Abstract

Phonics is an instructional approach for teaching reading for children. It involves sound-letter correspondence for developing children's coding, blending, sounding and reading skills. This new approach has been recently introduced into the Libyan context through the new textbooks for grades one, two, three and four. This paper therefore discusses the principles, types and practices of this new approach in EFL contexts (e.g. Libya) and explores the challenges that teachers may encounter in its implementation in these contexts. It also presents a critical review of the previous research on phonics and highlights the importance of developing EFL teachers' understanding of its principles and practices for a successful introduction of this approach. The useful insights outlined in this paper can help in describing and diagnosing the current situation of Libyan EFL primary school teachers and classrooms and the extent to which they are ready for adopting phonics as an approach of instruction in teaching reading for grades one, two, three and four. This may lead to certain follow-up appropriate actions for better teaching of the new textbooks for these graddes. Moreover, the proposed guidelines and models for implementing phonics may benefit EFL teachers in other contexts as well.

Key Words: Phonics- Synthetic –analytic- whole language approach

ملخص:

تعتبر طريقة الصوتيات إحدى الطرق المستخدمة في تدريس القراءة للأطفال. تقوم هذه الطريقة على التزامن بين تقديم الصوت والحرف لتطوير مهارات الترميز والدمج والنطق والقراءة عند الأطفال. تم تقديم هذه الطريقة لليبيا من خلال كتب اللغة الانجليزية المقررة على الصفوف الأول والثاني والثالث والرابع. تناقش هذه الورقة أسس وأنواع وتطبيقات هذه الطريقة وتسلط الضوء على التحديات التي تواجه الأساتذة في تطبيقها. تحقق هذا من خلال مراجعة الدراسات السابقة وعرض النتائج والتوصيات وإمكانية الاستفادة منها في زيادة فهم أساتذة الفصول الأولى في ليبيا لهذه الطريقة وتحسين قدراتهم على تطبيقها. تفيد هذه المراجعات التي تمت في هذه الورقة في تشخيص الحالة الراهنة للمدارس الابتدائية في ليبيا وتحديد مدى جاهزيتها مع الأساتذة لتطبيق هذه الطريقة وهو ما يمكن أن يقود لإجراءات وخطوات يمكن من خلالها تدريس الكتب المقررة على الصفوف من الأول إلى الرابع بشكل أفضل. تم اقتراح بعضا لإرشادات والتوصيات التي يمكن أن يستفيد منها أساتذة هذه الصفوف.

Introduction

The introduction of new English textbooks for the grades from one to four in Libyan primary schools during the school year 2018/2019 seems to be a promising step for improving language teaching and learning in the Libyan context. However, it poses a serious challenge for most of the teachers of these grades as they are required to adopt a new way of instruction namely *'phonics'*. In fact*, phonics* is not only a recommended way for delivering the content of these textbooks, but it is also the theory followed in designing their content and associated materials. The extract below has been taken from the introduction chapter of Primary One *Teacher's Book* and it is also written in the primary teacher's books for grades two, three and four

The Primary grades of 21st Century English for Libya follow a very specific approach for teaching young learners about **phonics**, reading and writing. In Unit 1, pupils learn the English alphabet, to understand the alphabetical order of the letters, the letter sounds and also, though less importantly at this stage, the name of each letter. Both capital (upper case) letters and small (lower case) letters are presented; so pupils are exposed to both forms at the same time. By the end of Unit 1, pupils should be able to recognize all the English letters. However, from Unit 2 onwards, lessons look at the individual English letters in a lot more depth, following a phonics approach that will help pupils to develop skills in reading and writing English letters. The focus is on forming, sounding and blending the letters to make words. The letters are presented in a different order (i.e., not alphabetically), so pupils can start to blend letters and form words as quickly as possible (Primary 1, Teacher's Book: 4). (see https://www.englishforlibya.com/).

This extract indicates that the sequence of the content of the lessons of these textbooks is different from the sequence of the content of the previous textbooks as the English letters are now not presented alphabetically. Moreover, the focus of this content is more on sounding and blending letters to form words rather than on writing letters and spelling words. The effective teaching of these textbooks is not an easy task for most of the teachers who were used to introduce the English letters in a fixed alphabetical order. Moreover, most of these teachers have a traditional teaching methodological background and teacher-centered beliefs and practices and working in very poor classrooms (Orafi & Borg, 2009; Shihibah, 2011). It is therefore very likely that these teachers resist this shift; especially before they develop good understanding of the concept 'phonics' and its principles and associated activities and practices. Not accounting for this issue can make the process of Implementing this approach of instruction in Arab EFL language classrooms difficult (Prahalathan, 2015). It is necessary to provide the teachers in these contexts with sufficient and effective training about phonics instructions (Ahdal et al ,2015). Moreover, there is some suspicion about the effectiveness of this approach for teaching reading and writing for young children in EFL contexts (Impact 20 ,2013; Dodgson, 2018). Therefore, imposing this approach on teachers may limit their autonomy and creativity (Impact 20,2013).

Considering these conflicting and different views about phonics, the aim of this paper is therefore to offer a detailed explanation about this new approach through a review of the recent research on its implementation in teaching reading in EFL children classrooms. This can promote Libyan EFL primary school teachers' understanding of phonics instructions which represents a necessary prerequisite step for its effective implementation.

What is Phonics?

Phonics simply means reading through corresponding sounds with letters. It implies linking sounds with their spellings (Blevins, 2010). From a teaching perspective, phonics is defined as   "a system of teaching reading that builds on alphabetic principle, a system of which a central component is the teaching of correspondences between letters and their pronunciations" (Adams, 1990:50). Snow et al, (1998) described phonics as an instructional teaching approach which involves using spellings for decoding speech sounds systematically. It is a process of "blending of grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) correspondences to decode words, without a reliance on contextual cues, such as pictures, syntax or semantics" (Wattsa

& Gardner, 2013:100) and it is mainly based on the principle of using letters for representing sounds (Stahl, et al., 1998 ; Smith,2011).

Phonics is not a new approach of instruction as Smith (1965) traced it back to the first century AD and as the practice of teaching children reading passages through letter-sound correspondences was widely used before the ' whole language approach' which was prevailed during the 1970s (Moustafa,2000). Primarily, phonics was introduced as an approach for teaching reading for beginners with two different modes of instruction 'synthetic' and analytic' (Harris & Hodges, 1995; Smith, 2011; Wattsa & Gardner, 20113; Dodgson, 2018). It aims to promote children's word decoding ability (Smith, 2011).

Some scholars assert that early teaching of decoding words for children leads to better learning achievement (Sitthitikul, 2014). This approach was found effective for improving children's skills of word identification, oral reading accuracy, comprehension and fluency (Jeanne & Helen, 1996). Therefore, phonics is recommended for FL beginner-level young learners who need literacy support for learning to form letters and decode sounds from a different alphabet (Dodgson ,2018). Moreover, phonics is believed to be effective for learning alphabet, improving spelling, learning new words and word roots, and boosting students' confidence (Verner, 2015). It was found a good way for teaching reading and for acquiring the skill of letter-sound correspondences which helps in developing children's ability for reading and spelling words and promotes their phonological awareness (Harris & Hodges, 1995 ; Stahl, et. al, 1998). Moreover, a positive correlation was identified between teaching through phonics and promoting children's interest and active participation (Wahyuni, et al , 2016).

For better understanding of high-quality teaching of phonics, *the Primary National Strategy* provided an informative description of this teaching:

> *High-quality phonic teaching, therefore, secures the crucial skills of word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically thus freeing them to concentrate on the meaning of the text. In other words, the learning of phonic skills for reading is a time-limited process whereas 'developing the abilities necessary to understanding and appreciating written texts in different content areas and literary genres continues throughout the lifespan'(Primary National Strategy, 2006)*

The recent re-emergence of phonics in the UK has been attributed to the failure of 'whole language approaches'. In 2006, the UK Government issued the *'Rose Report'* which firmly instructed primary and elementary school teachers to use phonics instruction in teaching reading (Rose, 2006). By this time, phonics was considered as an essential component of early reading courses in USA, New Zealand and Australia (Smith, 2011). Recently, this approach has become widely used in EFL contexts (Sitthitikul, 2014; Dodgson, 2018) and therefore it is necessary to remind EFL teachers with Savage's (2007) conclusion for considering phonics as a means not an end in itself.

However, the effective implementation of phonics requires creating an appropriate environment and providing certain facilities. Sitthitikul (2011) suggested three steps for using phonics instructions including: direct teaching of sound-symbol correspondences, using spelling tasks for developing children's manipulation of sounds in written words and offering patterns of spelled words. Well-equipped Language labs were reported to be effective for this

purpose by the Saudi EFL students participated in the study of Mohammed (2017) and was emphasized by Al-Hmoud (2014), and by Hafiz (2013).

Regardless the confusion around the definition of phonics, its principles and effective implementation, this detailed review indicates its popularity in the literature for teaching reading for EFL children.

Synthetic vs. Analytic Phonics Instruction

There are different approaches of phonics instruction. The National Institute for Literacy (2006) listed these approaches: 'synthetic phonics', 'analytical phonics', and 'analogy-based phonics', 'phonics through spelling', 'embedded phonics', and 'Onset-rime phonics instruction'. The Institute indicated the possibility of combining these approaches as there are no clear distinctions between them. In this section, the discussion will focus on the synthetic and analytic approaches due to their widespread use in EFL contexts. There is a lack of consensus about the superiority of one model over the other and about the possibility of using them together for teaching the same group of children. The synthetic approach involves sounding out and blending individual phonemes of words. For example, the word 'cat' will be sounded out as a word with three separate phonemes /k/,/æ/, /t/ which should be blended together to sound the word. Children may start by practicing the pronunciation of separate phonemes before blending them to sound words. The findings of Hardy (2014) indicated the effectiveness of this approach for teaching ESL children to read in English. On the other hand, the analytic approach emphasizes the inference of the relationship between sounds and symbols. For example, for introducing the word cat, children are asked to think about words that end with the same rime of /æt/ (e.g. rat, fat, hat, and mat) (Smith, 2011). In a study conducted by Johnston and Watson (2005) in Scotland, beneficial results from teaching synthetic phonics were reported. This study involved 300 first grade students of different genders and socio-economic backgrounds who were divided into two groups and taught to read using analytic and synthetic phonics over a period of 16 weeks for 20 minutes a day. The results measured by the end of the first year indicated that the synthetic phonics group performed better than the analytic phonics group. Then, the progress in the reading ability of 95 boys and 85 girls of the same participants was monitored over seven years which led the researchers to conclude emphasizing the sustainment of the positive effects of synthetic phonics over the duration of the study. In this regard, the teacher's books of Libyan primary schools provide clear instructions for using the synthetic approach of phonics instruction. This extract is an example of these instructions *"there is also the presentation of letter sounds and word formation. By the end of this book, pupils will have learned all the basic English letter sounds and will know how to blend those sounds to form words…"(Primary 1, Teacher's Book: 4)*. This type of phonics is also emphasized for primary school teachers in UK through the report of Rose (Rose, 2006).

However, depending on synthetic phonics only in teaching reading during early stages has been questioned and described as being not sufficient by the findings of the *Miscue Analysis* conducted by (Smith, 2011) and by Wattsa and Gardner (2013). These scholars argue that children cannot manage to transfer their sound-phoneme knowledge to their independent reading (Clay, 1991). Therefore, the approach of '*Look and Say'* (Oakhill & Beard, 1999) was recommended for teaching high frequency words and to be used as a complementary approach with phonics. It is worth mentioning that the vocabulary introduced in the Libyan

primary English textbooks for grade, 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been selected according to their frequency and are presented with some pictures representing the taught blended words and the teachers are instructed to utilize both approaches 'phonics' and 'look and say'. It is also possible to provide children with stress-free writing activities for demonstrating and consolidating their knowledge of letter-sound correspondences as far as they are not constrained with correct spelling and penmanship (Anderson et al, 1985: 34). Hence, it is useful to use both approaches as the synthetic approach can enable children to blend sounds to create words and the analytic approach can improve their spelling (Davies & Ritchie, 2003). Anderson et al (1985:17) described the well-designed reading program as the one which is based on the principle that "mastering the parts does not become an end in itself, but a means to an end, and there is a proper balance between practice of the parts and practice of the whole". Embedding phonics instruction within a total language reading program can allow for using synthetic and analytic approaches (Al-Humaidi & Al-Belushi, 2014 & Hardy ,2014). This integrated approach was also recommended by educationists and researchers in countries like Australia (Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training 2005), New Zealand (Literacy Taskforce 1999), the United States (National Reading Panel 2000), and Ireland (Eivers et al. 2005).

Regardless the type of phonics instruction approach implemented, it is necessary for EFL teachers to account for these basic principles when they adopt any one of the two models:

a. Integration of teaching phonics for beginning reading instruction;
b. believing in the value of teaching phonics for improving children's reading;
c. presenting phonics within the contexts of language use through providing structures and patterns for better understanding (*The International Reading Association ,1997*);
d. considering reading as an integrated skill of child's general language development not separated from listening, speaking and writing (Anderson et al, 1985: 20);
e. and thinking of learning reading as learning to play a musical instrument and therefore it can be improved through continuous practice reading like playing a musical instrument (Anderson et al,1985: 16).

Accounting for the above factors helps EFL teachers in developing their approaches of phonics instructions and increases the chance of improving their pupils' reading fluency.

Sequence

A successful phonics program requires a clear systematic progression. Some scholars believe that children who have not learnt to read should not start with phonics as they will encounter serious difficulties in analyzing the phonemes of spoken words (Ehri & Wilce, 1980; Mann, 1986 ; Treiman, 1986). It is therefore necessary to consider that children should develop their ability to analyze language words and sounds with their syllables before they are introduced to phonics instruction (Snow; Burns & Griffin, 1998 ; Rose, 2006). By contrast, Goswami and Bryant (1990) believed that children are capable of analyzing words into larger speech units such as syllables and rimes. This belief is supported by research findings which revealed that children's good awareness of the phonological and phonemic structures enabled them to learn phonics. Goswami and East (2000) attributed this to children's ability for employing their understanding of speech sounds in decoding and identifying letters-sounds relationships.

However, lack of this understanding makes children struggle with phonics instruction and decoding and they may not manage to sound or blend letters to form new words. For overcoming this issue, it is better to start with developing spoken language skills before exposing children to phonics decoding (Smith, 2011). Lane, et al. (2002) suggested some activities for teaching phonics for young children including: games for listening, activities for practicing rhyming, syllables, words, sentences, initial and final phonemes (segmenting & blending). During the stage of developing children's phonological awareness, letters should be introduced after children's development of their oral and auditory discrimination and phonological skills. This requires sufficient listening practice of sounds in words (continuous sounds), listening to sounds before spelling and providing more opportunities and clear instructions for blending activities (Smith, 2011). For systematic phonics instruction progression, it is recommended to follow the steps proposed by Barclay (2009):

   a. following an arranged sequence in introducing the phonics;
   b. teaching concepts explicitly (better to provide a model);
   c. using activities that involve all child's senses;
   d. following the simple to abstract sequence;
   e. and using controlled texts for introducing target words with sufficient practice.

The introduction of phonics often starts by pre-reading activities before instructing children to read. These activities or games should focus on developing children's knowledge of letters and sounds and the relationship between them. Each letter can be introduced with its corresponding sound through either a whole class or small group settings. The continuous practice of these activities or games reinforces children's recognition of letters and their corresponding sounds and improves their decoding ability. During the decoding stage, children need to be taught 'look & say' skill which involves looking at words, saying the individual sounds of words before blending the sounds together to make words. Teachers should be aware that developing this skill takes time and requires continuous practice before children become able to read independently. Phoneme segmentation activities are useful for developing decoding and blending skills. Children can start reading when they become able to break words into their specific phonemes, easily hear and recognize phonemes (sounds) and then produce words. After this stage, books can be introduced to children in classrooms according to their instructional levels. The focus on increasing vocabulary and phonics instruction is helpful for achieving this aim. The skill of spelling patterns learnt through phonics can help children in pronouncing unfamiliar words which can be remembered when they are seen again. This ability represents a fundamental step for improving children's reading fluency (accurate and smooth reading) as it saves children from spending time in decoding words (Hollowell, 2017).

EFL Teachers use different methods in teaching phonics. The findings of the experimental research conducted in Sri Lanka (Prahalathan,2015) confirmed the effectiveness of using *Leapfrog Carton* videos for teaching phonics over the teacher-centered model of 'chalk and board'. For example, the children who were taught through the *Leapfrog Carton* videos were more motivated and involved in more interaction. In this regard, language teaching in Sri Lanka is predominately teacher-centered (Prahalathan, 2015) which is similar to language teaching and learning in the Libyan context (Orafi & Borg, 2009 ; Shihibah, 2011). Thus, Libyan EFL primary school teachers need to be instructed and supported to use videos and

other available audio and visual aids. The publishing company of the new English textbooks for Libyan schools has launched a website for teaching resources offering different materials but not videos (https://www.englishforlibya.com/). It is possible for these teachers to use videos form phonics websites such as (https://www.kizphonics.com/materials/phonics-videos/) or (https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/oxford-owl-videos/phonics-videos/). In this stage, the role of language inspectors is to direct and guide teachers to benefit from these websites. Classrooms also should be provided with technological and internet facilities in order to help EFL teachers' adoption of these available materials. It is recommended to teach the English lessons for grades one, two, three and four in language labs.

The above discussion offers some phonics implementation models to be followed by Libyan EFL primary school teachers who seem to be struggling with shifting their approaches of instructions from whole language teaching to phonics instruction.

Phonics and Reading

This section   discusses the relationship between phonics and teaching reading for EFL children. Anderson et al, (1985: 6) defined reading as "the process of constructing meaning from written texts" and described it as "a complex skill that requires the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information". This implies the fact that the development of children's reading skill represents a serious challenge for language teachers. All language courses including those designed for kids introduce reading activities and tasks but at different stages of learning or courses. However, there is no agreement about when and how to introduce first time reading tasks for children. Language theories and instruction approaches offer different models for teaching reading and phonics is seen as one of these effective models.

Children's development of phonics knowledge and skills often leads to improvement in their ability of understanding reading texts. Phonics instruction is useful for promoting children's ability of corresponding sounds with spellings (letters) and decoding of words. The improved ability for decoding words often leads to better word recognition, better reading and fluency. Reading fluency is a product of an extensive practice and refers to the ability for reading fast, accurate and expressive. Good reading flow can be significantly improved through mastering letter sounds, using decoding strategies, and increasing sight words (Heitin, 2015). Learning words by sight can promote word recognition, fluency and automaticity. Thus, grade one children need to be offered sufficient opportunities for decoding words to develop their learning words by sight ability. Research revealed that children who fail to develop this skill during grade one often end this grade with poor reading skills and may continue as poor readers during the following grades (Juel's , 1988). Accordingly, phonics is not recommended for teaching reading for dyslexia children as their brains are not capable for performing tasks of decoding, segmenting or blending (Marsha, 2013).

Phonics is presented as an effective instructional approach for developing reading fluency which can significantly improve reading comprehension. The relationship between reading fluency and good reading comprehension can be emphasized by referring to the conclusion reported by Smith (2011) that fluent children often do not need to spend much time in decoding words and therefore they devote their attention and mental energies to understand meanings of words from texts (Heith, 2015). One more advantage for these children is their

improved ability for easy and fast learning of vocabulary. However, lack of reading fluency can prolong the process of word decoding, slower reading and create comprehension difficulties. It is therefore important that "readers must be able to decode words quickly and accurately so that this process can coordinate fluidly with the process of constructing the meaning of the text" (Anderson et al, 1985:11). This discussion concludes by emphasizing the necessity for developing EFL children's reading fluency before introducing reading comprehension tasks and activities in their classrooms.

Integrating Phonics and Whole Language

Since early 1980s through the 1990s and up to the present time, there has been a battle between phonics and whole language approaches on how to effectively teach children to read (Moats,2007). Krashen (2002) described this conflict as 'reading wars' with no signs of stop. Those who advocate the whole language approach referred to reading scores of poor students when they are taught through phonics and support their argument by pointing out results of some ethnographic studies (Reyhner, 2008). One of the findings of these studies emphasized the impact of the economic and social backgrounds of children's families on the level of their ability to read. Reyhner (2008) claimed that educated families' children often join schools with more vocabulary and more developed reading skills which they have learnt at home whereas less educated families' children often have less vocabulary and undeveloped reading skills as they do not have the chance to learn at home. This case applies to the Libyan context as currently both the economic as well as social backgrounds of Libyan families vary across the regions and among social classes. As a result, rich families' children can join private kindergarten and pre-schools classes as a preparation stage whereas poor families' children cannot. So, it often happens to have grade one children with different levels in terms of vocabulary and reading skills. For these reasons, the phonics approach of instruction may not succeed with these students. This makes the task of the teacher more demanding and challenging. On the other hand, whole language approaches may help in teaching reading for these students as teachers can select appropriate reading materials based on children's' language level and cultural and social backgrounds. Contrastively, relevant research revealed that the phonic approach is useful for children with weak-word recognition and that the whole language approach is preferred by children who have acquired their basic reading skills (Akamatsu ,1999). Moreover, no differences were found in the level of reading comprehension in a comparison study was conducted to compare between the whole language instruction approach and phonics approach of instruction (Krashen, 1999). The results of another experimental study conducted by Maddox and Feng (2013) indicated that their phonics group showed better growth in reading fluency and spelling than the whole language group. Nevertheless, they recommended combining the two approaches in one curriculum with more emphasis on phonics. Reyhner (2008) summarized the problems associated with the whole language approach including lack of a clear and systematic structure , lack of lessons and activities, and the heavy burden of teachers in developing their own appropriate materials and curriculum. By contrast, a research review about the whole language approach was conducted by Krashen (2002) and concluded by this statement "these studies actually provide evidence for the limits of phonics instruction and the efficacy of whole language".

This ongoing conflict and debate between the proponents of the two approaches produced an increasingly widespread view based on the belief that each approach has a different role to

play in teaching reading and argues for the possibility of utilizing these two roles in a complementary mode. This implies that a mixed approach integrating both phonics and whole language can be useful in teaching reading for EFL children.

In the Libyan context, primary EFL teachers have no choice to adopt such an integrated model as they are instructed through the guidelines offered in the *Teacher's Book* to use the synthetic phonics approach of instruction. Moreover, the content of the textbooks of grades one, two, three and four has been presented to be taught through phonics. However, these teachers' shift from teaching reading to children through whole language approach into teaching reading through phonics instruction will not be smoothly and easily realized. Consequently, instructing them to use an integrated approach utilizing phonics and whole language approaches for teaching same children can make things worse. In this case, it is very likely the teachers may not manage to successfully perform this integration. The researcher believes that integrating these two different approaches can confuse not only EFL reading teachers but also children. Exposing children to two different approaches of instruction at the same time during teaching the same course can make it more difficult for them to handle the materials and perform the tasks and activities. Therefore, Libyan primary EFL teachers are recommended to focus on developing their understanding of the types and practices of phonics instructions and promoting their awareness of the principles of phonics theory. This can help them in implementing the appropriate model of phonics for teaching reading for grades one, two, three and four.

Conclusion

Phonics is an instructional approach for teaching reading for children through developing their sound-letter correspondence ability. Synthetic and analytical phonics represent the most common types of phonics instructions used for teaching reading in EFL classrooms. While the synthetic phonics model involves sounding out letters and blending them to read words, the analytic phonics model involves learning to recognize words by sight. The most recent English language programs (e.g. Libyan textbooks for grade 1,2,3 & 4) designed for teaching reading for children tend to adopt the synthetic approach of instruction. A clear and systematic presentation and progression plan is required for the successful implementation of this approach. Developing children's ability for decoding words quickly and accurately should precede introducing meaning-construction tasks. Teachers who used to apply whole-word instruction approaches for teaching reading for children will find it difficult to shift to implementing a synthetic phonics instruction. This may lead these teachers to resist or reject the change and therefore they need to be trained, supported and motivated to implement the change. Libyan primary schools need to be provided with language labs where using the phonics approach of instruction for teaching English for grades one, two, three and four can be better conducted.

Although synthetic phonics seems to be a promising instructional approach for teaching reading in the children EFL classroom in Libya, neither the teachers nor the schools seem to be ready for introducing this approach. This suggests the need for an urgent and a thorough review of the implementation of this approach for teaching English for grades one, two, three and four in Libyan primary schools. A transitional period through using an integrated approach which utilizes the advantages of both phonics and the whole language approach can bridge the gap and reduce the teachers' tension. Enhancing the awareness of Libyan EFL

primary school teachers about the principles and practices of phonics can lead to changing their attitudes and beliefs about this approach. The insights provided in this paper can be useful for developing these teachers and other EFL teachers' understanding of phonics approaches of instructions.

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