

Independent Research in Hong Kong on Sounds Good English- Conclusion Page

The primary aim of my longitudinal study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a commercially available phonics program, “Sounds Good,” on the pronunciation and spelling of Hong Kong L1 Chinese secondary students at my school. The phonics instruction was intensive, systematic, and consistently taught three times a week for a minimum of 20 minutes per session. A pre-test and post-test were administered before and after the phonics intervention to accurately measure the improvement in spelling and pronunciation.

The total test scores reflected a significant improvement of 10.7% ($p < 0.001$) for the treatment group and 2.9% ($p\text{-value} < 0.01$) for the control group. The tests measured visual rhyme awareness, auditory rhyme awareness, spelling of real words and non-words, and pronunciation of real words and non-words. In particular, there were significant gains of 3.5% ($p < 0.001$) and 4.9% ($p < 0.001$) in the spelling and pronunciation sections of the test for the treatment group, but negligible gains of 0.4% ($p > 0.05$) and 0.3% ($p > 0.05$) in spelling and pronunciation for the control group. Therefore, we see that the significant gains in spelling, pronunciation and total scores in the post-test offer very convincing evidence that the phonics treatment directly improved students’ spelling and pronunciation of English words and pseudowords.

Undoubtedly, for even greater gains in spelling and pronunciation, the phonics program should be implemented at the beginning of the school year and last for the whole year. Most importantly, it needs to be integrated into a holistic reading program that would reinforce the phonics sounds that are taught and expose learners to even more sight words.

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