THE IMPACT OF RAISING PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS ON IMPROVING EFL LEARNERS READING COMPREHENSION: A CASE STUDY AT PREPARATORY YEAR NAJRAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT: *The study utilized experimental and descriptive approach to identify the impact of raising phonological awareness on improving EFL reading comprehension skill among Preparatory Year students at Najran University (NU). Phonological Awareness is an applied linguistic term which refers to the ability to hear and manipulate the sound structure of language. It is an encompassing term that involves working with the sounds of language at the word, syllable, and phoneme level and contains many processes. The study is an attempt to identify the impact of phonological awareness training and gender on reading performance of preparatory year students at NU. The sample consisted of (160) students, (80) males and (80) females. Phonological Awareness Skills Test and Cronbach Alpha Coefficient utilized to measure progress in four phonological awareness skills including word identification, word deletion, word blending and word rhyming while a reading passage. Pre- and post-Cloze Test applied to identify the reading levels of the participants. In addition, simple percentage and T-Test utilized to statically analyze the data. The results revealed that training on phonological awareness skills significantly improved the reading performance of the students in the experimental group.*

KEYWORDS: Phonological Awareness, Efl Learners, Comprehension, Najran University

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an indispensable skill in modern day societies, particularly in educational advancement of students since it provides access to written knowledge. Therefore, impaired reading can affect the academic achievement and educational career of students. Reading is an activity characterized by the translation of symbols/letters into words and sentences that have meanings to the individual. The ultimate goal of reading is to be able to understand which can be accomplished through phonological awareness. Phonological awareness is a broad skill that includes identifying and manipulating units and parts of oral language, such as words, syllables, onsets and rimes. Students who have phonological awareness are able to identify and make oral rhymes, to clap out the number of syllables in a word, and to recognize words with the same initial sounds, such as 'money' and 'mother'.

The literature on remediation and prevention of reading difficulties has provided evidence that phonological awareness is an important component of early reading development. Phonological awareness is defined as the understanding of the sound structure of oral language. Over the last decade, studies have established that phonological deficits are a precursor to reading disabilities (Wagner et al., 1993). Students with weak phonological awareness have difficulty understanding, that words can be broken into individual phonemes or acting on that knowledge. Weak phonological awareness may lead to learning disabilities, as students do not

know how to decode new words. Moreover, decoding problems lead to further difficulties in reading fluently and comprehension of written text.

Statement of the problem

Most of students who have passed their secondary school and have enrolled in the Preparatory Year Program (PYP) at NU have problems in mastering the English language reading comprehension skills, which affects their reading performance. The current study focuses on the impact of phonological awareness on improving EFL reading comprehension among students. With the help of data collected from the students, the author will provide some suggestions to reduce future problems regarding reading comprehension skills.

Objectives

This study is an attempt to identify the impact of phonological awareness tasks on reading comprehension and skills among preparatory year students. It also aimed at identifying the differences between male and females, gender influence, in phonological awareness. In addition to identifying students attitudes towards phonological awareness tasks.

Questions

The main question of the study states: does raising phonological awareness have an impact on improving EFL reading comprehension skill among students?

This leads to the following sub questions:

1. Do phonological awareness tasks have an impact on reading comprehension skill?

2. Do phonological awareness tasks improved reading skills among students?

3. Does gender have a significant effect on developing reading skills during phonological awareness training?

4. What are learners' attitudes towards phonological awareness tasks?

Hypothesis

1. Phonological awareness tasks have a positive impact on reading comprehension skill.

2. Utilizing Phonological Awareness program in teaching reading   comprehension improves students' reading skill.

3. There is no significant effect of gender on studying phonological awareness skills on reading performance.

4. Students, who have studied phonological awareness, acquired positive attitude towards Phonological Awareness program.

The Development of Phonological Awareness

Students begin to demonstrate Phonological Awareness through recognizing words as separate entities, such as 'What does that mean?' and syllables or rhymes; i.e. to be aware of how groups of sounds and words operate in spoken language, such as 'mat and pat' rhyme. They develop an awareness of individual sounds and can manipulate them, such as 'dad and dear'. These

individual sounds of language known as phonemes. An important link in developing phonological awareness is to encourage students to use invented or temporary spelling. When students attempt to write a word, they must first listen to their own language and segments of the word sounds, and finally try to match sounds with letters. Students need some phonological awareness to use invented spelling, but their exploration of sounds through writing helps them to discover more about how sounds and letters work in English and how to utilize this knowledge as they read.

The Role of Phonological Awareness

There are different levels of phonological awareness within words, including syllables, onsets and rimes, and sounds. Recognizing this has important implications on supporting student development of phonological awareness. Good readers look for familiar "letter patterns" as a strategy when attempting to decode or spell unfamiliar words. In other words, they use familiar sound chunks from known words not just individual sounds. This "chunking" of sounds makes the reading and spelling process much more effective and efficient. These letter patterns are based on familiar syllable or rhyme patterns as well as sound clusters and individual sounds. This ability to look inside words for syllables, rhymes, and individual sounds when reading and spelling is based on the student's phonological awareness. Students have to be able to segment, blend, and manipulate syllables, onset and rime, and sounds if they are going to be successful in using letter-sound knowledge effectively for reading and writing. The phonological awareness skills of segmenting and blending are most highly correlated with beginning reading acquisition (Snow et al., 1998).

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness:

Phonemic awareness refers to the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Phonemes are the smallest units comprising spoken language. Phonemes combine to form syllables and words. For example, the word 'mat' has three phonemes: /m/ /a/ /t/. There are 44 phonemes in English, including sounds represented by letter combinations such as /th/. Acquiring phonemic awareness is important because it is the foundation of spelling and word recognition skills. Phonemic awareness is one of the best predictors of how well children will learn to read during the first two years of school. Students with lower levels of phonological awareness are at risk of reading difficulty than do their classmates. The good news is that phonemic awareness and phonological awareness can be developed through a set of activities.

The Role of Phonological Awareness and Phonics

Students with high level of phonological awareness have the underlying framework in case of reading (decoding) and writing (encoding) when letter–sound correspondences (phonics) are learned. Students with lower level of phonological awareness can often learn "phonics", the knowledge of letters and sounds, but they have difficulty using this knowledge as they read and spell. So, if students are expected to use letters and sounds as a source of information or cueing system as they read and spell, and they have to, since English is based on an alphabetic system, it is important to ensure that they have a well-developed phonological awareness. Students who have difficulty with this area of language (approximately 20 percent) will struggle through school in figuring out *how sounds work in print*. They will not be able to use sound knowledge effectively because they will not have the underlying ability to "listen inside a word" and "play with the sounds" they hear (Fitzpatrick, 1997).

The phonological process usually works unconsciously when we listen and speak. It is designed to extract the meaning of what is said, not to notice the speech sounds in the words. It is designed to do its job automatically in the service of efficient communication. But reading and spelling require a level of metalinguistic speech that is not natural or easily acquired. On the other hand, phonological skill is not strongly related to intelligence. Some very intelligent people have limitations of linguistic awareness, especially at the phonological level. Phonological awareness is important because it helps students learning how words in their language are represented in print. Many studies have found that phonemic awareness among pre-readers is a powerful predictor of future success in reading and spelling; more powerful than IQ or mental age (Torgesen, 2000). Studies, including Liberman & Shankweiler, 1985; Torgesen, 2000; Wagner, 1985) laid emphasis on the importance of phonological awareness for skillful reading. "It is now widely accepted that the primary cause of reading disability for a majority of children lies in phonological processing inefficiencies that interfere with the development of phonological skills such as phoneme segmentation, verbal memory, and name retrieval" (O'Shaughnessy & Swanson, 2000).

Deficits in phonological awareness cause reading problems in three key ways:-

First, in order to learn to translate oral language to print, the student must be sensitive to the internal structure of words; the sounds within each word. If he is unable to hear those individual phonemes, the alphabetic principle (i.e., how print translates to speech sounds) that underlies our system of written language will never make sense (Chard & Dickson, 1999). Students who possess phonological awareness can pick off and think about the sounds in spoken words, which helps them remembering the correspondence between sound and symbol as they lean about letters of the alphabet. When students have this awareness, they discover ways in which spoken language is encoded by print becomes meaningful (O'Connor et al., 1993).

Second, students with lower phonological awareness find it hard to remember which letter represents which sound. This difficulty with phonological decoding can lead to misreading words. If word-reading errors are not corrected, reinforced incorrect print-to-sound associations will become permanent and interfere with the student's attempts to read similar words later (Olson et al., 1994).

Third, poor phonological skills can indirectly affect reading comprehension. If a student misreads important words in a passage, he may miss the main ideas being relayed. Also, if the reader is spending excessive energy trying to decode each word o f a sentence, his comprehension will be jeopardized (Olson et al., 1994).

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Phonological awareness is critical for learning to read any alphabetic writing system. Previous studies show that poor phoneme awareness and other phonological skills is a predictor of poor reading and spelling development. Ehri et al., 2004 and Troia, 1999 asserts that phonological awareness is critical for learning to read any alphabetic writing system. Phonological awareness is even important for reading other kinds of writing systems, such as Chinese and Japanese. There are several well-established lines of argument about the importance of phonological skills to reading and spelling. English uses an alphabetic writing system in which the letters, singly and in combination, represent single speech sounds. According to Liberman & Shankweiler, 1985 and Troia, 1999, people who can turn words to sounds and put them together

have the basic skill of using the alphabetic. Without phoneme awareness, students may be mystified by the print system and how it represents the spoken word. Phoneme awareness facilitates growth in printed word recognition. Even before a student learns to read, we can predict with a high level of accuracy whether that student will be a good reader or a poor reader by the end of third grade and beyond (Good and Kaminski, 2007 and Torgesen, 2000). Prediction is possible with simple tests that measure awareness of speech sounds in words, knowledge of letter names, knowledge of sound-symbol correspondence, and vocabulary, so phoneme awareness predicts later outcomes in reading and spelling. The majority of poor readers have relative difficulty with phoneme awareness and other phonological skills.

Previous studies have repeatedly referred to poor readers as individuals with lower achievement in phoneme awareness tasks than other cognitive tasks. In addition, at least 80% of poor readers are estimated to have weak phonological awareness and/or phonological memory. Readers with phonological processing weaknesses also tend to be the poorest spellers. Instruction in speech-sound awareness reduces and alleviates reading and spelling difficulties (Adams et al., 1998 and Gillon, 2004). Teaching speech sounds explicitly and directly accelerates learning the alphabetic code. Therefore, classroom instruction for beginning readers should include phoneme awareness activities.

METHODOLOGY

The current study utilized experimental and descriptive approach to investigate the impact of phonological awareness tasks on EFL learners reading performance. After being written, the pre- and post-evaluation test items, and observations items were submitted to five reviewers, who were university teachers, to comment about the tasks. They gave their opinion by adding, omitting or modifying some items.

The population of the study compromises students who have passed their secondary school and enrolled in the Preparatory Year Program at NU. They voluntarily joined the task throughout one semester. The sample consisted of (160) students, (80) males and (80) females. It has been divided into control and experimental groups compromising (40) student from each gender. A pre- and post-test will be handled to both groups. The result of the test will be statistically analyzed via SPSS. An observation team will participate in reporting student progress in reading skill. Remarks will jotted down to check if the program enhances the target skill. A teacher questionnaire will be distributed to measure the impact phonological awareness on reading skill. An interview with the students will be done to measure their attitudes towards phonological awareness program.

Analysis, Results and Discussion

Descriptive analysis utilized to analyze the questionnaires output. The statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) applied to conduct such analyses. In addition to utilizing simple coding scheme where all Likert options were codes from (1) Excellent to (6) V .Poor whereas the frequencies and arithmetic mean were also calculated.

Reliability Statistics

To answer the question, which states: Do phonological awareness tasks have an impact on reading comprehension skill?

Table (1) pre- and post-test reading level deals with the analysis of data collected through the tests for the students of the experimental and control groups. The arithmetic mean is compared to identify the impact of phonological awareness tasks on reading comprehension skills, Figure (1).

Table (1) mean and standard deviation for the two groups' reading comprehension skills

Valid	N	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
gender	320	80	1.50	.501
Group	320	80	1.50	.501
Summary of students' abilities and needs	320	80	1.74	.441
Evaluates what has been read	320	80	1.74	.441
Summarizes what has been read	320	80	1.74	.437
Rereads to deepen understanding	320	80	1.74	.441
Pauses, reflects, and makes notes	320	80	1.77	.422
Notes main ideas and key supporting details	320	80	1.71	.456
Self-monitoring and self-correcting	320	80	1.72	.449
Makes and confirms predictions	320	80	1.76	.426
Makes connections to text, experiences, and other texts	320	80	1.74	.439
Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events	320	80	1.66	.474
Develops the purpose for reading	320	80	1.74	.441
Links prior knowledge before reading	320	80	1.74	.441
sample	320	80	1.50	.501

Reliability coefficients

No. of cases = 320.0   No. of item = 12   Alpha = .9933

The results of the analysis show that the value of Alpha is (0.901).

Table (2) Sample Frequencies

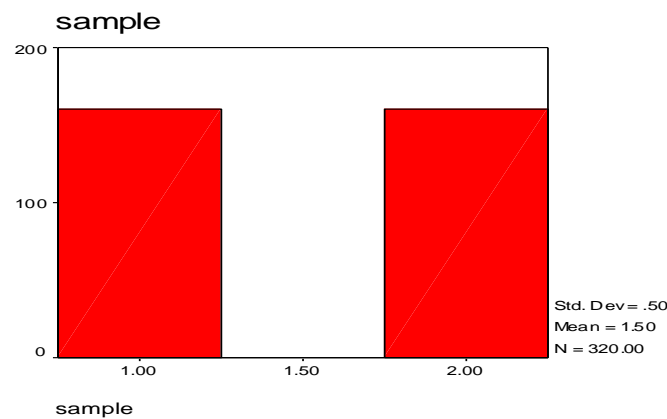|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	pre	160	40.0	50.0	50.0
	post	160	40.0	100.0	50.0
	Total	320	80.0	100.0	
Missing	System	80	20.0		
Total		400	100.0		

Figure (1) Mean and standard deviation for the two groups' reading comprehension skills

Table (1-1) sample, group, and Links prior knowledge before reading and Notes of main ideas and key supporting details Cross-tabulation

Links prior knowledge before reading			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	78	2	80
	total		80	4	84
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	2	78	80
	total		80	156	236

Diagram (1-1)

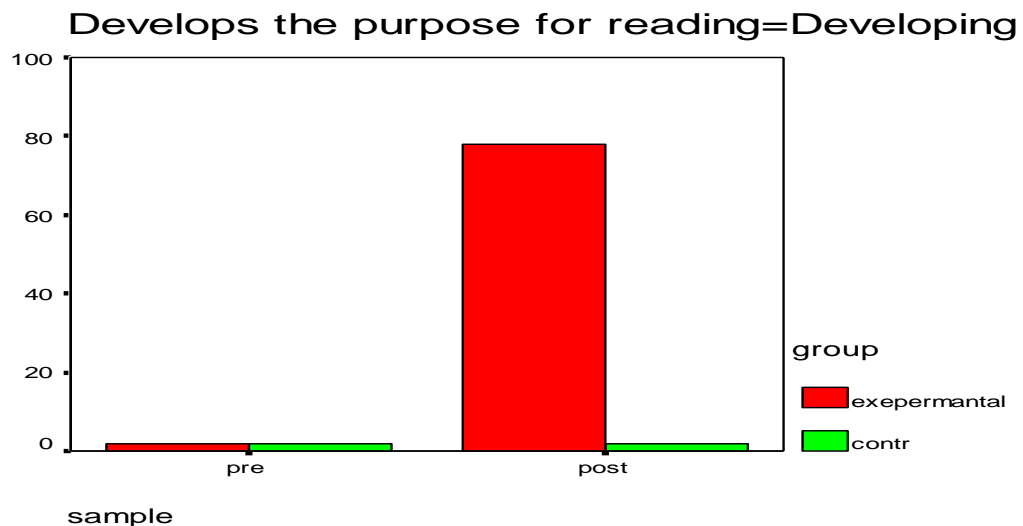The above table and diagram show the result of the first item: links prior knowledge before reading. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (78) and the control group still (2).

Table (1-2) Developing the purpose for reading

| Developing the purpose for reading			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	78	2	80
	total		80	4	84
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	2	78	80
	total		80	156	236

Diagram (1-2)

The above table and diagram show the result of the second item: Develops the purpose of reading. The pre-test result for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (78) and the control group still (2).

**Table (1-3) Using titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events**

Using titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	10	10	20
		post	78	10	88
	total		88	20	108
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	70	70	140
		post	2	70	72
	total		72	140	212

Diagram (1-3)
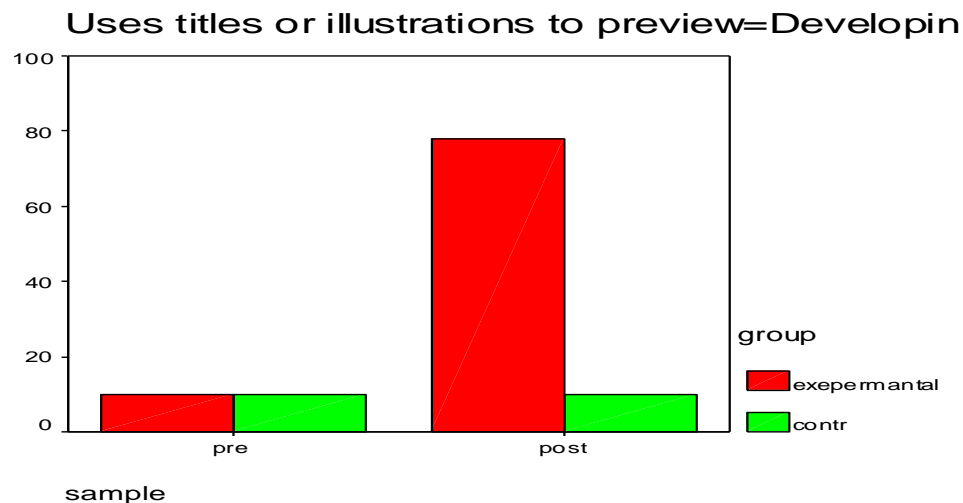
The above table and diagram show the result of the third item: Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events. The pre-test for the two groups was (10) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (78) and the control group still (10).

Table (1-4) Making connections to text, experiences, and other texts

Making connections to text, experiences, and other texts			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	77	2	79
	total		79	4	83
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	3	78	81
	total		81	156	237

Diagram (1-4)

Makes connections to text, experiences,=Devel
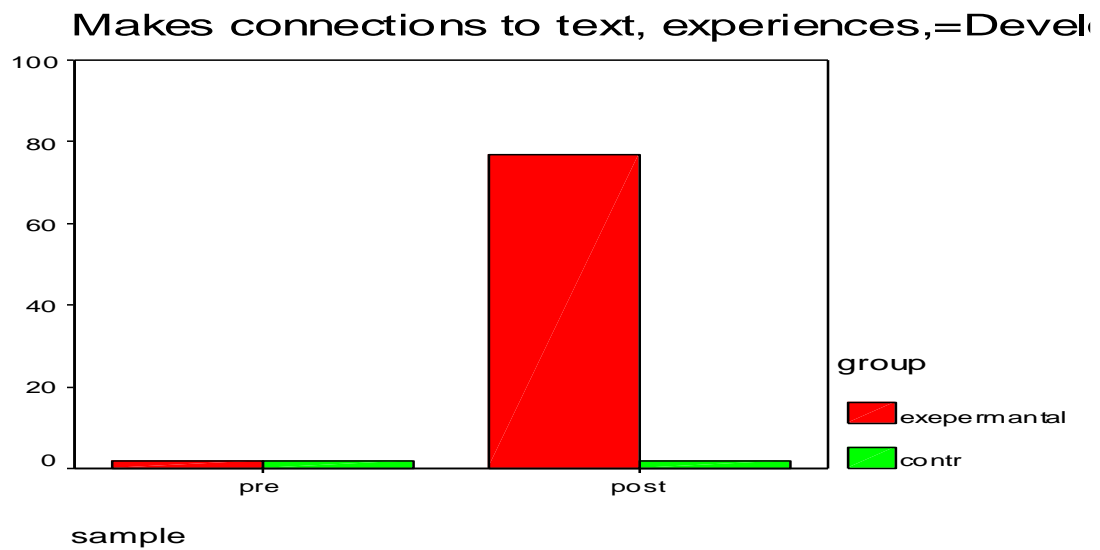
The above table and diagram show the result of the fourth item: Making connections to text, experiences, and other texts. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (77) and the control group still (2).

Table (1-5) Making and confirming predictions

Making and confirming predictions			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	70	2	72
	total		72	4	76
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	10	78	88
	total		88	156	244

Diagram (1-5)

Makes and confirms predictions=Developing Ad
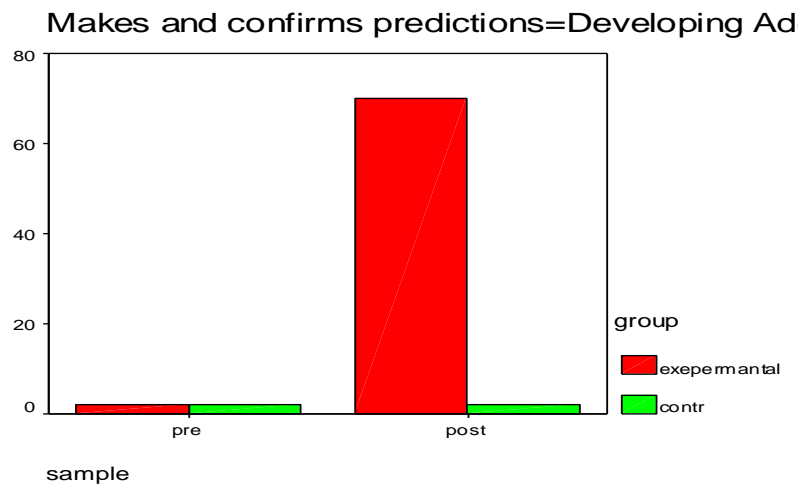
The above table and diagram show the result of the fifth item: Making and confirming predictions. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (70) and the control group still (2).

Table (1-6) Self-monitoring and self-correcting

Self-monitoring and self-correcting			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	4	4	8
		post	77	4	81
	total		81	8	89
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	76	76	152
		post	3	76	79
	total		79	152	231

Diagram (1-6)

Self-monitoring and self-correcting=Developing

The above table and diagram show the result of the sixth item which: Self-monitoring and self-correcting. The pre-test for the two groups was (4) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (77) and the control group still (4).
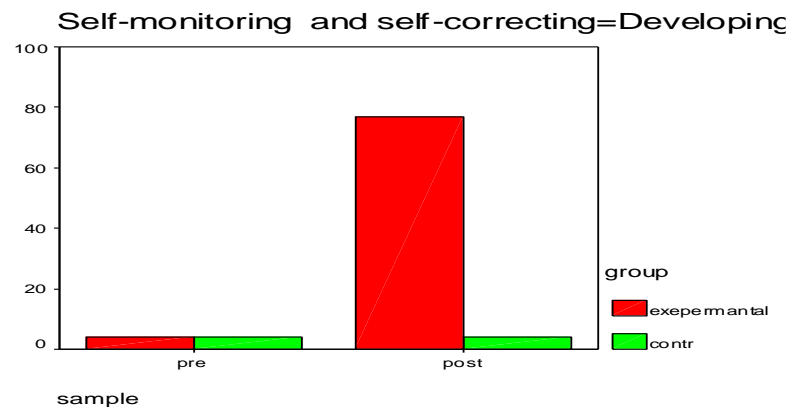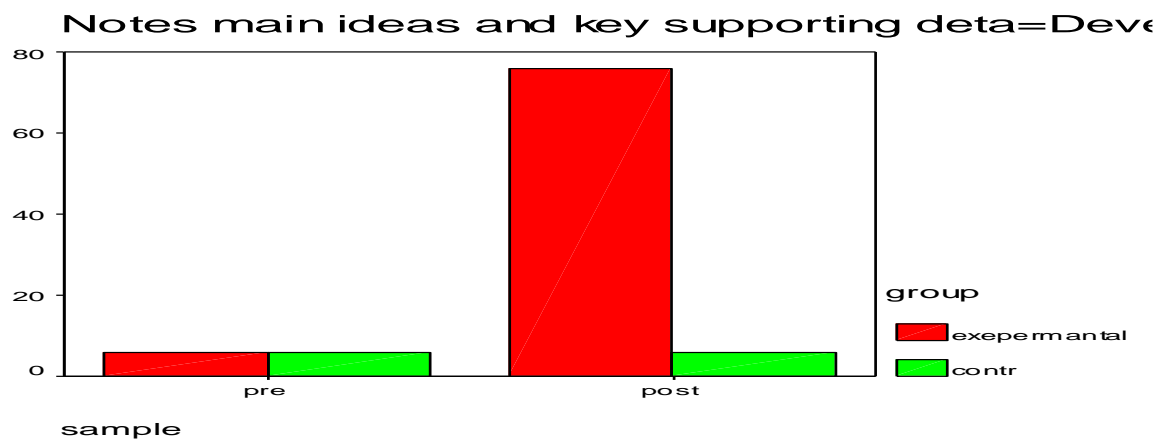
Table (1-7) Notes, main ideas and key supporting details

Self-monitoring and self-correcting			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	6	6	12
		post	76	6	82
	total		82	12	94
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	74	74	148
		post	4	74	78
	total		78	148	226

Diagram (1-7)

The above table and diagram show the result of the seventh item: Notes, main ideas and key supporting details. The pre-test for the two groups was (6) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (76) and the control group still (6).

Table (1-8) Pauses, reflects, and making notes

Pauses, reflects, and making notes			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	68	2	70
	total		70	4	74
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	12	78	90
	total		90	156	246

Diagram (1-8)

Pauses, reflects, and makes notes=Developing ʌ
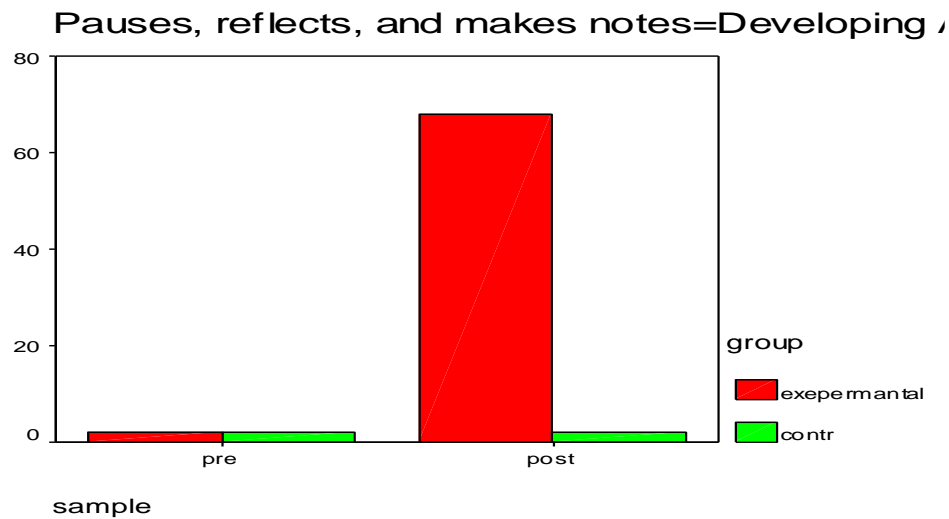
The above table and diagram show the result of the eighth item: Pauses, reflects, and making notes. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (68) and the control group still (2).

Table (1-9) Rereading to deepen understanding

Rereading to deepen understanding			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	78	2	80
	total		80	4	84
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	2	78	80
	total		80	156	236

Diagram (1-9)

Rereads to deepen understanding=Developing

The above table and diagram show the result of the ninth item: Rereading to deepen understanding. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (78) and the control group still (2).

Table (1-10) Summarizing what has been read
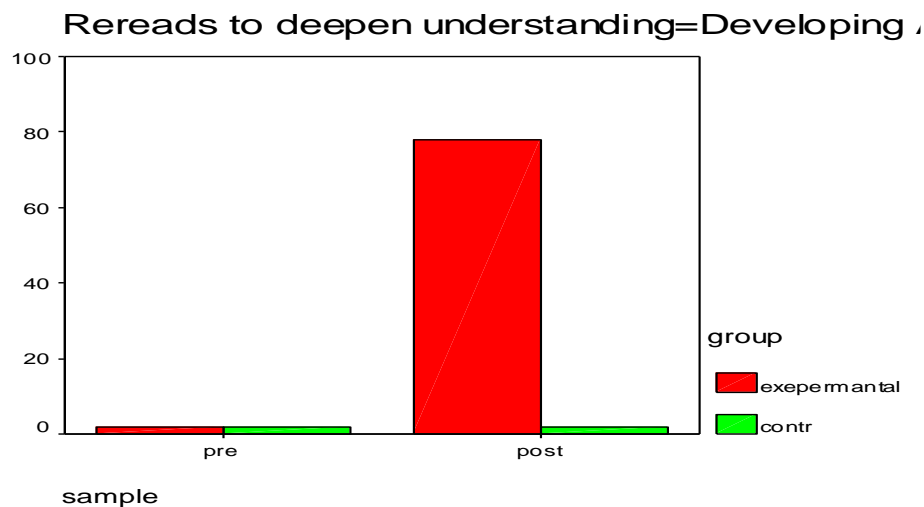
Summarizing what has been read			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	76	2	78
	total		78	4	82
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	4	78	82
	total		82	156	238

Diagram (1-10)

Summarizes what has been read=Developing A

The above table and diagram show the result of the tenth item: Summarizing what has been read. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (76) and the control group still (2).
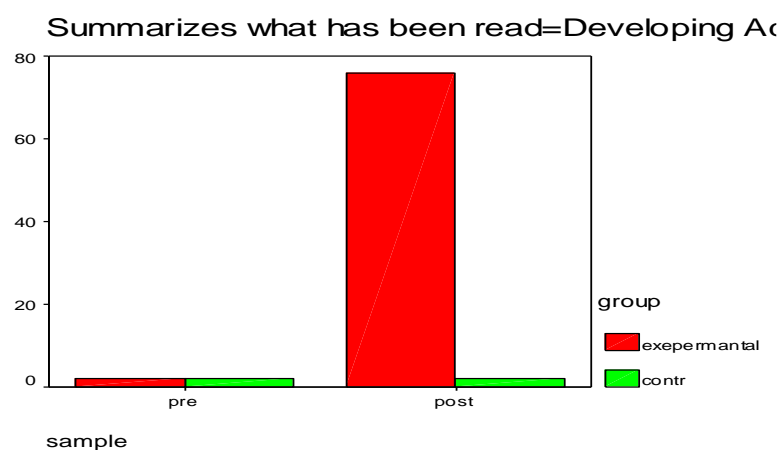
Table (1-11) Evaluating what has been read

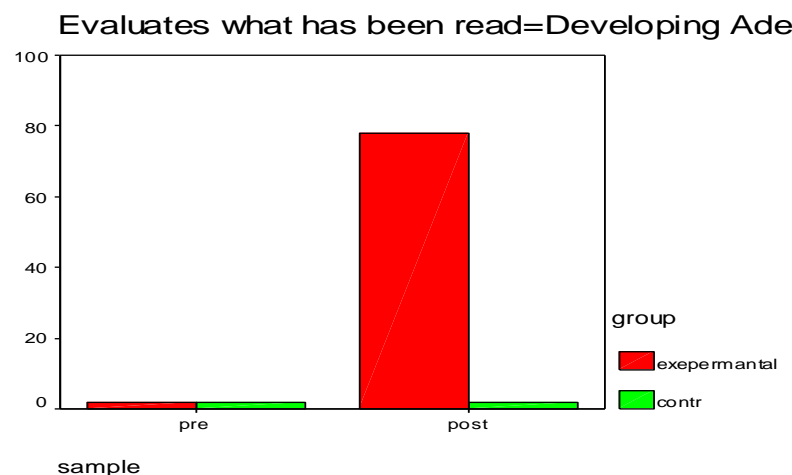| Evaluating what has been read			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	78	2	80
		total	80	4	84
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	2	78	80
		total	80	156	236

Diagram (1-11)

The above table and diagram show the result of the eleventh item: Evaluating what has been read. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (78) and the control group still (2).

Table (1-12) Summary of students' abilities and needs

| Summary of students' abilities and needs			group		Total
			Experimental	control	
Developing adequately date	sample	Pre	2	2	4
		post	78	2	80
		total	80	4	84
Needs improvement	sample	Pre	78	78	156
		post	2	78	80
		total	80	156	236

Diagram (1-12)

The above table and diagram show the result of the twelve item: Summary of students' abilities and needs. The pre-test for the two groups was (2) while the post-test result for the experimental group increased to (78) and the control group still (2).

The results of the pre- and post-test reading performance of the experimental students after the intervention revealed that there is significant effect of the training on the phonological awareness skills on the students reading performance. This finding is consistent with O'Connor et Al. (1993). Children who possess phonological awareness can pick off and think about the sounds in spoken words, which helps them to remember the correspondence between sound and symbol as they learn about letters of the alphabet. When children have this awareness, discovering ways in which spoken language is encoded by print becomes meaningful. Phonological awareness tasks have a positive impact on reading comprehension output, it appeared in the experimental group performance. Hypotheses number one: "Phonological awareness tasks have a positive impact on reading comprehension output", fulfilled.

To answer question number two which state: Is phonological awareness tasks improve the learners' reading skills?

Table (2) Assessing, Evaluating and Reporting Progress; Analytic Scoring Rubric for Reading

Criteria	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Total
Reading skill and strategies	2	6	16	136	160
Comprehension	2	7	15	136	160
	1	10	14	135	160
	2	6	14	138	160
Response	0	9	16	135	160
	0	8	14	138	160
	0	7	14	139	160
	0	2	16	142	160
	0	2	16	142	160
	7	53	103	957	1120
	0.777778	5.888889	11.44444	106.3333	124.4444
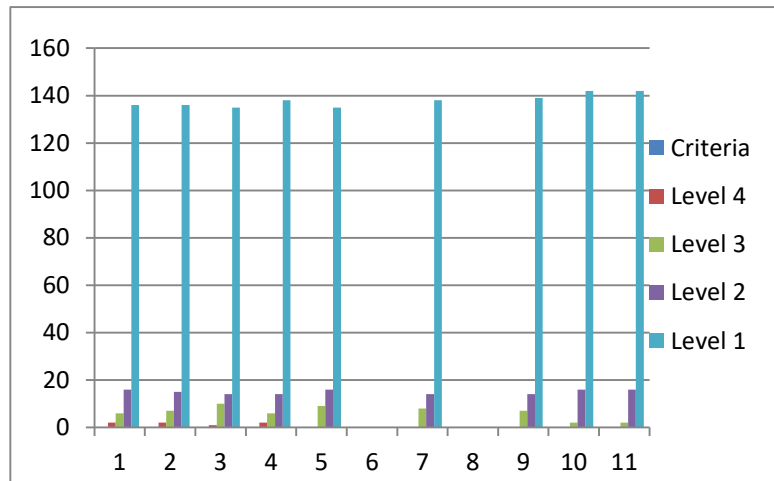
Diagram (2)

The observation team reported the students' progress in developing reading skill in the experimental group. They followed the criteria from Table (2): Reading skill and strategies, Comprehension, and Response. In *reading skill and strategies* criteria, most of the students when they started the program were using few strategies before, during, and after the reading process. After four weeks, they used some basic strategies before, during, and after the reading process. During the eight week, they used a range of strategies before, during, and after the reading process. Finally, during the fifteen week, they consistently and properly used a range of strategies before, during, and after the reading process. The observation team reported that students *Comprehension,* when they started studying the course, demonstrates limited understanding of ideas, information concepts, and/or themes in text. After five weeks, they started to demonstrate some understanding of ideas, information, and/or themes in text. During the ninth week, they demonstrate clear understanding of ideas information, concepts, and/or themes in text. Finally, during the fifteen week, they become able to demonstrate insightful understanding of ideas, information, concepts, and/or themes in text. When the students started the program, the majority were able to identify explicit messages, but have difficulty in identifying the implicit messages in the text. After four weeks, they identified the explicit and some of the implicit messages in the text. After five weeks, they identified the explicit and implicit messages in the text then at week number fifteen they became able to explain the relationship between the explicit and implicit messages in the text. When the students stared the program, they had difficulty in explaining how ideas are organized and how concepts and elements/techniques have been utilized. After four weeks, they explained in a simple way how ideas are organized and how key concepts and element/techniques have been used to achieve a particular effect. Within the ninth week, they explained how ideas are organized and how key concepts and elements /techniques have been used to achieve particular effects. After four weeks, they became able to explain in a through and insightful way how ideas are organized and how key concepts and elements/techniques have been used to achieve particular effects. For the last criteria; *Response*, according to the team, when the students stared the program, they need assistance and prompting to respond from personal viewpoint. After four weeks, they became able to respond personally to the text. After five weeks, the

students became able to respond personally and thoughtfully to the text, then after four weeks, the students became able to respond critically and thoughtfully to the text.

When the students stared the course, they respond personally with limited detail and support. After four weeks, they became able to respond personally with some detail and support. After four weeks, they respond personally with considerable detail and support, then after five weeks they became able to respond personally with a high degree of detail and effectiveness. Also, when the students stared the course, they respond critically with limited analysis and support. When assisted after four weeks, they respond critically with some analysis and support. When prompted, after five weeks they respond critically with considerable analysis and support. When they stared the course, they made connections with other texts with limited understanding. After four weeks, they made connections with other texts with limited understanding. Then, after five weeks, they made connections with other texts with some understanding. After eight weeks they made connections with other texts with other texts with considerable understanding, then they made connections with other texts with other texts with considerable understanding. Finally after four weeks they made connections with other texts with a high degree of understanding. When they started the course, they show a limited awareness of personal bias in presentations. After four weeks, they identify and explain overt and covert bias. After five weeks they identify and explain overt and covert bias in presentations; then after eight weeks, they identify and explain overt and covert bias, avoid and actively challenge bias in presentations.

According to the above-mentioned report, phonological awareness tasks improve learners reading skills. The second hypotheses: Using Phonological Awareness program in teaching reading comprehension increases students' reading skill, fulfilled. To answer question number three which states: does gender has a significant effect on studying phonological awareness skills on the reading performance.

Table 3 Pre- and Post-test to evaluate reading level applied to find if gender has an effect on the training on phonological awareness

Valid	Male			Female			Total		
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean	N	Std. Dev.
Sample	1.50	160	.502	1.50	160	.502	1.50	320	.501
Summary of students' abilities and needs	1.74	160	.441	1.74	160	.441	1.74	320	.441
Evaluates what has been read	1.74	160	.441	1.74	160	.441	1.74	320	.441
Summarizes what has been read	1.74	160	.438	1.74	160	.438	1.74	320	.437
Rereads to deepen understanding	1.74	160	.441	1.74	160	.441	1.74	320	.441

	Mean	N	SD	Mean	N	SD	Mean	N	SD
Pauses, reflects, and makes notes	1.77	160	.423	1.77	160	.423	1.77	320	.422
Notes main ideas and key supporting details	1.71	160	.457	1.71	160	.457	1.71	320	. 456
Self-monitoring and self-correcting	1.73	160	.448	1.72	160	.451	1.72	320	.449
Makes and confirms predictions	1.76	160	.427	1.76	160	.427	1.76	320	.426
Makes connections to text, experiences, and other texts	1.74	160	.438	1.74	160	.441	1.74	320	.439
Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events	1.66	160	.474	1.66	160	.474	1.66	320	.474
Develops the purpose for reading	1.74	160	.441	1.74	160	.441	1.66	320	.441
Links prior knowledge before reading	1.74	160	.441	1.74	160	.441	1.74	320	.441

Table (3) show the same mean and standard deviation for male and female for eleven items, including Links prior knowledge before reading, Develops the purpose for reading, Makes connections to text, experiences, and other texts, Rereads to deepen understanding, Summarizes what has been read, Evaluates what has been read, and Summary of students' abilities and needs. The mean equals (1.75), while the standard deviation is (0.441). The Mean of 'Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events' equals (1.66) and the standard deviation is (0.474). 'Makes and confirms predictions' has a Mean (1.76), standard deviation is (0.427). The mean of 'Notes main ideas and key supporting details' equals (1.71) and standard deviation (0.457). 'Pauses, reflects, and makes notes' has a mean of (1.77) and standard deviation (423). There is insignificant difference between male and female in self-monitoring and self-correcting item. The mean of male equals (1.73), while female has a mean of (1.72), standard deviation for the male is (448) and female (457). Thus, the result revealed that there is insignificant effect of gender on phonological awareness skills training on reading performance of preparatory year students, NU. For more details see the following tables and diagrams.

Table (3-1) Links prior knowledge before reading and Develops the purpose for reading

Links prior knowledge before reading	Develops the purpose for reading			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	40	42
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	80	84
Needs improvement	Needs improvement	gender	male	78	40	118
			female	78	40	118
		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-1)

Develops the purpose for reading=Developing A

Links prior knowledge before reading=Developin

Table (3-2) Pauses, reflects, and makes notes

Pauses, reflects, and makes notes	Develops the purpose for reading			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	35	37
			female	2	35	37
		total		4	70	74
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male		5	5
			female		5	5
		total			10	10
	Needs improvement	gender	male	78	40	118
			female	78	40	118

		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-2)

Develops the purpose for reading=Developing A

Pauses, reflects, and makes notes=Developing /

Table (3-3) Rereads to deepen understanding

Rereads to deepen understanding	Develops the purpose for reading			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	40	42
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	80	84
Needs improvement	Needs improvement	gender	male	78	40	118
			female	78	40	118
		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-3)

Develops the purpose for reading=Developing A

Rereads to deepen understanding=Developing /

Table (3-4) Summarizes what has been read

Summarizes what has been read	Develops the purpose for reading			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	35	37
			female	2	35	37
		total		4	70	74
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male		5	5
			female		5	5
		total			10	10
	Needs improvement	gender	male	78	40	118
			female	78	40	118
		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-4)

Table (3-5) Evaluates what has been read

Evaluates what has been read	Develops the purpose for reading			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	40	42
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	80	84
Needs improvement	Needs improvement	gender	male	78	40	118
			female	78	40	118
		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-5)

Develops the purpose for reading=Developing A

Evaluates what has been read=Developing Adec

Table (3-6) Summary of students' abilities and needs:

Summary of students' abilities and needs:	Develops the purpose for reading			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	40	42
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	80	84
Needs improvement	Needs improvement	gender	male	78	40	118
			female	78	40	118
		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-6)

Develops the purpose for reading=Developing A

Summary of students' abilities and needs=Devel

Table (3-7) Links prior knowledge before reading and Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events
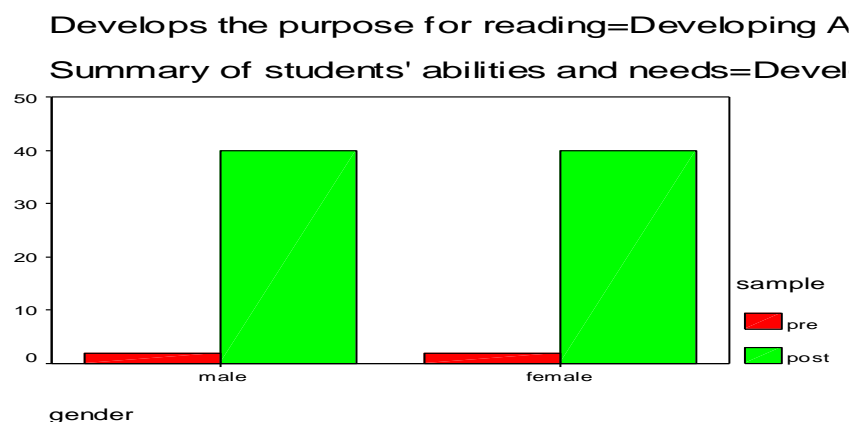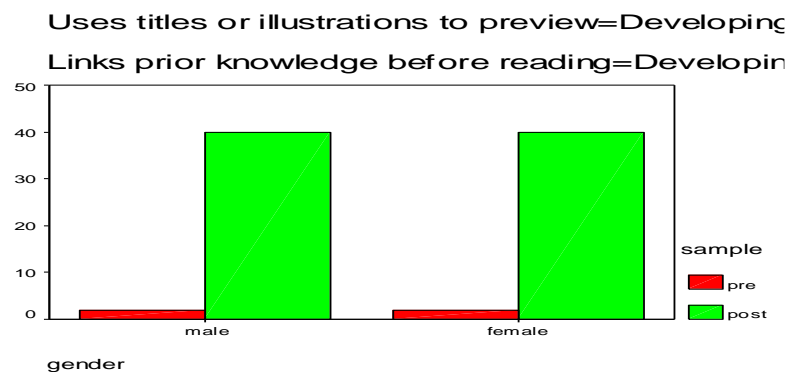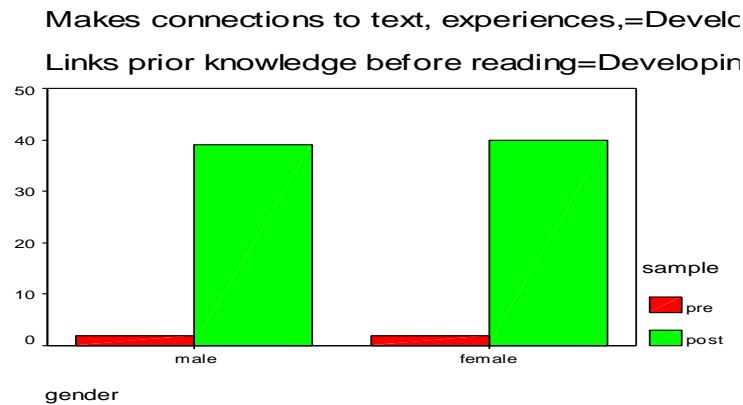
Links prior knowledge before reading	Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	40	42
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	80	84
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	8	4	12
			female	8	4	12
		total		16	8	24
	Needs improvement	gender	male	70	36	106
			female	70	36	106
		total		140	72	212

Diagram (3-7)

Uses titles or illustrations to preview=Developing

Links prior knowledge before reading=Developin

Table (3-8) Makes connections to text, experiences, and other texts

Links prior knowledge before reading	Makes connections to text, experiences, and other texts			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	39	41
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	79	83
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male		1	1
			female		1	1
		total			1	1
		gender	male	78	40	118

	Needs improvement		female	78	40	118
		total		156	80	236

Diagram (3-8)

Makes connections to text, experiences,=Develc

Links prior knowledge before reading=Developin

gender

Table (3-9) Makes and confirms predictions

Links prior knowledge before reading	Makes and confirms predictions			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	39	41
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	79	83
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male		1	1
			female		1	1
		total			1	1
	40 40	40	40	40	40	118
		40	40	40	40	118
		80	80	80	80	236

Diagram (3-9)

Makes and confirms predictions=Developing Ad

Pauses, reflects, and makes notes=Developing ʌ
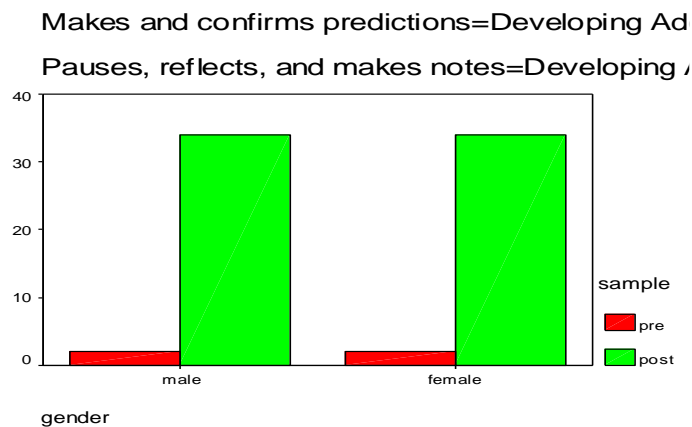
Table (3-10)

Pauses, reflects, and makes notes	Self-monitoring and self-correcting			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	39	41
			female	2	40	42
		total		4	79	83
	Needs improvement	gender	male		1	1
			female		1	1
		total			1	1
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2		
			female	2	1	3
		total		4	2	6
	Needs improvement	gender	male	76	39	115
			female	76	39	115
		total		152	78	230

Diagram (3-10)

Self-monitoring and self-correcting=Developing
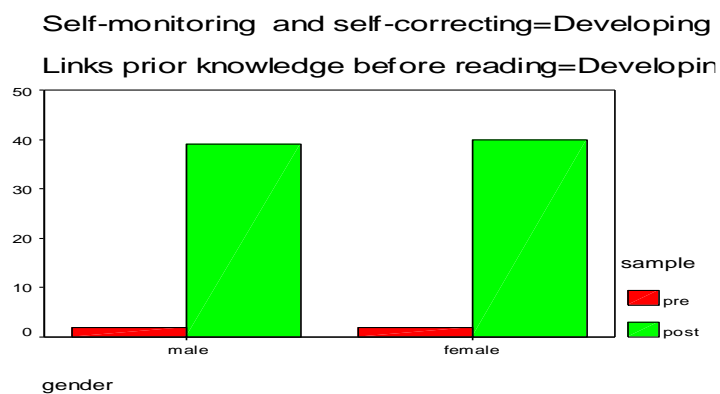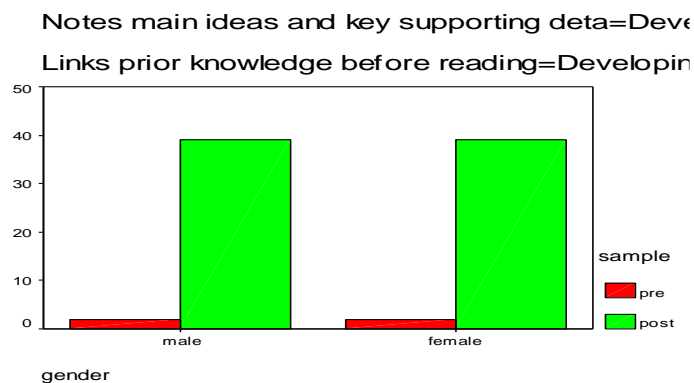
Links prior knowledge before reading=Developin

Table (3-11) Notes main ideas and key supporting details

Pauses, reflects, and makes notes	Notes main ideas and key supporting details			Sample		Total
				pre -	Post-	
Developing adequately date sample	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	2	39	41
			female	2	39	41
		total		4	78	82
	Needs improvement	gender	male		1	1
			female		1	1
		total			2	2
Needs improvement	Developing adequately date sample	gender	male	4	2	6
			female	4	2	6
		total		8	4	12
	Needs improvement	gender	male	74	38	112
			female	74	38	112
		total		148	76	224

Diagram (3-11)

Notes main ideas and key supporting deta=Deve
Links prior knowledge before reading=Developin

The results further revealed that there is no statistical significant difference in the reading performance of males and females, so hypotheses number three: There is no significant effect of gender on studying phonological awareness skills on reading performance, was verified.

To answer question number four: What are learners' attitudes towards phonological awareness tasks after studying it? The researcher analyzed Figure 4-1.

N of cases = 20

N of item = 10

Alpha: .9827

Table (4) mean and standard deviation for the learners' attitudes towards phonological awareness tasks after studying

Valid	N	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
The course as a whole	20	0	1.30	.470
The course content	20	0	1.40	.598
The course organization	20	0	1.25	.444
Clarity of course objectives	20	0	1.40	.503
Sequential presentation	20	0	1.35	.587
Interest level of class sessions	20	0	1.35	.587
Relevance and usefulness of course content	20	0	1.30	.470
Evaluative and grading techniques	20	0	1.30	.571
Clarity and student responsibility and requirements	20	0	1.30	.571
Use of class time	20	0	1.30	.571

Table (4-1) the course as a whole

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	14	70.0	70.0	70.0
	V. good	6	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Diadram 4-1

The course as whole was

Std. Dev = .47
Mean = 1.30
N = 20.00

The course as whole was
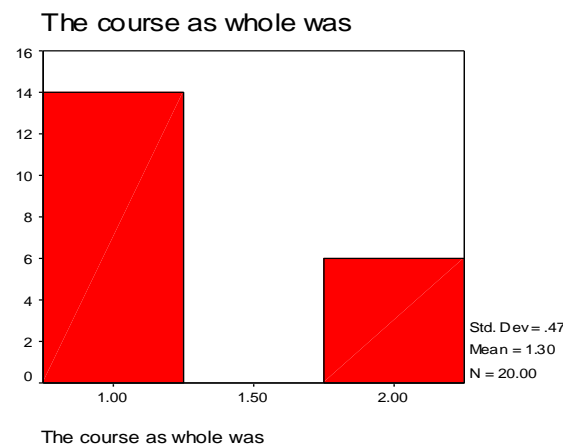
Seventy percent of the leareners perceived the course as whole was excellent and thirty percent perceived the course as whole was very good.

Table 4-2 the course content

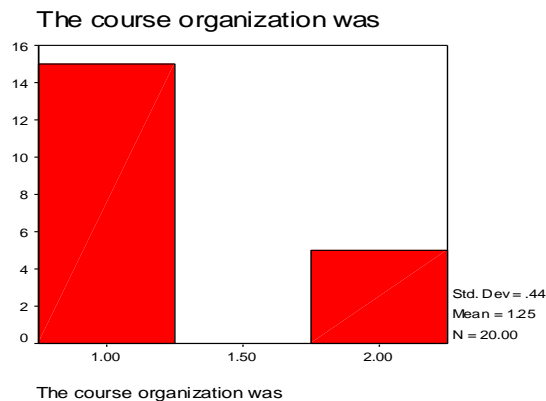|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	13	65.0	65.0	65.0
	V. good	6	30.0	30.0	95.0
	good	1	5.0	5.0	11.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

Diagram 4-2
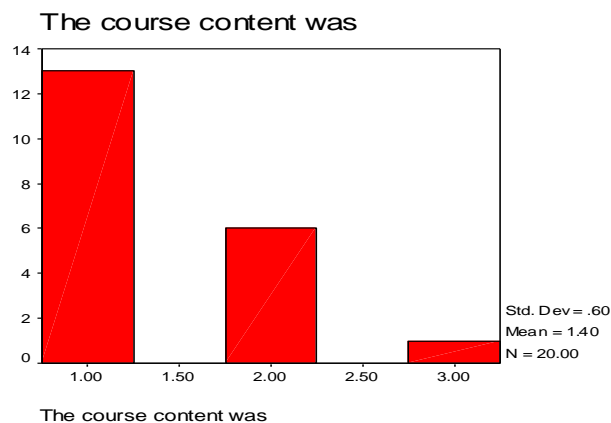
Sixty five percent of the learners perceived the course content as excellent, thirty percent perceived it as very good and five percent perceived it as good.

Table (4-3) the course organization

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	15	75.0	75.0	75.0
	V. good	5	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Diagrm (4-3)

The course organization was

Seventy five percent of the learners perceived the course organization as excellent and twenty five percent as very good.

Table (4-4) sequential presentation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	14	70.0	70.0	70.0
	V. good	5	25.0	25.0	95.0
	good	1	5.0	5.0	11.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

Diagram n-4-4

Sequential presentation
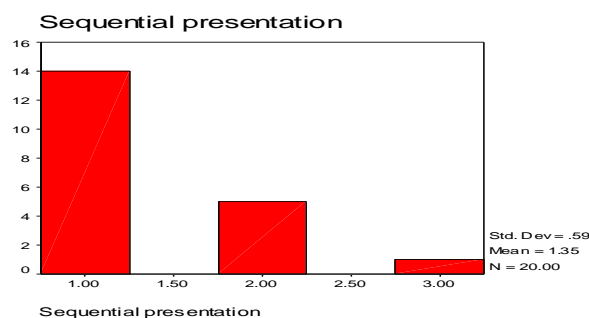
Seventy percent of the learners perceived sequential presentation of concepts as

Excllent , fifty five percent was very good and five percent was good.

Table (4-5) clarity of course objectives

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	12	60.0	60.0	60.0
	V. good	8	40.0	40.0	100.0

	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Digram (4-5)

Clarity of course objective was
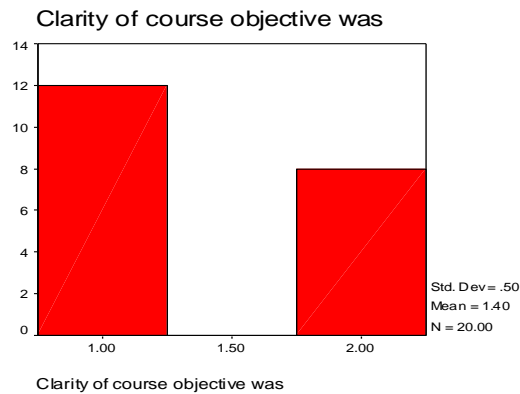
Clarity of course objective was excellent according to sixty percent and very good according to forty percent.

Table (4-6) interset level of class sessions

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	14	70.0	70.0	70.0
	V. good	5	25.0	25.0	95.0
	good	1	5.0	5.0	11.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

Diagram (4-6)

Interest level of class sessions was
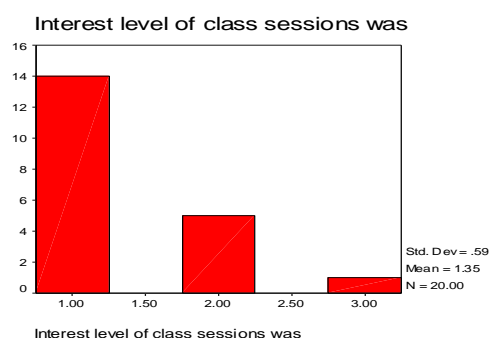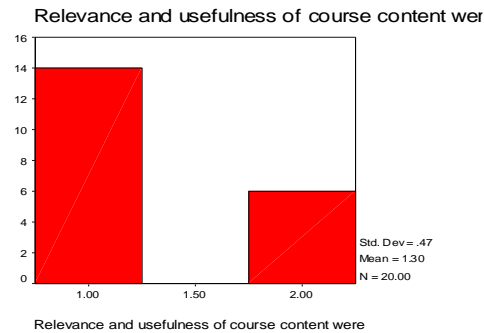
The above table and diagram show that Interest level of class sessions perceived as excellent by seventy percent of the students and twenty five percent perceived it as very good and five percent as good.

Table (4-7) relevance and usfulness of course content

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Excellent	14	70.0	70.0	70.0
	V. good	6	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Diagram (4-7)

Relevance and usefulness of course content were

The above table and and diagram show that relevance and usefulness of course content were excellent according to seventy percent of the learners and thirty percent perceived it as very good.

Table (4-8) evaluative and grading techniques

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	15	75.0	75.0	75.0
	V. good	4	20.0	20.0	95.0
	good	1	5.0	5.0	11.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

Digram (4-8)

Evaluative and grading techniques were(test - papers - project)
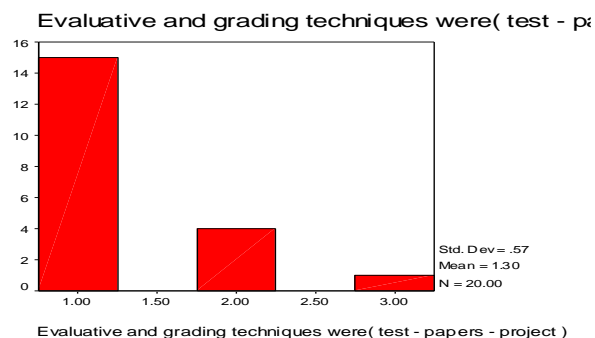
The above result show that evaluative and grading techniques get excellent by seventy five percent of the students and twenty very percent perceived it as V. good and five percent as good.

Table (4-9) clarity and students responsibilty and requiremnets

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	15	75.0	75.0	75.0
	V. good	4	20.0	20.0	95.0
	good	1	5.0	5.0	11.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

Digram 4-9

Clarity and students responsibility and requireme

Std. Dev = .57
Mean = 1.30
N = 20.00

Clarity and students responsibility and requirement was
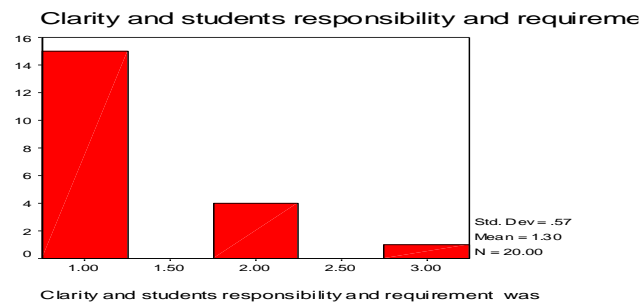
The result show clarity and students responsibility and requirement was excellent as seen by seventy five percent, twenty percent was very good and five percent was good.

Table (4-10) Use of class time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	15	75.0	75.0	75.0
	V. good	4	20.0	20.0	95.0
	good	1	5.0	5.0	11.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	100.0

Diagram (4-10)

Use of class time was

Std. Dev = .57
Mean = 1.30
N = 20.00

Use of class time was
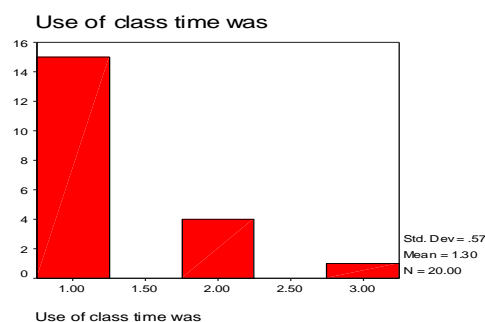
The results show that Use of class time were perceived as seventy five percent of the students as excellent , twenty percent as very good and five percent as good.

From the previous analysis of the student questionnaire we conclude that:

The students who had studied phonological awareness acquired positive attitude towards Phonological Awareness program. It means that hypotheses number four was verified.

A teacher questionnaire was distributed to measure phonological awareness effects on skill development. The questionnaire consists of 6 items: excellent, v. good, good, fair, poor, and v. poor. The analysis shows only excellent and v. good, as the sample selection focused on excellent and v. good.

The reliability coefficients

N of cases = 9   N if items = 9

Alpha   9141

Table (5) mean and standard deviation of the results of the teacher's questionnaire

Table (5-1) The course involves placement experience and the aims and procedures for such experience clearly established and justified and have been planned in close collaboration with appropriate agencies

Valid	N	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation
The course involves placement experience and the aims and procedures for such experience clearly established and justified and have been planned in close collaboration with appropriate agencies	9	11	1.44	.527
Clearly articulated rationale for the course which relates the course structure and context to certain clearly identified professional needs and provides a clear justification for the course structure sequence and context	9	11	1.44	.527
The various components in the course combine to offer a progressively demanding educational experience	9	11	1.22	.441
The activities which make up the course relate directly to the course aims	9	11	1.44	.527
The course deploy a variety of appropriate teaching \learning strategies	9	11	1.33	.500
The assessment arrangement and requirements adequately explained and justified in relation to the course aims	9	11	1.22	.441
The means by which the course will be evaluated Clearly set out as well as	9	11	1.33	.500

mechanisms of course management and control				
The staffing and other resources required to sustain the course available	9	11	1.33	.500
There are suitable arrangements for the advising and counseling of SS on both academic and personal matters	9	11	1.11	.333

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	5	25.0	55.6	55.6
	V. good	4	20.0	44.4	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-1)

The course involves placement experience and th

Std. Dev = .53
Mean = 1.44
N = 9.00

The course involves placement experience and the aims and proced

Table (5-2) Clearly articulated rationale for the course which relates the course structure and context to certain clearly identified professional needs and provides a clear justification for the course structure sequence and context

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	5	25.0	55.6	55.6
	V. good	4	20.0	44.4	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-2)

Clearly articulated rationale for the course which relates the course s
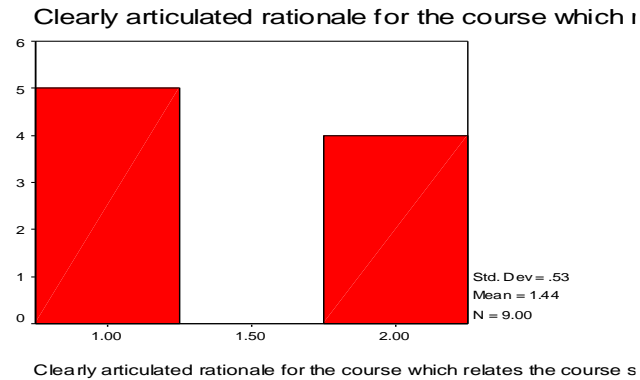
Table (5-3) The various components in the course combine to offer a progressively demanding educational experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	7	35.0	77.8	77.8
	V. good	2	10.0	22.2	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-3)

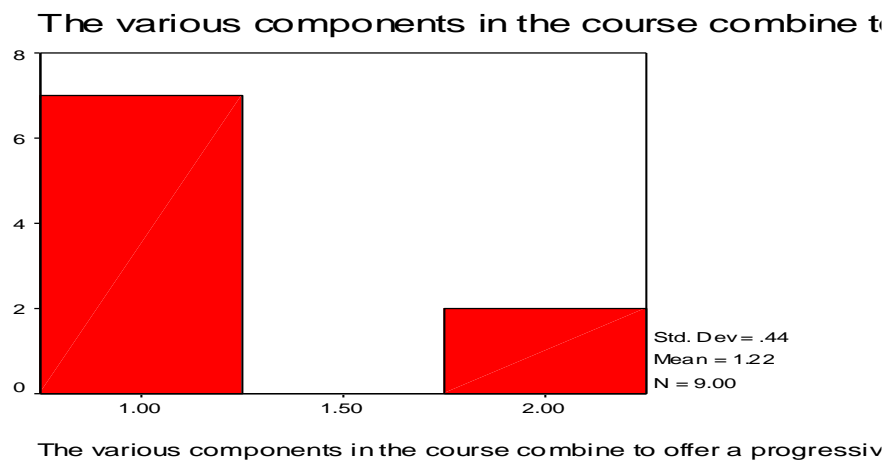The various components in the course combine to offer a progressiv

Table (5-4) The activities which make up the course relate directly to the course aims

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	5	25.0	55.6	55.6
	V. good	4	20.0	44.4	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-4)

The activities which make up the course relate directly to the course
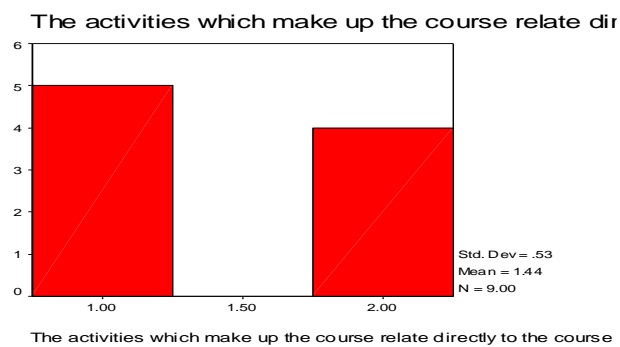
Table (5-5) The course deploy a variety of appropriate teaching \learning strategies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	6	30.0	66.7	66.7
	V. good	3	15.0	33.3	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-5)

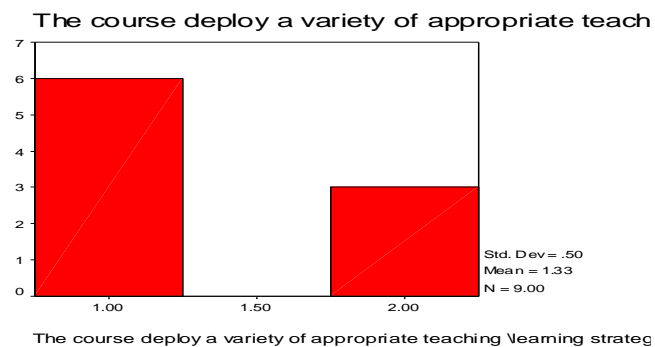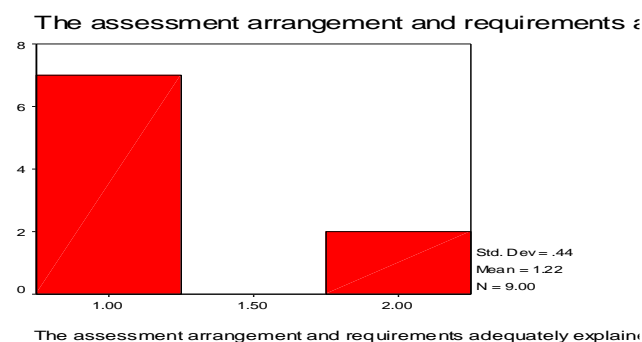The course deploy a variety of appropriate teaching \learning strateg

Table (5-6) The assessment arrangement and requirements adequately explained and justified in relation to the course aims

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	7	35.0	77.8	77.8
	V. good	2	10.0	22.2	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-6)

The assessment arrangement and requirements a

Std. Dev = .44
Mean = 1.22
N = 9.00

The assessment arrangement and requirements adequately explaine

Table (5-7) The means by which the course will be evaluated Clearly set out as well as mechanisms of course management and control.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	6	30.0	66.7	66.7
	V. good	3	15.0	33.3	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-7)

The means by which the course will be evaluated

Std. Dev = .50
Mean = 1.33
N = 9.00

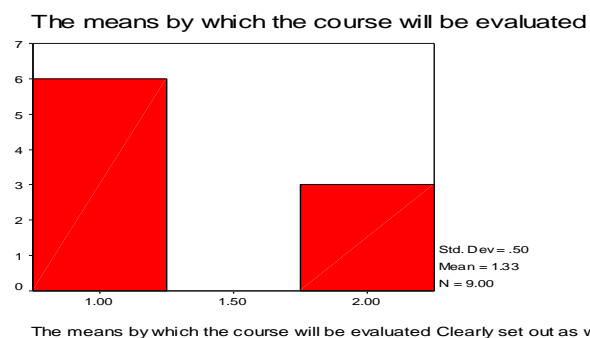The means by which the course will be evaluated Clearly set out as w

Table (5-8) The staffing and other resources required to sustain the course available

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	6	30.0	66.7	66.7
	V. good	3	15.0	33.3	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-8)

The staffing and other resources required to susta

Std. Dev = .50
Mean = 1.33
N = 9.00

The staffing and other resources required to sustain the course avail
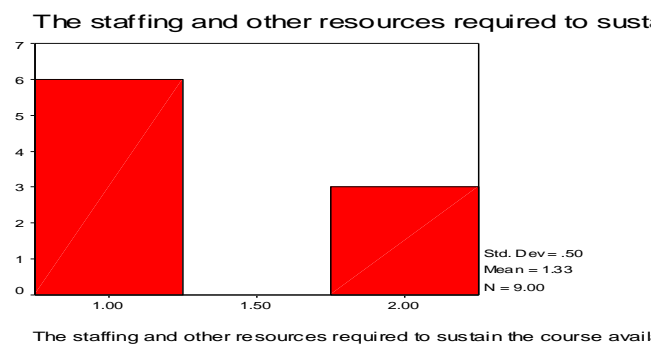
Table (5-9) There are suitable arrangements for the advising and counseling of SS on both academic and personal matters

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Excellent	8	40.0	88.9	88.9
	V. good	1	5.0	11.1	100.0
	Total	9	45.0	100.0	
Missing	System	11	55.0		
Total	Total	20	100.0		

Diagram (5-9)

There are suitable arrangements for the advising

Std. Dev = .33
Mean = 1.11
N = 9.00

There are suitable arrangements for the advising and counseling of
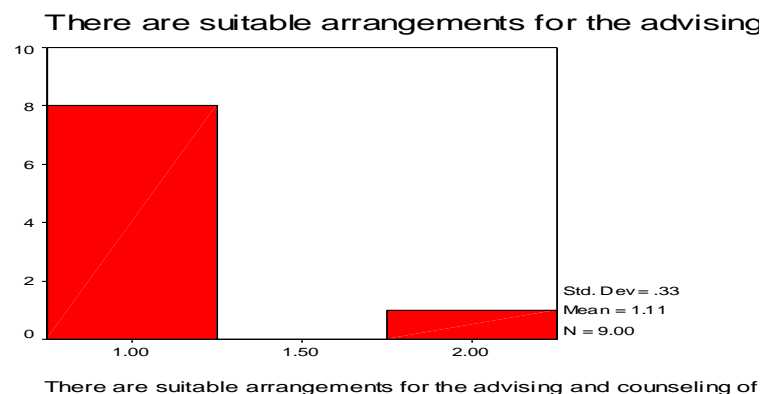
According to teachers, all the criteria were satisfied. It mean that phonological awareness program has positive effects on reading skill. The teacher added the following comments: The program is coherent, applicable, and suitable for the target group expectation and immediate professional needs.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Reading skill is one of the basic skills required for the students in their English language learning. Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that training in phonological awareness skills has significant effects in improving the reading ability and performance of PYP students. The findings of the study is very significant to teachers, parents, government and school proprietors that not all students who could not read are either slow learners or lack sound background in reading. But that some of such students have learning difficulties which proper intervention can curb their problems. The study equally concludes that there is no significant effect of gender on the reading performance of PYP students.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made: 1. The training on phonological awareness has revealed that it is significant in improving the reading performance of the PYP students; 2. Preparatory Year should give students a phonemic course; 3. Since gender is not a barrier to acquiring reading skills, both male and female should be encouraged to participate actively in intervention programs that will help overcome their reading difficulties.

Appreciation

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APPENDIX 1

Table (1)
Pre- and Post- test Reading Level

Student's Name: _____ DA - Developing Adequately Date: Date_____ NI - Needs Improvement		
	DA	NI
Links prior knowledge before reading		
Develops the purpose for reading		
Uses titles or illustrations to preview and predict content/events		
Makes connections to text, experiences, and other texts		
Makes and confirms predictions		
Self-monitoring and self-correcting		
Notes main ideas and key supporting details		
Pauses, reflects, and makes notes		
Rereads to deepen understanding		
Summarizes what has been read		
Evaluates what has been read		
Summary of students' abilities and needs:		
Recommendations:		

Appendix (2)
Table (2) Assessing, Evaluating, and Reporting Progress Analytic Scoring Rubric for Reading

Student's name: ---

Criteria	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Reading skill and strategies	Consistently and properly uses a range of strategies before, during, and after the reading process	Uses a range of strategies before, during, and after the reading process.	Uses some basic strategies before, during, and after the reading process.	Uses few strategies before, during, and after the reading process
Comprehension	Demonstrates through and insightful understanding and ideas, information concepts and or themes in text	Demonstrates clear understanding of ideas information ,concepts , and or themes in text	Demonstrates some understanding of ideas, information, and or themes in text.	Demonstrates limited understanding of ideas, information concepts m and or themes in text
	Explains the relationship between the explicit and implicit messages in the text	Identifies the explicit and implicit messages in the text	Identifies the explicit and some of the implicit messages in the text	Identifies explicit messages but has difficulty in identifying the implicit messages in the text.
	Explains in a through and insightful way how ideas are organized and how key concepts and elements/ techniques have been used for effect	Explains how ideas are organized and how key concepts and elements/ techniques have been used to achieve particular effects.	Explains in a simple way how ideas are organized and how key concepts and element/ techniques have been used to achieve particular effect.	Has difficulty explaining how ideas are organized and how concepts and elements / techniques have been used for effect.
Response	Responds critically and thoughtfully to the text	Responds personally and thoughtfully to the text	Responds personally to the text	Needs assistance and prompting to respond from personal viewpoint

Respond a personally with a high degree of detail and effectiveness	Respond a personally with considerable detail and support.	Respond a personally with some detail and support.	Responds personally with limited detail and support.
Responds critically with a high degree of analysis and effectiveness	Responds critically with considerable analysis and support	Responds critically with some analysis and support, when prompted	Responds critically with limited analysis and support, when assisted
Makes connections with other texts with a high degree of understanding	Makes connections with other texts with other texts with considerable understanding.	Makes connections with other texts with other texts with some understanding	Makes connections with other texts with limited understanding.
Identifies and explains overt and covert bias, avoids and actively challenges bias in presentations	Identifies and explains overt and covert bias in presentations.	Identifies and explains overt and covert bias only.	Shows a limited awareness of personal bias in presentations

Table (4) Evaluating the Course
Student's Name (Optional):--------------------------------
Completion of this questionnaire is voluntary.

	Question	**Excellent**	**V. Good**	**Good**	**Fair**	**Poor**	**V. poor**
1	The course as whole was						
2	The course content was						
3	The course organization was						
4	Sequential presentation Of concepts was						
5	Clarity of course objective was						
6	Interest level of class sessions was						
7	Relevance and usefulness of course content were						
8	Evaluative and grading techniques were(test – papers – project)						
9	Clarity and students responsibility and requirement was						
10	Use of class time was						

Appendix 5

Table (5) Evaluating the Course
Instructor: --------------------------------
Completion of this questionnaire is voluntary

	Question	Excellent	V. good	Good	Fair	Poor	V. poor
1	The course as whole was						
2	The course content was						
3	The course organization was						
4	Sequential presentation Of concepts was						
5	Clarity of course objective was						
6	Interest level of class sessions was						
7	Relevance and usefulness of course content were						
8	Evaluative and grading techniques were(test – papers – project)						
9	Clarity and students responsibility and requirement was						
10	Use of class time was						