Alphabetical Principle Versus Alphabetical Code in Early Reading Instruction

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Abstract- Early reading instruction is pivotal for lifelong literacy, with the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code serving as foundational concepts. Alphabetical principle refers to the awareness that letters represent sounds whereas Alphabetical code signifies systematic rules connecting sound to symbol. This is a documentary research which is categorized under qualitative research method. Through thematic analysis of qualitative data gathered from academic literature, policy documents, and educational reports, the study addresses four objectives: tracing historical and theoretical foundations, contrasting instructional applications, evaluating empirical evidence on effectiveness, and identifying challenges. Findings reveal that the alphabetic principle, rooted in cognitive psychology, emphasizes conceptual sound-letter mapping, while the alphabetic code focuses on explicit phonics instruction such as synthetic phonics. Research supports both approaches: systematic phonics enhances decoding and word recognition, particularly for struggling readers, whereas the alphabetic principle fosters broader comprehension and fluency. A balanced integration of both -combining phonemic awareness with structured phonics - proves most effective in promoting early literacy. Nevertheless, challenges persist, including the irregular spelling system of English language which complicates decoding; overemphasis on phonics potentially neglecting comprehension; and socio-cultural factors affecting diverse learners. Criticisms also highlight rigid phonics programmes limiting teacher flexibility and developmental appropriateness. The study concludes that while explicit instruction in the alphabetic code and principle is essential, educators must adopt adaptable, holistic strategies that balance decoding skills with meaningful language experiences, culturally responsive practices, and comprehension development. Policymakers and teachers are urged to prioritize evidence-based, flexible curricula to address learner diversity and mitigate long-term literacy disparities.

Index Terms- Alphabetical principle, Alphabetical code, Early literacy development, English language, Reading instruction challenges

I. Introduction

The development of early reading skills is fundamental to a child's literacy journey throughout his or her life and two key concepts that affect this process are the **alphabetic principle** and the **alphabetic code** (Gehsmann, 2023). The alphabetic principle refers to the capacity to understand letters or groups of letters represent sound of speech (Ehri, 2014). In contrast, the alphabetic code includes the specific rules and structures that govern how the sounds and letters are related to one another, such as phonemic awareness, decoding, and spelling rules (Gough & Tunmer, 2016). While both concepts are significant in literacy instruction, debates on their relative importance and effectiveness in initial reading process still persist. Therefore, this documentary research focuses on Alphabetical Principle versus Alphabetical Code in elementary reading instructions.

The alphabetic principle has been advised in the research to be taught explicitly in order to support early reading acquisition. Ehri (2014) states that children's capacity to map spoken words to written symbols servers as a fundamental basis for decoding new words. This principle is particularly critical for young readers as they transit from pre-literacy stage to fluent reading stages. In addition, studies highlight that student who struggle with grasping the alphabetic principle are likely to face long-term reading issues, and this fact emphasizes the significance of early intervention. (Castles et al., 2018).

In contrast, the proponents of **alphabetic code instruction** mention that phonics approaches, with a

focus on systematic sound- symbol correspondences, foster reading ability more effectively (National Reading Panel, 2000; Snowling & Hulme, 2012). This perspective suggests that teaching students structured phonics patterns enables them to decode words more accurately and fluently. In a longitudinal study, Suggate (2016) invented that children who were instructed in systematic phonics outperformed those who were not in word recognition and reading comprehension. Consequently, literacy educators advocate for an explicit, systematic phonics curriculum to underpin the alphabetic code (Moats, 2020).

Inspite of the seeming different definitions of these two concepts, a research suggests a **balanced approach** which integrates both the alphabetic principle and alphabetic code. The research results indicate that this kind of strategy is more effective (Brady, 2019). A research by Seidenberg emphasizes that although phonic awareness makes one a strong decoder, fluency and comprehension are attained through insight into the larger alphabetic principle (Seidenberg, 2017). In addition, teaching strategies combining phonemic awareness with phonics based methods bring out a greater measure of literacy success in elementary students. (Foorman et al., 2016).

The controversy of alphabetic code and alphabetic principle has significant effects on curriculum design, teacher preparation, and reading instruction policy (Schulze, 2020). Moreover, educational systems worldwide evolve to strike a balance between these two approaches (Reading Rockets, n.d.). One needs to understand how these concepts affect elementary reading proficiency in order to create appropriate pedagogical practices that promote early literacy.

II. RESEARCH ELABORATIONS

Significance of the Study-

This is a significant study because it supports teachers as well as educators understand the best method to teach reading to young children. Reading is among the most important skills in early literacy, and the way reading is taught can play a crucial role in the child's literacy capacity (Ehri, 2014).

The argument between the **alphabetic principle** and the **alphabetic code** influences how reading is taught in classrooms. Another major reason for the significance of this research is that reading proficiency in early childhood affects academic success of their later life. It has been discovered that those students who excel at reading in their elementary stage will also succeed in other academic disciplines (Castles et al., 2018). If children struggle with reading at their elementary stage, they may fall behind in school and experience long-term difficulties in learning. Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code, as it provides insights to English language educators to select effective teaching methods to help students succeed.

Another important aspect is that this study can guide **teacher training and curriculum development**. Many teachers may not fully aware of the differences between the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code or may not be trained to use both effectively (Moats, 2020). If teachers prioritize one method while neglecting the other could leave students lacking in well- rounded reading skills. For example, phonics-based instruction which is based on the alphabetic code can be employed to teach children to decode words but may not be enough for reading comprehension (Snowling & Hulme, 2012). On the other hand, teaching only the alphabetic principle in isolation without systematic phonics instruction leaves students at a loss with word recognition. This study can help educators achieve the optimal balance between these two approaches.

Additionally, this research is significant to **education policymakers**. Schools and governments make decisions about how reading should be instructed related to research evidences. A research done by Seidenberg provides strong evidence to prove that balanced approach is the best one. Therefore, the education officials may update policies to include instructions in both; alphabetic principle and systematic phonics in instructing elementary reading skills (Seidenberg, 2017). This can raise literacy rates and more children become fluent readers.

In a nutshell, this research will provide a better insightfulness of reading instructions and it further supports teachers, students, and policymakers make

informed choices about how to teach reading effectively.

Background of the Study –

Teaching children how to read has significantly evolved over the time. In the past, elementary reading instructions was based on **memorization and whole-word recognition**, where students were taught to identify words by sight rather than understanding the relationship of sounds with letters (Seidenberg, 2017). This method was popular in the mid-20th century when reading was taught by exposing children to printed words without explicit teaching of phonics. However, with advancement of researches, educators identified that reading must be instructed systematically through the process of mapping of sounds with symbols; **Introduction of phonics-based methods** (Castles et al., 2018).

In accordance with former generations, the reading instructions relied on the **whole language approach**, where children learned words from context but not through phonetic decoding. (Goodman, 2014). The model, which was implemented during 1980s and 1990s, was based on the premise that reading is a natural process that is similar to speaking and that children would acquire literacy skills through exposure to rich texts. However, it was discovered that many students who were taught utilizing this approach struggled to decode unfamiliar words and, as a result, had long-term reading problems. (Ehri, 2014). Therefore, educators and policymakers shifted their attention to phonic instructions which aligns with the alphabetic code; **the systematic relations between sounds and letters** (Snowling & Hulme, 2012).

In modern reading instruction, there is greater recognition of the importance of both **the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code** (Moats, 2020). The alphabetic principle, which involves understanding that letters represent sounds, is a basic concept in early literacy instructions. Meanwhile, explicit phonics instruction that focuses on the alphabetic code allows students develop effective decoding skills (Foorman et al., 2016). Most modern curricula blend both approaches to make sure that children not only recognize words but also understand how to decode them effectively.

In addition, advances in **cognitive science and education psychology** have further illustrated how children learn to read. Studies have brought out that early phonemic awareness, or the ability to hear and manipulate sounds in words, is a strong predictor of later reading proficiency (Brady, 2019). As a result, modern reading instruction emphasizes phonemic awareness as well as phonics to create a balanced and effective method (Castles et al., 2018).

This shift from more conventional whole-word memorization to a systematic, phonics driven approach demonstrates the ongoing evolution of literacy education. By analyzing alphabetic principle versus alphabetic code attempts to explore how these approaches are applied in modern elementary classrooms and their impact on student learning outcomes.

Research Problem –

Acquiring reading is a significant hurdle for a large number of young children, particularly when they have problems grasping the alphabetic principle-the concept that letters symbolize sounds within spoken language (Ehri, 2014). Although some children pick up the concept with ease, others have trouble mapping written letters to the sounds, thus resulting in reading impairment (Castles et al., 2018). The problem is even more significant for children who learn in environments where reading instruction doesn't specifically cover the alphabetic principle. Children learn to memorize words without understanding how they are put together, and therefore struggle to decode words they haven't seen before (Seidenberg, 2017). One of the major hurdles is that the English language contains an irregular spelling system; the same letter or group of letters can represent multiple sounds. For instance, the "a" in the word "cat" is a different sound from the "a" in "cake." These exceptions make it more difficult for children to use the alphabetic principle in a consistent manner (Snowling and Hulme, 2012).

Due to these challenges, a large number of students develop poor reading skills and fall behind academically. Moreover, a research shows that early reading struggles can lead to long-term disadvantages in education (Foorman et al., 2016). To address this

issue, reading and linguistics experts have investigated more scientific approaches to teach reading. Instead of relying on the alphabetic principle by itself, researchers have promoted the use of the alphabetic code that teaches kids systematic phonics rules (Moats, 2020). This helps students recognize patterns in words, thereby being in a position to decode unknown words. Scientific studies have presented that phonics-based instruction significantly improves children's reading skills compared to methods that do not explicitly teach letter-sound correspondence (Brady, 2019).

Despite these facts, the argument about teaching reading among educators continues to exist. Some teachers emphasize the identification of whole words, while others focus the teaching of phonics (Goodman, 2014). Thus, there is no agreement on the best method for early reading instruction.

Research Questions –

1. What are the historical developments and theoretical foundations of the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code in teaching elementary reading?
2. How do the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code differ in their application within elementary reading curricula?
3. What evidence exists regarding the effectiveness of the alphabetic principle versus the alphabetic code in enhancing early reading skills among elementary students?
4. What are the challenges and criticisms associated with implementing the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code in elementary reading?

Methodology - Alphabetical Principle versus Alphabetical Code in Elementary Reading Instruction is a documentary study which is categorized under qualitative research approach. It consists of systematic analysis of existing documents and literature in order to address research questions. In this research it is anticipated to address these questions through the analysis of existing literature and data which will provide valuable insights into the comparative effectiveness and practical consideration of employing the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code in elementary reading instruction. Thus, the first research question is focused on exploring the origins and evolution of these instructional approaches which would provide a comprehensive insight to their theoretical underpinnings. The second question attempts to recognize and analyze the disparities between these methods as implemented in various educational programmes. The third question aims on evaluating research findings that compares the outcomes of these two instructional strategies on student literacy development whereas the fourth question focuses on uncovering potential hindrances and controversies regarding adoption and execution of these reading instruction methods in classroom settings.

Since the research is a documentary one, a comprehensive range of documents pertinent to the research topic were selected as data and evidences. These included academic journal articles, books and book chapters, educational reports and policy documents, curriculum guidelines,conference proceedings, theses and dissertations, historical records related to reading instruction methodologies etc.

Next, data were analyzed and interpreted. It was a thorough content analysis of the collected documents. In addition, thematic analysis was employed in order to identify key themes, patterns, and perspectives related to the alphabetic principle and alphabetic code. Different viewpoints, methodologies, and findings presented in the literature were compared and contrasted. This analysis paved the way to understand the evolution, implementation, and effectiveness of these reading instruction methods.

Synthesize Findings: In order to provide a comprehensive overview of the topic, the insights gained from the analysis were integrated. Furthermore, the research questions were addressed by summarizing the evidence, highlighting agreements and disagreements among sources, and identifying gaps in the existing literature.

Draw Conclusions and Make Recommendations: Based on synthesis, the informed conclusions which were applicable to the research questions were drawn. Thus, the historical developments and theoretical foundations of the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code in teaching elementary reading, the differences between them, their efficacy in elementary reading instruction, and the challenges associated with

each method were catered. In addition, the recommendations were put forward for policymakers, educators, and future research endeavors.

III. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Data Presentation and Analysis –

1. Historical Developments and Theoretical Foundations

1.1 Alphabetic Principle: Origins and Theoretical Basis

When historical evolution is considered, this concept developed from studies in phonics instruction and reading acquisition in alphabetic languages like English (Ehri, 2014).

The cognitive psychology of reading mainly supported this principle. In accordance with some researches, it was invented that systematic phonics instruction based on the alphabetic principle leads to better reading outcomes in early education (Castles et al., 2018; Ehri, 2014). In addition, decoding is considered as the most relevant in alphabetic principle. Later research confirmed that early reading success depends on children's ability to connect letters with sounds (National Reading Panel, 2000; Castles et al., 2018).

1.2 Alphabetic Code: Historical Development and Application

English language consists of a complex alphabetic code due to its irregular spelling system (Dehaene, 2020). The studies regarding historical evolution of spelling in English language prove that there is borrowing from Latin, French, and Germanic roots. These borrowing from different languages resulted in multiple spellings for the same sound and vice versa (Treiman & Kessler, 2014).The teaching of the alphabetic code has been influenced by synthetic phonics approaches. In countries like the UK and Australia, the national literacy policies promote systematic phonics instruction (Johnston et al., 2012). The alphabetic code is basic to these methods, as it provides learners with tools to **blend phonemes into words** and **segment words into phonemes** (Ehri, 2014).

1.3 Theoretical Foundations Supporting Both Concepts

When theoretical perspective is considered, **Constructivist** and **Cognitive Load Theories** too support the teaching initial reading via alphabetical principle and alphabetical code. In accordance with Constructivist theory the learners actively build understanding through meaningful interactions with print (Vygotsky, 1978; Woolfolk, 2016). On the other hand, the **Cognitive Load Theory** emphasizes the significance of explicit and systematic instruction in phoneme-grapheme mapping to prevent cognitive overload in early readers (Sweller et al., 2011).

Furthermore, **Ehri's Phases of Word Reading Development** (2014) brings out a developmental model which illustrates how children progress from recognizing letters to understanding the full alphabetic principle, eventually leads to fluent reading.

All these data come under the topic of 'Historical Developments and Theoretical Foundations' are tabulated in Table 1.

Data collected on Historical Developments and Theoretical Foundation

Alphabetical Principle	Alphabetical Code
Origins and Theoretical Basis	
This concept developed from studies in phonics instruction and reading acquisition in alphabetic languages.	Teaching of the alphabetic code has been influenced by synthetic phonics approaches.
The cognitive psychology of reading mainly supported this principle	it provides learners with tools to blend phonemes into words and segment words into phonemes
Decoding is considered as the most relevant	
Early reading success depends on children's ability to connect letters with sounds	
Theoretical Foundations Supporting Both Concepts	
Supported by Constructivist theory –	Supported by Cognitive load theory –

Learners actively build understanding through meaningful interactions with print	Significance of explicit and systematic instruction in phoneme-grapheme mapping to prevent cognitive overload in early readers

Table 1

2. How alphabetic principle and alphabetic code differ in their application within elementary reading curricula-

The Alphabetic Principle and the Alphabetic Code differ in both definition and application. The Alphabetic principle can be defined as the understanding that there are systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds (National Reading Panel, 2000, as cited in Piasta & Wagner, 2010). It is a conceptual understanding that letters represent phonemes. This principle is basic to phonics instruction and is essential for decoding unfamiliar words (Ehri, 2014).

In contrary, the alphabetic code is more mechanical and instructional in nature. It consists of actual system of correspondences between graphemes (letters or groups of letters) and phonemes (sounds). Teaching the alphabetic code involves explicit instruction of sound-symbol relationships; the letter "c" represents the /k/ sound in "canteen" and the /s/ sound in "city" (Castles, Rastle, & Nation, 2018).

Although above mentioned both concepts are interconnected, their application in curricula differs. For an instance, the alphabetic principle is generally introduced via conceptual activities such as phoneme segmentation, sound identification and rhyming. These activities support learners to internalize the idea that letters map onto sounds (Scanlon, Anderson, & Sweeney, 2017). In addition, the alphabetic principle focuses on building understanding and cognitive readiness.

In contrast, the alphabetic code fundamentally involves systematic phonics instruction. This concept provides learners direct teaching on specific letter-sound correspondences. For example, many structured literacy programmes, such as the Orton-Gillingham approach, emphasize teaching the alphabetic code in a sequential and cumulative way to build fluency and automaticity (Moats, 2020).

In accordance with empirical studies, explicit instruction of the alphabetic code leads to significant gains in decoding and word recognition, especially for struggling readers and English Language Learners (LLs) (Vaughn et al., 2019). Nevertheless, in absence of the alphabetic principle, students may not understand the relevance of the code they are learning, potentially leading to rote learning without transferability (Torgesen et al., 2012).

In a nutshell, the alphabetic principle serves as the theoretical foundation for decoding, while the alphabetic code is the practical tool used to implement this principle. Effective elementary curricula must integrate both; building conceptual understanding through phonemic awareness and reinforcing it through systematic phonics instruction.

The data of differences between alphabetic principle and alphabetic code in their application within elementary reading curricula are tabulated in Table 2.

The data collected on differences between Alphabetic Principle and Alphabetic Code in their application within elementary reading curricula

Alphabetical Principle	Alphabetical Code
Understanding that there are systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken sounds	More mechanical and instructional
Letters represent phonemes	Consists of actual system of correspondences between graphemes (letters or groups of letters) and phonemes (sounds)
This principle is basic to phonics instruction and is essential for decoding unfamiliar words	Involves explicit instruction of sound-symbol relationships

Introduced via conceptual activities such as phoneme segmentation, sound identification and rhyming	involves systematic phonics instruction
These activities support learners to internalize the idea that letters map onto sounds	provides learners direct teaching on specific letter-sound correspondences
Focuses on building understanding and cognitive readiness.	build fluency and automaticity
in absence of the alphabetic principle, students may not understand the relevance of the code they are learning	significant gains in decoding and word recognition, especially for struggling readers and English Language Learners
serves as the theoretical foundation for decoding	practical tool used to implement this principle

Table 2

3. Evidence exists regarding the effectiveness of the alphabetic principle versus the alphabetic code in enhancing early reading skills among elementary students-

Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that knowledge of the alphabetic principle - awareness that letters and letter combinations symbolize the sounds of oral language - is at the core of reading acquisition. Ehri (2005) stated that knowledge of the alphabetic principle is also important for words' decoding, which is the foundation of reading fluency. In a longitudinal research, Connor et al. (2007) ascertained that early instructions focusing on phonics and the alphabetic principle strongly predicted subsequent reading comprehension. National Reading Panel (2000) emphasized that systematic teaching of phonics, rooted in the alphabetic principle, improved the reading performance among K–1 students (children in Kindergarten (K) and Grade 1 (1st grade); students aged 5- 7 years. Johnston and Watson (2005) also demonstrated that synthetic phonics with heavy reliance on the alphabetic principle resulted in better reading performance than the traditional analytic method. This evidence verifies the key role of the alphabetic principle in early literacy.

Instruction focusing on the alphabetic code, particularly through phonics and decoding strategies, has also demonstrated positive outcomes in early reading development. The National Reading Panel (2000) reported that systematic phonics instruction with teaching the alphabetic code, significantly enhances reading and spelling abilities of children. This approach is mainly beneficial for young learners and those who struggle in reading (Reading Rockets) In addition, the Reading Rockets organization highlights that knowledge of the alphabetic code enables students to decode unfamiliar words which would lead to develop word recognition and reading fluency. They promote explicit, teacher-directed instruction in phonics to teach the alphabetic code effectively.

Both the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code are fundamental components in the development of early reading skills. Research supports the implementation of both, explicit and systematic instruction to enhance phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, decoding abilities, and overall reading proficiency among elementary students.

4. The challenges and criticisms associated with implementing the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code in elementary reading -

Implementation of the alphabetic principle and alphabetic code in early reading instruction has become a widely accepted practice in many educational contexts. Nevertheless, there are several challenges and criticisms against their effectiveness and suitability, especially when applied despite of the diversity of learners and contexts.

One major challenge is the difficulty faced by some children in perceiving the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and letters (graphemes). The alphabetic principle assumes that learners can easily match spoken sounds to written letters. Nevertheless, this process might be challenging for children with limited phonemic awareness, especially those with language delays or dyslexia (Tunmer & Chapman, 2012). For such learners, even intensive phonics instruction might

be insufficient unless accompanied by extra language supporting strategies.

Another issue is that English alphabetic code has become complicated as English is not a perfectly regular phonetic language. In English, many letter-sound relationships are irregular or inconsistent. Due to this reason, the early learners can be confused. In accordance with studies the children may initially grasp regular patterns but find difficulties when they encounter exceptions (Bowers & Bowers, 2017). For example, the words "though," "through," and "thought" all contain the same sequence of letters but are pronounced differently, making the decoding process less straightforward.

In addition, critics argue that there can be a constricting impact of prioritizing too much phonics and decoding on the narrow specification of the reading curriculum and giving less emphasis on meaning, comprehension, and the joy of reading (Wyse & Bradbury, 2022). While decoding is a necessity, it will not suffice alone to promote meaningful and fluent reading. Some researchers worry that phonics-first approach rigidly followed can delay introduction of genuine texts and meaningful reading experience (Ehri, 2020).

Socio-cultural factors are also at play in the challenges of applying the alphabetic principle. For children from homes where oral language development is limited or where English is not the first language, decoding skills alone might not help them become proficient readers. These children are likely to need more language support that is rich in vocabulary development and cultural knowledge (Snow, 2016). Furthermore, some researchers have criticized systematic phonics programs for being too scripted and not allowing sufficient flexibility for teacher judgment. Teachers may feel constrained by prescriptive curricula that do not allow them to adjust instruction based on the individual needs of their students (Clark, 2013). The programs may also fail to consider developmental readiness and learning style diversity in classrooms today.

Finally, while the alphabetic principle has its basis in cognitive psychology, it may conflict with constructivist or socio-cultural literacy theories, which emphasize meaning-making and interaction over procedural decoding (Compton-Lilly et al., 2021). Such a contradiction has led to debate about the most suitable theoretical foundation for early reading instruction.

The data collected on the challenges and criticisms associated with implementing the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code in elementary reading

Alphabetic Principle	Alphabetic Code
1. Challenging for children with limited phonemic awareness, especially those with language delays or dyslexia.	1. Complicated as English is not a perfectly regular phonetic language. In English, many letter-sound relationships are irregular or inconsistent.
2. Socio-cultural factors - decoding skills alone might not help the students who lack language environment. They need more language support that is rich in vocabulary development and cultural knowledge.	2. Prioritizing too much phonics, giving less emphasis on meaning, comprehension, and the joy of reading.
	3. It can delay introduction of genuine texts and meaningful reading experience.
	4. systematic phonics programs for being too scripted and not allowing sufficient flexibility for teacher judgment.

Table 3

Discussion –

The literature review suggests that the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code are both focal in early reading acquisition. But their instructional influence, theoretical underpinning, and application nuanced differences. The alphabetic principle, in a nutshell, assists children to understand the symbolic nature of

print; how written letters stand for spoken sounds and thus delineates the cognitive framework for decoding. In contrast, the alphabetic code delivers the practice tools of instruction, such as decoding processes based on phonics, through systematic and explicit teaching of phoneme – grapheme correspondence.

The researches provide strong empirical evidence to underpin systematic phonics teaching as an effective method of reading development, especially for early readers and children who struggle to read or fail to read. For instance, the National Reading Panel (2000) and Suggate (2016) affirm that individuals who are taught through instruction based on the alphabetic code perform better in reading comprehension and word recognition tasks. At the same time, without a proper knowledge of the alphabetic principle, teaching phonics can turn into a rote drill with not much transfer to more general literacy activities.

In addition, the findings determine that neither instruction based on the alphabetic principle nor the alphabetic code in isolation can sufficiently address the issue of early reading acquisition. Instead, an equilibrium literacy instruction blending both elements would be encouraged to yield the maximum outcomes. This is exactly what Seidenberg (2017) and Brady (2019) advocate through their case for dual instruction that enforces the decoding skill while promoting phonemic awareness and reading fluency. Despite these advances, there are still challenges present, including the irregular spelling of English, reading difficulties like dyslexia, and contextual and meaningful reading requirements. These conditions emphasize the significance of flexibility in instruction, diversity accommodation, and grounded balance between phonics instruction and conceptual sensibility of language.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research emphasizes the importance of recognizing the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code as complementary functions in early reading instruction. While the alphabetic principle provides the fundamental information that letters represent sounds, the alphabetic code offers the organized way in which this information is translated into reading ability through phonics instruction. The ultimate findings determine that effective literacy instruction is not to prioritize one over the other but, rather, blend them together in an attempt to give a balanced reading development.

Systematic phonics instruction based on the alphabetic code has been reliably indicated to enhance decoding skill, particularly in poor readers. Concurrently, the alphabetic principle builds a stronger cognitive connection between print and speech so that children can apply decoding strategies to novel words with increased fluidity and sense. Together, they provide a dual model that fosters both mechanics and meaning in reading.

The research also identifies several challenges; linguistic irregularities in English, curriculum inflexibility, and socio-cultural diversity of learners that can constrain effective implementation. These challenges suggest that teachers need to adapt teaching strategies to various classroom scenarios, ensuring that neither conceptual understanding nor systematic instruction is over dominated.

In conclusion, while the alphabetic code and the alphabetic principle are helpful tools in early reading, they must be balanced with more comprehensive literacy practices that foster understanding, language development, and learner participation. A one-size-fits-all solution will not fit all learners, especially in linguistically and culturally diverse settings. In addition, it is concluded that this research encourages pedagogical shift towards balanced literacy approaches in curriculum development and teacher education. It is in favour of evidence-based teaching that values equally theoretical knowledge and technical skills, pointing out that early reading success is best attained by utilizing the alphabetic principle and the alphabetic code together.

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