



FLORIDA STATE  
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# Open and Closed - A Study of Multisyllabic Decoding for ESL Readers

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# ESL Decoding Instruction: What is effective?

- Approximately 400 ESL students are served in general education classrooms within Walton County
- Older ESL students enter US public education with little literacy knowledge in their home language which makes learning English an added challenge
- Many ESL interventions focus on oral language and vocabulary without the same emphasis on decoding skills that would be part of early literacy learning
- Does explicit decoding instruction benefit older ESL readers?



# Research Questions

- What are ESL students' strengths and weaknesses in regard to reading skills?
- What syllable knowledge do ESL students possess?
- Is explicit and individualized syllable instruction an effective strategy for decoding skill development among ESL students?



# Participants

## Case Study: Began with 2 fifth-grade students

- Student 1: ELL/ESL
  - Spanish speaking
  - Moved from Guatemala to the US 3 years ago
  - Has been at current school from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Student 2: Struggling reader
  - Has difficulties focusing in whole group and small group settings
  - Benefits the most from one-on-one instruction



# Methods

- Administered a battery of standardized decoding tests (DAR)
  - Phonological Awareness
  - Phonics
  - Fluency
  - Comprehension



# Methods

- Administered additional assessments
  - Pre and post tested to measure intervention effectiveness
- Developed 3 intervention lessons based on pretest results
  - Learning syllable patterns
  - Breaking apart syllables
  - Decoding multisyllabic words



# Results

*What are ESL students' strengths and weaknesses in regard to reading skills?*

Diagnostic Assessment of Reading	
Subtests	ELL STUDENT
Phonological Awareness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Print and Letter Awareness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Phonics Skills	
Consonant Sounds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consonant Blends	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Short Vowels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vowel Digraphs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Diphthongs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vowels with R	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Two Syllable Words	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Polysyllabic Words	<input type="checkbox"/>





# Pre and Post Testing

Subtests	Number of items
Decoding closed syllables	20
Decoding open and closed syllables	20
Decoding consonant-le syllables	20

siple

mawcle

fefmist

fridag

beetle

gatble

display

drisag

basket

zigzag

fabric

apple

fanbit

silent

yoyo

maple

wipgle

flickle

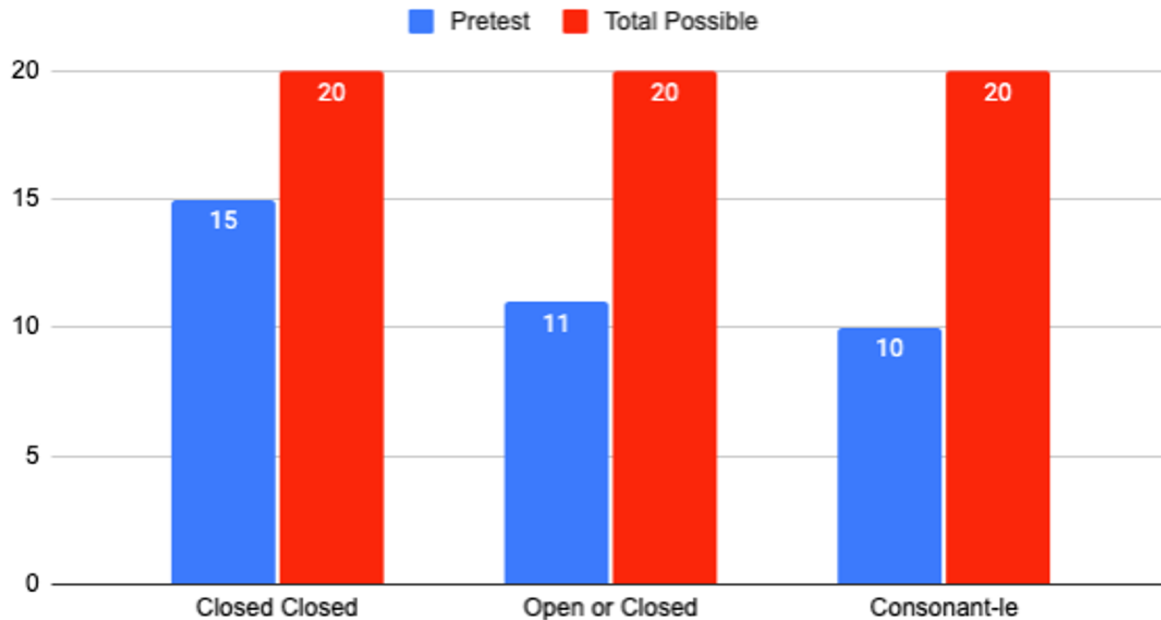




# Decoding Multisyllabic Words Results

*What syllable knowledge do ESL student possess?*

Closed Closed, Open or Closed, and Consonant-le





# The Intervention

## Lesson Sequence

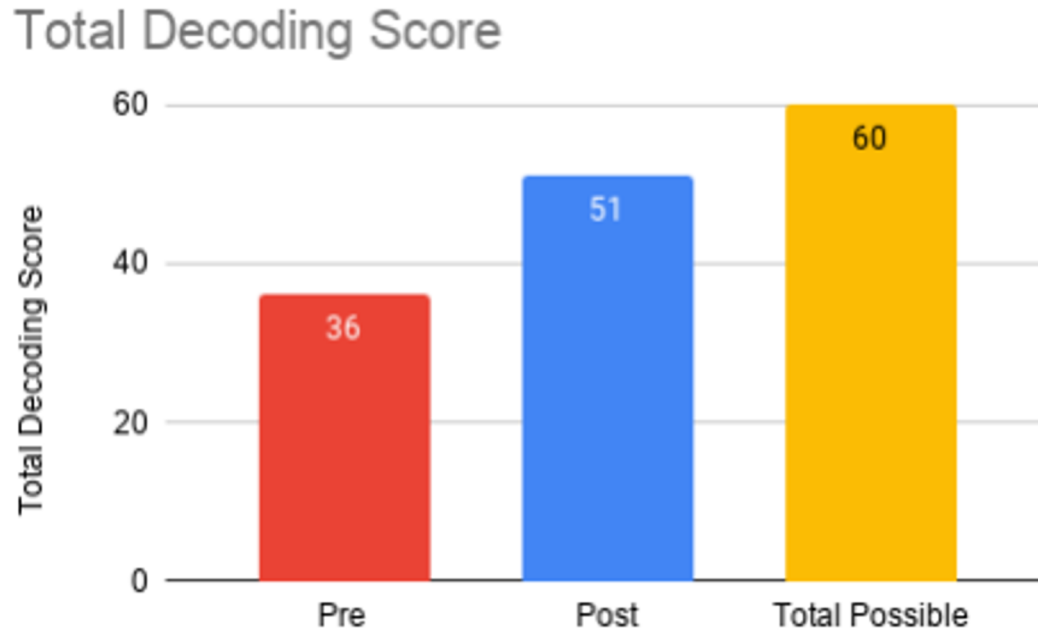
- Identify syllable types
- Decode isolated syllables
- Decode multisyllabic words in a list
- Encode multisyllabic words

## Lesson Schedule

- Day 1: Closed syllables
- Day 2: Open and closed syllables
- Day 3: Open, closed, and consonant-le syllables



# Overall Pre and Post Test Results

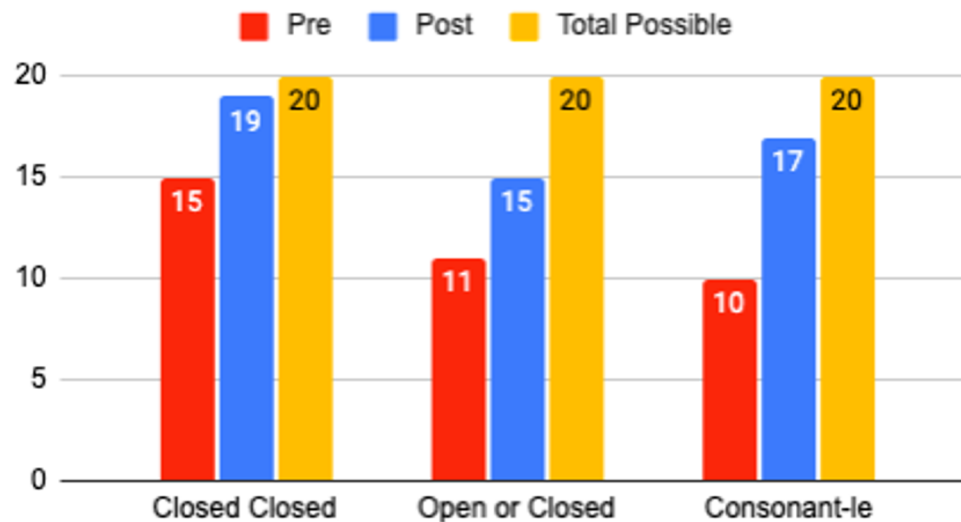




# Pre and Post Test Results

*Is explicit and individualized syllable instruction an effective strategy for decoding skill development among ESL students?*

Change from Pre to Post by Syllable Type





# Discussion & Conclusions

ESLs can improve multisyllabic decoding skills by learning specific syllable identification skills.

- ESLs struggle with some letter-sounds differences, between their native language and second language.
- Increased practice with real word reading is helpful.
- Incorporate more real multisyllabic words throughout the lesson.
- Provide practice with decoding multisyllabic words in a text.



Thank You!



# Reference

Roswell, F.G., Chall, J.S., Curtis, M.E., & Kearns, G. (2005). *Diagnostic Assessment of Reading: Second Edition technical manual*. Chicago: The Riverside Publishing Company.