

THE ROLE OF ARABIC ORTHOGRAPHIC LITERACY IN THE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS OF TUNISIAN CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

This article investigated the effect of Arabic orthography on the phonological awareness acquisition. A sample of Tunisian primary school and preliterate were asked to manipulate syllables and phonemes through segmentation, counting and deletion tasks. Results showed that manipulation of syllables is far easier than that of phonemes. Also, the deletion of phonemes was an easier task than phoneme segmentation and counting, in contrast to findings attendant to alphabetically written languages such as English and Hebrew. Data were interpreted by the nature of Arabic orthography and diglossia.

Key Words: Early childhood, Phonological awareness, Reading literacy, Arabic orthography, Diglossia.