

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Towards an integrated framework of reading development: Teachers' strategies in phonological and morphological awareness

Reza Purwaningsih^a, Mutiara Hati Ali^a, Yogii Rao^b, Rianawati^c

^a Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Islam Riau, Indonesia

^b University of Delhi, India

^c Institut Agama Islam Negeri Pontianak, Indonesia

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received: 2026-01-18 Accepted: 2026-05-08 Keywords: Phonological Awareness; Morphological Awareness; Reading Literacy; Digital Learning; Instructional Strategies	This study addresses persistent challenges in students' reading proficiency, particularly those arising from limited phonological and morphological awareness in contemporary literacy contexts. The purpose of this research is to explore teachers' understanding and instructional strategies in integrating phonological and morphological awareness to enhance students' reading abilities within modern and digitally influenced learning environments. A qualitative descriptive design was employed, involving 13 informants (9 teachers and 4 students) selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, and analyzed using an interactive model of data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that teachers implement diverse strategies—including explicit instruction, contextual learning, collaborative activities, differentiation, and gamification—to develop students' phonological and morphological awareness, which significantly improves reading fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension. The study also highlights the growing role of digital tools in supporting adaptive and engaging literacy instruction. However, limitations include the contextual scope and reliance on qualitative data, suggesting the need for broader and mixed-method investigations. This study offers originality by proposing an integrated linguistic-digital instructional framework that bridges phonological and morphological awareness with contemporary pedagogical practices, providing both theoretical enrichment and practical guidance for advancing literacy education in the digital era.
Corresponding Author: Reza Purwaningsih, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Islam Riau Jl. Kaharuddin Nasution 113, Pekanbaru 28284, Indonesia Email: rezapurwaningsih@student.uir.ac.id	

1. INTRODUCTION

The reading skills of primary school students in Indonesia still face serious challenges, with many children experiencing difficulties in decoding words and understanding texts due to weak linguistic foundations such as phonological and morphological awareness, which are the main prerequisites for early literacy (Sukenti & Tambak, 2025; Rasyidi et al., 2025; Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). Previous studies have shown that phonological awareness, defined as the ability to recognize and manipulate word sounds, significantly improves reading and spelling skills through

structured interventions such as blending, segmenting, and phoneme manipulation (Sukenti & Fauzan, 2024; Graves, 2023; Hentasmaka et al., 2022; Nevin et al., 2026; Nkurunziza, 2024). Meanwhile, morphological awareness of sensitivity to the structure of remunerated words contributes to vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension, with research in Indonesian kindergarten children revealing an early awareness of inflectional and derivational morphology, although it still depends on their morphological knowledge (Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Damanik et al., 2025; Giazitzidou et al., 2024). However, the state of the art reveals a significant research gap, as most studies tend to examine phonological awareness and morphological awareness separately without integrating both within a unified instructional framework, especially in the Indonesian context (Castles et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2022; Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021).

The context of Indonesian language learning presents both challenges and opportunities due to its relatively transparent phonological system, where consistent letter–sound correspondence facilitates early decoding skills (Nkurunziza, 2024; Castles et al., 2022; Hentasmaka et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). This phonological transparency provides an initial advantage for reading acquisition; however, the morphological complexity of Indonesian requires deeper structural awareness to achieve full comprehension (Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Giazitzidou et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Castles et al., 2022). Local research indicates that reading instruction often prioritizes speed and quantity of reading rather than the quality of linguistic processing underlying comprehension (Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Graham, 2020; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). Effective reading strategies, therefore, must incorporate explicit training in both phonological and morphological awareness in an integrated and balanced manner (Castles et al., 2022; Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Hjetland et al., 2020). Teachers need to develop approaches that reinforce students' basic language skills while also building advanced reading skills such as inference, information integration, and text evaluation. Reading Teachers need to develop instructional approaches that simultaneously strengthen foundational linguistic skills and higher-order reading abilities such as inference, synthesis, and critical evaluation (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Hattie, 2020; Biesta, 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). Reading strategies that integrate phonological and morphological awareness enable students to process texts more accurately and efficiently while enhancing comprehension depth (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Giazitzidou et al., 2024; Hjetland et al., 2020). Thus, research focusing on integrated linguistic strategies at the elementary level contributes significantly to improving literacy practices in both primary and secondary education (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021).

Recent studies indicate that instructional approaches combining phonological and morphological awareness yield more substantial improvements in reading skills compared to general instruction (Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Giazitzidou et al., 2024; Hsu et al., 2023; Castles et al., 2022). For instance, research findings demonstrate that both phonological and morphological skills contribute significantly to reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension across different educational levels (Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Giazitzidou et al., 2024; Nkurunziza, 2024; Nevin et al., 2026). These findings suggest that linguistic awareness continues to play a critical role in literacy development even as students' progress to higher levels of education (Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Castles et al., 2022). Teachers' strategies that incorporate explicit phonological and morphological training have been shown to significantly improve reading outcomes (Hentasmaka et al., 2022; Nevin et al., 2026; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Castles et al., 2022). Therefore, reading instruction should not only emphasize text exposure but also incorporate deep linguistic exploration activities (Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Graham, 2020; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). This perspective forms the foundation of modern literacy theory, which integrates linguistic knowledge with cognitive reading processes (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Hjetland et al., 2020; Snow & Moje, 2021).

However, challenges remain in implementing integrated phonological and morphological instruction in classroom settings (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Hattie, 2020; Biesta, 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). Some teachers lack sufficient linguistic knowledge, while others face constraints

related to time and instructional resources (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Hattie, 2020; OECD, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). Additionally, the absence of explicit curriculum guidelines for phonological and morphological instruction limits teachers' ability to integrate these components effectively (OECD, 2021; Redecker, 2022; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). These challenges highlight the need for systemic support through teacher professional development, instructional materials, and assessment frameworks (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; OECD, 2021; Redecker, 2022; Holmes et al., 2022; Hattie, 2020). By addressing these barriers, literacy instruction can be enhanced to achieve optimal student outcomes (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021). Furthermore, a strong understanding of linguistic structures enables students not only to read fluently but also to comprehend texts more deeply (Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Giazitzidou et al., 2024; Hjetland et al., 2020).

Teachers have a central role in determining the success of reading learning in the classroom. Teachers not only function as material presenters, but also as designers of effective learning strategies. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2021), the quality of the learning strategies used by teachers greatly affects student learning outcomes. In learning to read, teachers need to understand the linguistic characteristics of students and their learning needs. The right learning strategies can help students develop optimal phonological and morphological awareness. However, there are still many teachers who do not fully understand the importance of these two aspects. Reading learning is often still conventional and focuses on reading texts without language analysis. As a result, students get less exercise that supports their linguistic development. Therefore, teachers need to be equipped with theoretical and practical understanding of phonology and morphology. Mastery of linguistics-based learning strategies will improve the quality of reading learning. Thus, the role of teachers is very crucial in improving students' reading skills.

Teachers' strategies in reading learning must be adjusted to the characteristics of the language being taught. Indonesian has a relatively transparent phonological system, but it has a productive morphology. According to Alwi et al. (2022), understanding the morphology of the Indonesian language is very important in understanding the meaning of words and sentences. Many words in Indonesian are formed through a complex process of affixation. If students do not understand the structure of words, they will have difficulty understanding the reading text. Therefore, reading learning strategies need to integrate word analysis exercises. Teachers can use activities such as identifying suffixes and the meaning of root words. In addition, regular phonological training is required to ensure pronunciation accuracy and reading fluency. A balanced strategy between phonology and morphology will help students read more effectively. This approach also supports the development of students' academic vocabulary. Thus, learning to read Indonesian requires contextual and linguistic strategies.

Thus, research on teachers' strategies in improving students' reading skills by paying attention to phonological and morphological awareness is very relevant and urgent to be carried out. This research will not only make an empirical contribution to reading learning practices but also provide strategic recommendations for teacher professional development, teaching material design, and curriculum that supports reading learning comprehensively. The findings of this study are expected to be the basis for education policy recommendations, especially in literacy learning in primary and secondary schools. In addition, the results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of a more holistic reading learning theory.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Reading skills

Reading is a complex cognitive process in which the reader constructs meaning by deciphering written symbols (Shivonen, 2021). Reading is a basic science that must be possessed by a person to gain other knowledge, but it is not enough only with abilities but also a desire is needed. The ability and desire to read will affect a person's knowledge and skills. The more reading it can be ensured from

ignorance to know and inability to be able. By reading a lot, a person will have a better quality of self than those who read a little (Staddon, 2022) (Hadi, 2023). Reading comprehension is the result of two distinct but related skills: decoding, the ability to recognize individual written words, and language comprehension, the process of interpreting connected words and discourse. In the early stages of learning to read, decoding skills are the most important factor in the reading process. Adequate reading skills will get good understanding, so that readers have reading comprehension skills. (Smith, 2021) (Ayuningrum, 2021)

Reading is a complex process that involves interaction between the reader and the text to build meaning. According to Snow and Moje (2021), reading not only includes the ability to recognize words accurately, but also involves understanding, reasoning, and interpreting the information presented in the text. Reading is seen as an active cognitive activity, in which the reader integrates previous knowledge with new information from the text. This process demands the simultaneous involvement of a wide range of linguistic and cognitive abilities. Therefore, reading is inseparable from the underlying language ability. In the context of education, reading is the main means of acquiring knowledge and developing high-level thinking skills. Reading also serves as the foundation for lifelong learning. Good reading comprehension allows students to access various sources of information independently. Thus, reading has a strategic role in students' academic development. Therefore, mastery of reading skills is the main goal in language learning.

In modern literacy studies, reading is understood as a multidimensional process that includes linguistic, cognitive, and social aspects. According to Castles, Rastle, & Nation (2022), reading involves two main components, namely decoding and language comprehension. Decoding is related to the ability to recognize and pronounce words, while language comprehension is related to the interpretation of the meaning of text. These two components are interrelated and cannot be separated in an effective reading process. Students who are able to read fluently do not necessarily have good reading comprehension if they are not supported by adequate language skills. Therefore, reading requires mastery of vocabulary, sentence structure, and knowledge of discourse. Recent research shows that weaknesses in one of the components of reading can hinder the overall process of text meaning. According to Afflerbach, Cho, & Kim (2021), reading activities are influenced by reading goals, the type of text, and the social and cultural background of readers. In the school context, reading is directed to support the achievement of learning goals and the development of students' literacy.

2.2. Phonology

Reading involves the extraction of meaning from visual input not only on semantics, but also on the form of words spoken (phonology) as well as the processing of the visual word form itself (orthography) (Graves, 2023). Phonology is a branch of linguistics that examines sound systems in languages that contain rules that govern linguistics that examine the production, transmission, and recognition of language voices. Phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies the sound system of language and the function of sounds in distinguishing meaning. According to Odden (2021), phonology does not only discuss sounds physically, but emphasizes more on how sounds are organized in language systems and used by speakers to communicate. Phonology focuses on sound patterns, rules of sound distribution, and relationships between phonemes in a language. Thus, phonology is different from phonetics which focuses on the articulatory and acoustic aspects of sound. In phonological studies, sound is understood as an abstract unit that has a linguistic function. This study includes the analysis of phonemes, allophones, syllable structure, pressure, and intonation. Therefore, phonology plays an important role in understanding how language works at the sound level. Understanding phonology helps explain why certain sounds can differentiate the meaning of words. This makes phonology an important foundation for language study and language learning. (Rahelsa, 2025)

In the context of language education and acquisition, phonology is closely related to phonological awareness, which is the ability of individuals to recognize and manipulate language sounds. According to Hulme and Snowling (2021), phonological awareness is a metalinguistic skill that

includes the ability to identify phonemes, syllables, and sound patterns in spoken language. This ability is very important in the process of learning to read because it helps students associate letters with their sounds. Phonology is the basis for the decoding process in reading, especially in the early stages of literacy. Research by Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2022) confirms that phonological weakness is often the main cause of reading difficulties. Therefore, understanding phonology is not only important in the study of theoretical linguistics, but also in language learning practice. Phonology serves as a bridge between spoken and written language. With a good command of phonology, students will more easily develop reading and writing skills. This shows that phonology has a strategic role in language education. According to Gussenhoven and Jacobs (2021), the phonological system of a language is formed by rules that are socially agreed upon by its speakers. This means that sounds that are considered meaningful in one language do not necessarily have the same function in another language. In language learning, understanding phonology systems helps teachers explain the differences in sounds and pronunciation patterns more systematically.

2.3. Morphology

Morphology is the study of describing the shape of a landscape and its formation process, investigating the relationship between forms and processes and their controllers. Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words and the process of word formation in a language. According to Lieber (2021), morphology focuses on morpheme analysis as the smallest unit that has a grammatical meaning or function. Morphemes can be independent morphemes that can stand alone or bound morphemes that must be attached to other morphemes. The study of morphology includes the process of word formation such as affixation, reduplication, composition, and derivation. Through this study, it can be understood how words are formed and how changes in the shape of words affect their meaning and grammatical function. Morphology also plays a role in explaining the relationship between the form and the meaning of words. Thus, morphology is an important part of understanding the language system as a whole. Understanding morphology helps speakers and language learners recognize patterns of word formation. This shows that morphology is not only theoretical, but also applicable in the use of language. Therefore, morphology has a central position in the study of linguistics.

In the context of language acquisition and learning, morphology is closely related to morphological awareness, which is the ability of individuals to recognize and understand the structure of words and the meaning of morphemes in them. According to Goodwin and Ahn (2021), morphological awareness contributes significantly to the development of vocabulary and reading comprehension. Students who have a good knowledge of morphology tend to understand new words more easily, especially affixes and complex words. This is very important in learning to read, because reading texts often contain words with diverse morphological structures. Research by Carlisle and Kearns (2022) shows that explicitly teaching morphology can significantly improve reading comprehension. Morphology helps students interpret the meaning of words based on their parts. Thus, understanding morphology supports the process of interpreting texts in more depth. Morphological awareness also helps students understand the relationship of meaning between words in a text. Therefore, morphology has an important role in improving reading skills. In addition, morphology is language-specific and is influenced by the linguistic system of each language. According to Aronoff and Fudeman (2022), each language has its own distinctive morphological rules in forming words. In Indonesian, for example, the process of affixation is very productive and plays an important role in the formation of the meaning of words.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research design

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design to systematically explore teachers' pedagogical strategies in enhancing students' reading skills through phonological and morphological

awareness (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Tracy, 2020; Aspers & Corte, 2021). Qualitative inquiry is particularly appropriate for investigating complex educational phenomena because it emphasizes meaning-making, contextual interpretation, and human experience rather than statistical generalization (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Denzin & Lincoln, 2023; Flick, 2022). This design enables the researcher to capture the depth and richness of instructional practices as they naturally occur within classroom environments (Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Yin, 2021; Patton, 2022). Furthermore, qualitative descriptive approaches are recognized for their flexibility and their capacity to remain close to participants lived realities without excessive abstraction (Kim et al., 2020; Sandelowski, 2021; Doyle et al., 2020). Consequently, this design aligns with the study's objective of producing a nuanced and context-sensitive account of literacy instruction (Maxwell, 2021; Creswell, 2022; Guest et al., 2021).

From a philosophical standpoint, this study is grounded in an interpretivist paradigm that prioritizes participants' perspectives and socially constructed meanings (Schwandt, 2021; Denzin & Lincoln, 2023; Crotty, 2020). Interpretivism assumes that reality is co-constructed through interaction, experience, and contextual influences within educational settings (Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022; Merriam & Tisdell, 2021). In this regard, teachers' instructional strategies are understood as dynamic practices shaped by institutional contexts, classroom interactions, and learner diversity (Biesta, 2022; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Hargreaves, 2020). The qualitative descriptive framework allows for systematic yet flexible exploration of these pedagogical processes (Maxwell, 2021; Yin, 2021; Patton, 2022). Thus, the research design ensures both methodological rigor and contextual sensitivity in interpreting findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Guest et al., 2021).

3.2. Research setting and participants

The study was conducted in a secondary school context where reading instruction constitutes a central component of language learning (OECD, 2021; Snow & Moje, 2021; Castles et al., 2022). Secondary education provides a critical stage for literacy development due to the increasing complexity of texts and cognitive demands placed on learners (Graham, 2020; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Kim et al., 2022). The participants consisted of 13 *informants*, selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance, depth, and contextual richness (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Patton, 2022; Palinkas et al., 2020). Purposive sampling is widely employed in qualitative studies because it enables the inclusion of participants who possess rich experiential knowledge related to the research focus (Etikan, 2020; Campbell et al., 2020; Robinson, 2021). This sampling strategy enhances the credibility and depth of qualitative findings (Guest et al., 2021; Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022).

The participants comprised 9 *Indonesian language teachers* as primary informants and 4 *students* as supporting informants to provide complementary perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Yin, 2021). This combination allows for triangulation between pedagogical practices and learner experiences, thereby strengthening analytical validity (Patton, 2022; Denzin & Lincoln, 2023; Guest et al., 2021). The selection criteria included teaching experience, instructional competence, and active engagement in reading instruction (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Biesta, 2022; Hattie, 2020). Student participants were selected based on their involvement in reading activities to enrich contextual interpretation (Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Kim et al., 2022). This structured participant composition ensures a comprehensive understanding of both teaching and learning processes.

3.3. Data sources

This study utilized both primary and secondary data sources to ensure comprehensive and triangulated findings (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Patton, 2022; Yin, 2021). Primary data were collected through classroom observations and in-depth interviews, enabling the researcher to capture authentic instructional practices and lived experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Tracy, 2020; Guest et al., 2021). Such data are essential in qualitative research because they provide rich, contextually grounded insights

into educational phenomena (Flick, 2022; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Maxwell, 2021). Secondary data included lesson plans, teaching modules, and assessment records, which offer additional contextual and documentary evidence (Bowen, 2020; Yin, 2021; Creswell, 2022). The integration of multiple data sources enhances the validity and reliability of the study (Patton, 2022; Denzin & Lincoln, 2023; Guest et al., 2021).

The use of multiple data sources reflects the principle of triangulation in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2023; Patton, 2022; Flick, 2022). Triangulation allows researchers to cross-verify findings and minimize bias arising from single-source data (Carter et al., 2021; Tracy, 2020; Maxwell, 2021). Furthermore, combining observational, interview, and documentary data provides a holistic understanding of instructional practices (Yin, 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2021). This methodological integration strengthens interpretive depth and analytical rigor (Guest et al., 2021; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Patton, 2022). Consequently, the study ensures a comprehensive and credible representation of the research context.

3.4. Data collection techniques

Data collection was conducted through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, which are widely recognized as core qualitative methods (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Patton, 2022; Flick, 2022). Observation enables direct examination of behaviors and interactions in natural settings, thereby capturing authentic instructional practices (Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Yin, 2021; Tracy, 2020). In this study, non-participant observation was employed to reduce researcher interference and maintain objectivity (Angrosino, 2021; Creswell, 2022; Guest et al., 2021). Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format to allow flexibility while maintaining alignment with research objectives (Kallio et al., 2020; Adams, 2020; Braun & Clarke, 2021). Documentation served as a complementary technique to validate and enrich the collected data (Bowen, 2020; Yin, 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2021).

Semi-structured interviews are particularly effective for eliciting in-depth perspectives and experiences from participants (Kallio et al., 2020; Tracy, 2020; Guest et al., 2021). This approach enables researchers to explore emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Flick, 2022; Maxwell, 2021). Observation provides contextual evidence of how teaching strategies are enacted in real classroom settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Yin, 2021; Creswell, 2022). The integration of multiple techniques ensures methodological complementarity and enhances data richness (Patton, 2022; Denzin & Lincoln, 2023; Guest et al., 2021). Consequently, the study achieves a comprehensive and balanced data collection process.

3.5. Research instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher functions as the primary instrument responsible for data collection and interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Patton, 2022). This role enables flexibility, responsiveness, and contextual sensitivity during the research process (Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022; Maxwell, 2021). Supporting instruments included interview guides, observation checklists, and document analysis protocols to ensure systematic data collection (Bowen, 2020; Yin, 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2021). These instruments were developed based on the research objectives and key analytical indicators (Guest et al., 2021; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Patton, 2022). The use of structured tools enhances consistency and methodological rigor. The combination of multiple instruments strengthens the credibility and dependability of qualitative findings (Creswell, 2022; Flick, 2022; Tracy, 2020). Interview guides ensure alignment between research questions and participant responses (Kallio et al., 2020; Guest et al., 2021; Braun & Clarke, 2021). Observation checklists support systematic recording of instructional practices (Yin, 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2021). Document analysis protocols provide a structured approach to examining educational materials (Bowen,

2020; Patton, 2022; Maxwell, 2021). Together, these instruments enhance the overall rigor of the research process.

3.6. Data analysis

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which involves data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2021; Yin, 2021). Data reduction involves selecting and organizing relevant data to identify key themes and patterns (Flick, 2022; Braun & Clarke, 2021; Maxwell, 2021). Data display facilitates the presentation of information in structured formats such as matrices and thematic charts (Guest et al., 2021; Patton, 2022; Creswell, 2022). Conclusion drawing involves interpreting findings and verifying their consistency through iterative analysis (Miles et al., 2021; Yin, 2021; Tracy, 2020). This analytical process ensures systematic and transparent interpretation. The interactive nature of this model allows data collection and analysis to occur simultaneously (Miles et al., 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2021; Patton, 2022). This iterative approach enables continuous refinement of themes and enhances analytical depth (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Flick, 2022; Maxwell, 2021). Furthermore, it supports the development of grounded and contextually relevant conclusions (Yin, 2021; Guest et al., 2021; Tracy, 2020). The model also ensures coherence between data interpretation and research objectives (Creswell, 2022; Merriam & Tisdell, 2021; Patton, 2022). Therefore, the study achieves methodological rigor and analytical consistency.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Teachers' understanding of phonological awareness and how it relates to students' abilities

Teacher 1 (T1) is a senior Indonesian language teacher with more than ten years of teaching experience at the junior secondary level. She demonstrates a strong pedagogical orientation toward foundational literacy skills and frequently integrates phonological activities into her classroom practices. Her professional background indicates a deep awareness of linguistic components in reading instruction. Interview excerpt:

"Phonological awareness, in my understanding, is the ability of students to identify, differentiate, and manipulate sounds within words, which is essential for achieving reading fluency. Many of my students who struggle with reading actually have difficulties in recognizing sound patterns, especially when dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary. I often observe that when students cannot segment syllables properly, they tend to mispronounce words and lose comprehension. Therefore, I always emphasize blending and segmentation exercises at the beginning of lessons. In my experience, students who develop strong phonological awareness show significant improvement not only in pronunciation but also in confidence during reading activities." (T1)

Teacher 1 conceptualizes phonological awareness as a foundational linguistic skill directly linked to reading fluency. Her emphasis on sound manipulation reflects a strong alignment with phonics-based instructional approaches. The relationship she identifies between phonological skills and student confidence highlights both cognitive and affective dimensions of literacy development. Teacher 2 is an experienced teacher at the senior secondary level, with a focus on academic reading and vocabulary development. His teaching approach integrates phonological awareness within broader literacy practices, particularly in dealing with complex texts.

"For me, phonological awareness is not only about sounds but also about how students connect those sounds to meaning, especially in more advanced texts. In senior high school, students often face difficulties when encountering new academic vocabulary, and this is where phonology becomes relevant again. I integrate phonological training indirectly through reading exercises"

rather than isolated drills. Students who are weak in phonological awareness usually read slowly and struggle with comprehension. Therefore, strengthening this skill is still important even at higher educational levels.” (T2)

Teacher 2 expands the concept of phonological awareness beyond basic decoding to include its role in vocabulary acquisition. His approach reflects an integrative pedagogical model rather than isolated skill instruction. The emphasis on advanced learners indicates that phonological awareness remains relevant across educational stages. Teacher 3 is a mid-career teacher who actively incorporates interactive and student-centered learning strategies. She focuses on improving students’ reading fluency through repetitive and collaborative practices.

“Phonological awareness is crucial because it forms the basis of how students read aloud and understand text. I often ask students to repeat words slowly and carefully to ensure they recognize each sound correctly. Many students initially feel embarrassed when they make mistakes, but repetition helps them improve gradually. I also use group reading activities so that students can learn from each other. Over time, students who were previously hesitant become more fluent and confident readers.” (T3)

Teacher 3 highlights the role of repetition and social interaction in developing phonological awareness. Her strategy reflects a constructivist approach where learning occurs through practice and collaboration. The link between phonological awareness and student confidence is strongly emphasized. Teacher 4 specializes in early secondary education and focuses on foundational literacy reinforcement. She is particularly attentive to students with diverse learning abilities.

“I see phonological awareness as the ability to break down words into smaller sound units, which is essential for students who still struggle with basic reading. In my class, there is a wide variation in students’ abilities, so I need to differentiate my instruction. Some students require very basic phonological exercises, while others can move on to more complex reading tasks. Without this foundational skill, students cannot progress effectively. Therefore, I consider phonological awareness as the starting point of all reading instruction.” (T4)

Teacher 4 emphasizes differentiation in phonological instruction based on student ability levels. Her perspective positions phonological awareness as a prerequisite for higher-order reading skills. This reflects a developmental view of literacy acquisition. Teacher 5 integrates gamification into reading instruction and focuses on increasing student engagement.

“Phonological awareness can be taught in fun ways, such as through word games and interactive activities. Students tend to lose interest if the exercises are too repetitive or mechanical. I use word cards and sound-matching games to make learning more engaging. When students enjoy the activity, they are more willing to practice and improve. As a result, their reading accuracy and fluency also improve significantly.” (T5)

Teacher 5 connects phonological awareness with student motivation and engagement. Her use of gamification demonstrates an innovative pedagogical approach. The findings suggest that affective factors play a critical role in literacy development. Teacher 6 adopts a structured and systematic teaching approach, emphasizing gradual skill development.

“Phonological awareness must be developed step by step, starting from simple sounds to more complex structures. I usually begin with syllable recognition before moving to word-level analysis. Students who follow this progression tend to achieve better results. However, those who skip these stages often experience difficulties later. Therefore, consistency in instruction is very important.” (T6)

Teacher 6 highlights the importance of scaffolding in phonological instruction. His approach aligns with structured literacy frameworks. The emphasis on progression underscores the cumulative nature of reading skills. Teacher 7 focuses on integrating phonology with contextual reading.

"I do not teach phonology separately, but I integrate it within reading texts. Students analyze how words are pronounced while also understanding their meaning. This approach helps them see the relevance of phonological awareness in real reading situations. It also prevents students from perceiving phonology as too basic or unnecessary. As a result, students become more engaged in learning." (T7)

Teacher 7 adopts an integrative instructional approach. His strategy reflects contextualized learning principles. This approach reduces resistance among students toward foundational skills. Teacher 8 emphasizes remedial instruction for struggling readers. *"Some students require additional support because their phonological awareness is still very weak. I provide remedial sessions where we focus on basic sound recognition and pronunciation. These students often improve significantly after receiving targeted instruction. Without such support, they would continue to struggle in regular classes. Therefore, remedial teaching is essential."* (T8). Teacher 8 underscores the importance of targeted intervention. His approach highlights equity in literacy instruction. The findings suggest that differentiated support improves outcomes for struggling learners. Teacher 9 integrates phonological awareness with assessment practices.

"I assess students' phonological awareness regularly to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This helps me design appropriate learning strategies for each student. Assessment is not only for grading but also for understanding students' needs. Through continuous evaluation, I can monitor their progress effectively. This makes my teaching more responsive and adaptive." (T9)

Teacher 9 emphasizes assessment-informed instruction. His approach reflects data-driven pedagogy. Continuous assessment enhances instructional effectiveness. Student 1 is a junior secondary student with moderate reading ability. *"Sometimes I find it difficult to read long words because I cannot recognize the sounds clearly. When the teacher asks us to break words into syllables, it becomes easier for me. I feel more confident when I can pronounce words correctly. Practice really helps me improve."* (S1). Student 1 confirms the role of phonological awareness in decoding. The improvement in confidence indicates affective benefits. Instructional support is perceived as effective. Student 2 demonstrates higher reading proficiency.

"I think understanding sounds helps me read faster and understand better. When I know how to pronounce a word, I can also guess its meaning. The exercises given by the teacher are very helpful. They make reading easier." (S2)

Student 2 links phonological awareness with fluency and comprehension. The ability to infer meaning indicates advanced literacy skills. Instruction supports higher-level reading processes. Student 3 experiences reading difficulties. *"I often feel confused when reading because I do not know how to say the words. When the teacher helps us with sounds, it becomes clearer. I still need more practice, but I feel I am improving. It makes reading less stressful."* (S3). Student 3 highlights challenges in phonological processing. Instruction reduces anxiety and confusion. Progress is gradual but evident. Student 4 actively participates in classroom activities. *"I like reading activities when we do them together in class. Listening to others helps me understand how to pronounce words. I learn from my friends and the teacher. It makes learning more interesting."* (S4). Student 4 emphasizes collaborative learning benefits. Peer interaction enhances phonological awareness. Engagement contributes to learning effectiveness.

Across all informants, phonological awareness is consistently understood as a fundamental component of reading development. Teachers emphasize its role in decoding, fluency, and comprehension, while students experience its impact on confidence and ease of reading. The findings indicate a strong alignment between instructional practices and students' perceived learning outcomes, reinforcing the importance of integrating phonological awareness into literacy instruction.

4.2. Teacher's understanding of morphological awareness and how it relates to students' abilities

Teacher 1 is a senior Indonesian language educator with extensive experience in literacy instruction, particularly in developing students' vocabulary and reading comprehension through linguistic approaches. Her pedagogical orientation emphasizes the integration of word structure analysis in classroom practice. Interview excerpt:

"Morphological awareness, in my understanding, refers to students' ability to recognize and analyze the internal structure of words, including prefixes, suffixes, and root forms. This ability is essential because many words in Indonesian are formed through affixation, and without understanding these structures, students often struggle to grasp meaning. I frequently observe that students who cannot identify word components tend to misinterpret texts, especially in academic reading. Therefore, I consistently incorporate activities such as identifying affixes and discussing word formation in context. In my experience, students who develop strong morphological awareness demonstrate significant improvement in vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension." (T1)

Teacher 1 conceptualizes morphological awareness as a critical linguistic competence for decoding meaning. Her emphasis on affixation reflects the structural complexity of the Indonesian language. The connection she draws between morphology and comprehension highlights its cognitive significance in literacy development. Teacher 2 is a high school teacher who focuses on advanced reading and academic language development. His instructional approach integrates morphology within text-based learning.

"For me, morphological awareness is closely related to how students understand complex academic vocabulary. Many students can read words fluently but fail to understand their meanings because they do not analyze their structure. I encourage students to break down words into roots and affixes to uncover their meanings. This is particularly important when dealing with scientific or formal texts. Students who master this skill become more independent readers. They no longer rely solely on memorization but can infer meanings systematically." (T2)

Teacher 2 positions morphological awareness as a tool for academic literacy. His emphasis on independent meaning-making reflects higher-order cognitive processes. This approach aligns with analytical reading strategies in advanced education. Teacher 3 employs collaborative and discussion-based strategies to enhance students' understanding of word structures.

"Morphological awareness helps students understand how words are formed and how their meanings change. In my class, I often use group discussions where students analyze words from reading texts. They identify prefixes, suffixes, and root words together. This collaborative process makes learning more interactive and meaningful. Over time, students become more confident in interpreting unfamiliar words. They also develop a deeper understanding of the language." (T3)

Teacher 3 highlights collaborative learning as a means of developing morphological awareness. Her approach emphasizes social interaction in knowledge construction. This strategy enhances both engagement and comprehension. Teacher 4 focuses on supporting students with diverse abilities, particularly those who struggle with vocabulary.

"I see morphological awareness as the key to helping students expand their vocabulary. Many struggling students do not realize that words are built from smaller meaningful units. When I teach them how to identify these units, they begin to understand words more easily. However, some students find this concept abstract and difficult at first. Therefore, I use simple examples and gradual instruction. With consistent practice, students show noticeable improvement." (T4)

Teacher 4 emphasizes the role of scaffolding in teaching morphology. Her approach addresses cognitive challenges in understanding abstract concepts. The gradual progression supports inclusive learning. Teacher 5 integrates creative and engaging methods in teaching morphology.

“Teaching morphology does not have to be boring. I use games where students match roots with affixes or create new words. This makes them more interested in learning. When students enjoy the activity, they participate more actively. As a result, they remember word structures better. This also improves their reading comprehension.” (T5)

Teacher 5 connects morphological awareness with student engagement. Gamification enhances motivation and retention. The approach demonstrates the importance of affective factors in learning. Teacher 8 focuses on remedial teaching for students with low vocabulary skills.

“Some students have very limited vocabulary because they lack morphological awareness. I provide additional sessions where we focus on basic word structures. These students gradually improve when they understand how words are formed. Without this support, they would continue to struggle. Morphology is essential for their progress.” (T8)

Teacher 8 highlights the importance of targeted intervention. Morphological awareness is positioned as foundational for vocabulary growth. The approach supports equity in education. Teacher 9 integrates assessment into morphology instruction.

“I regularly assess students’ understanding of word structures to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This helps me adjust my teaching strategies. Assessment is not just for grading but for improving learning. Through continuous evaluation, I can monitor students’ progress. This makes my teaching more effective.” (T9)

Teacher 9 emphasizes assessment-driven instruction. Continuous evaluation supports adaptive teaching. This approach enhances instructional effectiveness. Student 1 is a junior secondary student with developing reading skills. “Sometimes I do not understand words because they are too long. When the teacher explains the parts of the word, it becomes easier. I can guess the meaning better. It helps me read more confidently.” (S1). Student 1 demonstrates the role of morphology in comprehension. Breaking down words aids understanding. Confidence increases with linguistic awareness. Student 2 has relatively strong reading abilities.

“Understanding word structure helps me learn new vocabulary faster. I do not need to memorize everything. I can figure out meanings by myself. This makes reading easier.” (S2)

Student 2 shows independent learning through morphology. Analytical skills enhance vocabulary acquisition. Morphological awareness supports autonomy. Student 3 struggles with reading comprehension. “I often get confused when words are complicated. When the teacher explains prefixes and suffixes, I understand better. I still need more practice, but it helps me a lot. Reading is becoming easier.” (S3). Student 3 highlights difficulties with complex words. Instruction reduces confusion and supports progress. Morphology aids gradual improvement. Student 4 actively participates in learning activities.

“I like learning about how words are formed. It is interesting to see how meanings change. I also learn from my friends during group discussions. It makes learning more enjoyable.” (S4)

This emphasizes engagement and collaboration. Morphological learning is perceived as meaningful. Social interaction enhances understanding. Across all participants, morphological awareness is consistently understood as a critical component of vocabulary development and reading comprehension. Teachers emphasize its role in decoding complex words, while students experience its benefits in improving understanding and confidence. The findings demonstrate that integrating morphological instruction into reading practices creates a more effective and meaningful literacy learning process.

4.3. Learning strategies for morphological understanding

Teacher 1 is a senior Indonesian language teacher who emphasizes explicit linguistic instruction and structured vocabulary development in her classroom. She consistently integrates morphological analysis into reading activities to enhance students' comprehension.

"In my teaching practice, I prioritize explicit instruction of morphological structures, particularly prefixes, suffixes, and root words. I usually begin by introducing a set of affixes and then ask students to identify them in reading texts. After that, we analyze how these affixes change the meaning of words. I also encourage students to create their own examples to reinforce understanding. This strategy helps students become more aware of how language works. Over time, they develop the ability to decode unfamiliar words independently." (T1)

Teacher 1 adopts an explicit and structured instructional approach to morphology. Her emphasis on practice and application supports deep linguistic understanding. This strategy promotes independent vocabulary acquisition. Teacher 2 focuses on integrating morphology into contextual and academic reading practices.

"I prefer to teach morphology through authentic texts rather than isolated exercises. Students analyze complex words within their actual reading materials. This allows them to understand both form and meaning simultaneously. I guide them to identify word components and relate them to the overall meaning of the text. This strategy is particularly effective for academic reading. Students become more analytical and less dependent on memorization." (T2)

Teacher 2 emphasizes contextualized learning through authentic materials. His approach enhances meaning-making in real reading situations. This strategy supports higher-order literacy skills. Teacher 3 employs collaborative learning strategies to enhance morphological understanding. *"I often use group discussions to teach morphology. Students work together to analyze words from reading texts and identify their components. This collaborative process allows them to share ideas and learn from each other. I also ask them to present their findings to the class. This not only improves their understanding but also builds confidence. Students become more engaged and active in learning."* (T3)

Teacher 3 utilizes social interaction as a learning tool. Collaborative strategies enhance engagement and knowledge construction. This approach fosters both cognitive and social development. Teacher 4 focuses on differentiated instruction to accommodate diverse student abilities. *"In my class, students have different levels of understanding, so I use differentiated strategies. For beginners, I provide simple examples and guided practice. For more advanced students, I give more complex tasks involving word analysis. I also use visual aids to help students understand word structures. This approach ensures that all students can participate meaningfully. Over time, their understanding improves at their own pace."* (T4). Teacher 4 highlights the importance of differentiation in morphology instruction. Her approach addresses diverse learning needs. This strategy supports inclusive education. Teacher 5 integrates gamification into morphological learning.

"I use games to teach morphology because students find it more interesting. For example, I create activities where students match roots with different affixes. They also compete in groups to form new words. This makes learning fun and interactive. Students are more motivated to participate. As a result, they remember word structures more effectively." (T5)

Teacher 5 connects engagement with learning effectiveness. Gamification enhances motivation and retention. This strategy demonstrates the importance of affective factors. Teacher 6 adopts a systematic and sequential instructional model.

"I teach morphology step by step, starting from basic concepts and gradually moving to more complex structures. Students first learn root words before exploring affixes. This progression helps them understand the logic of word formation. I also provide regular practice to reinforce learning. Consistency is key to developing this skill. Students who follow this process show steady improvement." (T6)

Teacher 6 emphasizes structured progression in learning. His approach reflects a scaffolded instructional model. This ensures cumulative knowledge development. Student 1 is a junior secondary learner with developing vocabulary skills.

"I understand words better when the teacher explains their parts. Breaking words into smaller parts makes them easier to understand. I also like when we do activities in groups. It helps me learn faster. I feel more confident when I understand the meaning." (S1)

Student 1 highlights the role of decomposition in understanding. Collaborative learning enhances comprehension. Confidence improves with clarity. Student 2 demonstrates strong engagement in learning activities. *"Learning morphology helps me guess the meaning of new words. I do not have to memorize everything. The activities in class are interesting and helpful. I can apply what I learn when reading. It makes learning easier."* (S2). Student 2 shows independent learning development. Morphological awareness supports inference skills. Engagement enhances effectiveness. Student 3 experiences difficulty with complex vocabulary. Interview excerpt:

"I find long words difficult, but learning about prefixes and suffixes helps me. The teacher explains them clearly. I still need more practice, but I am improving. It makes reading less difficult." (S3)

Student 3 indicates gradual improvement through instruction. Morphology reduces reading difficulty. Practice remains essential. Student 4 actively participates in collaborative learning. *"I enjoy group activities where we analyze words together. It is interesting to see how words are formed. I learn from my friends and the teacher. It makes learning more enjoyable."* (S4). Student 4 emphasizes collaborative engagement. Social interaction enhances understanding. Enjoyment contributes to learning success. The findings reveal that teachers employ a range of instructional strategies to develop students' morphological understanding, including explicit instruction, contextual learning, collaboration, differentiation, gamification, and assessment-driven approaches. These strategies collectively support vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and learner autonomy. Students' responses further confirm that meaningful and engaging instructional practices significantly enhance their ability to understand and apply morphological knowledge.

4.4. Learning strategies for phonological understanding

Teacher 1 is a senior Indonesian language teacher with extensive experience in early literacy instruction. Her pedagogical approach emphasizes explicit phonological training as a foundation for reading development.

"In my classroom, I consistently implement phonological exercises such as blending, segmentation, and syllable identification to strengthen students' reading skills. I usually begin lessons with short phonological drills to activate students' awareness of sounds. These activities include breaking words into syllables and combining sounds to form words. I also incorporate reading aloud sessions where students practice pronunciation collectively. Over time, I observe that students who engage regularly in these activities demonstrate improved fluency and accuracy in reading." (T1)

Teacher 1 employs explicit phonological instruction as a foundational strategy. Her use of repetitive drills reflects a structured literacy approach. This method supports the development of decoding accuracy and reading fluency. Teacher 2 teaches at the senior secondary level and integrates phonological awareness within broader reading practices.

"At the high school level, I integrate phonological strategies within reading activities rather than teaching them separately. Students analyze pronunciation while reading texts, especially when encountering unfamiliar words. I guide them to break down difficult words into manageable sound units. This approach allows them to connect pronunciation with meaning. It also prevents

them from perceiving phonological exercises as too basic. As a result, students become more confident and independent readers.” (T2)

Teacher 2 adopts an integrative approach to phonological instruction. His strategy emphasizes contextual learning within authentic reading tasks. This approach enhances both fluency and comprehension. Teacher 3 focuses on interactive and student-centered phonological learning strategies.

“I use repetition and guided practice to help students improve their phonological skills. Students are encouraged to read words aloud and repeat them several times. I also use choral reading so that students can learn together. This reduces anxiety and builds confidence. Additionally, I provide immediate feedback to correct pronunciation errors. Gradually, students become more accurate and fluent readers.” (T3)

Teacher 3 highlights repetition and feedback as key strategies. Her use of group reading fosters a supportive learning environment. This approach enhances both accuracy and confidence. Teacher 4 specializes in differentiated instruction for students with diverse abilities.

“In my class, students have varying levels of phonological awareness, so I adapt my strategies accordingly. For students who struggle, I provide basic exercises such as identifying initial sounds. For more advanced students, I introduce complex phonological tasks. I also use visual and auditory aids to support learning. This ensures that all students can participate effectively. Over time, their phonological skills improve significantly.” (T4)

Teacher 4 emphasizes differentiation in instruction. Her approach accommodates diverse learner needs. This strategy supports inclusive literacy development. Teacher 5 incorporates gamification into phonological learning. *“I use games such as sound matching and word-building activities to teach phonology. These activities make learning more enjoyable and engaging. Students are more motivated to participate when learning is interactive. I also organize group competitions to encourage collaboration. As a result, students practice phonological skills more frequently. This leads to noticeable improvement in their reading abilities.” (T5).* Teacher 5 integrates gamification to enhance engagement. His approach emphasizes motivation and participation. This strategy improves retention and skill development. Teacher 7 integrates phonological awareness within contextual reading activities.

“I integrate phonological exercises into reading tasks so that students can apply them directly. They analyze pronunciation while reading texts and discuss difficult words. This makes learning more meaningful. Students can see the relevance of phonology in real reading situations. It also reduces boredom. As a result, they become more engaged in learning.” (T7)

Teacher 7 adopts a contextualized approach. Integration enhances relevance and application. This strategy supports deeper learning. Teacher 9 integrates assessment into phonological instruction.

“I regularly assess students’ phonological abilities to identify their strengths and weaknesses. This helps me design appropriate learning strategies. Assessment is not only for evaluation but also for improvement. I monitor students’ progress continuously. This allows me to adjust my teaching. As a result, my instruction becomes more effective.” (T9)

Teacher 9 emphasizes assessment-driven instruction. Continuous evaluation enhances teaching effectiveness. This approach supports adaptive learning. Student 1 is a junior secondary learner with developing reading skills. *“I find it easier to read when the teacher helps us break words into sounds. The exercises make difficult words easier to understand. I feel more confident when I can pronounce words correctly. Practice helps me improve. I enjoy learning this way.” (S1).* Student 1 highlights the role of phonological segmentation. Instruction improves confidence and comprehension. Practice enhances learning outcomes. Student 3 experiences difficulties in reading.

"I often struggle with pronunciation, but the exercises help me improve. When I practice sounds, reading becomes easier. I still need more practice. The teacher's guidance is very helpful. I feel less stressed when reading." (S3)

Student 3 highlights challenges in phonological processing. Instruction reduces anxiety. Improvement occurs gradually. Student 4 actively participates in classroom activities. *"I like reading activities where we practice sounds together. It helps me learn from my friends. I understand words better. Learning becomes more enjoyable. I feel more confident."* (S4). Student 4 emphasizes collaborative learning. Peer interaction enhances understanding. Engagement supports skill development. The findings reveal that teachers employ diverse strategies to develop phonological understanding, including explicit instruction, contextual integration, repetition, differentiation, gamification, and assessment-based approaches. These strategies collectively enhance students' decoding skills, reading fluency, and confidence. Students' responses further confirm that structured and engaging phonological instruction significantly improves their reading abilities and learning experiences.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the integration of phonological and morphological awareness within instructional practices constitutes a foundational framework for enhancing students' reading proficiency, particularly in linguistically complex educational contexts (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). This integration demonstrates that phonological awareness supports decoding accuracy and reading fluency, while morphological awareness facilitates vocabulary expansion and semantic interpretation, thereby forming a complementary and interdependent relationship in literacy development (Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Hjetland et al., 2020; Giazitzidou et al., 2024). The findings align with contemporary literacy theories that conceptualize reading as a multidimensional process involving phonological processing, morphological analysis, and higher-order comprehension skills (Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Kim et al., 2022). Moreover, the integration of these linguistic components reflects a shift from fragmented literacy instruction toward a more holistic and theoretically grounded approach to reading education (Castles et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Graham, 2020). Consequently, the study reinforces the argument that effective literacy development requires the simultaneous activation of multiple linguistic competencies within authentic learning environments (Hjetland et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2022; Goodwin & Ahn, 2021).

From a pedagogical perspective, the findings indicate that teachers employ a diverse range of instructional strategies, including explicit instruction, contextual learning, collaborative activities, and differentiated teaching approaches, to enhance students' linguistic awareness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Biesta, 2022; Graham, 2020). These strategies reflect a transition from traditional teacher-centered models to student-centered learning paradigms that emphasize active engagement, interaction, and meaning-making (Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022; Patton, 2022). The integration of phonological and morphological instruction into authentic reading contexts allows students to connect linguistic knowledge with real-world literacy practices, thereby improving both comprehension and retention (Kim et al., 2022; Castles et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). Furthermore, collaborative learning strategies, such as group discussions and peer-assisted activities, enhance students' cognitive engagement and social interaction, which are critical for deep learning (Hattie, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Biesta, 2022). Therefore, the findings suggest that pedagogical innovation plays a crucial role in optimizing the effectiveness of linguistic instruction in contemporary classrooms (Graham, 2020; Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022).

The study further demonstrates that phonological awareness remains a critical predictor of reading fluency, particularly through instructional strategies such as blending, segmentation, and repetitive practice (Castles et al., 2022; Hsu et al., 2023; Nevin et al., 2026). These findings support the theoretical position that phonological processing serves as the foundational mechanism for decoding and word recognition, especially in early and intermediate stages of literacy development (Ehri, 2020;

Adams, 2021; Hjetland et al., 2020). At the same time, morphological awareness emerges as a higher-order linguistic skill that enables students to analyze word structures, infer meanings, and expand their vocabulary (Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). The interaction between phonological and morphological awareness highlights the need for balanced instructional approaches that address both sound-level and structure-level processing (Giazitzidou et al., 2024; Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022). Thus, effective literacy instruction should integrate both components to support comprehensive reading development (Snow & Moje, 2021; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Liu et al., 2024).

Importantly, the findings reveal that students' learning experiences are significantly influenced by affective and social factors, including motivation, confidence, and collaborative engagement (Hattie, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Biesta, 2022). Instructional strategies such as gamification, interactive learning, and group-based activities not only enhance linguistic skills but also foster positive attitudes toward reading (Graham, 2020; Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022). This aligns with socio-constructivist perspectives that emphasize the role of social interaction and emotional engagement in learning processes (Biesta, 2022; Patton, 2022; Maxwell, 2021). Moreover, increased student confidence and motivation contribute to sustained engagement and long-term literacy development (Hattie, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Graham, 2020). Therefore, the integration of cognitive, affective, and social dimensions is essential for effective literacy instruction in modern educational contexts (Tracy, 2020; Flick, 2022; Patton, 2022).

In the context of digital and modern education, the integration of technology into literacy instruction represents a transformative shift in pedagogical practices (Selwyn, 2021; Redecker, 2022; Holmes et al., 2022). Digital tools such as AI-based learning platforms, speech recognition systems, and interactive reading applications enable personalized and adaptive learning experiences (Holmes et al., 2022; Redecker, 2022; Selwyn, 2021). These technologies facilitate the development of phonological awareness through automated pronunciation feedback and support morphological learning through interactive word analysis tools (Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Holmes et al., 2022). Furthermore, digital learning environments enhance student engagement and motivation by providing multimodal and interactive content (Selwyn, 2021; Redecker, 2022; Holmes et al., 2022). Consequently, the integration of digital technology with linguistic instruction offers significant potential for improving literacy outcomes in contemporary education (OECD, 2021; Holmes et al., 2022; Redecker, 2022).

The convergence of linguistic awareness and digital pedagogy reflects the broader transformation of education in the era of Industry 4.0, where literacy extends beyond traditional reading skills to include digital and multimodal competencies (OECD, 2021; Selwyn, 2021; Redecker, 2022). In this context, phonological and morphological awareness can be reconceptualized as foundational elements of digital literacy, supporting students' ability to interpret and produce meaning across diverse digital platforms (Fisseler, 2024; Selwyn, 2021; OECD, 2021). This perspective highlights the need for educators to integrate linguistic knowledge with technological competencies in designing instructional practices (Holmes et al., 2022; Redecker, 2022; Selwyn, 2021). Additionally, digital tools enable the implementation of differentiated instruction by adapting learning content to students' individual needs and proficiency levels (Tomlinson, 2021; Holmes et al., 2022; Redecker, 2022). Therefore, the integration of digital and linguistic approaches is essential for preparing students to navigate complex literacy demands in the modern world (OECD, 2021; Selwyn, 2021; Holmes et al., 2022).

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of literature that emphasizes the importance of integrating phonological and morphological awareness within a comprehensive, technology-enhanced literacy framework (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). The findings demonstrate that effective literacy instruction requires a strong theoretical foundation in linguistics combined with innovative and adaptive pedagogical strategies (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Biesta, 2022; Graham, 2020). Furthermore, the integration of digital technology enhances the effectiveness of these strategies by providing personalized, interactive, and engaging learning experiences (Holmes et al., 2022; Redecker, 2022; Selwyn, 2021). This study underscores the need for educators to adopt holistic approaches that combine linguistic awareness, pedagogical innovation, and digital competence (OECD, 2021; Holmes et al., 2022; Redecker, 2022). Consequently, future research and practice should

focus on developing integrated literacy models that address the evolving demands of education in the digital era (Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Selwyn, 2021).

6. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of phonological and morphological awareness constitutes a robust and multidimensional foundation for enhancing students' reading proficiency, particularly within linguistically complex and evolving educational contexts. The findings demonstrate that phonological awareness significantly supports decoding accuracy and reading fluency, while morphological awareness facilitates vocabulary expansion and semantic comprehension, thereby forming a complementary and synergistic relationship in literacy development. Moreover, the study confirms that effective literacy instruction requires the systematic integration of these linguistic components within authentic and meaningful learning environments. The convergence of these elements underscores the importance of adopting holistic literacy models that move beyond fragmented instructional practices. Consequently, this study reinforces the theoretical premise that reading development is inherently multidimensional, requiring the interaction of phonological processing, morphological analysis, and higher-order comprehension skills.

This study contributes to the advancement of literacy education by proposing an integrated framework that systematically combines phonological and morphological awareness as complementary foundations for reading development, while simultaneously embedding these components within contemporary digital pedagogy (Castles et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024). It extends existing theoretical models by demonstrating that effective literacy acquisition requires the dynamic interaction of decoding processes, structural word analysis, and meaning construction within authentic and technology-enhanced learning environments (Goodwin & Ahn, 2021; Snow & Moje, 2021; Holmes et al., 2022). Empirically, the study provides evidence that diverse instructional strategies—including explicit teaching, contextual integration, collaboration, differentiation, and gamification—significantly enhance students' linguistic awareness, engagement, and reading performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2021; Hattie, 2020; Graham, 2020). Practically, it offers a pedagogical model that aligns linguistic theory with digital innovation, emphasizing the role of adaptive technologies and interactive platforms in supporting personalized and inclusive literacy instruction. At the policy level, the study underscores the necessity of integrating linguistic competence, teacher professional development, and digital infrastructure into curriculum design to address the evolving demands of 21st-century literacy education.

Finally, this study acknowledges several limitations and proposes directions for future research to further advance the field of literacy education. Future studies should explore the effectiveness of integrated phonological and morphological instruction using mixed-method or experimental designs to strengthen empirical evidence. Additionally, research should investigate the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and learning analytics, in enhancing linguistic awareness and literacy outcomes. Cross-cultural and longitudinal studies are also needed to examine the generalizability and long-term impact of integrated literacy models. Therefore, future research should continue to develop innovative, interdisciplinary, and technology-enhanced approaches to literacy instruction in order to address the evolving demands of global education.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions of the authors in this article: Reza Purwaningsih contributed as concepts and drafters of the article; Mutiara Hati Ali contributed as data analyzers and interpreters; Yogii Rao as the drafter of the manuscript; Rianawati contributed in collecting data and critically revising the article. All authors agree to take responsibility for all aspects of this work.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

The author declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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