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# **The Impact of Targeted and Non-Targeted Interactive Digital Storytelling on EFL Kindergarteners' Learning of Challenging English Phonemes**

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## **Abstract**

Children learning English as a foreign language (EFL) face challenges in recognizing words starting with similar phonemes such as /p/ and /b/ as in *pin* and *bin*, /f/ and /v/ as in *fast* and *vast*, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ as in *chair* and *share*, and so on (Kharma & Hajjaj, 1989, p. 16). This issue seems to be caused by transferring L1 linguistic system while learning L2 vocabulary (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). To help children recognizing words accurately, this study investigates how improved phoneme perception using targeted and non-nontargeted interactive digital storytelling (DST) techniques can improve children's recognition of /p/ and /b/ initial phoneme words. Saudi EFL kindergarten students ( $N = 75$ ) were randomly assigned to participate in three groups: a targeted interactive group, a non-targeted interactive group, and a control group. A pre-and post-test design was used to investigate the effect of each condition. Findings showed that there were differences in the accuracy of words recognition between children in the targeted interactive DST and non-targeted interactive DST conditions. There is an improvement in children's words recognition by perceiving the difference between /p/ and /b/ initial words more accurately in the targeted interactive group compared with children in the non-targeted interactive DST and children in the control group.

**Keywords:** children, online-tools, self-learning, sounds, technology