



Morphological
Awareness is the new
SuperPower

About Me

- Experience
- Background
- Interests



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF READING CHALLENGES

- Only 34% of eighth graders and 37% of twelfth graders are proficient in reading (US Dept of Ed; NAEP, 2019)
- Nearly three-quarters of students read below proficient levels (Lai, et.al. 2014)
- By secondary school, reading is no longer explicitly taught (Lai, et.al. 2014)
- Academic language becomes increasingly complex (Lai, et.al. 2014)
- Students without strong reading skills continue to fall behind (Indrisano & Chall, 1995)

**PROBLEM
STATEMENT:
READING
ACHIEVEMENT
GAPS**

High school students rarely receive targeted reading intervention

Students struggle with increasingly specialized and complex texts

Low readers feel frustrated and unmotivated

Need for targeted reading strategy to close comprehension gaps

Purpose of the Study

- Identify how morphological awareness benefits high school readers
- Focus on ninth-grade students
- Explore potential of morphological awareness as reading intervention
- Investigate word recognition and reading comprehension improvements
- Extend research beyond elementary and specialized populations



TO WHAT EXTENT DOES
MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS
HELP IDENTIFY UNKNOWN
VOCABULARY?



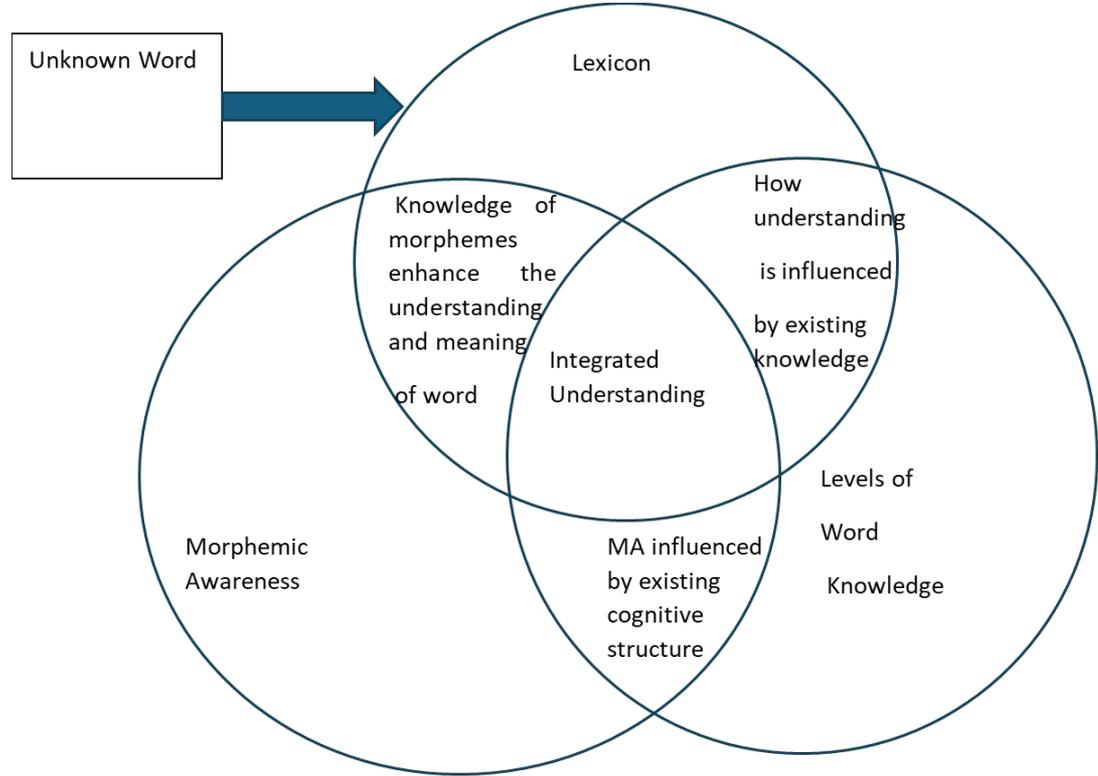
CAN MORPHOLOGICAL
AWARENESS IMPROVE READING
COMPREHENSION?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Theoretical Framework: Word Knowledge

- Nagy and Scott's five dimensions of word knowledge:
 - • Incrementality
 - • Polysemy
 - • Multidimensionality
 - • Interrelatedness
 - • Heterogeneity
- Dale's four levels of word knowledge progression
- Intersection of morphemic awareness and existing word knowledge

Map of Vocabulary Learning



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

- Extends current research to general education classrooms
- Provides potential Tier I support strategy
- Addresses reading gaps for emerging high school readers
- Offers inclusive instructional approach
- Supports students without specialized learning designations

EARLY LITERACY



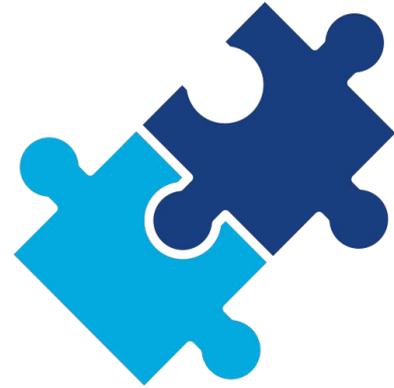
- Reading & storytelling boost comprehension
- Storybook exposure grows vocabulary, comprehension
- Early reading struggles often persist over time
- Home literacy > Economic status for outcomes
- Fewer literacy experiences = lower skill levels
- Early literacy practices drive later success
- Literacy gaps widen from 4th to 7th grade
- Reading comprehension drops in middle grades

SPECIAL POPULATIONS

- ELLs: reading + speaking = same time
- Vocabulary gaps widen over time
- 68% of 4th grade ELLs read below basic
- After Grade 3: focus shifts to reading to learn
- First language skills aid second language acquisition
- MA training = stronger vocabulary
- Word part knowledge transfers to new words
- Spanish-English root connections help ELLs
- Native language support boosts English learning
- Morphemes = better reading comprehension

MORPHEMIC AWARENESS

- Understand how word parts build meaning
- Strong link to comprehension and vocabulary
- Word-conscious teaching grows skills
- Morphological training decodes new words
- Predicts literacy success in adults
- Helps close reading gaps in teens



VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION

- Greek & Latin roots = vocabulary foundation
- 14 master words = unlock 100,000+ words
- Morpheme knowledge = decoding new words
- 82% of academic words = Greek/Latin roots
- Studying roots boosts comprehension

VOCABULARY INSTRUCTION CONTINUED



- Literacy gets content-specific in secondary school
- Interventions mainly target English class
- Struggling readers = limited vocabulary
- Need repeated exposure to words
- Morphological families grow word knowledge
- 60% of curriculum words = predictable by morphemes

RESEARCH DESIGN: QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

Quasi-experimental design



Pre-test/post-test control group methodology



Eight-week intervention period



Convenience sampling of ninth-grade students



Linear regression analysis

PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLE

- 56 ninth-grade students in rural Wisconsin school
- Rural, low to mid socioeconomic community
- 74.9% white students
- 39.7% economically disadvantaged
- 20 students in intervention group
- 36 students in control group

MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

- 37-item matching vocabulary test
- Weekly MAZE passage assessments
- Morpheme-based word recognition test
- Reliability established through:
 - Consistent testing procedures
 - Third-party scoring

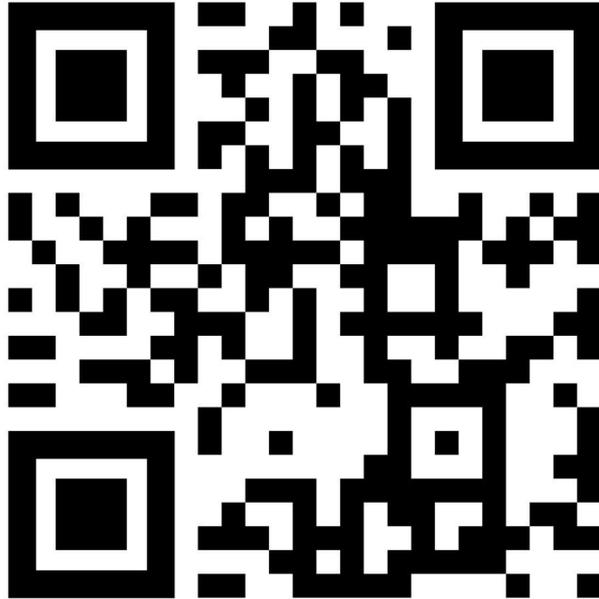
DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

- Initial baseline vocabulary assessment
- Eight weeks of morphological awareness instruction
- Weekly morpheme study activities
- Friday MAZE passage comprehension tests
- Final post-test vocabulary assessment
- Systematic data tracking
- Anonymous student identification

PRACTICAL CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Integrate explicit morpheme instruction into daily curriculum
- Create targeted word study activities focusing on root words, prefixes, and suffixes
- Develop morphological awareness warm-up exercises

Let's get started in your classroom!





QUESTIONS?

