# Table of Contents

Acknowledgement ........................................................................................................... v
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................ vii
List of Tables .................................................................................................................... xiii
List of Figures ................................................................................................................... xiv
List of Appendices .......................................................................................................... xiv
Abbreviations .................................................................................................................. xv

## Chapter 1 Introduction ................................................................................................. 1

1.1. English education in Japanese elementary schools — A historical summary 2
1.1.1. Beginning of English education in elementary schools 2
1.1.2. ‘English Conversation Activities’ preceding the introduction of FLA 3
1.1.3. Introduction of FLA into the elementary school curriculum 4
1.2. Aims and objectives 5
1.3. Rationale and research questions 6
1.3.1. The significance of teaching early English reading at the elementary school level 6
1.3.2. Research questions 9
1.4. Overview of the book 14
Chapter 2  Phonological Awareness and its Importance for Japanese Children Learning English ................................. 15

2.1. Introduction 15

2.2. Phonological awareness and its development 16

2.2.1. Definition 16

2.2.2. The levels of phonological awareness 17

2.2.2.1. Rhyme awareness 18

2.2.2.2. Syllable awareness 19

2.2.2.3. Onset-rime awareness as intrasyllabic awareness 19

2.2.2.4. Phonemic awareness 20

2.2.3. The development of phonological awareness 21

2.3. Phonological awareness and early reading development in L1 23

2.3.1. The influence of phonological awareness on learning to read 23

2.3.1.1. The large-unit hypothesis 23

2.3.1.2. The small-unit hypothesis 24

2.3.1.3. Toward a compromise of different conceptualisations — Phonological awareness as a unitary construct 25

2.3.2. The influence of reading development on the sophistication of phonological awareness 28

2.3.2.1. Knowledge of the alphabet 28

2.3.2.2. Reading experience in an alphabetic script 30

2.3.3. Discussion 31

2.4. Japanese children’s phonological awareness and speech segmentation in L1 32

2.4.1. Japanese phonological units and the writing system 32

2.4.2. Japanese children’s phonological awareness 34

2.4.2.1. Strategies used in counting and deleting syllables and phonemes 35

2.4.2.2. Causes in the development of phonological awareness at the phoneme level 38

2.4.3. The speech segmentation procedure of Japanese children 39

2.4.3.1. Speech segmentation and learning to read in an alphabetic language 39

2.4.3.2. The effect of language rhythm on speech segmentation 40

2.4.3.3. Characteristics of Japanese speakers’ speech segmentation 41

2.4.4. Summary 44

2.5. Phonological awareness necessary for Japanese children in learning to read in English 45
2.5.1. The effect of orthographic and phonological differences on learning to read 45
2.5.2. The differences in phonological awareness necessary for early reading across languages 46
2.5.3. The importance of multi-level phonological awareness in early English reading 48
2.5.4. Summary 50
2.6. The necessity of phonological awareness instruction for Japanese children learning English 51
  2.6.1. Cross-linguistic transfer of phonological awareness 51
    2.6.1.1. Evidence of the transfer of phonological awareness 51
    2.6.1.2. The factors affecting the transfer of phonological awareness 52
    2.6.1.3. The effect of L1 phonological awareness on L2 word reading 54
    2.6.1.4. Three questions that need to be answered 55
  2.6.2. The development of phonological awareness of Japanese children learning English 55
    2.6.2.1. The effect of the Roma-ji instruction 56
    2.6.2.2. The developmental progression of phonological awareness of Japanese children learning English — A hypothesis 58
  2.6.3. The importance of teaching phonological awareness to Japanese elementary school children 61
2.7. The instruction of phonological awareness 64
  2.7.1. Features of the effective phonological awareness instruction 65
  2.7.2. The implications for the phonological awareness instruction for Japanese children 67
2.8. The factors affecting the item difficulty in the phonological awareness assessment 70
  2.8.1. The target levels of phonological awareness 70
  2.8.2. Task differences 71
  2.8.3. The linguistic complexity of target phonological units 72
    2.8.3.1. The number of phonemes in the target stimuli 72
    2.8.3.2. The position of target phonemes 73
    2.8.3.3. The types of target phonemes 74
  2.8.4. Summary 75
2.9. Chapter summary 76
Chapter 3  Methodology ................................................................. 77
3.1.  Research Design  ................................................................. 77
3.2.  The intervention ................................................................. 78
   3.2.1.  The context ................................................................. 78
   3.2.2.  Methods of data collection and the role of the researcher 79
   3.2.3.  The content and methods for the instruction .................. 80
      3.2.3.1.  Target skills for phonological awareness, sound categories,
                 and spelling rules ............................................. 80
      3.2.3.2.  Session plans ................................................... 83
   3.2.4.  The assessment and questionnaires before and after the
           intervention ........................................................... 85
      3.2.4.1.  Tests for the initial and final assessment of phonological
                awareness ......................................................... 87
      3.2.4.2.  Mini assessment ............................................... 92
      3.2.4.3.  The letter combination in non-word targets .............. 93
   3.2.5.  Ethical issues related to the intervention ...................... 94
   3.2.6.  Data analysis procedures .......................................... 95
3.3.  Chapter summary .............................................................. 95

Chapter 4  The Results ............................................................... 97
4.1.  Actual sessions ................................................................. 97
4.2.  Lower-case letter-name knowledge ..................................... 101
4.3.  Phonological awareness skills .......................................... 103
   4.3.1.  Segmenting and phoneme identification ....................... 103
      4.3.1.1.  Qualitative observational data .......................... 103
      4.3.1.2.  Quantitative assessment data ............................ 106
   4.3.2.  Blending ............................................................... 115
   4.3.3.  Deleting ............................................................... 118
      4.3.3.1.  Qualitative observational data .......................... 118
      4.3.3.2.  Quantitative assessment data ............................ 121
   4.3.4.  Substitution ........................................................... 123
      4.3.4.1.  Qualitative observational data .......................... 123
      4.3.4.2.  Quantitative assessment data ............................ 126
4.4.  Letter sounds — Short vowels and basic consonants ............. 130
   4.4.1.  Qualitative observational data ................................ 130
   4.4.2.  Quantitative assessment data ................................ 134
4.5.  Skills and knowledge for early word reading ...................... 135
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1.</td>
<td>Word reading</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1.1.</td>
<td>Qualitative observational data</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.1.2.</td>
<td>Quantitative assessment data</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2.</td>
<td>Split-grapheme rule</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2.1.</td>
<td>Qualitative observational data</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.2.2.</td>
<td>Quantitative assessment data</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.</td>
<td>Digraphs — <em>ch</em>, <em>ck</em>, <em>sh</em>, <em>th</em>, and <em>wh</em></td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.1.</td>
<td>Qualitative observational data</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.3.2.</td>
<td>Quantitative assessment data</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.4.</td>
<td>Double vowel-letters — <em>ee</em> and <em>oo</em></td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.4.1.</td>
<td>Qualitative observational data</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.4.2.</td>
<td>Quantitative assessment data</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.5.</td>
<td>Consonant doubling</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.6.</td>
<td>Consonant clusters</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6.</td>
<td>The results of children’s questionnaires before and after the intervention</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7.</td>
<td>Children’s reactions to the reflection sheets</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8.</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 5 Discussion**

5.1. The effectiveness of the phonological awareness instruction in ‘Foreign Language Activities’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1.1.</td>
<td>The outcomes of the instruction and the characteristics of the children’s phonological awareness and early English reading — RQ-A</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.2.</td>
<td>The difficulties in phonological awareness tasks in English for Japanese children — RQ-B</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.3.</td>
<td>The reaction of children and elementary school teachers to the instruction — RQ-C</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.4.</td>
<td>Problems related to the instruction — RQ-D</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1.5.</td>
<td>The learnability and teachability of phonological awareness</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.</td>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Chapter 6 Conclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main findings of this study</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical implications</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical implications</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations and future directions</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding statement</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## References

189

## Appendices

217

## Index

245