

Article

Exploring the Effects of Teachers' Practices in the Early Childhood Literacy Classroom Environment on Children's Acquisition of Literacy Skills

Merfat Ayesh Alsubaie 

Department of Curriculum and Instruction, King Faisal University, Al-Hasa 31982, Saudi Arabia;
malsebiee@kfu.edu.sa

Abstract: The primary focus of this study is to explore the relationship between the early childhood literacy classroom environment and teachers' practices to promote an understanding of their influence on Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills. This study utilizes a quantitative methodological approach, whereby null and alternative hypotheses were formulated to examine the association between Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills and the early childhood literacy classroom environment. Data analysis was conducted using a statistical technique known as structural equation modeling. The results of this study indicate that the literacy classroom environment, teachers' practices, and Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills affect each other and have an evidence-based interrelationship. Based on this relationship, the results and recommendations of this study may be considered inspirational ideas for teachers, researchers, and decision-makers working in early childhood who seek to make positive educational changes in this field.

Keywords: literacy environment classroom (LEC); teachers' practices (TP); children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS); structural equation modeling (SEM)



Citation: Alsubaie, M.A. Exploring the Effects of Teachers' Practices in the Early Childhood Literacy Classroom Environment on Children's Acquisition of Literacy Skills. *Educ. Sci.* **2024**, *14*, 453. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci14050453>

Academic Editors: Beryl Exley, Alfredo Bautista, Shahid Karim and Xuanyi Eliza Wu

Received: 4 January 2024

Revised: 16 April 2024

Accepted: 17 April 2024

Published: 25 April 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

Physical environment is a critical determinant in young children's ability to acquire literacy skills. Ardoin and Bowers [1] advocated for adjusting pedagogical practices to provide a positive and conducive environment for learning success. In particular, schools should invest in designing physical spaces for lower-grade learners to optimize learning outcomes [2]. The classroom design and arrangement create an environment that either supports or distracts learners.

Learning materials and classroom design are the primary determinants of a supportive teaching environment. The physical space assists learners in developing literacy skills by enabling children to accumulate experiences. For instance, an effective classroom environment supports varied teaching strategies and interactions with materials such as textbooks, crayons and pencils, papers, and other learning aids. The space improves learning by expanding learners' development and exploration [3,4]. Enhanced classroom interaction with educational materials raises children's curiosity, prompting them to ask additional questions that advance their knowledge and skills. Besides the physical features, the classroom environment depends on teaching practices and social bonds—learners form connections with their peers and instructors [3,4]. Hence, when teachers have good relationships with their students in a classroom environment that has an adequate physical environment and is rich in educational materials, it will help the children gain literacy skills via effective teaching practices.

The issues of how children acquire literacy skills, the importance of the literacy classroom environment, and teachers' practices are already topics covered in a large body of literature [3,5–8]. A study by Hofslundsengen et al. [9] noted that the physical environment

of literacy classrooms and its components in Scandinavia can affect children's acquisition of literacy skills. For example, the reading and writing skills of children in Finland are higher than in other Scandinavian countries, and this may be due to the availability of books in the physical environment of early childhood classrooms, which has a positive impact on the acquisition and development of these skills in children. In addition, the study of Kılıncı and Bayraktar [6] stressed the necessity of providing a book center in all early childhood classrooms in Turkey because of its positive role in children's knowledge of the letters of the alphabet and acquiring the skill of writing names. However, in the context of Saudi Arabia, early childhood education is still evolving in several aspects, such as curricula, programs, teacher preparation, literacy classroom environments, learning materials, and teaching practices [10,11]. To the best of our knowledge, the current literature indicates a lack of Arabic studies focusing on the educational environment of the Arabic language and related aspects in early childhood, such as the relationship between the literacy classroom environment, teachers' practices, and Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood grades [10–12]. We consider the present study significant as it focuses on three crucial elements in early childhood education (learning environments, teachers' practices, and children) and examines the impact of each on the others in a comprehensive manner. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the association between the early childhood literacy classroom environment and teachers' practices to promote an understanding of their influence on the acquisition of literacy skills in Arabic-speaking children. Hence, this study aims to bridge this gap and contribute to the existing literature on this subject by addressing the following three questions:

1. What is the relationship between the literacy classroom environment and Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood grades?
2. What is the relationship between the literacy classroom environment and teachers' practices in the literacy classroom environment in early childhood grades?
3. What is the relationship between teachers' practices in the literacy classroom environment and Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood grades?

In summary, the findings of this study can provide valuable insights into the significance of preparing the classroom environment with learning materials, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia. This preparation aims to reinforce and assist early childhood learners in acquiring literacy skills. Simultaneously, the results and recommendations of this study may serve as inspiring ideas for teachers, researchers, and decision-makers involved in early childhood education. These insights align with the developmental priorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which places emphasis on advancing education in the early childhood sector.

1.1. The Early Childhood Literacy Classroom Environment

The definition of the classroom environment often comes from teachers and educationists and tends to ignore the perspective of children. However, Chaparro-Moreno et al. [13] described it by capturing children's first-hand experiences and interactions with teachers and peers in the classroom environment. The literacy classroom environment proves effective when children interact with teachers and their peers in an early childhood classroom environment. In such settings, teachers in the classroom provide more child-directed speech to children after their parents, who are their first language teachers, in order to help them gain and learn literacy skills via various teaching practices. Therefore, as asserted by [14–16], children's literacy environment is influenced by the quality of the physical environment and the interplay among the children, the teachers, the classroom, and the learning materials in a positive learning environment during early childhood. For instance, children tend to exhibit better learning outcomes if they learn in a classroom where the physical environment is conducive to learning and engaging educational materials are present. Hence, teachers who aim to enhance their teaching practices in their classroom environments will work to develop their children's learning and acquisition of literacy skills.

In addition, in this study, the physical environment refers to space is an influencing element of a learning environment, especially in the early childhood classroom, which has a crucial role in children's development of literacy skills. In addition, the physical features of the classroom include its size, as well as learning resources, toys, and furniture [17]. For example, the arrangement of classroom furniture, availability of educational materials, good lighting, and appropriate colors significantly influence discipline, learning, and the acquisition of literacy skills in the classroom. Therefore, classroom designers and teachers could use space to create a stimulating learning environment [18,19]. According to the studies of [8,20–23], teachers should make use of the physical classroom space and effectively employ educational materials in their teaching practice, thereby helping children in early childhood to learn and acquire literacy skills in deliberate ways.

1.2. Children's Acquisition of Literacy Skills

Acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood may differ among children due to varying abilities and the physical environment. For example, children's inherent aptitude plays a significant role in the pace at which they develop literacy skills. Consequently, some children may quickly grasp the alphabet and excel in reading and writing due to their high aptitude for such skills. However, the process is not solely dependent on innate abilities; a rich environment, adequate materials, and varied teaching practices also influence phonetic skills acquisition [3,6,24,25]. Teachers contribute to fostering literacy by exposing children to alphabetic coding and helping them identify phonic patterns in words [26]. Additionally, emphasizing orthographic consistency, which involves developing a systematic approach to language writing, further supports reading mastery [27]. These teaching practices collectively contribute to creating a supportive classroom environment that enhances literacy skills for children.

Children's abilities may also determine their speed in learning literacy skills. For instance, evidence has shown that children with poor phonological skills may develop language impairments, affecting the acquisition of literacy skills [28–31]. Furthermore, children who face phonological challenges due to their bilingual status at home often have poor speaking skills in a literacy classroom environment since they come from home environments that have conversational challenges [32–35]. Teachers should adjust the learning environment to help children learn and acquire literacy skills via interactions with teachers, peers, and educational materials in the literacy classroom environment. This can be achieved by engaging them in one-to-one activities, using resource material that focuses on phonetics, and incorporating music and singing to reinforce phonetic sounds—all engaging activities that teachers can involve the children in. Such an approach significantly improves children's acquisition of literacy skills. This challenge is particularly pronounced during the coronavirus pandemic, which has reduced students' interaction time with peers and teachers, diminishing children's cognitive abilities to learn both written and spoken skills in an active learning environment [36,37]. Consequently, according to the authors of [38–40], observing and assessing children's learning levels may assist in designing better literacy environment classrooms. This involves physical manipulation and teacher practices, providing suitable educational materials and games, and improving teaching practices, such as the use of play in building literacy skills—all of which contribute to helping children acquire literacy skills effectively.

1.3. Teachers' Practices in the Early Childhood Literacy Classroom Environment

Early childhood teachers employ diverse teaching practices and strategies to promote children's acquisition of literacy skills. For instance, teachers utilize experiences related to literacy skills as part of their teaching practices in the classroom environment, including activities such as early writing and book reading, which can aid young children in gaining and developing literacy skills [41]. However, it is worth noting that this method may be less effective for children from impoverished home literacy environments [42,43].

Additionally, teachers can diversify their teaching practices and use several methods to design appropriate learning environments that facilitate effective literacy instruction in early childhood. These methods include interactive and stimulating reading, as well as the use of picture books, which are effective teaching practices that positively influence children's oral, narrative, and vocabulary skills. The inclusion of physical elements in the environment that capture the child's attention can encourage them to engage with the content [7,44]. A more practical application of interactive readings can be observed in the utilization of reflexive dialogue, where the goal in early childhood is to enhance self-expression rather than solely achieve language mastery [45,46]. Therefore, teachers can support children's acquisition of literacy skills via the implementation of efficient teaching practices.

Therefore, the review of the previous literature indicates that there is a relationship between the quality of the environment and the improvement of literacy acquisition. Various studies discussed the learning materials of literacy and the development of children's literacy skills via interaction with these. For example, Altun and others [42] in their study indicated that the availability of print-related resources and books as literacy learning materials with appropriate and engaging features, including pictures, increases children's engagement with the materials in the early childhood classroom environment. This, in turn, promotes the utilization of these materials and contributes to the development of their literacy skills. In addition, the utilization of literacy learning materials by children in early childhood classrooms significantly influences the development of their literacy skills. Young children's exploration of available literacy materials in early childhood environments impacts their enjoyment of literacy and the frequency of their engagement, resulting in the enhancement of early literacy skills [13,21]. Thus, children's use of print learning materials for literacy increases their interest in engaging with these materials, leading to improvements in literacy skills.

The structure of this paper is as follows: Section 2 presents the theoretical framework and development of hypotheses, Section 3 presents the methodology and data, Section 4 presents the findings, Section 5 presents a discussion and implications, and Section 6 presents the conclusions, limitations, and future research.

2. Theoretical Framework and Development of Hypotheses

The theory of instructional design explains the causal relationship between the design of the learning environment and learning outcomes [47,48]. The teaching practices examined in this study encompassed various activities, such as reading exercises, informative conversations, parent participation in children's homework, encouraging children to talk about their experiences, the use of nursery rhymes, the use of picture books, and encouraging children to express themselves in complete sentences. Additionally, the theory of materialism [49] also operationalizes the construct of the physical environment in a way that would include the material classroom space and the curricular materials. Thus, this study hypothesizes that when teaching practices are included in the learning process in an adequate physical environment, this, in turn, may produce better learning outcomes.

The theory of instructional design provides explicit guidance on how methods of instruction can be tailored to facilitate effective learning. This study proposes that a literacy classroom environment should include various designs that positively influence children's acquisition of literacy skills. Thus, the first hypothesis is proposed:

H1: *The early childhood literacy classroom environment is positively associated with Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood grades.*

This hypothesis is supported by the results of the studies of [10,11,25], which indicate that a rich classroom environment should have adequate materials and adult teacher participation. However, Di Pietro et al. [37] added that the organization of learning environments may negatively affect teaching practices. Therefore, we set the following second hypothesis:

H2: *The early childhood literacy classroom environment is negatively associated with the teaching practices of teachers in the literacy classroom in early childhood grades.*

Despite the challenges that may arise due to classroom environment design, Hendi and Asmawi [50] found that diversity in teaching practices and the use of several strategies are effective in achieving various learning objectives in early childhood. Thus, we introduce a third hypothesis indicating how teacher practices could augment the physical learning environment and Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills.

H3: *Teachers' practices in the literacy classroom environment positively influence Arabic-speaking children's acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood grades.*

A conceptual model of this study is shown in Figure 1, featuring five variables: literacy classroom environment (LEC), children's acquisition of literacy skills 1 (CALS1), children's acquisition of literacy skills 2 (CALS2), teacher's practice 1 (TP1), and teacher's practice 2 (TP2). The literacy classroom environment was determined as the independent variable, children's acquisition of literacy skills was the dependent variable, and teachers' practices were designated as the mediator variable.

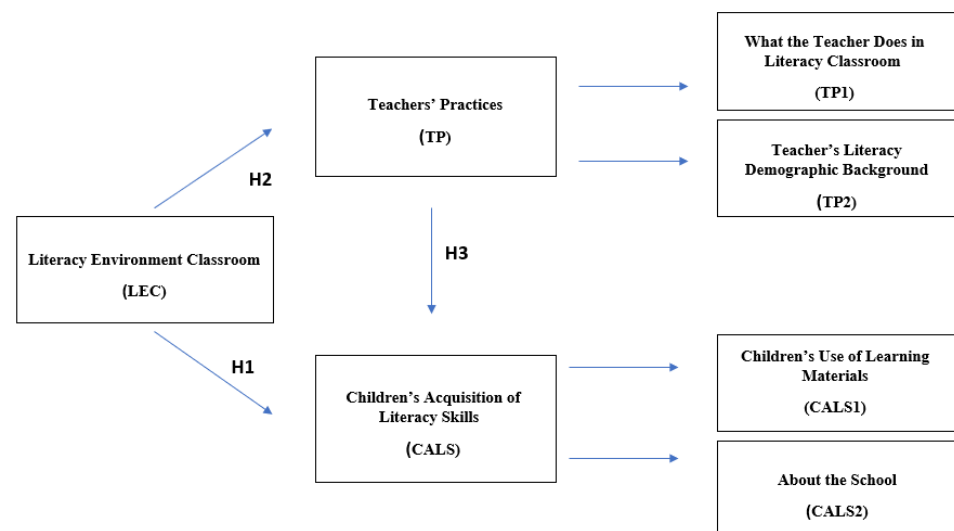


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants' Characteristics

This study employed a quantitative research design, emphasizing objective measurements via statistical and mathematical tools. This approach is suitable due to its ability to reach a larger sample size and produce more generalizable results than would be achievable using a quantitative approach [51]. The sampling for this study consisted of early childhood teachers. The survey received 344 responses from the sampled respondents. The vast majority (77%) had a bachelor's degree, while fewer than one in five (17%) had postgraduate qualifications. More than half (51%) of the respondents majored in kindergarten-related studies, while 26% majored in the Arabic language. Only 18% of these respondents had less than five years of work experience in the education sector. Additionally, these teachers could assess their children's acquisition of literacy skills by observing them during a variety of teaching activities and educational tasks.

3.2. Data Collection and Measurement

The data were gathered during the first semester of the 2022 academic year in Saudi Arabia after ethical approval was gained from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) at King

Faisal University (Reference Number: KFU-REC-2022-JAN-ETHICS377). The data were collected via questionnaires containing 36 items, all of which were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = undecided, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). The survey comprised two sections, the first of which was designed to collect the demographic information of the study respondents. The second consisted of questions aimed at gathering data on classroom literacy. Seven items were used to collect information about the literacy classroom environment. Seven more items collected information about children's acquisition of literacy skills: children's use of learning materials (CALS1). Four items focused on children's acquisition of literacy skills: about the classroom and school (CALS2). Fourteen items collected information on teachers' practices in early childhood classrooms: what the teachers do in the literacy classroom environment (TP1). Four items focused on teachers' practices in early childhood classrooms: the teachers' demographic backgrounds (TP2). All these constructs of the questionnaire were adapted from the work of the website Get Ready to Read: Classroom literacy environment. To ensure that the content and elements of the questionnaire were related to the objectives of the study, this questionnaire was submitted to a number of experts, and they indicated that the questionnaire was proportionate and relevant to the purpose of the study.

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used as the statistical technique for data analysis by means of confirmatory factor analysis [52]. This measurement method is effective for studying developmental changes in literacy and language. SEM was utilized to assess the directions and strengths of the associations between the study variables, as highlighted in the conceptual framework (Figure 1). The Analysis of Moment of Structures (AMOS) program was used to analyze the data of this study [53].

3.3. Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

3.3.1. Reliability

A reliability analysis was conducted to determine the accuracy, precision, and internal consistency of the questionnaire. A Cronbach alpha test was performed for the various constructs in the questionnaire. Table 1 shows the results of these tests.

Table 1. Reliability analysis.

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items
Literacy environment (classroom; LEC)	0.81	7
Children's acquisition of literacy skills: using learning materials (CALS1)	0.81	7
Children's acquisition of literacy skills: about the classroom and school (CALS2)	0.46	4
Combined CALS1 and CALS2	0.76	11
Teachers' practices: what the teachers do at the literacy environment (TP1)	0.77	14
Teachers' practices: the teachers' literacy demographic backgrounds (TP2)	0.61	4
Combined TP1 and TP2	0.77	18
All variables	0.89	36

The threshold Cronbach alpha value was taken as 0.7. Therefore, the children's acquisition of literacy skills: about the classroom and school (CALS2) and teachers' practices in early-childhood classrooms: the teachers' demographic backgrounds (TP2) variables lacked the necessary internal consistency needed for analysis. Consequently, these constructs were combined to enhance their internal consistency.

3.3.2. Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the scores in the dataset. Table 2 shows the correlation matrix for the average of each construct. All

the variables had a significant correlation with each other. Therefore, the instrument had the necessary validity for further statistical tests.

Table 2. Correlation matrix.

		Correlations		
		LEC_AVG	CALS_AVG	TP_AVG
LEC_AVG	Pearson correlation	1	0.636 **	0.511 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.001	<0.001
	N	344	344	343
CALS_AVG	Pearson correlation	0.636 **	1	0.541 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001		<0.001
	N	344	344	343
TP_AVG	Pearson correlation	0.511 **	0.541 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001	
	N	343	343	343

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3.3.3. Goodness of Fit

A goodness-of-fit test was conducted to determine how well the responses fit the expected distribution of a population with normally distributed parameters. The null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis for this test were as follows:

Null Hypothesis H0: *There is no relationship between the distribution of sample observation and the population dataset.*

Alternative Hypothesis H1: *There is a significant relationship between the distribution of sample observation and the population dataset.*

Table 3 shows the goodness-of-fit test for the variables. A chi-squared test for the three variables had a p value of less than 0.05.

Table 3. Goodness-of-fit test for the average scores of each construct.

Test Statistics			
	LEC_AVG	TP_AVG	CALS_AVG
Chi-squared	210.791 ^a	247.714 ^b	218.605 ^a
Df	20	34	20
Asymp. Sig.	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

^a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies that are less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.4. ^b. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies that are less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 9.8.

Since $p < 0.05$, there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. There is a significant relationship between the distribution of sample observation and the population dataset. Consequently, the sample dataset could be used to represent the population.

4. Findings

4.1. Structural Equation Modeling

A structural equation model was developed to explain the causal relationship between literacy classroom environment (LEC), children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS), and teachers' practices (TP) in terms of influencing children's performance. This relationship

was inferred from the conceptual model, which determined that literacy classroom environment (LEC) is the independent variable, while children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS) is the dependent variable. Teachers' practices (TP) are the mediator variable. However, the close relationship between these variables means that each of these variables has a mediating influence on the other Civelek [54]; Whittaker and Schumacker [55]. For instance, literacy classroom environment (LCE) had a significant connection or impact on teachers' practices (TP) and children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). Therefore, the conceptual model was adapted to represent the dual influences between the variables.

Each of the three constructs had several items. The literacy classroom environment (LEC) variable had 7, children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS) had 11, and teachers' practices (TP) had 18 items. An SEM derived from each of these items could not be determined as the correlation matrix was not positively definite [53]. As a result, five new variables were calculated by averaging the items in each construct. The new variables were LEC_AVG, TP1_AVG, TP2_AVG, CALS1_AVG, and CALS2_AVG. These computed variables were used to determine the relationship between the three constructs. Figure 2 shows the resulting structural model for the dataset.

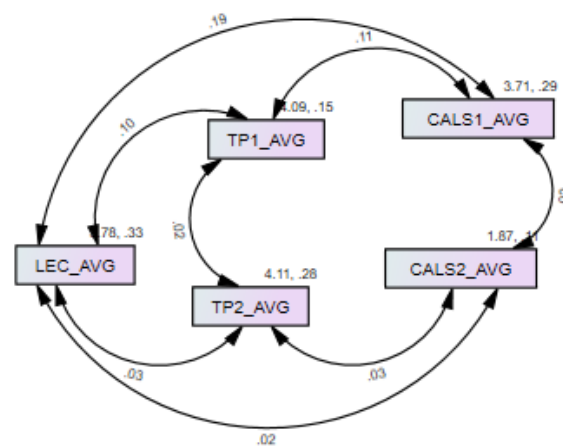


Figure 2. Structural equation model derived using the average for the sub-constructs.

The chi-squared value for the default model was significant at a 5% level, as indicated in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Chi-squared value.

Model: CMIN	NPAR	CMIN	DF	<i>p</i>	CMIN/DF
Default model	18	60.958	2	0.000	30.479
Saturated model	20	0.000	0		
Independence model	5	425.132	15	0.000	28.342
Model: Baseline Comparison	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	0.857	−0.075	0.861	−0.078	0.856
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Since $p < 0.05$, the model is not significant. In addition, the ratio of chi-squared to degrees of freedom exceeds 30.49. Since this ratio exceeds the acceptable threshold of 5.0, the model is not satisfactory [56]. Therefore, the causal relationship inferred in the conceptual model is unreliable.

The results of AMOS output show that the children's acquisition of literacy skills: using learning materials (CALS1) variable had the strongest direct effect on literacy classroom

environment (LEC). Table 5 below shows the direct, indirect, and total effects of the default model.

Table 5. Direct, indirect, and total effects.

Direct Effects (Group Number 1-Default Model)					
	LEC_AVG	TP1_AVG	TP2_AVG	CALS1_AVG	CALS2_AVG
LEC_AVG	0.00	0.11	0.02	0.19	0.02
TP1_AVG	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.00
TP2_AVG	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CALS1_AVG	0.00	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.02
CALS2_AVG	0.02	0.11	0.04	0.02	0.00
Indirect Effects (Group Number 1-Default Model)					
	LEC_AVG	TP1_AVG	TP2_AVG	CALS1_AVG	CALS2_AVG
LEC_AVG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TP1_AVG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TP2_AVG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CALS1_AVG	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CALS2_AVG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Effects (Group Number 1-Default Model)					
	LEC_AVG	TP1_AVG	TP2_AVG	CALS1_AVG	CALS2_AVG
LEC_AVG	0.00	0.11	0.02	0.19	0.02
TP1_AVG	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.00
TP2_AVG	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CALS1_AVG	0.01	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.02
CALS2_AVG	0.02	0.11	0.04	0.02	0.00

Based on Table 5, the literacy classroom environment (LEC) had the strongest influence on children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). The variable teacher's practices: what the teachers do at the literacy environment (TP1) had the second-highest influence, while teachers' practices: the teachers' demographic backgrounds (TP2) had the least impact.

An alternative model was developed using the average for the three main constructs: literacy classroom environment (LEC), teachers' practices (TP), and children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). Figure 3 shows the implied causal relationships for the dataset.

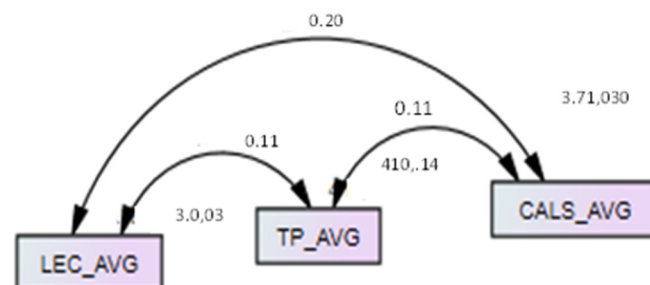


Figure 3. Structural equation model derived using the average for the main constructs.

The ratio of chi-squared to degrees of freedom (CMIN-Df) was 0.00. Table 6 shows the summary statistics for the model.

Table 6. Model summary statistics.

Model: CMIN	NPAR	CMIN	DF	<i>p</i>	CMIN/DF
Default model	9	0.000	0		
Saturated model	9	0.000	0		
Independence model	3	319.794	6	0.000	53.299
Model: Baseline Comparison	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Saturated model	1.000		1.000		1.000
Independence model	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

The fact that the ratio of the chi-squared value to degrees of freedom is less than 3.0 indicates a perfect fit. In addition, the baseline comparison shows a comparative fit index (CFI) of 1.0. This CFI value confirms a perfect fit in the dataset [57–60]. Therefore, this model is a perfect representation of the relationship between literacy classroom environment (LEC) and children’s acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). The model demonstrates that literacy classroom environment (LEC) has the strongest impact on children’s acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). Table 7 shows the direct, indirect, and total effects of the model.

Table 7. Direct, indirect, and total effects of the model.

Direct Effects (Group Number 1-Default Model)			
	LEC_AVG	TP_AVG	CALS_AVG
LEC_AVG	0.00	0.11	0.20
TP_AVG	0.11	0.00	0.11
CALS_AVG	0.20	0.11	0.00
Indirect Effects (Group Number 1-Default Model)			
	LEC_AVG	TP_AVG	CALS_AVG
LEC_AVG	0.00	0.00	0.01
TP_AVG	0.00	0.00	0.00
CALS_AVG	0.01	0.00	0.00
Total Effects (Group Number 1-Default Model)			
	LEC_AVG	TP_AVG	CALS_AVG
LEC_AVG	0.00	0.11	0.21
TP_AVG	0.11	0.00	0.11
CALS_AVG	0.21	0.11	0.00

Despite the perceived importance of teachers’ practices (TP) on children’s education, the variable showed only a minimal impact. However, both teachers’ practices (TP) and literacy classroom environment (LEC) had a significant impact on children’s acquisition of literacy skills (CALS).

4.2. Hypotheses Tests

The second model was used to test the three hypotheses developed in the study. Based on Figure 2, the coefficient for literacy classroom environment (LEC) is 0.20, and this value is significant at a 5% level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis as literacy classroom environment (LEC) has a positive effect on children’s acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). Similarly, the second hypothesis was that literacy classroom environment (LEC) has a negative effect on teachers’ practices (TP). However, the coefficient for this relationship

was positive and significant at a 5% level. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis, as there is a positive relationship between literacy classroom environment (LEC) and teachers' practices (TP). Lastly, we hypothesized that teachers' practices (TP) have a positive effect on children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). Figure 2 confirms that teachers' practices (TP) have a positive effect on children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS), and this effect is significant at a 5% level. Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis, as teachers' practices (TP) have a positive effect on children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS).

In summary, this analysis shows that literacy classroom environment (LEC) has a positive effect on children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS). In addition, it shows that literacy classroom environment (LEC) has a positive effect on teachers' practices (TP). Lastly, it proves that teachers' practices (TP) in the early-childhood literacy classroom have a positive effect on children's acquisition of literacy skills (CALS).

5. Discussion and Implications

We considered that a test of the interrelationship between the literacy classroom environment in early childhood, children's acquisition of literacy skills, and teaching practices would be important for promoting an understanding of their influence on the learning process. The idea of a dual conceptual model was used to validate that the three variables had a mediating effect on each other [54,55]. Consequently, the chi-squared value resulting from the new averaged variables (LEC_AVG, TP1_AVG, TP2_AVG, CALS1_AVG, and CALS2_AVG) indicates a 5% significance level. According to Collier [56], the ratio of chi-square to degree of freedom, which exceeds 30.49, is above the minimum threshold of 5.0. Thus, the relationship results are unreliable. A more detailed model was applied to confirm the validity of the first attempt's outcomes using the analysis of an AMOS table. The typical approach is linked to a positive result that indicates a reliable baseline comparison of 1.0 CFI (comparative fit index) [57–60]. Consequently, it is evident that the literacy classroom environment includes the available study materials, teachers, and peers who assist the children in achieving their best grades via practices such as developing a system of language writing and alphabetic coding [15,27]. The statistical outcome shows that the learning classroom environment significantly influences acquired literacy skills. Therefore, teachers must assess if their literacy classroom environment is qualified and equipped with educational materials that help and facilitate the children's acquisition of literacy skills. For example, teachers should check if their classroom environments contain several books for daily activities, whiteboards, crayons, papers, printed words and pictures, picture books, and listening and reading centers among their tools [61]. At the same time, the leaders or principals of early childhood schools should ensure that teachers use, benefit from, and exploit the educational materials available in the classroom environment. Unfortunately, some teachers do not use the available educational materials effectively to help children acquire literacy skills, despite the presence of financial support from the Ministry of Education and encouragement or training support from the school principal or supervisor [51,62].

The use of appropriate and various educational materials in the literacy classroom environment, as well as teachers' practices and collaboration with children's parents in the learning process, will encourage and improve children's acquisition of literacy skills in early childhood grades. This result is consistent with prior studies on the effective literacy learning of young children [61–64]. As indicated by [3,15,65,66], the availability of educational material and the number of students in the literacy classroom environment, in addition to the good use of classroom furniture and literacy learning materials, help strengthen social relationships among students and teachers. These bonds are crucial for young children's acquisition of literacy skills, as well as their social literacy skills and confidence. Furthermore, maintaining appropriate class sizes facilitates teachers and assistant teachers in focusing on individual students or groups, implementing a variety of instructional strategies to facilitate students' acquisition of literacy skills in a setting conducive to holistic development. Despite this, many literacy classrooms only allocate

space for the primary teacher, overlooking the importance of having an assistant teacher. This oversight may adversely affect teaching practices, especially when there are numerous students for a single teacher to attend to. For instance, if one teacher is responsible for a large number of children, they may find it challenging to provide the necessary attention to each student. Therefore, the Ministry of Education should recognize the significance of having an assistant teacher in early childhood classrooms.

A hypothetical methodology was employed to confirm the validity of the interrelationship between the three variables. The assessment of the impact of a literacy classroom environment on children's acquired literacy skills resulted in a 5% significance level and a 0.20 coefficient. The null hypothesis was rejected because the literacy classroom environment has teachers who create supportive learning environments via their teaching practices, such as encouraging alphabetic coding and orthographic consistency [26,27]. The literacy classroom environment also improves children's knowledge of writing and oral skills. In addition, the alternative hypothesis validates that teachers' practices have positive effects on children's acquired literacy skills. Via their teaching practices, teachers are responsible for overcoming children's conversational challenges by analyzing their entry behavior and working to build and develop literacy skills [38–40]. Teachers should involve children in frequent pronunciation activities to construct oral skills. In essence, an association exists between the literacy classroom environment, children's acquisition of literacy skills, and teaching practices in learning institutions that perform at a high level. This finding aligns with a study by Hanadi et al. [10], who recommended that teachers should work to change and develop their teaching practices and benefit from the support they receive under the direction of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has given priority to the development of education in the field of early childhood. In addition, the early childhood literacy classroom environment positively impacts teaching practices in the early childhood literacy classroom. For instance, a library stocked with picture books and educational stories supports teaching practices, fostering literacy skills and enhancing listening and speaking abilities as children gather around the teacher to discuss stories. However, it is important to note that some early childhood literacy classroom environments may lack essential resources such as furniture, libraries, and educational materials such as picture books and stories. This deficiency may drive teachers to develop innovative educational practices and create materials that facilitate children's acquisition of reading and writing skills in the classroom. Thus, the early childhood literacy classroom environment is positively associated with teaching practices.

This study seeks to shed light on the interplay between various aspects of the educational process, specifically focusing on early childhood grades, including the classroom environment and teachers' practices. The goal is to underscore key elements that can enhance children's acquisition of literacy skills. The findings of this study have several significant implications for educational institutions, school leadership, teachers, and educational policymakers in Saudi Arabia. Regarding educational institutions, it is crucial to highlight the importance of learning materials for teaching Arabic literacy. While high-quality learning materials are available, there is a relative scarcity compared to resources for teaching and acquiring literacy skills in other languages, such as English and Chinese. Consequently, educational institutions responsible for teaching children in early childhood grades need to communicate with international or professional companies or factories to produce educational materials in the Arabic language, particularly those pertaining to early childhood literacy skills.

This study is relevant to school leaders who provide beneficial knowledge acquired from restructuring classroom features to support children and teachers in reaching their potential. Thus, it is possible to estimate expected performances due to the relationship between teaching practices and the literacy classroom environment. Francis and Barnett [64] postulated that teachers should be able to create an interactive environment to facilitate one-on-one or group cooperation with children. Such interactions during the acquisition of skills, such as phonology, puzzle solving, and oral language skills, can result in significant

advancements. Moreover, it is crucial that teachers give children plentiful opportunities to interact and deal with educational materials, both individually and cooperatively, which helps them acquire literacy skills in a more effective and enjoyable way.

At the same time, it is crucial for teachers to maintain ongoing communication with the parents of their students, updating them on their children's progress in literacy skills. For example, they can encourage children's parents to cooperate with them to help their children learn to write letters. In addition, recognizing that some parents are eager to work with the school and teachers but may not know how to contribute effectively, it becomes imperative for the school administration and teachers to take the lead in initiating communication with parents. Providing educational materials and clear instructions equips parents to actively participate and contribute to elevating their children's literacy skills [35,65,66]. Moreover, the administration of early childhood schools should prioritize periodic examinations of children's vision, hearing, and speech throughout the school year. This proactive approach helps identify potential causes of delayed speech and language learning difficulties. Addressing these issues promptly is essential. While some kindergartens and schools may rely on the initial examination conducted during the child's enrollment in early childhood school, it is crucial for ongoing assessments to ensure comprehensive support for the child's development.

The characteristics of participants in this study have highlighted a notable observation that some early childhood teachers possess scientific backgrounds outside the realm of early childhood education, potentially influencing their teaching practices and interactions with children. Given this revelation, it is imperative for the Ministry of Education to prioritize the recruitment of teachers specifically trained in early childhood education to instruct children in these crucial developmental stages. In addition, according to Al-Abdullatif and Alsubaie [51], training and professional development are necessary for all teachers, particularly those lacking specialization in kindergarten or early childhood education.

6. Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Research

This study emphasized the correlation between the literacy classroom environment in early childhood and the practices employed by teachers, as well as the subsequent impact on children's acquisition of literacy skills. Structural equation modeling was used for the data analysis of the study. The findings revealed a mutual influence among these variables, establishing an evidence-based interrelationship.

This study has some limitations that may limit the optimal expectations for its research outcomes. Notably, the evaluation of teaching practices did not encompass the use of digital and educational technologies. Hence, future research should explore how digital technology, including tools such as infographics, digital storytelling, comics, or games, can be effectively incorporated into teaching literacy skills to young children in early childhood. These technologies play a crucial role in facilitating knowledge transition, particularly in light of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, future studies should investigate how new environments affect learners, particularly children, and compare them with other educational environments in the world. In terms of methodology, this research relied on quantitative methods, so this study may not have provided in-depth information about these three variables and their relationships. Therefore, future studies could benefit from employing qualitative or mixed methods, incorporating instruments such as teacher interviews or observations of the literacy classroom environment and teaching practices. This approach would yield richer information. In addition, it is worth noting that the participants of this study were from the Eastern Province in Saudi Arabia, so it may be difficult to generalize the results to all literacy classroom environments in Saudi Arabia. To enhance the external validity of future studies, it is recommended to include participants from various teaching experiences and practices. This would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships under investigation.

Funding: This research was financially supported by the Deanship of Scientific Research at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia (GRANT5,803).

Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted with approval by the Institutional Review Board (or Ethics Committee) of the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of King Faisal University (protocol code KFU-REC-2022-JAN-ETHICS377).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Data are not available due to confidentiality concerns.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

1. Ardoin, N.M.; Bowers, A.W. Early childhood environmental education: A systematic review of the research literature. *Educ. Res. Rev.* **2022**, *31*, 100353. [\[CrossRef\]](#) [\[PubMed\]](#)
2. Nakajima, N.; Hasan, A.; Jung, H.; Brinkman, S.; Pradhan, M.; Kinnell, A. Investing in school readiness: A comparison of different early childhood education pathways in rural Indonesia. *Int. J. Educ. Dev.* **2019**, *69*, 22–38. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
3. Alsubaie, M.A. Factors affecting early literacy learning spaces of young children: The context of home literacy in Saudi Arabia. *Educ. Sci.* **2022**, *12*, 791. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
4. Hilmawan, H.; Musthafa, B.; Agustin, M. Literacy environment: What must teachers do? In Proceedings of the ICLIQE 2020: Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Learning Innovation and Quality Education, Surakarta, Indonesia, 5 September 2020; Volume 52, pp. 1–6.
5. Al-Abdullatif, A.M. Towards Digitalization in Early Childhood Education: Pre-Service Teachers' Acceptance of Using Digital Storytelling, Comics, and Infographics in Saudi Arabia. *Educ. Sci.* **2022**, *12*, 702. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
6. Kılınççı, E.; Bayraktar, A. Early literacy materials and teacher practices in preschool classrooms. *Pegem J. Educ. Instr.* **2021**, *11*, 447–478. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
7. Grolig, L.; Cohrdes, C.; Tiffin-Richards, S.; Schroeder, S. Narrative dialogic reading with wordless picture books: A cluster-randomized intervention study. *Early Child. Res. Q.* **2020**, *51*, 191–203. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
8. Sunday, M.; Amalu, M. School learning environment and pre-primary children's reading readiness in early childhood development in Ogoja Education Zone of Cross River State. *J. Contemp. Res.* **2020**, *17*, 1–17.
9. Hofslundsengen, H.; Magnusson, M.; Svensson, A.; Jusslin, S.; Mellgren, E.; Hagtvet, B.; Heilä-Ylikallio, R. The literacy environment of preschool classrooms in three Nordic countries: Challenges in a multilingual and digital society. *Early Child Dev. Care* **2018**, *190*, 414–427. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
10. Hanadi, A.O.; Gregory, E.; Jessel, J.; Khalil, A. Early literacy model in a Saudi Arabian preschool: Implementation in a different cultural context. *Education* **2015**, *5*, 6.
11. Taibah, N.J.; Haynes, C.W. Contributions of phonological processing skills to reading skills in Arabic speaking children. *Read. Writ.* **2011**, *24*, 1019–1042. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
12. Aram, D.; Korat, O.; Saiegh-Haddad, E.; Arafat, S.H.; Khoury, R.; Elhija, J.A. Early literacy among Arabic-speaking kindergartners: The role of socioeconomic status, home literacy environment and maternal mediation of writing. *Cogn. Dev.* **2013**, *28*, 193–208. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
13. Chaparro-Moreno, L.; Justice, L.; Logan, J.; Purtell, K.; Lin, T. The preschool classroom linguistic environment: Children's first-person experiences. *PLoS ONE* **2019**, *14*, e0220227. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
14. Daniels, K. Notions of agency in early literacy classrooms: Assemblages and productive intersections. *J. Early Child. Lit.* **2021**, *21*, 568–589. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
15. Johnston, C.; Herzog, T.; Hill-Chapman, C.; Siney, C.; Fergusson, A. Creating positive learning environments in early childhood using teacher-generated prosocial lessons. *J. Educ. Res. Pract.* **2019**, *9*, 10. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
16. Keiler, L. Teachers' roles and identities in student-centered classrooms. *Int. J. STEM Educ.* **2018**, *5*, 34. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
17. Fardlillah, Q.; Suryono, Y. Physical environment classroom: Principles and design elements of classroom in early childhood education. In Proceedings of the International Conference on Special and Inclusive Education (ICSIE 2018), Yogyakarta, Indonesia, 25–26 October 2018.
18. Flint, T. Responsive play: Creating transformative classroom spaces through play as a reader response. *J. Early Child. Lit.* **2018**, *20*, 385–410. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
19. McChesney, K.; Clarkin-Phillips, J. Space speaks: A portrait of an early childhood centre and the affordances provided by the learning environment. *Early Child. Folio* **2020**, *24*, 26–34. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
20. Knauf, H. Visual environmental scale: Analysing the early childhood education environment. *Early Child. Educ. J.* **2018**, *47*, 43–51. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
21. Knauf, H. Physical environments of early childhood education centres: Facilitating and inhibiting factors supporting children's participation. *Int. J. Early Child.* **2019**, *51*, 355–372. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
22. Dodoo, N.; Kye, J.; Kyei, P.; Nyarko, N. *Classroom Environments and Learning in Kindergarten: Evidence from Three Districts in Ghana*; University of Ghana: Accra, Ghana, 2018.
23. Slot, P. *Structural Characteristics and Process Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care: A Literature Review*; OECD: Paris, France, 2018; pp. 17–23.

24. Breadmore, H.; Vardy, E.; Cunningham, A.; Kwok, R.; Carroll, J. *Literacy Development: Evidence Review*; Education Endowment Foundation: London, UK, 2019.
25. Çakıroğlu, A. The language acquisition approaches and the development of literacy skills in children. *Int. Electron. J. Elem. Educ.* **2019**, *11*, 201–206. [CrossRef]
26. Castles, A.; Rastle, K.; Nation, K. Ending the reading wars: Reading acquisition from novice to expert. *Psychol. Sci. Public Interest* **2018**, *19*, 5–51. [CrossRef]
27. Majorano, M.; Bastianello, T.; Bodea-Hategan, C.; Fantuzzi, P.; Fontana, G.; Hoste, E.; Lombardi, M.; Standaert, A.; Talas, D.; Trifu, R.; et al. Early literacy skills and later reading and writing performance across countries: The effects of orthographic consistency and preschool curriculum. *Child Youth Care Forum* **2021**, *50*, 1063–1085. [CrossRef]
28. Castro, D.; Barrera, S. The contribution of emergent literacy skills for early reading and writing achievement. *Temas Psicol.* **2019**, *27*, 509–522. [CrossRef]
29. Collazos-Campo, C.; Cadavid-Ruiz, N.; Gómez, J.; Jiménez-Jiménez, S.; Quijano-Martínez, M. Predictors of early reading acquisition in children of low socioeconomic status. *Paidéia (Ribeirão Preto)* **2020**, *30*, e3037. [CrossRef]
30. Duff, D.; Tomblin, J. *Literacy as an Outcome of Language Development and Its Impact on Children's Psychosocial and Emotional Development*; University of Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh, PA, USA, 2018.
31. Jasińska, K.; Wolf, S.; Jukes, M.; Dubeck, M. Literacy acquisition in multilingual educational contexts: Evidence from Coastal Kenya. *Dev. Sci.* **2019**, *22*, e12828. [CrossRef]
32. Silinskas, G.; Sénéchal, M.; Torppa, M.; Lerkkanen, M. Home literacy activities and children's reading skills, independent reading, and interest in literacy activities from kindergarten to grade 2. *Front. Psychol.* **2020**, *11*, 548889. [CrossRef]
33. International Literacy Association. *Phonological Awareness in Early Childhood Literacy Development*; International Literacy Association: New York, NY, USA, 2019. Available online: <https://www.literacyworldwide.org/get-resources/journals> (accessed on 1 January 2024).
34. Knauer, H.; Jakiela, P.; Ozier, O.; Aboud, F.; Fernald, L. Enhancing young children's language acquisition through parent-child book-sharing: A randomized trial in rural Kenya. *Early Child. Res. Q.* **2020**, *50*, 179–190. [CrossRef]
35. Russak, S. A study of literacy acquisition in English as a foreign language amongst native Hebrew and Arabic speaking pupils. *Int. J. Biling. Educ. Biling.* **2019**, *24*, 1373–1391. [CrossRef]
36. Alsubaie, M. Distance education and the social literacy of elementary school students during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Heliyon* **2022**, *8*, e09811. [CrossRef]
37. Di Pietro, G.; Biagi, F.; Costa, P.; Karpiński, Z.; Mazza, J. The likely impact of COVID19 on education: Reflections based on the existing literature and recent international datasets. *JRC Tech. Rep.* **2020**, 12–16. [CrossRef]
38. Alstad, G. Preparing teachers for early language education. In *Handbook of Early Language Education*; Springer: Cham, Switzerland, 2020; pp. 1–28. Available online: https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-030-91662-6_22 (accessed on 28 December 2023).
39. Farrell, K. Using guided play to acquire literacy skills. In *Guided Play and Literacy*; Northwestern College: Orange City, IA, USA, 2019; pp. 1–34.
40. Jahnke, T. Building Literacy Skills in Preschoolers through Play. Play-Based Literacy Instruction. Master's Thesis, Concordia University, St. Paul, MN, USA, 2019; pp. 1–53.
41. Schwartz, M. Language-conducive strategies in early language education. In *Handbook of Early Language Education*; Springer: Cham, Switzerland, 2020; pp. 1–29.
42. Altun, D.; Tantekin Erden, F.; Snow, C. A multilevel analysis of home and classroom literacy environments in relation to preschoolers' early literacy development. *Psychol. Sch.* **2018**, *55*, 1098–1120. [CrossRef]
43. Carroll, J.; Holliman, A.; Weir, F.; Baroody, A. Literacy interest, home literacy environment and emergent literacy skills in preschoolers. *J. Res. Read.* **2018**, *42*, 150–161. [CrossRef]
44. McGlynn-Stewart, M.; Murphy, S.; Pinto, I.; Mogyorodi, E.; Nguyen, T. Technology-supported early literacy learning in a multilingual community preschool. *Education 3-13* **2018**, *47*, 692–704. [CrossRef]
45. Harju, A.; Åkerblom, A. Opening up new spaces for languaging practice in early childhood education for migrant children. *Int. J. Early Years Educ.* **2020**, *28*, 151–161. [CrossRef]
46. Villegas, A.; Saiz de La Mora, K.; Martin, A.; Mills, T. Preparing future mainstream teachers to teach English language learners: A review of the empirical literature. *Educ. Forum* **2018**, *82*, 138–155. [CrossRef]
47. Khalil, M.; Elkhider, I. Applying learning theories and instructional design models for effective instruction. *Adv. Physiol. Educ.* **2016**, *40*, 147–156. [CrossRef]
48. Hardré, P.; Chen, C. A case study analysis of the role of instructional design in the development of teaching expertise. *Perform. Improv. Q.* **2008**, *18*, 34–58. [CrossRef]
49. Schrag, F. Education and historical materialism. *Interchange* **1986**, *17*, 42–52. [CrossRef]
50. Hendi, N.; Asmawi, A. Preschool English teachers' practices and early literacy instruction: Montessori vs. International Preschool Curriculum. *Malays. Online J. Educ. Sci.* **2018**, *6*, 29–36.
51. Al-Abdullatif, A.M.; Alsubaie, M.A. Using digital learning platforms for teaching Arabic literacy: A post-pandemic mobile learning scenario in Saudi Arabia. *Sustainability* **2022**, *14*, 11868. [CrossRef]

52. Quinn, J.; Wagner, R. Using meta-analytic structural equation modeling to study developmental change in relations between language and literacy. *Child Dev.* **2018**, *89*, 1956–1969. [CrossRef]
53. Boateng, S.L. *Structural Equation Modelling Made Easy for Business and Social Science Research Using SPSS and AMOS*; Kindle Direct Publishing: Seattle, WA, USA, 2018.
54. Civelek, M.E. *Essentials of Structural Equation Modeling*; University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries: Lincoln, OR, USA, 2018.
55. Whittaker, T.A.; Schumacker, R.E. *A Beginner's Guide to Structural Equation Modeling*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2022.
56. Collier, J.E. *Applied Structural Equation Modelling Using AMOS: Basic to Advanced Techniques*; Routledge: London, UK, 2020.
57. Gana, K.; Broc, G. *Structural Equation Modeling with Lavaan*; John Wiley & Sons: Hoboken, NJ, USA, 2019.
58. Henseler, J. *Composite-Based Structural Equation Modeling*; Guilford Publications: New York, NY, USA, 2021.
59. Henseler, J.; Yu, X.; Zaza, S.; Schuberth, F. Counterpoint: Representing forged concepts as emergent variables using composite-based structural equation modeling. *ACM SIGMIS Database DATABASE Adv. Inf. Syst.* **2021**, *52*, 114–130.
60. Mehmetoglu, M.; Venturini, S. *Structural Equation Modelling with Partial Least Squares Using Stata and R*; CRC Press: Boca Raton, FL, USA, 2021.
61. Alsubaie, M. Gender, literacy, and elementary school students with reading centers. *Glob. J. Hum.-Soc. Sci.* **2015**, *22*, 446.
62. Alsubaie, M. *Ten Elementary School Teachers' Voices: How They Build Effective Literacy Learning in the Lives of Their 2nd Grade Children*; Western Michigan University: Kalamazoo, MI, USA, 2018.
63. Ramírez, R.; Huang, B.; Palomin, A.; McCarty, L. Teachers and language outcomes of young bilinguals: A scoping review. *Lang. Speech Hear. Serv. Sch.* **2021**, *52*, 755–768. [CrossRef]
64. Rojas, N.; Yoshikawa, H.; Melzi, G. Preschool teachers' use of discourse practices with Spanish-speaking dual language learners. *J. Appl. Dev. Psychol.* **2020**, *69*, 101158. [CrossRef]
65. Francis, J.; Barnett, W. Relating preschool class size to classroom quality and student achievement. *Early Child. Res. Q.* **2019**, *49*, 49–58. [CrossRef]
66. Available online: <https://www.getreadytoread.org/> (accessed on 1 January 2022).

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.